

“When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures” (James 4:3).

A while ago, I heard this random comment: “Good motivation is like bathing- you need to do it every day.” I knew it was one of those God moments where there was a message in what he said. The Bible has a lot to say about motives. Just look at Samson, David, Pharisees, etc. Motives are either good or bad. We can justify our actions, but God examines our motives. Motivation is the reason or reasons for acting or behaving in a particular ways. Scripture shows that people’s reasons for doing things stem from both good and bad motivation.

According to Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology - *“Motives pose at least a twofold dilemma: the status of a good deed done for the wrong reason or an evil deed done with good (or even without) intent;”*
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/motives/>

The human heart is very deceitful and can easily fool any one about their own motives. We all know at least one person that has selfish reasons behind their decisions. We have seen Ministries split because of this and relationships part ways. Yet, according to scripture we cannot concern ourselves over what they do, “All a person’s ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the LORD” (Proverbs 16:2). This is when you need to be careful, Jesus rebuked the disciples for jumping to conclusions about people and their deeds or actions (Matt 26:6-13).

Today’s message is for you to examine the motives behind things you are doing, not others. Your heart is deceitful and has fooled you before. Unworthy motives are tricky and should be avoided!!!! Not to mention the lack of being motivated can have grave or unforeseen consequences and cause a variety of problems.

The greatest example to follow is Jesus since He was motivated only by His sense of duty and purpose (“not my will, but thy will be done,” Luke 22:42). His purpose was to please God, not people. The right motivation can produce rewarding or great success. Therefore, your purpose should be to please God and not people (1 Thessalonians 2:4).

Everyone has a reason behind what they are doing and why. If you are to examine your own motivation, you may be in for a surprise. No one is exempt from wrong motivations. Jesus had to rebuke James and John when they argued about their future position in the kingdom (“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked. They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory” Matthew 10:36-37).

Jesus warns you about doing things for the wrong reasons in Matthew 6:1, “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.”

I’ve been asking myself a lot lately, why I am doing certain things and encourage you to do the same.

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