

## Something We Must Not Love: Pleasure

Ponder: If something is fun, does that mean it's sinful?

Scripture: "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. For men will be . . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (2 Timothy 3:1-4, NKJV).

That tastes so good it must be sinful! This is so much fun it must be sinful!

Have you ever said anything like that? Sadly, some folks honestly believe it is wrong for a child of God to enjoy any pleasure whatsoever. Others, however, say, "it can't be wrong when it feels so right." As usual, truth lies between the extremes.

The Holy Spirit said through Paul that God "gives us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6:17). So no, just because something is fun, pleasant, or tastes good does not mean it is sinful!

But let's face it: Sin can be pleasurable! When Moses came of age in the house of Pharaoh's daughter in Egypt, he had to make a decision. Hebrews 11:5 tells us that he chose "to suffer affliction with the people of God" rather than "to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin."

Even that which is within God's will may become sinful. Food is a good thing; but gluttony is sin. Recreation is needed to maintain good health, both mental and physical; but it can become sinful when it becomes a virtual god. With but little observation we can see that many Americans are obsessed with "having fun." We spend vast fortunes at amusement parks, sporting events, and other recreational activities. Too often, these things take priority over our obligations to God, family, and our neighbors.

"Lovers of pleasure" in 1 Timothy 6:17 is a compound word composed of *philos* (the warm, friendship variety of love) and *hedone* (pronounced hay-don-ay), which gives us our word "hedonism" (the philosophy which says that pleasure is the highest good). Our culture is quite hedonistic, and Christians must beware lest we be swept away with the tide. Jesus warned that the "pleasures of this life" may choke out the word of God so that it brings forth no fruit in us (Luke 8:14).

Enjoy godly pleasure, but don't fall in love with it!