

**All for God's Glory:
Living for the Glory of God
Colossians 3:17**

December 26, 2010

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Text Introduction: At various times this year, I have done some major teaching on our core values as a church. I have suggested that we adopt these four core values as a church.

1. We must preach the Gospel.
2. We must declare this Gospel to the next generation.
3. We must preach this Gospel to all the nations.
4. Whatever we accomplish must be all for God's glory.

So, in this year, I wanted to spend a specific amount of preaching time preaching through these four core truths that we hold. We have talked about the first three core values earlier this year.

For the last couple of weeks, we have considered this theme "All for God's Glory." We have considered the definition of God's glory. What is it? We said that God's glory speaks to His praiseworthiness however it is more than that. We said that God's glory speaks to His pre-eminence. In addition, we said that God's glory is personified in Jesus. John begins His Gospel in talking about the glory of God being revealed in Jesus Christ.

So, we said last time that in Christ we behold or observe the glory of God. That is the message of Christmas.

Ultimately, and the subject of our time today, we want to make sure that we are "Living for the Glory of God."

There is one verse in the letter to the Colossians that communicates to us in a great way this principle of "Living for God's glory."

Text: And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Introduction:

The attitude to do "all for God's glory" is an attitude that must encompass every area of our lives for it to be true. This principle affects our lives in three ways. Let's notice that this principle is ...

I. The Goal of all of our Words and Works

The first area in which this verse affects our lives is that all we do is under Christ's lordship. Our goal should be that all we do, we do for the Lord. We seem to not have much trouble in understanding that what we do in regards to our spiritual life we should do well. However, where we run into trouble is separating our lives into the spiritual and the secular. But Paul's lesson for us is that in whatever we do, we should do it for the Lord. He even gives us some specific examples. (Beyond verse 17, Paul launched into a teaching about the family,

master/slave relationships which could equate to our work relationships, etc. We ought not miss how this ties back to verse 17.) When all of our words and works are done as to the Lord, we recognize that the totality of our lives belongs to Christ. Second, we recognize that all we do serves as a testimony to an unbelieving world.

- A. The Totality of our life belongs to Christ—We do not separate the spiritual from the sacred.
- B. The Testimony to an Unbelieving world—Christians ought to be the hardest workers, the best employees, the hardest working students. We ought to be in the best physical shape. Really this verse touches every area of our lives.

Matthew 5:16, (In the context of being salt and light), “In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

In his autobiography *Why Not the Best?*, President Jimmy Carter tells about his interview for a job in the Navy Nuclear Submarine program with Admiral Hyman Rickover. The admiral asked how he had stood in his class at the Naval Academy. “I swelled my chest with pride and answered, ‘Sir, I stood 59th in a class of 820!’ I sat back to wait for the congratulations. “Instead came the question: ‘Did you do your best?’ I started to say, ‘Yes, sir,’ but I remembered who this was. I gulped and admitted, ‘No, sir, I didn’t always do my best.’ He looked at me for a long time, and then asked one final question, which I have never been able to forget—or to answer. He said, ‘Why not?’” (Reader’s Digest, October, 1993, page 104)

II. The Gauge of every question of worthiness.

People will often ask me if something is acceptable to do. Here is the gauge: Does it bring glory to God? If we acknowledge that Christ is supreme and that we are entirely under His command and if we acknowledge the totality of our life under his Lordship then this principle becomes the gauge for all that we say and do.

- A. The Filter for every Word. (Col. 4:5-6) Every word needs to be filtered
- B. The Filter for every Work.

The question: Does _____ (you fill in the blank yourself) honor God?

Some Specific Examples

Speech

Places

Attitudes

Actions

Habits

III. The Gateway to a life of Worship. "giving thanks through Him to God the father."
Doing things "in the Lord" reminds us that

All power comes from Him.

All praise belongs to Him.

Henry Ironsides tells this story about himself:

When I was a boy, I felt it was both a duty and a privilege to help my widowed mother make ends meet by finding employment in vacation time, on Saturdays and other times when I did not have to be in school. For quite a while I worked for a Scottish shoemaker, or "cobbler," as he preferred to be called, a man named Dan Mackay. He was a forthright Christian and his little shop was a real testimony for Christ in the neighborhood. The walls were literally covered with Bible texts and pictures, generally taken from old-fashioned Scripture Sheet Almanacs, so that look where one would, he found the Word of God staring him in the face.

On the little counter in front of the bench on which the owner of the shop sat, was a Bible, generally open, and a pile of gospel tracts. No package went out of that shop without a printed message wrapped inside. And whenever opportunity offered, the customers were spoken to kindly and tactfully about the importance of being born again and the blessedness of knowing that the soul is saved through faith in Christ. Many came back to ask for more literature or to inquire more particularly as to how they might find peace with God, with the blessed results that men and women were saved, frequently right in the shoe shop.

It was my chief responsibility to pound leather for shoe soles. A piece of cowhide would be cut then soaked in water. I had a flat piece of iron over my knees and, with a flat-headed hammer, I pounded these soles until they were hard and dry. It seemed an endless operation to me, and I wearied of it many times.

What made my task worse was the fact that, a block away, there was another shop that I passed going and coming to or from my home, and in it sat a jolly, godless cobbler who gathered the boys of the neighborhood about him and regaled them with lewd tales that made him dreaded by respectable parents as a menace to the community. Yet, somehow, he seemed to thrive and that perhaps to a greater extent than my employer, Mackay. As I looked in his window, I often noticed that he never pounded the soles at all, but took them from the water, nailed them on, damp as they were, and with the water splashing from them as he drove each nail in.

One day I ventured inside, something I had been warned never to do. Timidly, I said, "I notice you put the soles on while still wet. Are they just as good as if they were pounded?" He gave me a wicked leer as he answered, "They come back all the quicker this way, my boy!"

"Feeling I had learned something, I related the instance to my boss and suggested that I was perhaps wasting time in drying out the leather so carefully. Mr. Mackay stopped his work and opened his Bible to the passage that reads, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of god."

"Harry," he said, "I do not cobble shoes just for the four bits and six bits (50c or 75c) that I get from my customers. I am doing this for the glory of God. I expect to see every shoe I have ever repaired in a big pile at the judgment seat of Christ, and I do not want the Lord to say to me in

that day, 'Dan, this was a poor job. You did not do your best here.' I want Him to be able to say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

Then he went on to explain that just as some men are called to preach, so he was called to fix shoes, and that only as he did this well would his testimony count for God. It was a lesson I have never been able to forget. Often when I have been tempted to carelessness, and to slipshod effort, I have thought of dear, devoted Dan Mackay, and it has stirred me up to seek to do all as for Him who died to redeem me.

H. A. Ironside, Illustrations of Bible Truth, Moody Press, 1945, pp. 37-39.