

HEART MOTIVES - PART 1

A DEPENDENT HEART!

In the book of I Samuel chapter 16 God sends the prophet Samuel to the home of Jesse the Bethlehemite to anoint the next King of Israel. God tells him that this next King will come from one of Jesse's sons. But then before Samuel leaves, God gives the prophet this warning in verse 7.

"But the Lord said unto Samuel, look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

Now what did God mean by this? . . . He understood that Samuel, even as faithful as he had been, like most of us, was prone to judge a person by what he saw on the outside of that individual . . . *rather than by what was within the heart of that person - his **Heart Motives!***

Most of us first look at the "outward appearance" - how handsome or beautiful a person is, how tall they are, how educated, how they "care themselves", how well they speak and communicate, and from these attributes usually make a decision as to whether or not we believe this person is a "good" individual, someone to be admired, and someone to be trusted and followed. But God wanted Samuel, **and you and I**, to know that He *judges a person by a totally different standard!*

. . . What is this standard of God? What is He looking for in you and in me?

Matthew 5:8 tells us that *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* Now a better and more literal translation of the Greek in this verse would be, *"Fortunate and to be envied are those who are clear and clean in their thoughts and feelings, for they shall gaze with wide-opened eyes at something remarkable! (Which in this case happens to be God!)"*

In other words, your **Heart Motives . . . Why you do what you do, is the part of who you are that God responds to!**

Yet for most of us this is a totally different way of thinking! A different way of looking at the lives of others, and also a totally different way of thinking about how God looks at us!

For the next few letters I'm going to be writing to you about some of the **Heart Motives** that are found within scripture. . . . **Heart Motives** that faithfully move the very

heart of God! But please remember, what I'm about to share is not meant to be some "formula" that you place within your "Christian life" to somehow motivate God to do what you hoped He would always do. It can't be! Or trust me . . . IT WILL FAIL!

. . . And that's because this is **NOT** a game where *if* we just memorize the right scriptures and formulas, and repeat them over and over, then God will have to do what we want Him to do. **THIS IS A RELATIONSHIP! A LOVE RELATIONSHIP!**

Now, the first **Heart Motive**, and one that I believe with everything inside of me, is probably the most important for you and I to have . . . is a "dependent heart"! . . . A desperately dependent heart!

One of the most interesting scriptures, and at the same time at first glance seems to be a total contradiction to itself, is found in Hebrews 4:11. Listen to this! It says, "*Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*" Now it is the first part of that scripture that I want you to notice. "*Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest . . .*". Did you catch that!

The writer of Hebrews has just told you and I in our walk as Christians to "labor". And the word "labor" there means *to make an effort, be prompt, and diligent in what you are doing! And do it with great haste!* But at the very same time, . . . HE TELLS US TO REST! Think about that! **How can a person really labor and rest in the exact same moment of time?** So what is it that the writer of Hebrews is implying that you and I are without wavering responsible to do?

If we take the time to read what proceeds this text - an answer can be found. In verses 9 - 10 the writer says, "*There remains therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from His.*"

One of the most important "motives" that God is looking for within our hearts is that *beyond everything else we believe no matter how much effort, nor how hard we try, nor how diligent we become in our efforts . . . THEY WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH!*

You and I must embrace the truth of the fact that all of our efforts, "all of our righteous deeds are as filthy rags in God's eyes"! And if true, then if you or I are ever going to be able to live this life the way Jesus has called us to . . . **IT WILL HAVE TO BE WITH THE EMPOWERING THAT ONLY HAPPENS BECAUSE OF HIS PRESENCE COMING ALIVE WITHIN US!**

Don't you remember Jesus' words to you and I from John 15:4-5? "*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot produce fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. If you*

*stay joined to Me, and I stay joined to you, then you will produce much fruit. **But without Me, you can do nothing.***"

You and I must accept the truth that we are totally dependent upon God! Totally! It doesn't matter how emotionally strong we feel, nor what talents or gifts we possess, nor what sort of leadership abilities we have! Because apart from His presence within us . . . **WE - CAN - DO - NOTHING!**

Understand this - the Christian life is not difficult to live! . . . ***It is impossible!*** That is . . . except we learn to surrender to the Holy Spirit *brought* Christ within us!

