

WHAT MAKES US DO THE THINGS WE DO? The Motivation for Godly Behavior

A. What Motivates Us to Do Bad Things (or Not to Do the Things We Should)?

“Every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judg. 21:25).

1. Self-will (Judg. 21:25; Prov. 3:7; 28:26; Isa. 53:6).
2. Self-indulgence (Deut. 21:18-21; Prov. 6:4-11; 15:19; 19:15,24; 20:13; 22:13; 23:21; 26:13-16).
3. Lust, covetousness (Gen. 3:6; Josh. 7:21; Prov. 6:24-29; Mark 7:22; Eph. 5:3,5; Jas. 1:14,15; 1 John 2:16).
4. Pride (Gen. 3:6; Job 35:12; Psa. 10:4; Prov. 11:2; 13:10; 16:5,18; 29:23; Mark 7:22; 1 John 2:16).
5. Peer pressure (Prov. 1:10-19; compare Matt. 21:8,9 with 27:22-24; John 12:43,44).
6. Attractions of the world (Gen. 34:1,2; Judg. 14:1-3; John 17:15; 1 John 2:15).
7. The devil (made me do it!) (2 Chron. 18:20,21, John 8:44; 13:2; Acts 13:10; Eph. 4:27; 2 Tim. 2:26; Rev. 20:10).

B. Do We Ever Do What Is Intrinsically Right But For the Wrong Motives?

“I have seen that every labor and every skill which is done is the result of rivalry between a man and his neighbor” (Eccl. 4:4 NASB).

1. Seeking the approval of others (Matt. 6:1-18).
2. Wanting a following after ourselves (Phil. 1:14-18).
3. Wanting to be seen as better than others (Eccl. 4:4).

C. What Motivates Us to Do What Is Right in God's Eyes?

"The love of Christ controls and urges and impels us" (2 Cor. 5:14 Amplified).

1. Pleasing our parents or fearing their punishment (Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20).
2. Fearing God's punishment (reaping what we sow) (2 Chron. 12:2,3; 21:10-19; 22:3-9; 24:20; 25:14,15; 28:1-5,19; 29:6-9; Gal. 6:7).
3. Fearing the Lord (2 Chron. 17:10; 19:7,9; Prov. 1:7; 8:13; 9:10,11; 10:27; 14:27; 15:16; 16:6; Acts 9:31; Col. 3:22; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:17).
4. Anticipating the judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10-13; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 John 4:17).
5. Wanting God to answer our prayers (Psa. 66:18; Heb. 13:18; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 3:22).
6. Desiring rewards in heaven (Col. 2:24; 2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10; 4:4,10; 14:14).
7. Obeying God's commandments (Exod. 19:8; John 15:12,14; Rom. 7:22; 1 John 4:21).
8. Following the example of Christ (John 13:14,15,34; Rom. 15:2,3; Phil. 2:1-8; 1 Pet. 1:15,16; 2:21-24; 1 John 2:6).
9. Loving Christ and appreciating His love for us (John 14:15,23,24; 1 John 4:19).
10. Wanting to be a good testimony for Christ (2 Sam. 12:14; Rom. 2:24; Col. 3:22,23; 1 Thess. 4:11,12; 1 Tim. 6:1; Tit. 2:5).
11. Wanting to please our Saviour who suffered and died for us (Rom. 13:14; 1 Cor. 11:26; 2 Cor. 5:14,15; 8:9-11; Eph. 4:20-5:5; Phil. 1:27; Heb. 12:1-3; 1 Pet. 2:1-3).
12. Living in view of our heavenly hope (Rom. 5:5; Eph. 1:18; Tit. 1:1,2; Heb. 6:17,18; 1 Pet. 3:15).