

Whats In It for Me?

Sunday AM, December 31, 2023

Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

John 7:15-18 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

- I. One of the most important things about Christ's example to us is that his life was completely about God and others, not about himself.
 - A. He conducted himself entirely without selfishness in any form in all that He did and said.
 - B. His life was all about the Father and his interests.
 - C. He had no purpose of his own separate from the Father.
 - D. He always did those things that pleased his Father.
 - E. The Roman centurion in Matthew 8 and Luke 7 recognized this in him, that He was not acting on his own, but was a man under authority.

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

John 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

- F. To live with absolutely no self-interest, no selfish aims, no selfish pride, absolutely no desire, thought, or care about self, while putting the will of god and the glory and honor of God first, is the most powerful testimony of the reality of God in a person's life.

John 15:12-13 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

1 John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Matthew 16:24-25 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

- G. This is repeated 6 times by Jesus in the gospels.

Revelation 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

- H. Jesus was in stark contrast to the religious leaders who were clearly in it for themselves.
- I. When the multitudes followed Him for the loaves and fishes they proved that they did not believe in Him, but cared only for themselves and what was in it for them.

- J. Even his own disciples showed their unbelief and total lack of understanding of what Jesus was about when they argued among themselves about who should be the greatest.
 - 1. But after they were converted they did indeed lay down their lives for his sake followed in his footsteps.
- K. So it is one of the most obvious truths of the New Testament that a true believer and follower of Christ lays down HIS life and lives solely to honor God and to do God's will.
- L. The very essence of sin and wickedness is that we care more for ourselves than others.
 - 1. Our life takes priority over the lives of others, even those we claim to love.
 - 2. Our desires are our top concern, regardless of how other lives are affected.
 - 3. Sin is transgression of the law; it is a trespass upon someone else's life, desires, and welfare.
 - 4. The other side of sin is how we react and respond to the sin of others; if it includes any pride or selfishness then it becomes our sin, also.
 - 5. This is to walk after the flesh, and it means condemnation before God.
- M. True righteousness is to do justly before God and toward others.

Micah 6:8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Matthew 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Galatians 5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

- II. This is the true measure of true saving faith.
 - A. How much is for me and how much is for God and his kingdom?
 - B. How much of my time?
 - 1. How much time to we invest in reading, studying, praying, and seeking to know God more?
 - 2. How much of our time do we spend in any effort to reach out to others in any real tangible way? Letters, phone calls, communication of any kind?
 - 3. If we are honest we will have to admit that most of our time is spent in our own interests and pleasures and whatever time we give to these other matters is only a token to keep our conscience quiet.
 - C. How much of my strength?
 - 1. When we stand before God and give account for ourselves, what will be shown that we have worn ourselves out on while living on earth?
 - 2. How much of our strength and vitality is actually spent on the kingdom of God?
 - D. How much of my possessions?
 - 1. What is our real heart attitude about the things that we possess?
 - 2. Is it a clinging to what is "mine?"
 - E. How much of my heart?
 - 1. Where do my affections truly lie?

Matthew 22:36-37 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (quoting Deuteronomy 6:5)

2. Is there anyone or anything that we love more?

Matthew 10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

- F. How much of my mind?
 1. What occupies most of the capacity of my mind?
 2. What are my sweetest and dearest memories centered around?
- G. How much of my body do I yield to God?
 1. How much of my presentation of myself and my appearance is under the Lordship of Christ?
 2. How much do I consider others in how I present my body?
 3. What controls my appetites? Do I consider the honor of God, or just the lusts of my own flesh?
- H. How much of my rights?
 1. What do I cling to in regard to my rights to myself?
 2. What do I refuse to surrender when it comes to making my decisions about life?
 3. How much authority over my life do I yield to God, and how much I retain?
- I. But the main concept we must have about all this is how it looks in the sight of God, and how it affects and influences others.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

- J. My very being; when all is refined down to what I really am in my heart and my mind, what do I care about, and invest in the most?

Romans 15:3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

Philippians 2:4-7 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

- K. This is our testimony on earth and it will be what testifies for or against us when we stand before God.
- L. To be like Jesus is to live your life for the honor, glory, and will of God, and to love others and to esteem their lives more than you do your own.