

“Why: Why Do I Need to Live for God?”

Ephesians 6:5-8

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(Friday Large Group, September 28th, 2018)

Ephesians 6:5-8

5 Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, 6 not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.

Introduction

“Spy Kids” Movie scene

The brother falls into a volcano crater. His sister clips her carabiner onto a ground root and jumps into the crater after him. She successfully grabs her brother’s foot before he falls any further. As the brother tries to climb on top of his sister, the climbing rope breaks. To their surprise, they find themselves falling for more than 3 hours within the crater. As they keep falling, their attitudes change. They seem unfazed within the process and the brother even starts eating a snack in the middle of their fall. It is as if they forgot they were about to die.

Similarly, we live our lives forgetting that we are going to die one day. The Bible tells us that the end of the world is coming and that we need to live in anticipation of what is coming.

“Boy Interrupted” Documentary of a boy who committed suicide

Evan seemed like the last person to commit suicide. After he committed suicide, police found a note within his laptop. The letter mentioned the common thoughts any 15-year old kids would have about themselves. However, these common thoughts were more self-condemning and deeper for Evan than for other teenagers. Evan’s mother cannot believe that she gave birth to Evan and had to bury him. She cannot believe that time continues to pass without him. Pastor Min’s personal assessment on Evan’s suicide was that he could not find a purpose to live for.

“He who has a why to live can bear almost any how of life.”

– Friedrich Nietzsche (German Philosopher)

I. Why Do I Need to Live for God?

A. Design – Beginning

ESV: Ephesians 1:10-11

¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will

The Message (created and translated by Eugene H. Peterson): Ephesians 1:10-11
¹⁰ a long-range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in him, everything in deepest heaven, everything on planet earth. ¹¹It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living,

Latter half of verse 11 means that Christ thought of us throughout eternity. He designed us, meaning that there is a purpose for our living. Without the assumption of God, questioning the purpose of life is meaningless because consequences for our actions would not exist.

With God, there is a purpose and a design. His design allows free will, but His design is ultimately meant for us to live for Christ and under the submission of Christ. He guides us in the best path possible because we do not know. When we live without His guidance, we are like fish out of water or a seed that is above the ground and unable to bear fruit.

We misuse our lives by living for ourselves and not for God. When we live for God, we are living for the greatest being in the world. According to the Bible, we are made in His image and made to display His characters to the world in our own uniquely designed selves. The first step is to see God's design or purpose for us and only then, our confusion of existence will be changed to a clarity of purpose.

If we can understand this, as we go through sufferings in life, we can understand this is the process God is leading us through to live maximally for His glory. Even as we go through successes, we will learn to use those for God's glory. God is working in our lives in so many ways for our eternal joy and for His glory.

B. Happiness – During

In this life, we are designed for happiness. Happiness does not refer to the joy in living for ourselves. Rather, it is the joy in Christ.

Luke 9:23

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me..."

Because our hearts are alive, we are always seeking for maximum pleasure or minimum pain. Apart from Christ, someone can live 80 years happily for themselves in this life and live eternally in misery. With Christ, someone can live

the worst life possible for 80 years and yet live eternally in happiness. What would you choose?

Luke 9:23 tells us to choose the latter choice. It does not mean you will live miserably all your life. In fact, life will always be mixed with pain and pleasure. Rather, it is an invitation to find maximum pleasure and joy in Christ within any situation.

Happiness is not about getting more of what you desire but having less desire for yourself and more love for other people. Often, people want happiness through money and other idols that bring pleasure. Idols include family, money, occupation, ministry, friends, etc. Whether we find pleasure in these idols or hope to find pleasure through them, our hearts may experience diminishing returns and search for more satisfying pleasure in life. Even if these idols can bring pleasure with constant satisfaction, there will come a time when you will die and lose them.

Deny yourself and follow Christ who is a treasure that you can never lose. Nor will Christ ever lose you. He is working for your eternal joy and sometimes, it costs you temporary misery. Stop focusing on how stressed you are and remember how blessed you are. When you are drowning under the problems of your life, remember the One who walks on the water of life. Keep on following Christ who is working for your eternal pleasure in Him because He will help you navigate through life.

