

Motivation and Maturity

The Meaning of Motivation

**I like to hear a man preach
like he was fighting a swarm of bumblebees.**

Abraham Lincoln

Have you ever been attacked?

The Big Question

What does it take
to **motivate** me
to obey and serve the Lord?

Fear

There is no fear in love.

**But perfect love drives out fear,
because fear has to do with punishment.**

The man who fears is not made perfect in love.

1 John 4:18

Guilt

**... if we walk in the light...
the blood of Jesus...
purifies us from all sin.**

1 John 1:7

**Blessed are they...
whose sins are covered.**

Romans 4:7

**... I will...
remember their sins no more.**

Hebrews 8:12

Reward

... store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...

Matthew 6:20

... each will be rewarded according to his own labor...

1 Corinthians 3:8

**... Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you...
etc...**

Matthew 25:31-46

Love: the Greatest Command

And the Greatest Motivation!

**‘Love the Lord your God
with all your heart and
with all your soul and
with all your mind.’**

This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it:

‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 22:37-39

**This goes beyond Love,
it has to do with becoming One with God!**

It means that we understand and agree with Him.

Four Phases of Motivation -- Is there more?

Maturity



Fear



Guilt



Reward



Love

**Growing
"Faster"**



How do we get to the final phase?

Two Thieves -- One "Gets it"



The picture suddenly snaps into focus!

Peter's Burst of Understanding

“You are the Christ, the Son of God.”

Matthew 16:16

Does the picture come together for us?

God is more than a Super Man

“... unless the conception of God is something higher than a Magnification of our own Good Qualities, our service and worship will be no more and no less than the service and worship of ourselves.”

J. B. Phillips

Comprehending the Magnitude of God

Heaven's "streets of Gold" are only a hint of the Glory.

Perhaps even the cross does not show
the real magnitude of God's love for us.

God is Good

Think of God as Complete Goodness in a Person.

Think of Good as a Ever-Growing Substance

Have you ever put too much soap in the washer?



The Limitless Expanse of God

“I pray that out of his glorious riches
he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit
in your inner being,
so that Christ may dwell **in your hearts** through faith.

[prepare room]

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,
may have power, together with all the saints,
to grasp how wide and long and high and deep
is the love of Christ,
and to know this love that surpasses knowledge —
that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

[prepare a lot of room!]

Now to him who is **able to do immeasurably**
more than all we ask or imagine,
according to his power that is at work within us,
to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

[it won't be enough!]

Ephesians 3:16-21

Love and Grace Greater than the Universe

**Though there is a cosmic struggle for our souls,
no power in the universe can separate us from the love of God.**

**... I am convinced that neither death nor life,
neither angels nor demons,
neither the present nor the future,
nor any powers, neither height nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God
that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Romans 8:35-38

God is Light

We are living in a world that is absolutely transparent,
and God is shining through it all of the time.”

Thomas Merton

God is Light; in Him is no Darkness at all.

1 John 1:5

The god of this age has **blinded** the minds of unbelievers,
so that they **cannot see**
the **light** of the gospel of the glory of Christ,
who is the image of God.

For God, who said, "Let **light shine** out of darkness,"
made his **light shine** in our hearts
to give us the **light of the knowledge of the glory of God**
in the face of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4, 6

The Light can Overcome our Senses

**From the angel with the flaming sword at the entrance (or exit)
to the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:24)
to the light of the face of Christ in Revelation (Rev 1:16),
we find that we cannot stand up to the brilliance of God.**

**We desire to see God's glory,
but we fail to realize that the true Glory is in God's character –
His Love.**

There is a difference between being dazzled and illuminated.

How can we connect to the Infinite?

That is why God came to earth in the form of man.

**God is infinite, but reachable –
we need a bridge, and that is Christ.**

How can we See the Glory?

Remember that when God passed by in front of Moses,
he was hidden in a crevice in the rock
because he could not withstand the Glory.

Also think of Paul on the road to Damascus –
directed at Paul it blinded him until God healed him.

We have to squint when we are exposed to bright sunlight.

God lives in “**unapproachable light**,
whom no one has seen or can see.” (1 Timothy 6:16)

But God has given us a full representation
that we can continually gaze on:
“**The Son is the radiance of God’s glory
and the exact representation of his being...**”
Hebrews 1:3

Christ becomes a peephole
through which we can see what we need to of God.

Try to Expand Your Mind about God

Some of the gods we have considered
are nothing more than artificial;
some of them are inadequate pin-hole glimpses
of the true Light.

What we are going to try to do, then,
is not to light fresh candles
but to take down the shutters.

J. B. Phillips, Your God is Too Small

C. S. Lewis once wrote that God gets bigger as we grow up.

This doesn't make sense,
unless you understand that it has to do with maturity
and not just size.

The Complexity of Good and Evil

Some claim that a Good God could not allow evil to exist in the world.

Goodness is something that I embrace as the Greatest thing I know.

Evil exists and the spiritual rules are not something I can understand.

They cannot be defined by a simple formula.

Trying understand with our limited minds

is like performing higher math with Roman Numerals.

