

Volume 1, Day 15: To LIVE backward is EVIL

Even Jesus prayed in the garden before the cross, “Not my will, but what you will.” So what He prayed with the disciples a few days before His death was not, “Father save me.” It was, “Father glorify yourself.”

Religion portrays God as a goody reward snack machine. He'll give us the goodies if we act goody. The ‘new creation’ life that begins instead with, “Yeah, God does have all the goodies and He loves you and He wants to teach you how to live in His way. He wants you to experience love, joy and peace with everyone and everything. Living by our selfish ways only leads to death and frustration. But in Christ we have a chance, but only by surrendering to Him, to learn to live in the fullness of His life and His love!

We are taught from an early age, even in church, that, “If you don’t look out for number one, no one else will.” Nearly everything we do is to serve that purpose. Yet, EVIL is nothing other than to LIVE backward. We were made to love others. But we have been taught to love ourselves. Religion promotes ‘self care’ over other care. “You need to take care of yourself first so that you have the strength to care for others!” That is how misery overtakes so many Christians.

We are still living backward in ‘selfishness.’ But that Holy Spirit within you, the Spirit of Christ, wants to express His ‘other-caring’ nature to those within the scope of your influence. Your moral whiteness will repulse people from God. Only the irrefutable evidence of Holy Spirit’s unconditional love in you will compel them. In the end, it is all about living knowing you’re loved and letting the Holy Spirit within you live loving others! “It is the kindness of God that compels anyone to repentance.”

Volume 1, Day 16: What glorifies God

What's the difference between doing things **for** God or doing things **with** God? If you're doing anything for God, anything at all, stop doing it. Now, that may sound a little strange coming from a clergyman. Stop doing stuff for God. Yes, God doesn't **need** you to do stuff for Him. Most of us try to earn God's favor to get some blessings from Him. We expect that the stuff we want to do **for** Him, even things like building an amazing ministry **for** God, we do because we want God to reward us.

We hope to gain prosperity, popularity and power. But whatever we do **for** God, harkens back to the old creation the way our natural selfish ways work. That's the way we used to live. That's the way that we were trained to live and the religious things that we participated in. But in reality, when we claimed that we were doing things **for** God, we were actually doing them **for ourselves** because it actually made us **feel** better.

When they succeeded, it made us feel like we were doing our part. And if we failed, we **felt** even worse. We didn't love God enough to do the very things we said we wanted to do for Him only motivated by love for Him. As a man left a Bible study, he was asked by the teacher, "Jim, If you worked long and hard developing a thriving ministry for God and I got all the credit, would you be okay with that?" Jim immediately shot back, **absolutely not!** The teacher continued, "Then that ministry was about you getting glory, not God's glory."

If you do things **for God's glory**, you won't care who tries to get glory with Him as long as it isn't you! God does not share His glory with us. As a matter of fact, the 'glory of God' is the fully surrendered, humble servant who is only and always motivated by God being glorified!

Volume 1, Day 17: Performance? NO! Affection? YES!

Our desire to be rewarded by God causes us to focus on performance. Our religious obligations say that, “there are certain standards, certain expectations that God wants us to meet.” If I meet them, He will bless me. He will be with me. He will speak to me. And if I don't, He won't.

Here's the problem with that. When you're failing, you've got an excuse for God not to speak to you, not to care about you, to be disgusted with you, not to be involved in that with you, because after all, it's your fault. And that's where religion is so misleading and heinous. By religion, I mean man's attempts to earn God's approval. It's **what we try to do for God**.

What Jesus offered us was the ability to walk with His Father, alongside Him and the Son and the Holy Spirit. In other words, it wasn't about us doing things for them. God has always been active in the world. Jesus modeled that Himself. He said, “I only do the things I see the Father doing, and I only speak the things I hear the Father speaking.”

So we've lost sight of this journey, if we ever had it at all. We began to think that by performance, doing enough good for God or good for his kingdom or good for something, then my life is going to be blessed and all things work out well. But Jesus offered us something different. He offers us a relationship that allows us to walk **with** Him. Think about the things you do for your most significant others that might be inconvenient. You do it because you love **them** and want to please **them**.

“God is never disillusioned with you, because He never had any illusions about you in the first place. He knows that you are weak and foolish with a history of messing up!” Just let God love you and love Him back!

Volume 1, Day 18: Motivated by Passionate Desire

We do things for and with others not because it is quicker, cheaper, or easier, but because we **want to** be with them. God doesn't **need** us. God **wants** us! While we are with Him, He wants to share what He does in the world. He **wants to be with people who want to participate with him** in it. But our mentality must shift. It must change from, "I've got to do this **for** God." Instead, we can relax into what is God asks us to be part of.

Even my prayer lists in the mornings used to be because I was trained this way. I had a full list of things to pray for people. I wanted God to bless things. I wanted God to give wisdom. I wanted Him to give me stuff. I would pray, pray, and pray again, mostly asking for these things that would bring me comfort or pleasure or respect or influence or that would remove misery from me. And I don't know about most of you, but when I had long lists of prayer requests, most of them were simply repetitious. And God seldom answered them. Occasionally He did. But the bulk of the list continued to grow on.