C. Judgment – After

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

¹³The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

Luke 12:2-5

² Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. ³ Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops. ⁴ “I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. ⁵ But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him!

Everything will be evaluated and judged when we see Christ face to face.

Hebrews 4:13

And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Again, everything is recorded and will be judged. Judgment means God's evaluation of us. When we are negatively evaluated by others, we often are unable to ignore their opinions. That is because we live for other's evaluations of us. Students live for their professors' evaluations. Workers live for their supervisors' evaluations. We are constantly thinking about people's evaluations of us or our own evaluations of ourselves. What matters in eternity is that God evaluates everyone. Nothing else really matters other than what God thinks of us.

D. Reward – Forever

Revelation 22:12

“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done...”

We will receive according to what we have done. If you are a Christian, you have two bowls in your heart. One is sinful nature and the other is spirit's nature. The reason why we need to live for God is that we will receive more of the reward He pours out as we grow our spirit's bowl. The Bible says God Himself is our reward and in heaven, He will be our only pleasure as our sinful nature will be gone.

Live by “A Hundred Years” principle:

Even if you have everything you wanted now

But do not have Jesus

About a hundred years later

You will have nothing you wanted

Even if you have nothing you wanted now

But have Jesus

About a hundred years later

You will have everything you wanted

Live for what will matter hundred years later

Live as if we will die tomorrow and if we were to die tomorrow, die as if we will live forever.

II. How Do I Live for God?

A. What? Glory of God

1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1. Seeing Him – Who I am/my growth/praising God/becoming like Him

We live for His glory and His praise. Therefore, we need to see Him to embrace His glory. Seeing Him to embrace His glory means that as we relate and fall in love with Him, He forms who we are by helping us become like Jesus Christ.

2. Showing Him – How I live/others’ growth/praising of God/displaying Him

We need to show Him by displaying His glory. Showing Him results in others’ growth as we bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. We display the worth of Jesus Christ so that others would want to become like Christ and glorify Him.

B. Where? Callings in life

1. Local church

Ephesians 4:15-16

¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

You are called into a local church to serve and strengthen one another. You are not called to just attend a local church.

2. Marriage and Family

Ephesians 5:22,25

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord...25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

Family and marriage revolve around Christ. Your relationship should reflect what Jesus does for His people and picture the Gospel.

Ephesians 6:1,4

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right...⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

When we are good children to our parents it pictures the Gospel. Fathers are to picture what God is like to their children.

3. Work/study

Ephesians 6:5,9

⁵ Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ...⁹ Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

If you are working for someone, do your best. If you are a manager/supervisor of someone, picture God to your team or employees.

C. Why? Motive of Love for Christ

1. Local church

Ephesians 4:15-16

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Jesus Christ is the head.

2. Marriage and Family

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord...25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

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¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right...⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Everything is for the glory of Christ.

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There are motives in every sphere of our callings. Ulterior motive in our studies are not grades. Ulterior motive in pleasing our bosses at our workplaces is not money. Ulterior motive in your marriage is not just to please your wife/husband. Ulterior motive is to do everything for Jesus Christ. We need to fight living for ourselves by living for Christ.

D. How? Method of Serving God and Others

In your heart, live for the Kingdom of God and not for the people's eyes. Serve people with our hands and feet in the spheres of our callings. People's reactions or lack thereof should not and do not matter. Secular work is not what you do at your job and sacred work is not what you do at your church. Secular work is working for yourself while sacred work is working for Jesus. Even within church, you can do secular work.

Conclusion

When babies are born, they think that their lives are ending because living within their mothers' wombs was all they knew. They do not realize that being born is the beginning of their lives. We are just as similar. We live as if our current lives are the end. The Bible says that our current lives are just the beginning because there is an eternity ahead. Live as if you are going to live forever.

When you know your why, your what has more impact because you are walking in or towards your purpose.

Our why is Jesus. Our what is everything we do in our lives.