

Examining Your Motives

by Rolfe Barnard

Rolfe Barnard emphasizes the necessity of examining our motives in light of God's glory and the example of Christ.

Duration: 39:23

Scripture: John 4:34

Topics: "Motives"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the importance of doing the will of God and finishing His work. He references a Bible verse from the fourth chapter of the Gospel of John, verse 34, which states that doing God's will brings satisfaction and fulfillment. The speaker also shares a story about Mr. Burns, who experienced a revival while working in Mr. McChain's parish in Scotland. The sermon emphasizes the need for the church to produce people who reflect the character of Christ and highlights the key purpose of God, which is to promote and display the glory of Jesus.

Transcript

They both commit the same act. One of them goes in to get drunk, the other goes in the same place to talk to somebody about Christ. The Lord doesn't look on the outward appearance but the heart.

The Lord isn't interested so much in what we do as why we do it. I want to try to talk to you tonight on examining your motive in the light of one basic Bible truth, the glory of God. In the light of the glory of God that everything has for its final purpose the promotion of the glory of God.

I have thought that that's the best way that a preacher or a person who is a child of God can test his motive. Since motive is so important in the sight of God, more so than what you do, why you do it. I've asked myself why have I been a public preacher all these years.

Why did you do what you did? Why do you purpose to do what you hope to do? I think when you test your motive or when you examine your motive you'll see that they need to be repented over time after time. I don't know whether it would be possible for us to have an unselfish motive, a motive absolutely disconnected from any hope of gain or blessing for ourselves. I don't know.

But at best our motives need to be repented of often. I'm dead certain that the best test of your character and of mine is not what you do, but why you do it. Why do you act like you do? I've gone around the

country for a number of years now, sometimes experienced great blessings, apparently.

Sometimes it's like the heavens are almost silent. Evidently if success is what motivates us, most of us should have had to take you out a long while ago. Why do you do what you do? The best text that I've found for this line of thought is in the 4th chapter of the Gospel of John, verse 34.

It may not be the best in the Bible, but it suits my way of thinking and I want to use it tonight. The Lord has been dealing with a woman called the woman of Samaria at the well. His disciples are left in the go-in town to get a hamburger.

The disciples came back and in verse 31 they prayed and said, Lord, eat, ask to eat, get a hamburger. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. I've got something that fills a need that's deeper than physical food.

Therefore said the disciples one to another, has any man brought him off to eat? They didn't understand what he was talking about, so he told them in the next verse, I have written on my Bible, I've rubbed out the word meat in verse 34, for the better rendering of it is pleasure. Jesus saith unto them, the thing that gives me pleasure, that satisfies me, the thing that keeps me going. In the language of the beatniks of today, the thing that sends me, I believe they call it, that people get a kick out of, the Lord said, the thing that keeps me going, the thing that satisfies the longing of my heart, the thing that gives me pleasure, to get my frills out of it, is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

The classic illustration, perhaps, of examining a man's motives as to why he does what he does in the light of God's word, is perhaps given by Mr. Burns, who was a human instrument in the outbreak of an in-gathering on Holy Maxine's parish in Scotland. Mr. Maxine, who prayed and preached himself to death when he was 29, perhaps one of the two or three holiest men that ever lived, went to a mission to the Jews, and while he was gone, he brought in a young man by the name of Burns. And while Mr. Burns was there, the wind blew, and revival came.

And later, Mr. Burns went to China, and some reporters tackled him before he got on the boat to take him to China. And one of the reporters said, Mr. Burns, we presume that you're going to China to convert the heathen. And Mr. Burns, you've heard it, haven't you? He said, no, I'm going to China to glorify God.

That's a little deep water, isn't it? But when we remember that the one thing that makes the Bible a little bit understandable, the one thing that brings all of the truths of the Bible together is simply this, that the chief purpose God Almighty has in what he has done and what he is doing and what he proposes to do, the chief purpose, the thing behind everything else, that the Bible says God does, or will do, or is doing, or has done, the chief purpose, the one big thing that motivates Almighty God, crystal clear is simply the promotion of the glory of the man Christ Jesus, the sent one, the promotion of the glory of the man Christ Jesus, the one who was born in a chalice table, the one who was crucified on a tree, the one who, although none of us can understand it, was sent here and was subordinate to God the Father and took upon himself the form of a servant, a bond-slave of God, and was buried in another man's tomb. That's the last of him, as far as the world knows by itself. The chief purpose God has in everything he does, whether it be the salvation of a soul, the damnation of a sinner, whatever he does, the chief purpose of God is the promotion and the displaying of the glory of the man Christ Jesus.

If that be true, my motive must be linked up in that connection. And I want to say three things the best I can tonight. I'm laboring a little bit and pretty busy.

