

Motivation

As a parent, grandparent, a teacher, and a former coach and “boss,” motivating people has been and is a big part of what I do. Trying to get people to do something, and to do their best at what they do, is often difficult. Throughout my experience I've found that there are two very different ways to motivate.

The first deals with **LOVE** or **RESPECT**. If a person loves me, as in the case of my family members and friends, they will do what I ask out of respect or love for me. They want me to be happy—and the best way to make me happy is for them to do what I ask them to do. They know that. I love and respect them and would never ask them to do what I would not be willing to do myself.

The other motivator is **FEAR**. My employees always knew that if they didn't do what I asked, they could be fired. My students are well aware of “marks” or “detention,” and they want to avoid that at all cost. My children and grandchildren know that I'm not afraid to punish, whatever form that punishment takes.

I've said all that to simply say this. We do what God expects of us for the same reasons, and I'm certain He prefers the first motivating factor over the second, just as I do. I would much rather have someone do what I ask them to do because they love and respect me rather than because they fear what I might do to them if they don't do what I ask.

Daniel opened his prayer in **Daniel 9:4** by saying that God was the “**Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love with those who love Him and keep His commandments.**” Solomon, in **Ecclesiastes 12:13** concluded that the entire purpose for man's existence here on this earth is to “**Fear (have loving reverence for) God and keep His commandments.**” And Jesus, in **John 14:15**, said simply: “**If you love me, keep my commands.**” Not really hard to understand the motivation Jesus preferred.

Certainly, we need to understand that if we don't do what God expects of us, we'll be punished. If you read the Old Testament, God's record on that point is clear. The Hebrew writer warns his readers of the certainty of God's judgement and punishment in **Hebrews 10:30-31** when he said:

“For we know Him who said, 'It is mine to avenge: I will repay,' and again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a dreadful (KJV “fearful”) thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

It is scary to think about being punished by God, but avoiding punishment is not the motivation God prefers.

John said in **I John 4:16-19**:

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgement: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because He first loved us.”

Let's let our actions be motivated by our love and respect for God, rather than have the "just in case God will punish me if I don't" attitude. It is a far better reason to do what God expects of us.