

What Is Your Motivation? - by Alan Smith

What is it that provides you with the motivation to serve God day after day?

Perhaps you are motivated by the fear of punishment if you don't. It's a valid motive -- that's why Jesus told us about hell.

Or perhaps you are motivated by the hope of reward. Again, it's a valid motive -- that's why Jesus told us about heaven.

But I would suggest to you that there is an even higher motive and that is to serve God out of a love and appreciation for all that He has done for us.

As a parent, that's what I hope for my children. They may at times obey me to avoid punishment or to gain some reward I've promised them, but I hope that in time they come to listen to me simply because they love and respect me.

"We love Him because He first loved us." (I John 4:19)



Remember Those Who Are Sick: Jim Wetzstein, Kenny Cauley, Francis Mansfield, Starr Wilkins, Debbie Kingsmill, Carrie Hare, Sister Gerry Wiemert.


Remember in your prayers: Houston Perry away from on and overseas on military duty in Iraq and **Mary Serilli** overseas in Afganistan until December.

We meet on James M Harvell Rd next to the public library in Navarre. Call us for directions and more information (850) 939-8109



Navarre church of Christ
8490 James M Harvell Rd
Navarre, FL 32566

Place Stamp Here



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday
Bible Class for all ages.....9:00 AM
Morning Worship Service.....10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Class for all ages.....7:00 PM

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

If you know of someone who would like to receive this publication, please let us know.
For a free Bible correspondence course by mail, call us.

Navarre Messenger

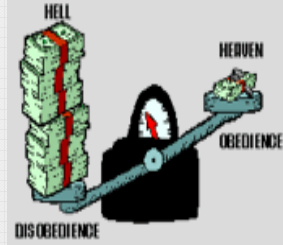
"Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Matthew 11:1

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Thought To Ponder

The cost of obedience is nothing compared with the cost of disobedience.



Luke 14:25-33
2 Thessalonians 1:7-10
Romans 2:1-11
Revelation 22:14-15

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Jim Bell
Evangelist & Editor

A LETTER FROM HELL



Dear Ura Weakun:

I'm writing you to congratulate you and your friends for your lack of Bible study. That's one thing that makes me appreciate you so much. Sure, you keep some Bibles around the house, but you never read them, do you? A Bible is all right as long as you don't read it. Those pretty black covers and gold-edged pages kinda give a little dignity to a room.

I don't know when I've ever been in a better mood. It seems that people haven't ever known as little about the Bible as they do now. They can't fool me with their talk about how many Bibles are sold each year. I'm not worried about how many are sold, but how many are read. If people knew as little about how to handle fire as they do about how to handle the Bible, every town in the world would burn down tonight.

I just wanted to write so that you would not pay any attention to all this talk about studying the Bible. Elders, preachers, and teachers are the main ones that put out all that "study" talk.

Ura, if you should lose control of yourself some night and start to pick up the Bible and read, remember to turn on the TV set instead. If there aren't any good TV shows on, then try the newspaper or the latest magazine. Should you feel that you just have to do some Bible reading, do as little as you can, and make sure that you don't read long in the same place. Don't try to get the meaning of the verses. Just scan the passage and maybe the urge to read will leave.

In closing, remember this, Ura, "It pays to be ignorant." The boss is overjoyed at your stupidity on Biblical subjects.

I remain yours for a sinful world and pledged for the promotion of a lack of Bible knowledge

**Ima Drawback,
Satan's Chief of Staff**

**Department of Ignorance,
Headquarters Torment**

(Selected)

Check us out on the internet: www.navarrechurchofchrist.net

“CHURCH GROWTH: From Decline To Growth” LEADERS NEEDED

How Leadership Affects Church Growth & Decline

One of the most significant controllable factors in church decline is the failure of church leaders to give the church a unified vision of evangelism and an efficient management of church work or goals. On the other hand, one of the most powerful contributions to church growth is an united, visionary, and dedicated leadership that inspires the church to involvement, growth, and service. The church looks to its elders, deacons, and preachers to provide this leadership through teaching, planning, and implementation of church work. As leadership guru John Maxwell says, “Everything rises and falls on leadership”.

- Men of sacrifice who would give more to others than they would take from others.

The Kind of Leadership Needed

Churches tend to be influenced by the dominant leadership styles that are currently the norm for other organizations in society. Instead, we need to look carefully at the principles that have governed the way God’s chosen leaders led His people. Consider, for example, the leadership of Nehemiah in leading God’s people to rebuild Jerusalem’s walls. From this we can learn that a good leader:

- Has a vision of what God seeks for His people (Neh. 1:3).
- Prays for the opportunity to serve God in carrying out the vision (Neh. 1:4-11).
- Does his homework before casting the vision before others (Neh. 2:11-16).
- Seeks the involvement of all people working together as a team (Neh. 2:17-18; 3:1-32).
- Provides encouragement to keep the work going (Neh. 4:14, 19-20).
- Helps overcome problems and solve problems that arise implementing the vision (Neh. 4:1-6:14).

