

# The Leader's Motivation

**Text:** II Corinthians 5:11-21

**Subject:** The Source of Our Motivation and Passion in Serving God

## Introduction

- ◆ Paul the Apostle is the author of II Corinthians.
- ◆ Paul wrote this epistle to the Corinthians after hearing of the church's repentance.
- ◆ Paul penned his letter from Macedonia for three primary reasons:
  1. To vindicate the purity of his life and the authority of his ministry.
  2. To crush the false accusations against him (as his character and motives were slandered) so much so that several cliques were formed against Paul.
  3. To encourage the church to complete its special mission project to the poor saints in Jerusalem and Judea

**Fact:** II Corinthians is the most personal of Paul's Epistles.

**Fact:** It opens up his life for all to see.

**Fact:** It shows us Paul's humanity, joys, pains, victories and setbacks.

**Fact:** It is an incredibly transparent letter to everyone who is involved in ministry.

(And in chapter 5:11-21)

- ◆ Four characteristics of a motivated leader, of a passionate leader, a healthy leader and a leader that will enable God to use you in a greater way than ever before!

**Question:** What is it that positions you before God so that He can do what He wants to do where He has placed you in the local church?

(Four non-negotiable ingredients)

## I. A Divine **Perspective** (That sees people from God's point of view)

*"From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view: I used to think of Christ as though He were merely a human being." (v. 16)*

*"What this means is that those who become Christians become new persons, they are not the same anymore. The old life is gone and a new life has begun." (v. 17)*

**Question:** What does Paul mean in v. 16 when he says, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."?

**Answer:** He is talking about his change of heart:

- ◆ At one time Paul had evaluated Jesus from a worldly (“after the flesh”) point of view.
- ◆ As an educated Jew, Paul was looking forward to the Messiah.
- ◆ The Jews of his day were looking for a political Messiah (to free them from Roman rule)

(But something happened)

- ◆ On the Damascus Road, Paul encountered the risen Christ and was radically changed. (Acts 9:1-15)
- ◆ Paul’s encounter with Jesus convinced him of two things:
  1. Jesus died to provide salvation for Jews and Gentiles alike (and)
  2. Everyone must receive this Jesus or be eternally lost (and separated from God)

(In other words)

- ◆ Paul’s total perspective in life was changed!
  1. He now sees Jesus as the only One who can forgive sin and change the human heart (and)
  2. He now sees people “not after the flesh” (or as merely fleshly human beings) but as spiritual beings who will exist forever in one of two places!

(In other words)

- ◆ He sees people in a whole new perspective
- ◆ He views his calling in a whole new light
- ◆ He views his purpose for being in a brand new way
- ◆ He sees people (everywhere he goes) not as Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, man or woman, black or white (“after the flesh”)

(Instead)

- ◆ He sees every person as an immortal soul that must be reached with the good news!

### Application

Question: What do we see where God has placed us?

Question: Have we been looking at the lostness of those around us?

Question: Do we see the obstacles or opportunities before us?

Question: Do we nit-pick at peripheral things (or are we looking at what really matters)?

### In Plain Vanilla

- ◆ Do we see people for who they are (eternal souls) or do we view them as prospects (to increase the numbers in our church attendance)?

## II. A Focused **Priority** (that aims at reconciling people back to God)

*“This new life is from God who brought us back to himself through what Christ did. And God has given us the responsibility of reconciling people back to him.” (v. 18)*

*“For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. This is the wonderful message he has given us to tell.” (v. 19)*

Question: What is the highest priority of the church (for both pastor and congregation?)

Answer: To live to reconcile people back to God.

- ◆ v. 18 *“God has given us the responsibility.”*
- ◆ v. 19 *God has given us the message to tell.”*

Question: What is the priority of ministry?

Answer (v. 18) *“God has given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”*

(In other words)

- ◆ Since believers have been reconciled to God, we now have the priority (responsibility) to ask others to accept God’s free gift (and become reconciled as well).

(I love Paul’s emphasis here)

- ◆ The “Ministry of Reconciliation” is to preach the message of connecting people to Jesus (not ourselves)
- ◆ Our priority is to wrap people around Him (not us)!
- ◆ Our goal and passion and #1 priority will always be (and never change) to find every way possible to reach sinners and see them reconciled to God!

### Application

Question: Am I finding ways to reach the unchurched?

Question Am I fasting and praying and then going out to where the people are?

Question: Do I need to switch from a “maintaining” mode to an “I must reach new people” mindset?

## III. A Servant’s **Privilege** (that represents Jesus and His Kingdom)

*“We are Christ’s ambassadors, and we urge you as though Christ himself were here pleading with you, ‘Be reconciled to God’ ” (v. 20)*

*“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.” (v. 21)*

Question: What is our privilege?

Answer: To be ambassadors!

Question: What is an ambassador?

Answer: The word “ambassador” (presbeuomen) means: “Someone who is sent forth to represent the sender and announce the message of the sender.”

