



The Good News

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Going through the motions

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There are many tasks in life that most of us simply do not want to do but have to do anyway. Most of us can probably think of a few examples where this rule applies, such as doing taxes, household chores, waking up for work every day, changing dirty diapers, etc. What are some consequences that can result in our not wanting to do something but knowing it must be done anyway? Perhaps we procrastinate until we simply cannot put it off any longer and then we rush to get it done in time, maybe not putting the effort and attention into the effort that it deserves. Perhaps we grasp at any good outcome, such as getting our tax returns or paycheck, as motivation to help us get these dreadful tasks finished. But suppose we did our taxes, went to work, or did our daily chores because we truly wanted to do them, and not just because we had to do them? We might find that we would be more motivated to get our taxes or chores done “early and often”, and be more zealous to do well in our jobs. We might find that we could enjoy these tasks more, not just because of the paycheck or tax return, but because of the joy in knowing that we are doing what we are supposed to be doing, and we are doing it well. The same holds true when it comes to being a Christian. In fact, our souls depend on us obeying God from a pure and sincere heart as opposed to just obeying a command because we are supposed to; the difference is that there is a danger of simply “going through the motions” when we do things we do not want to do. But if we care enough to want to do certain tasks, we are more likely to care about where our mind is as we do them, which is vital for a Christian.

In **I Sam. 15:22**, Samuel tells Saul that God delights more in obedience than in sacrifice. Samuel wasn't saying that sacrifices weren't important, but that God wanted obedience first, and all else second. In **Deut. 26:16**, we find that the source of this obedience is to come from the heart, or, in other words, we obey because we want to do well and because we care about what God wants from us. We also find that when the encouragement to obey God's commands is given, it is often coupled with loving God. In **Deut. 5:10, 7:9, and 11:1** Moses encourages the people to love God and obey His commandments. This is also given to Christians from Jesus in **John 14:15** where we find that if we love Christ we will keep His commandments. In **Psm. 119:47-48** we read of loving the commandments of God which, when applied, shows that we should love being obedient to God and living as a Christian.

In what ways can this help us? In almost every way! From our everyday life to our worship services, it is important that we remind ourselves that we are to follow the commands of God because we love Him and we love being Christians. We should always make sure our minds are devoted to what we are doing so that we never fall into the trap of simply “going through the motions”. Let's make sure that for everything we do as Christians we put the appropriate amount of thought and foresight so that, as we obey the Lord, we can do so with a true heart and proper attitude.