Boy, I don't know who to choose, my wife or which one of you. If the promotion of the glory of the man Christ Jesus is what makes this world tick, that explains every activity of God, and I know that's the teaching of the Bible, then as I seek to test my motive by that, I want to test them under three such lines. First, I believe that it is descriptual and pleasing to God if a man by the name of Ralph Barnard looked forward to the time when he meets God, looked forward to the hope that the Lord God would say, You've done a good job.

You've been faithful. Well done, thou good and faithful servant. I know that's somewhat selfish, but it is no more selfish than the Bible teaches the Lord Jesus was.

For if you remember in the book of Hebrews, chapter 7, we are told to look, spend our time running the race with patience, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, there was a joy set before him, so he could look at it and anticipate it. And because of the drawing attractiveness and enticement of that joy that was set before him, he as a man was able to endure the cross and treat lightly the shame and be set down at the right hand of the majesty on high forever. If the Lord as a man, and he was a man, and it's not the preexistent God the Son, but it is the one who became a man that God seeks to glorify.

And if as a man God would be pleased to give him the drawing power of an anticipation of joy to come, enabling him to endure the cross and treat lightly the shame, then surely it wouldn't be too selfish of a man like me or you to anticipate that this would not detract from the glory of Christ. And when my sojourn here is done and I meet God, I might have some of the pleasure of the Lord look forward to. In the book of Hebrews, chapter 1, we are told in verse 3, that after he had purged us from our sins, he did what? He sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high.

Boy, I'm interested in that verse of scripture. We are told in the book of Hebrews, chapter 10, that he entered heaven not without his own blood, not with the blood of bull and goat, but with his own blood, having done what? Obtained eternal redemption for us. Now he's been down here as the man sent from God, the man with a mission.

God sent him to do something. And he said, you know what? The thing that gives me pleasure is to do what he sent me to do and to finish his work. And now he's gone back to glory.

And I'm vitally interested. He goes back there and you know what happens? The father says, sit down, son. You've done a good job.

Unsatisfied with the job you've done. That's right. I met an old missionary down in Puerto Rico a year and a half ago.

Spent the night in his home. He'd been a missionary for 50 years. His father and mother before him were missionaries.

He was a missionary before the missionaries had it as easy as they have now. He was a missionary back when they lived on peanut butter and corn bread. And he came out of there living now, driving an old battered-out car because of his condition.

And I remember this preacher was with me. He said, brother, you haven't been paid much down here, have you? He said, well, that ain't what I'm looking forward to. I said, I'm fixing to get my pay later on.

That's all right, isn't it? That's all right. Well done. You've done a good job.

Sit down. Ha, ha, ha, ha. Oh, boy, he's going back up in the presence of the father with his own blood.

And the father said, I'm not satisfied. No hope for our son. The father said, you did what I sent you to do, son.

Sit down now. Test your motives. Who are you working for? When do you expect to get paid? And then I think that I'd have to test my motives, remembering that must be tacked on to the key purpose of God, to glorify and promote the glory, and display the glory of the man with a mission who was under God, subordinate to him, and to do something.

I think that my motives will need checking and testing now and then in the light of the fact that in the dream of redemption, that's what the Bible's all about, God's a redeeming God. That's the purpose of tending his son to accomplish the redemption of the world. And bless God, this world is going to be redeemed.

That's right. This is going to be a redeemed world one of these days. That doesn't mean everybody's going to be saved.

But the day is coming when the lion and the lamb will lie down together. This world is going to be a redeemed world. The day is coming.

I like almost my shouting ground. Nevertheless, Peter will say, nevertheless, God bless your heart, some hell or high water, we'll look according to his promise. For a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

He promised it. It's coming. And in the dream of redemption, all attention is forever given to this man, Christ Jesus, to none other and nowhere else.

The spotlight is always on him, never on the church. The church is under Christ. The church is not to be glorified.

Christ is to be glorified in the church. The world is not to be glorified. Christ is to be glorified in the church.

The Christian is not to be glorified. Christ is to be glorified in the Christian. The spotlight is always, in the language of John the Baptist, he must increase, that means I must decrease.

The spotlight is always on Christ in three directions, in that God has lodged in the Son the exclusive conduct of the world and the human race, all authority is given unto me, he says, that thou hast given him authority over all things. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands. He, and he alone, has been given the job of conducting the affairs of the Godhead throughout the long reaches of time, and then into eternity.

There is a man in glory now, running the show, saving and damning, guarding and guiding, controlling and allowing. This world is under the charge of the man in glory. He has channeled all his love and favor God has to suffering, sinful, lost mankind in Jesus Christ.

There were never more poignant words uttered by God, our man, than at the time when the Lord Jesus had been baptized by John the Baptist, out of the heaven came a voice, This is the voice of the Lord, and it is the voice of the Father, and it is the voice of the Son, and it is the voice of the Father, and it is the

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net