

Why?

by Hendrik Joubert

During our lifetime we engage in many activities for a variety of reasons. We eat because we have to, but we eat *what* we eat because of personal taste – as adults at least. Our choices may be affected and limited by conditions beyond our control, but also due to bad habits of the past. We work because we have to, but here too we do have a great degree of choice in what we do. Again, bad habits of the past may determine what we do and the level of enjoyment we derive from doing it.

Then there are those activities we engage in purely because we enjoy them – our hobbies. Motivation for these comes naturally; we do not need to have the reasons explained to us. The level of enjoyment derived is the sole factor determining our continued participation. We may lose appetite for some and develop interest in others while the questions “Why?” never arises. It is simply the function of self-gratification.

There are also those activities which have to become habits because of what is good for us – those “Because I say so...” type we learn as children and enforce as adults. We may spend the rest of our lives miserable because we *have to*, or we may deal with the reason “Why” and have a totally different attitude towards it. We may refer to this as *dealing with reality*. Words accredited to Colleen C. Barrett express a positive human attitude well: *Work is either fun or drudgery. It depends on your attitude. I like fun.*

Motive is the driving force behind all we do, for those things we enjoy as well as those we do not enjoy. Have you noticed how prominent *self* is in all of this? Some people will only do things they or *theirs* may benefit from. Direct benefits are the only ones that will motivate them. The attitude Christians are instructed to have is quite different: ***See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.*** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

Notice the distinction made between *one another* and *all people*. Christians need to be concerned for their brethren, but also for the people of the world – as their Savior was. They are to encourage their brethren, while making every effort to teach their neighbor. They are to ***Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*** (Philippians 2:3-4) In their consideration as to what to do, they have to keep others in mind.

The motives and intents of our hearts are extremely important as may be seen from the following words of David to his son Solomon: ***"As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.*** (1 Chronicles 28:9)

What an elementary principle – if your attitude is wrong you often will not notice the obvious. What is my attitude towards God? Why do I worship Him? Am I doing it merely to escape the fires of Hell, or is my desire to return the love He demonstrated towards me? Can you see how this subtle difference may affect our attitude and therefore the way we approach the life of a Christian? One may be meticulous in the way you work at making sure you do things right for the fear of hell, or you may find the positive energy to submit your will to God

because He allowed His Son die for us – ***at the right time, while we were enemies*** because of our sin. (**Romans 5:6-10**)

It seems that some consider heaven *the better of two evils*; they only know where they do not want to go. Is this the reason why some work on God's plan for salvation to make it more palatable? Is this perhaps why sinners will take on the responsibility of deciding what is necessary to please God, and what not? Is this why some will not see *the truth* and follow a *delusion*; ***because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved?*** Is this why God do not *let* some *find Him*, the reason ***God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false,*** ¹² ***in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.*** (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12)

Attitude is important. I should worship God because I *want* to and not because I *have* to. I should worship God, not because I do not want to go to hell, but because I want to spend eternity with Him. I should have a desire ***serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind,*** so God ***will let*** me ***find Him.*** ***We love, because He first loved us.*** (1 John 4:19)