

Motivations of the Heart

11 May 2017



The book of Job is generally accepted as the first written book in the Bible. It also deals with one of the most fundamental questions, if not *the* most fundamental question: what does it take to follow God?

Early on in the book, we are told that Satan, along with other heavenly beings, came to present themselves before God. God spoke to Satan and, almost as a proud Father, asked Satan if he had seen His servant Job. Satan acknowledged that Job was a good and righteous man, but he made the case that anyone as blessed as Job would serve God. Satan was really questioning the motivation of Job's heart.

Why was he serving God? Was it because of what he could get out of it?

From there on, we see how God allowed Satan to test Job so that this most important question could be answered: why was Job in it? Why was he serving God? Was it because of what he could get out of it? Or was it truly because God is worthy?

What Are My Motivations for Serving God?

This is a question that all of us will have to answer at some stage: why are you in it? Many believers that show a lot of zeal and promise very quickly reach ceilings in their walk with God. This happens when their hearts are exposed to the answer to this question.

As a young believer, I truly had a heart to do great exploits for God. I understood well that, in order to be someone like that, I would have to give myself to the Word, prayer and a life of self-sacrifice. What I did not realise, was that at the core of this were my desires. I still wanted to be someone significant and to do great exploits for God as a means to gain significance. The point is that many sports stars or successful people in the world live a life of sacrifice in order to reach their goals. There is nothing special or different about it. But what if the only reason we lay down our lives is

because of the pleasure it gives Him? Even if at times there will be nothing in it for us.

Initially, my sacrifice and discipline seemed to “pay off”, and it seemed like my dream of becoming a “great man of God” was going to be realized. I seemed to be used and had a lot of fruit associated with my ministry.

I then started going through a time where I was used less by the Lord. It was dramatic for me. I went through a series of events and encounters where God revealed to me that my dream for my life was not really the dream that He had for my life. I felt the Lord say to me in so many words, ‘You will never be as great as you want to be.’ Now I am not saying that I won’t do significant things and shake the heavens as I am obedient to God. It is just that it was never God’s desire and plan for my life that I would be as significant in the eyes of men and praised as a great man of God to the measure I had hoped.

In fact, God loves that: when we give all of ourselves to Him, even though there is nothing in it for us.

This was very difficult for me. I came to the place where I had to face the age-old question: ‘What am I in it for? Why do I lay my life down? Why do I endure?’ Can you see why that was such an important question for me at that stage? I had to ask myself why I would wake up so early in the morning? Why would I pray? Why would I spend hours in the Word? Why would I do all of these things if there was nothing in it for me? We try not to waste any of the time that we give to God. We want to make sure that we get the most of what we give to God. We do not want to give any more time to God than what we can get out of it. We are afraid to waste all of ourselves. In fact, God loves that: when we give all of ourselves to Him, even though there is nothing in it for us.

Through a series of events and a lot of fighting with God, I had to come to the end of myself. I had to come to the decision that I was in it for God. I had to be in it for His name; for His glory. It is not about what I can get out of it, but it is about what God can get out of it. God did an incredibly deep work in my life. He changed my focus from being me-focused to God-focused.

The cry of Jesus when He taught us to pray is: *‘Let your Kingdom come and let your will be done.’* (Matthew 6:10) The kingdom is not here to make my dreams come true; rather, my life has been given to see His will be done and His Kingdom come.