What I've learned in the past few years is to pray differently. My prayers have shifted to this. "Father, what are you giving me today? Who are you giving me to love? What do you want me to know? What is Your Spirit urging me to do today?" My prayer life was radically altered. I am no longer trying to do things **for** God, even great things **for** God, even trying to pray down revivals or all the gymnastics I had gone through, hoping that God would finally see me. Hoping that He knew I was sincere enough to get Him to change my heart to love Him more.

God already and always wants to resonate with your heart. God wants you to learn to always be aware of Him, in every moment of decision or expression.

Volume 1, Day 19: Do Only Because You Love Him

So when we know Him intimately and are fully surrendering to Him we'll naturally want to follow Him everywhere. Consider Him in the midst of your activities and decision making. Increase your awareness of Him. This is a life-long pursuit. As your habits change to include God in everything, not just religion, He will become very dear to you. And you **will do** things **for** Him, but only **because you love Him** so much you cannot help but please Him.

Your expressions to all others will have the flavor and savory of God's love, not your own. Keep practicing 'following that nudge' in your my heart. Learn to recognize that nearly every thought might well be planted in your mind by the Holy Spirit. Pursue that thought unless the Holy Spirit causes you to stop. He will give you pause in order to keep you from doing something selfish. Or He will give you assurance to follow the thought. You will discover, "Ah, that's His thought or His idea, or the reason that person has come to mind. It is because God wants me to give him a phone call, write an email, or go by to visit.

Learning to **live *with* God instead of *for* Him** is what makes this relationship satisfying. It's the real essence of what it means to follow Christ. If we want to really walk **with** Him, we must completely stop doing things **for** Him.

I must be an active learner in this process. I needed to stop just taking in information and filing it in my memory. I can actually do the things I want to do. That's what we need to do with God. Other people, me, people on videos, authors of books, whatever can give you counsel, encouragement, advice, but we can't control this journey. This journey is learning to fly in the life of the Spirit by engaging in action with God in the process.

Volume 1, Day 20: Transformation: Active Learning

Here is an example of active learning. I wanted to learn to fly airplanes. So at 16 years of age, I worked until I had enough money saved up to actually take my first flying lesson. When I got on the plane with my instructor, we each took our seat. He looked over at me and he said, "I'm going to teach you everything you need to know about flying." And I thought, "Wow. This is great!"

It's absolutely quiet, and I kept looking at him waiting for him to tell me what I should do, but he didn't. I kept looking at him. He kept smiling at me. Finally I got frustrated and said, "What are we doing?" He said, "What would you like to do?" I said, "I'd like to learn to fly." He said, "I'm an instructor. I could teach you." And then he was silent again. Finally it dawned on me that he wanted me to take an active role in my own education.

Instead of my instructor just telling me what I needed to know, he wanted me to ask what specific thing I wanted to know. So I asked him, "Well, what do we want to do first?" He said, "What would you like to do?" I asked, "Do I want to start the plane?" He said, "Every good pilot will pre-flight the aircraft before he starts the plane." And then he was quiet again. He was guiding me to the order of the specific answers, not just the answers.

So when we want to learn this way with God, a great first question would be, "God, what do you have for me today?" Others might be, "What do you want to show me today?" If you have trouble, ask Him about that. "God, I don't understand what's going on here." Don't expect the answer to come immediately. Eventually something will drop into your heart and mind, a thought that's bigger than you, better than you, and you'll realize, oh, that's God showing me something. "How do I walk in that?"

Volume 1, Day 21: Relaxing into Reality

What this journey feels like is that you awaken to a **new reality**. Unfortunately, most of the things in the world make us feel like we have to achieve. There is something to work at. I've got to find my way into some reality or make my own. As we've often said it in our Christian traditions, "I've got to pray through or press in or be more committed or more devoted." But this journey doesn't work that way.

This is a **reality you relax into**. I know that may be strange language, but it's strange because God's love for you is already assured. He does love you. Whether you know it or not, see it or not, believe it or not, doesn't change the fact that He loves you. So what He's inviting you into is how to relax into the reality of that love.

Let me tell you how it's happened for a young woman from Eastern Europe. She wrote, "Hi, Wayne. It's working. I've been listening to your podcast for 15 months, looking for a relationship with God and trying hard to make it happen without realizing it. I was listening to you like another Pastor. But your teaching was not like any of the others.

Your teaching has changed my understanding. It's a change not by intellect, but by revelation. I get to follow the man, Christ Jesus, my friend and older brother. You've been a big help in pointing me to Him all the time. I get it now. I guess I was just ready. I'm starting on this journey with Jesus. I didn't get answers to my many questions, but I don't need them anymore."

"It's very simple. I live by what He reveals of Himself every day. And it's enough, even if what he gives so far is just peace. God loves me and it's okay between me and Him and I finally can just relax. He's here to help!