Would we tell Ray or Tommy

that all you have to do to be a pharmacist

is to count pills into a bottle?

Our Purpose: To Magnify (Glorify) the Lord

**Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.
Psalm 34:3**

**If we place a drop of ordinary water or a speck of dust
under a powerful microscope,
we will observe marvels we never dreamed could exist.**

**The same is true when we focus our attention on God;
the more we magnify the Lord,
the more we minimize our troubles.**

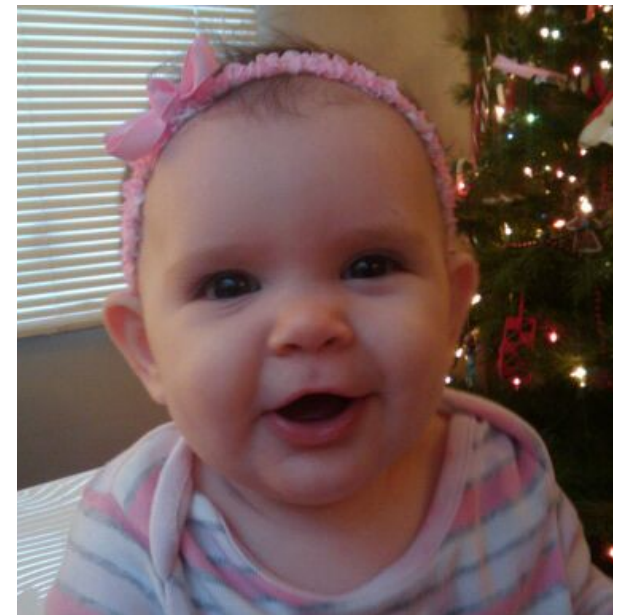
**Magnifying the name of the Lord
is to do Good so that we make God,
the Sum of all Goodness,
even bigger.**

A Definition of Maturity

**A vital part of Maturity
is recognizing the true value of things,
such as the Magnitude of Good (God).**

**A measure of maturity might be
how well our faith stands up when we suffer loss.**

**You must supply everything for a baby –
they cannot do without things very well.
As we get older we can go for longer periods
without food or drink
before we start crying.**



Strong Faith can Endure Loss

**Job was a great example of maturity;
he kept his faith as things kept getting subtracted from his life --
until he basically lost everything.**

Christ gave up even more:

**He, “being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God
something to be grasped, but made himself nothing...”**

Philippians 2:6-7

He is the most mature of all

because He completely understood the Greatness of God.

How about or Faith (Maturity)?

**To put in on a more personal level,
would you still love someone if they lost their looks,
their wealth,
or other physical attribute?**

**I am not saying that we all have to give up things
like their boat or big screen TV.**

**We are talking about being able give it up or to suffer its loss
without losing our faith.**

**If we are mature we realize that God will meet all our needs --
what we need to follow Him.**

**And my God will meet all your needs
according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.**

Philippians 4:19

A More Complete Definition of Maturity

Maturity is a combination of
the recognition of the Greatness of God, and
the comparative worthlessness of anything on earth.

I consider everything a **loss**
compared to the **surpassing greatness** of knowing
Christ Jesus my Lord,
for whose sake I have lost all things.

I consider them **rubbish**, that I may **gain** Christ ...

Philipians 3:8

What is the Next Level of Motivation?

We are **motivated** by fear, guilt, reward, and love.

Inspiration, however, resides at a higher level.

We are **inspired** by something greater than ourselves,
by a power that enables us to go beyond our normal capacity.

The Hound and the Hare (Aesop)

The Difference Between Motivation and Inspiration

**One day a hound, out hunting by itself,
flushed a hare from a thicket and gave chase.**

The frightened hare gave the dog a long run and escaped.

**As the disappointed hound turned back home,
a passing goatherd jeered,**

"You are a fine hunter!

Aren't you ashamed to let a little hare

one-tenth your size

give you the best of it?"

"You forget," replied the hound,

"that I was only running for my supper,

but the hare was running for his life!"

Does God Inspire Us?

The hound is motivated, but the hare is inspired.

**The point here is not that we should respond
as though we were running for fear of our spiritual lives,
but that we should be acting at a level **beyond**
the basic phases of motivation.**

God's love should inspire us into this higher level.

This is how the Spirit works mightily within us.

God can Help us go Beyond our Limits

There is something about being inspired that makes us temporarily forget the pain and the limitations that we normally feel.

It is as though we are running as hard as we can, and then we are inspired to have a burst of extra speed.

The law motivates you, but grace inspires you.

Four Phases of Motivation -- and Beyond!

Maturity



Fear



Guilt



Reward



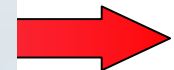
Getting the Point



Love

Good

Growing
"Faster"



Inspiration

Maturity Brings Great Blessings

**As we mature in our faith
we should operate more from inspiration,
from the spirit living inside us.**

**This is something that makes our soul tingle
with God's love and goodness.**

**The thrilling feeling of being inspired in this way
is something that I want to have forever.**

I believe that we will always feel like that in heaven!

**Whether we are motivated or inspired (or not)
will be very evident in our lives.**