

# MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

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P.O. BOX 9043 • KNOXVILLE, TN 37940

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Because Of Jesus

Dear Friend,

The first month of the year is considered to be the time when people resolve to change things about themselves. Some want to change the shape of their bodies from fat to thin. Others desire to stop bad habits, like smoking cigarettes or drinking alcohol. Instead of analyzing New Year's resolutions to determine whether or not they are beneficial, I would rather look at the motives for why people do what they do, because motive is everything. **When we do good things for the wrong reasons the results can be disastrous!**

Before anything ever changes in a person's life a decision must first be made. For example, "Today I'm making the conscious decision that I'm going to lose weight." The question then is **why do I want to lose weight?** Maybe I just came home from the doctor who told me to either lose weight or die. That is some pretty strong incentive to change. We can easily say; on the surface it looks like my motivation is correct.

So, I decide to lose weight because I don't want to die, but let's not stop there. **Why don't I want to die?** I would guess that this is not a question many people ask themselves. Is it because living here is so wonderful **verses living with Jesus for eternity?** Or, is it because I'm just afraid to die? Is it because I don't want to leave my family and friends? Or, is it because I have a great career and a big house? What is my reason for wanting to live? (Philippians 1:21)

***"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain".***

The truth of the matter is that there is really **only one right answer** for wanting to stay. The answer is that I want to stay because it is the desire of my heavenly Father for me to fulfill His plan for my life. The short version of this answer is this; I'm staying because I belong to Him and He wants me here. **When it is all said and done, that must be the first and foremost reason why we do anything; because of Him.**

When a person comes to Jesus they must make the decision to receive Him as their Lord and Savior. We aren't making Jesus Lord so that He can make our lives more enjoyable on this earth. Just let that sink in for a minute. If that were the case the Apostle Paul might have a few complaints about why his life seemed to be filled with so much affliction and pain. No, we are giving ourselves to Him in this great exchange and He is giving Himself to us. Our identity is now found in Him. It should be more important to me that I have become a child of God and that I see myself in Jesus and that my identity is found in Him rather than continuing to be the same person I have always been. From this understanding should come the one motivation for every decision I will ever make; **"Because I believe this is what God wants me to do."**  
(1 Corinthians 6:20)

***"For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."***

It is impossible to look at this verse and think that we are to remain in control of our own lives and destinies once we make Jesus Lord. The act of glorifying God in our body and spirit must somehow involve our willful surrender to Him and our obedience to what He directs us to do. How can we bring glory to God if we say we have surrendered our lives to His Lordship and yet continue to try to control our own destiny? It would seem to me that for Him to be Lord I must say "no" to my desires and "yes" to His and in so doing I would be bringing glory to God.

Now let's bring this back to our main topic of the motives for our actions. Believing it is truly God's desire for me to do something is really the only correct motivation. The trap I have found myself in at times, and maybe you have too, is justifying my decision to do something that has all the appearances of being God, **but doing it for all the wrong reasons.** In other words, it looks right, sounds right, and seems right, but it's being done with wrong motives. These are the things as Christians that can send us on detours that might never end.

The problem is that they look so right, and by all appearances may seem right, but are being done with wrong motives. For instance, let's say a Christian decides they are going to embark on a time of fasting. Maybe they have listened to a preacher who spoke of his extended times of fasting and followed that up with what He believed to be the results of his fasting. He told of blind eyes opening and deaf ears opening and the power of God showing up in greater degrees, just after completing his time of extended fasting.

There is nothing at all wrong with fasting, in fact I have embarked on extended times of fasting myself. The problem is that when we fast, or do anything

spiritual, **in an effort to get results that the word of God says already belong to us if only we believe; we can easily enter into works and not even know it.** What magnifies the problem is when our motives for doing the action are not pure. In other words, we know fasting is good and God-ordained, but wanting to fast because we want the results another man experienced isn't really the purest motive. Then, if we take it a step further and ask ourselves; **“Now why exactly do I want to have the results that the preacher had?”** We might discover that our motives are quite the opposite of what they should be.

Maybe a person says to them self, “I'm going to fast for forty days because I want to see more of God manifesting through me. What a great sounding reason, isn't it? Truth be told, the real reason the person wants more of God manifesting through them is so that people will flock to their meetings and their name will be in lights and they will fill the biggest arenas when they speak. Don't think that doesn't happen because it does. Something so good can so easily be done with wrong motives and when it's all said and done flesh is trying to climb up on the throne of our heart, where God is supposed to be.

I'll give you another example that will make some of you mad, but if it makes you mad then I think you should be able to see that something is amiss. I enjoy praying in tongues and meditating God's word. What Christian in his right mind could ever say that doing either of those two things was not totally right? Well, here's where I found for myself not too long ago and I'm sharing this as an example of what can happen.

Keep in mind we are talking about wrong motives. So, the question is, can a Christian have **wrong motives** in their heart and do something that is in itself 100% right and spiritual and end up with right results? Here's what I found myself doing. I had found out through my own experiences, as well as, listening to the experiences of others, how to position myself to receive revelation knowledge from God's word by meditating the scriptures and praying in tongues. So, I would spend long periods of time reading the word and praying in tongues, **two things that the word of God strongly encourages us to do.**

But here's the problem. When I was spending all that time praying in tongues and meditating God's word I wasn't doing it because I wanted to deepen my fellowship with Him nearly as much as I wanted the next great revelation. Why did I want the next great revelation? Because truth be told I wanted the people to come and hear me. It had ceased to be about deepening my walk with Jesus and enriching my fellowship with Him. What was motivating me was “self”, to be brutally honest, “flesh”.

As I look back now, what was being elevated was knowledge **about** God and what was taking a back seat was true fellowship with God, just for the sake of having fellowship with Him, and no other reason. What I have discovered as I look back is that **when knowledge about God is elevated over fellowship with God, man's intellect is promoted and the love of God is demoted.**

One of the greatest hurts I have experienced in my 34 years of walking with Jesus came at the height of this time. Everyone involved, including myself, was convinced that their position was right biblically. The question had become which teaching was more correct. **Love was no longer the motive, but rather being right for the sake of being right.** I can only imagine that this was how the Pharisees must have sounded. Pharisees, people who were intently focused on knowing what the scripture said, but having no personal fellowship with God Himself.

It's been some years now since then and gradually God has been able to open my eyes to what happened and to my own shortcomings that made me vulnerable to this situation. My motives had become impure and my fellowship with God had suffered. My goal had become **what I knew** instead of **"Who"** I knew. The long and short of it is that "self" had taken a higher seat than God. I'm writing this not as an indictment against anyone, but rather as a warning to any who might find them self in a similar situation.

I believe the words of John the Baptist are very fitting here. (John 3:30)

***"He must increase, but I must decrease."***

My suggestion to you is this; be brutally honest with yourself and ask yourself why you do what you do and if the answer isn't; **"Because of Jesus"**, then be mature enough to ask God to guide you back to where you need to be.

~ Jesus Loves You!

*Mark Jenkins*