(The four characteristics of an ambassador are)

1. They belong to the one who sent him out.
2. They are commissioned to be sent out (and exist only for the purpose for which they are sent.
3. They possess the authority and power of the one who sent them.
4. They are sent forth with the message of the sender.

Question: What is our message?

Answer: “Be reconciled to God” (v. 20)

Question: How are we to deliver the message?

Answer: “Pleading (deometha) with you” means: “to beg, intreat, cry and plead with people to be reconciled to God.”

- ◆ This is a passionate appeal asking people to respond.
- ◆ This (“for Christ’s sake”) is calling people to run to God who can save them.
- ◆ This is such a critical message (because of the consequences) that we are to passionately plead with people to turn from sin and turn to God!!!

#### Application

Question: Has the fire and passion in my service gone down?

Question: Am I full of the Word and the power of the One who sent me?

Question: Do I need to ask God (today) to re-ignite the spark and vision and fire and zeal within me?

#### **IV. A Motivating Passion (that flows from the cross)**

*“Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men”. (v. 11)*

*“We are not commending ourselves...and if we are beside ourselves, it is for God’s glory.” (v. 12, 13)*

*“For the love of Christ constraineth (motivates) me.” (v. 14)*

*“And those who receive His life should not live to please themselves, but live for the One who died to save them.” (v. 15)*

Fact: Paul tells us what compels a true leader!

Fact: Paul tells us what enables you to continue on when criticized, opposed, or rejected!

Fact: Paul tells us where our root motivation comes from in all our service!

(Your four sources of motivation and passion)

**#1. The fear of the Lord** motivates us. (v .11)

- ◆ The word “terror” (phobon) means “to stand in awe of God.”
- ◆ It means to hold the Lord in the highest regard and respect, convinced that you will stand before Him one day.

Question: What is Paul saying in v. 11, “*Knowing the terror (fear) of the Lord, we persuade men*”?

Answer: He is clearly stating that every spiritual leader who knows he will stand before God will allow this future examination to provoke him to live with integrity, transparency and commitment while persuading men to be saved.

**#2. The glory of God** motivates us. (v. 12, 13)

*“If we be beside ourselves, it is for God’s glory.”* (v. 13) means:

- ◆ Paul was charged with being a mad man (or acting with extreme abnormal zeal).
- ◆ Paul accepts the charge as true, but he says it was for a reason - **God’s glory!**

(In other words)

- ◆ Paul was a fool for the sake of God’s glory (in rescuing people from the fires of hell).

(In other words)

- ◆ *“Go ahead and criticize me, at least I am reaching people who will reveal God’s glory Through their lives that are changed.”*

**#3. The cross of Christ** motivates us (v. 14)

*“For the love of Christ motivates me”* means:

- ◆ Not the love we have for Christ, but the love He has for us - displayed on the cross.
- ◆ The word “constrain” (sunechei) means “to compel and stir to hold fast to the ministry”.

Question: What is God saying through Paul?

Answer: He is revealing to us - that our greatest source of motivation in our service is what took place at Calvary!

(In other words)

- ◆ If Calvary is not enough to motivate us where we are, then nothing else will ever be enough where we may go! (Yes)
- ◆ A person must take care of himself, but he is not to live for himself (a big difference).

#### #4. The needs of people motivates us (v. 13b)

*"If we are out of our mind, it is for God's glory; if we are in our right mind, it is for you".*  
means:

- ◆ Paul was acting with extreme zeal and passion out of a pure heart!
- ◆ He was not motivated by self-interest or some quest for power.
- ◆ He did everything for the glory of God - and for the welfare of the Corinthians!

(In other words)

- ◆ Pau's whole motivation was to reach (evangelism) and grow (disciple) people through the local church!

(Why?)

- ◆ Because one hundred million years from now, only one thing will matter: who is in heaven and who is in hell (and if it matters then, it has to matter now!)

In plain vanilla beloved...

1. **The Fear of the Lord** motivates us to confess and turn from every questionable sin and activity that doesn't reflect the nature of Jesus.
2. **The Glory of God** motivates us to move with zeal and passion in rescuing people from a Christless eternity.
3. **The Cross of Christ** motivates us to keep going when we are hurt, offended, criticized, attacked, slandered, rejected (and forgive and not get bitter).
4. **The Needs of People** motivate us to be a servant and advance others at the expense of ourselves, care less who gets the credit and take up our cross without complaint in following Jesus!

#### Application

Question: Are you easily de-motivated by people who want to intimidate and manipulate?

Question: Do critical people deflate your enthusiasm along the way?

Question: Isn't the cross (where Jesus forgave and died) enough to provoke us to forgive offenders and die to self?

Question: Do I really need any external stuff to provoke me to give my life away for the highest good?

Question: Isn't the Lord Himself enough so that I really don't need to be "thanked", recognized, or applauded in my Christian service?

Amen!  
Bill Kirk

"LORD, FILL US WITH YOUR PASSION."