

Is Your Life Relevant to God's Glory?

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(This is a chapter from my book: Where to find the Glory of Jesus Christ)

Sometimes people say, "All this theology stuff is fine, but how is it relevant to my life and/or my church? How is this relevant to my job, family, bank account, or business?" First, may I ask, is this the right question to ask? Does the Bible primarily assume the position of a book to be read so that you may find out how relevant Almighty God is to things in your life? I would say that no, it does not. Sadly, many pastors and evangelical authors make this wrong assumption. Did the Lord of Glory create human beings and put them into existence so that we may come to the realization of how God is relevant to our jobs, families, and vacations? No. The Bible paints an entirely opposite picture.

What we learn from the Holy Writings, from cover to cover, is to ask this question: how relevant is your life to the Lord of Hosts and His number one passion for His glory? That is the question the scripture asks us. If your life is relevant to God you will "seek His kingdom first," and then "all these things will be added to you."

What we have done in our modern day is made the gospel a man-centered gospel and not a God-centered one. Do you see it in the question we asked earlier of, "How is God relevant to me"? The question ends with "me" as the center, and not God. Don't misread me and think that I'm saying a Biblical question can never end with "me." It can, but more often than not we're better off asking questions that don't. If you ask, "How is my life relevant to God?" you will put God at the center. Yet, amazingly, you will also find your life "complete" when you ask the right question (see Col. 2:9-10). By making your life relevant to the glory of God, you will find that God's beauty satisfies completely your heart's deepest cries. You will find an infinite fountain of pleasure in knowing and living for the glory of Jesus Christ. Your quest for satisfaction is ironically found not in asking "How is God relevant to me?", but in living to know and display the glory of Jesus Christ. True satisfaction is found not in living for yourself, but in living for God. The scripture says in 2 Corinthians 5:15 that "He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."

Again, the Bible's view is this: how are your job, family, vacation, bank account, and business relevant to God? God is made the center of everything when the question is asked the right way. You can search all you like, but you will not find scripture saying to serve God primarily because He is relevant to your job and family. Instead, you will find the Holy Scripture saying that if your "barns" (bank accounts) are not relevant to the display of God's fame and glory, you will hear the words, "Tonight your soul is required of you" (Luke 12:20). On the other hand, if the life you live in your job, family and business displays the glory of Christ, you will hear these words: "Well done, my good and faithful servant; enter into your master's joy." In Jesus' teachings we see two opposites: one man lived a life not relevant to God, while the other lived a life relevant for the display of the "treasure" of Jesus Christ (see Matt.13:44).

When we hear the words of Jesus, "Let the dead bury the dead," "Difficult is the way which leads to life," "If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you," it is clear that they were not given to make Christ relevant to a bigger bank account, but instead to lead us to beg for mercy before a holy, infinite God. We should be like the tax collector when he wouldn't even look up to heaven, but beat his chest and said, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" When we hear the Creator of all things say, "Bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me" (Luke 19:27), we had better know what it takes to make our lives relevant to Him-what it takes to make them what He wishes them to be. What does He require for a relevant life? He requires that we love Him above all, and second that we love others. Both these things, in effect, display His infinite glory, fame, and worth. Again, the glory of

God's holiness is seen in that He would call sinners like you and me to an eternity of enjoying Him and honestly loving one another. We are here to make much of Jesus. In other words, we are here to "worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:3).

We were created for the "praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:6), "so that in everything He might have the supremacy" (Col. 1:18). Dear reader, is your life, all of it, in line with that cause? If we are to give the proper honor to God, then we need to ask the right type of questions so that they and their answers are God-centered. Again I ask, does the King of Glory deserve this type of discipline, and does He require it?

James, I believe, made the answer clear when he wrote, "Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.' But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil."

Why shouldn't this be true? After all, not only is the glory of God at stake when we don't honor God in living and speaking a God-centered life in everything we do, but we ourselves forfeit the deepest pleasure and peace and satisfaction we could ever have—that which goes beyond our power to articulate. Understanding this is so important. First, it practically helps us to know and love our Father of Glory and His Son Jesus Christ. Second, it helps us to find the soul-satisfying joy in Him that we were created for. This, in turn, helps us know better how to authentically love our fellows, by helping them see and enjoy the supremacy of Jesus Christ in all things. There is nothing more important or practical than this end: the glorified God and the satisfied soul as we behold and value the glory of Jesus Christ.