At one of the meetings I was teaching, afterwards I made the statement, "**The greatest difficulty in living the Christian life, is learning to live it with your heart desperate for God, . . . when your circumstances are not!**"

One man who had heard the teaching spoke up and replied with this question, "The truth is we are always desperate for God, aren't we?" And the answer to that question will forever be, "Yes, always!"

Now what is the opposite of a "dependent heart"? It is a person who is self sufficient, self-trusting. A person who is struggling to be in control. Afraid that if they somehow, if only for a moment, loosened the grip on their own life, others they love, or what their future might hold . . . then all of their world would immediately come unglued!

Now I'm sure most of us never see ourselves as living *independent* from God. Don't you think that's true? As Christians why would we even want to? But would you think about this for just a moment? When you or I are praying and we feel afraid, worried, or tense, about some situation that we are facing . . . *what do you think is the root cause behind all of these difficult and painful emotions?*

. . . Because if God is really real, loves us as much as we tell everyone else that He does, and wants to care for us . . . **then what do we have to be afraid of?** *Why should we be worried for even a moment of time? And shouldn't we feel more peace than any person ever imagined?*

Can I share something with you that I have come to know is true in my own heart? When I pray, if I find myself feeling afraid over a matter, or for someone I love . . . I've come to believe the fear, tension, anxiety, or simple worry is an indication that in some way I haven't fully turned the matter or person over into God's care. Because if I really, really trust Him with everything in my life, **(REALLY TRUST HIM!)** . . . *then why should I be afraid? Or worried?*

And, if I have truly left each matter in His care, then aren't the situations that have caused me fear, or worry . . . *now His responsibility?* And whatever the *outcome - good or bad* - also His responsibility?

Now at this point I need to make one point clear. Just because something has been placed in God's hands . . . it doesn't mean that I can now just sit back and do nothing! No, because remember as Christians, we are His servants. (We "have been bought for a price.") And as such, it is our service to also listen to His voice in each situation, and carry out whatever He asks of us. But now back to our discussion, *what do you do with those deeply emotional situations that it seems impossible for you to release?*

. . . YOU STAY IN PRAYER UNTIL YOU CAN AND HAVE RELEASED THE PERSON OR SITUATION THAT IS TROUBLING YOU INTO GOD'S CARE!

Do you remember how Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane? Think about this. He knew He was about to die, knew what He was going to face, and also knew no one would stand with Him. Yes, the final outcome would be good, but the road to that outcome would be horrendous! Luke 22 tells us that Jesus goes into the garden to pray. And that He is afraid! In fact, so frightened over what He is about to face that it tells us "His sweat was as if it were great drops blood . . .".

And in the account in Mark 14 He is pleading with God asking that if there is anyway possible that He can get out of what He is about to face, to "take away this cup". But then Jesus *stays in prayer* until He finally comes to the place in His own heart where He can also pray, "nether the less not My will, but your will be done".

The account here also tells us that Jesus goes in and out of the garden *three times to pray this very same prayer!* In other words *it even took Jesus praying for a long period of time to be able to place difficult and deeply emotional matters into His Father's care!* (The implication being that He emotionally picked the matter up twice again before He finally was able to release it once and for all!)

If this was true for Jesus, *then don't you think there are some matters so close to your heart, so perplexing, and so fearful . . . that it will probably take some time in prayer before you can take your hands off of them, release your desire to control the outcome, and finally place them into Father's hands and His control?*

Whatever you are facing right now, run to your Heavenly Father and *STAY THERE!* Stay, *until your heart is totally dependent upon His care, and . . . all of your fear is gone!*