

- ***Read Philippians 2:1-8*** A couple weeks ago, we began a study on the reasons that Jesus came to this earth. We could say that study is really centering around the motivations of Jesus for His coming to this earth. Knowing the motivations of Jesus for coming to earth can cause us to appreciate Him coming even more. We noted from this text that one motivation for His coming was to show His care and concern for others. He thought so much of man that He was willing to give up heaven and take up a cross for each and every one of us. Motivations are key when it comes to why people are willing to do some things they do.
- Let me suggest that this is just as true when we consider our focus for this year in Serving the Kingdom. When we ask those who are not busy serving why they don't serve...I wouldn't be surprised if many answered by saying something about how they just don't feel motivated to serve. This is true in just about any aspect of life. "Why don't you do this or do that?" We might ask. "Well I just don't feel motivated to do this or that." would be a very likely response. I'm not motivated to lose weight. I'm not motivated to read more. I'm not motivated to eat better. I'm not motivated to be better with my time. I'm not motivated to study or read my Bible more. I'm not motivated to serve others more.....We must realize that our motivations are key when it comes to anything we do. As we consider how we can be better servants of the Kingdom of God and others this morning, let's consider 4 things that ought to really motivate us to serve others. Jesus was highly motivated to come and serve us in the ultimate way, and we want to consider why we ought to be motivated to serve others.

I. Motivated By The Example Of Jesus

- A. Paul is using this very motivation in his admonition to the Philippians for them to be selfless in their actions towards others.
 1. He desires for them to be of the same mind, showing the same love, united in spirit, & intent on one purpose. **(v.2)**
 2. This could be accomplished if they would do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit. They were to have humility of mind and think of others as being more important than themselves. **(vv.3,4)**
 3. But let's be honest.....this is not something that we naturally want to do. In fact, we want to do the exact opposite. We want to focus solely on our wants and needs. This is what the world expects for us to be like.
 4. In order to combat this type of mentality, the Apostle Paul calls these disciples to consider the example of Jesus. He wanted them to consider the fact that Jesus, first, put all others before Himself.
- B. When we seriously consider what Jesus did for us, then how could we not be motivated to serve others and His purposes.
 1. Jesus existed in the form of God while He was in Heaven with Him. He held not only all attributes of God, but maybe even more was the fact that He had not possess any of the weak qualities of mankind. He could not suffer in any of the ways that man did, yet He gave that up so that He might come and serve us.
 2. Jesus gave up heaven. He gave up the perfection of paradise to come and live in this broken and cruel world. He gave us the place were trying to get to to come to the place were trying to escape.
 3. Then He took on human flesh. Flesh that comes with hunger and pain. It comes with exhaustion and thirst. Yet, He did this, again, because He was motivated to save me. He was motivated to save me even though I had rejected Him through my actions. He was motivated to that degree.
 4. If that doesn't motivate you to serve others then I just don't know what would. God Himself came to this earth for me. He came to save and serve me. May I ever be motivated to serve others because He first served me.

II. Motivated By Our Salvation

- A. We have all sinned and we are in need to salvation. Jesus provided that to us by His giving up of His life.
 1. The first four reasons we discussed in part one centered around Jesus coming to seek and save sinners. Jesus came to earth to call sinners to repentance. **(Phil. 2:9-13)**
 2. He came to serve us in the way of giving us salvation through the shedding of His blood and the sacrifice of His life.
 3. Our salvation is totally dependent on the sacrificing of Jesus. The perfect Son of God served us in such a way that our sins can be forgiven and our soul can be restored.
 4. We have been given so much through the service of Jesus...how can that not motivate me to serve others?
- B. The service of others that really fits with this point is serving them through sharing the Gospel.
 1. If we have been blessed with so a great a salvation, then how can we possibly not be motivated to serve others by sharing God's Grace with them.
 2. I am reminded of Peter and John's words in **Acts 4:19,20** where our Brothers affirm to the Jewish leadership that they can't stop talking about Jesus and His resurrection. They couldn't stop talking about the things that they had witnessed and heard. Why? Because they were motivated by those things.
 3. We ought to be motivated to do the same thing. We have received God's Grace and the forgiveness of sins that goes along with it. If we have felt the spiritual relieve that comes with the blood of Jesus, then how in the world can not feel compelled and perfectly motivated to share that with others?
 4. Our salvation and the hope of heaven ought to push us to serve others through the sharing of the Gospel with them. Our motivation is obvious. We have found that bread of life, and there are many others in desperate need of that life giving bread.