- Gives God the glory for all accomplished (Neh. 6:15-16).

Pray for Leaders

Pray that God will raise such leaders among us! We need them now! Who will accept the challenge?

Having discussed some general attitude changes that assist a church in reversing decline and achieving new growth, it is imperative that we also see the importance of leadership in the process of renewal.

Leaders Needed

It is obvious that no working organization can succeed without leadership. This is why God provided for the leadership of His people all through the ages. God used Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. He used Joshua to lead them in conquering Canaan. In the NT God used the apostles to establish NT congregations and elders to watch over the newly-formed churches. And so today every congregation needs leaders, “pastors and teachers” who will “equip the saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-13). (Even if a church does not possess men qualified to serve as elders according to 1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1, it still must rely upon the spiritual leadership of those closest to God’s standard, learning from them and working with them.)

The Kind of Leaders Needed

When we take a broad view at the leaders God selected for His people, we see common threads running through their character. They were:

- Men who loved God and were devoted to His cause.
- Men who loved people and sought to guide their spiritual growth.
- Men of prayer who depended upon the Lord for success.



HOW TO LISTEN IN CHURCH

Ever get sleepy during the sermon? (Not mine, of course.) Truth is, any one of us may find our attention wandering now and then. Long attention spans are difficult under the best of circumstances. The preacher bears a heavy responsibility here, for subject matter, style of presentation, relevance, and many other factors which contribute to a “live” wide-awake audience. But the speaker cannot do it all. Nor is it enough to prove by the Scriptures that we should be vitally interested. We know that and yet we may need motivation. Perhaps we could even learn how to become better listeners.

Jesus said, “Take heed ... how ye hear” (Lk. 8:18). Not with dulled hearing and closed eyes, shunning the truth (Matt. 13:15-16); nor with preconceived notions that prevent our receiving truth (Matt. 16:21-23). The people I now have in mind do not belong in these categories. But there are “good” people whose minds wander, or are easily distracted; and this article is bold to make some suggestions for getting more out of the sermon and of worship as a whole.

1. Sit toward the front of the auditorium; close enough to feel the speaker is talking to you. Do this not just to better hear the speaker, but to improve the “oneness” of feeling essential to good communication. It puts fewer distractions between you and the speaker, allows you to better “read” his expressions, gestures, etc. It also makes for better singing and a “closer” feeling for the Lord’s supper and other worship. Yes, there are mothers with babies who need to sit closer to the nursery; sick and elderly who need easier access to the rest rooms; and always a certain number who “couldn’t care less” about the worship, but come (now and then) for unknown reasons. Leave the back seats for them.

2. Becoming a participant, not an observer. In Christianity all saints are priests in a holy, royal priesthood (1 Pet.2:5.9). Each is a worshipper, praying and singing with the leader, remembering

Christ in the communion, giving freely with the Lord’s work in mind, and learning -- repeating in your own mind -- that which is being taught. Being a true learner is not a passive process, but requires distinct participation with the teacher.

3. Take notes, learn to outline the message. Some are content to jot down the Scriptures used -- and that is good. But this can be done without much thinking with the speaker. If we would make an effort to jot down his main points (in our own brief wording) and note their relation to one another and to the subject, we would find ourselves much more of a participant -- and certainly a much better listener.

4. Question what you hear. Is that a valid point, proven by the Scripture used? You will not be able to think the matter through during the sermon, but a question mark beside the point will remind you to “check it out” when you are home. This word of caution: one can be a “noble Berean” (Acts 17:11) without becoming a habitual critic of the work of others. Learn constructive criticism, and apply it to your own work.

5. Listen with the intention of making this your message, when you have time to think it through. How would you tell this to others? How could you improve on it, to fit someone you need to teach? This point of view can have an amazing effect on your attention span.

6. Make self-application of the lesson. How can this improve my life for Christ? How does it fit my personal needs? Listen with a tender conscience, ready to learn and adjust your life accordingly.

You can have the blessings of Jesus Christ if you will learn to be a good listener. The Savior said, “Blessed are your ears, for they hear.” He also said, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled” (Matt. 13:16; 5:6). With a little practice on the above, and this kind of incentive, you may not notice the preacher ran overtime.

- by Robert F. Turner