III. Motivated By The Golden Rule

- A. It was in **Mark 12:28-34** that we have recorded for us the account of Jesus being asked what the greatest commands are. His answer leads us to a motivation for our service of others.
1. The scribe comes to Jesus asking concerning the greatest commands of God. Jesus answers quoting the Law and says that loving God and your neighbor as yourself are the greatest commands of God.
 2. To love God and obey Him seems obvious seeing as how He is the mighty Creator of the whole universe, but directly following that is the command to love our neighbor as ourselves.
 3. Many have coined this as the Golden Rule. We might rephrase this as doing unto others as we would have them to do unto us. We treat others the way we would want to be treated.
 4. We wouldn't want others to be harsh, impatient, or unloving with us, therefore Jesus says that we ought not treat others harshly, impatiently, or unlovingly.
 5. Jesus says that the person who knows these things and is willing to do them is not far from the Kingdom of God. We ought to strive to be that person!
- B. We can be that person by using the motivation of our desires of others to push us to serve them well.
1. We would all desire for others to serve us when we are in need of it, but if we are not willing to help others first....then how can we expect that from others?
 2. Jesus says that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. When we are in need, don't we strive to fulfill that need?
 3. When we are hungry, do we eat food to satisfy that hunger? When we are thirsty, do we not drink to fulfill that thirst? When we are cold, don't we bundle up? Obviously, we do all of these things, and the point is that we are to treat others how we would treat ourselves or how we would want others to treat us.
 4. Therefore, we serve others because we serve ourselves and would desire to be served when we have a need that we cannot fulfill.
 5. Our motivation to serve others should be supplied by our realization that Jesus demands that we love our neighbors as ourselves.

IV. Motivated By Our Love For Others

- A. Our love for our fellow man should be a major motivating factor in why we seek to find ways to serve others.
1. We are to love all of those who are around us as we saw back in **Mark 12:31**. This love for others ought to motivate us to serve them in whatever capacity we can. We see someone hungry, sick, hurting, or needy then if we have the means, we ought to love them out of our love for all people.
 2. Every person has a soul who is loved by our God and as the people of God we ought to love them just the same and do everything we can to help meet their needs.
 3. We would all say that we love Jesus, but Jesus says that our love for Him is shown by the way we love and treat others. In what seems to be a description of the judgement scene, Jesus says that our service to others is an indirect service to Him. **(Matthew 25:34ff)**
 4. If we serve and show our love for others then we are serving and showing our love for Jesus, but if we fail to do these things then our love is not made known and we will be held accountable for our shortcomings.
- B. Love is really the greatest motivating factor that exists.
1. God loved us enough to send His Son to die for us. **(John 3:16)**
 2. Jesus said, "if you love Me...you will keep my commandments." **(John 14:15)**
 3. If we love others...if we confess our love for all people...then how can we ignore the times when we are able to serve others? As many have said before...words are cheap, but actions mean something.
 4. We might say that we love Jesus and others, but our love is truly shown by our actions towards others. Our love ought to be expressed and made evident through our service to others.
 5. The greatest acts are often a result of love. Jesus sacrificing Himself for us. Parents making sacrifices for their children. Spouses sacrificing for their spouse. These and many more are done in the name of love. Our love for others should be shown by our serving of them.

Everything we do, we do because we are motivated to do so. What is our motivation for serving others? The bottomline motivation is probably love, but it involves more than just that. Will we allow these motivations to drive us to serve others at every opportunity? Will we push ourselves to show Jesus that His sacrifice means something to us? Will we show our God that our salvation is appreciated in our lives? Will we show others how we would like to be treated? Will we show our God and our neighbor that we love them through our service to them. May God help us to consider these motivations and allow them to do just that...to motivate us to serve our God and our neighbor in an effort to be the servants that our God has called us to be.