

American Gospel discussion, part 4

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[0 : 00] So they begin talking about the motivation, motivation for trusting in God or believing in God.

! How does the reward play into those different things, if you remember?

And what should the priority of motivation be for coming to faith in Christ? For a lot of people, it begins with fear, right?

It should begin with fear. Instead of beginning with reward. So, I guess my question is, why is the motivation important?

Why is the proper motivation important? Does that make sense?

[1 : 14] Why would it be wrong for somebody to say, well, you know, or to focus primarily on the rewards first?

Wes? Or is it? Well, I was going to say, it's about, before you said the rewards, the fire insurance thing. I just don't want to go to hell, so I'm going to believe in Jesus.

When it should be about what he did for us and understanding our sin and, you know, what a mess that we're in and the sacrifice he made for us.

So, the reward is heaven in the end and being with Christ face to face. And heaven is going to be a great thing, but it shouldn't be because I just don't want a bad thing to happen to me. Okay, good.

Yeah, I think that's what I was thinking as well. What we have, what we've had happen is people who have, you know, repeated a sinner's prayer and then go on unchanged.

[2 : 15] But with the assumption that, well, I took care of that God thing and so now I'm okay and I'll benefit from all the rewards of heaven. Let's talk about fear.

And I said that that was, you know, maybe the proper motivation is that it begins with fear. And it's, it's a fear that shows that you have a proper understanding of who God is, right?

It's a fear that I understand that God is holy and I'm not. It's a fear that I understand God is the creator, that he is the judge and I'm not. It's a fear in realizing that your sins are great in many and that they're sins that have ultimately been committed against God himself.

So it's that kind of a realization. And I think in conversion, a lot of times you'll see it when somebody, and hopefully for you too, this realization that, oh my goodness, you know, my sin is great.

And it's sin against God. And that's a big thing. You know, it's not a little thing to sin. It's not a little thing to sin against God. And it's that realization of that. But with that fear, then comes love.

[3 : 31] You know, you, you experience, but, but the love of God. But this God whom I've sinned against has loved me so much that he sent his son to die in my place for my sins that I could have eternal life.

And then we think about the rewards, right? What does that mean for me? Well, it means I get to spend my eternity in heaven. It means that I have forgiveness of my sins now.

It means that I have peace with God, restored fellowship with God. It means that I'm going to live with him and dwell with him eternally. And then the next thing they talked about was the gospel call. And it's not, the question isn't, do you want to go to heaven? But do you want God, right? That that was the question presented in the gospel call.

It's not so much about, well, I think we all want to go to heaven, hopefully. But really, if you've had a healthy fear of God, if you've really experienced salvation, right?

[4 : 30] And you experience his goodness and his love, then it's more about why I want to be with God. You know, that's my priority. And God is in heaven, so I want to be there, right?

But it's not, what's the difference between those two things? Wanting to go to heaven or wanting God? What do you think is the difference between those two things? Amy?

We'll get you a microphone. Hold on, hold on, hold on. Wanting heaven might mean that you might be able to live like the devil while you're here, but you're still going to go to heaven when you die. But wanting God means you want him all the time, now and then. Yeah. Relationship. Okay. Why don't you want to?

Okay. But that's right. Well, I was thinking of like, you think of, we all know what a gold digger is, right? And it was funny because when we were going through Colorado, when we were driving back to the hospital, there was one of those little small towns, their mascot was the gold diggers.

[5 : 41] And I thought, oh, maybe it's a, we were speculating about what their mascot might look like, but it was kind of funny. But anyhow, you know, a gold digger is somebody who marries for money, not for the person, but for what they can get.

And so it's based, it's a relationship based upon, I love you, or I'll pretend that I love you, or I'll show you love as long as there's something in it for me. You know, and I'm not so interested in you, but in what you have.

And so I think the problem with that is, you know, I'm not really interested in you, God, maybe so much, or your Bible, or reading it, or praying, or doing any of those things, but heaven sounds really good. Streets of gold, I'm in on that, you know, a mansion on a hill, I'm there.

So I think that that's huge. I think that talks a lot about salvation, Julia. You know, if that relationship has been restored, like Doyleene pointed out, then, you know, God is what I want.

He's who I truly want. Yeah, that's, so the bottom line is, who do I want to please? Do I want to please myself? Do I want to please myself with this idea of good afterlife, you know, heaven for eternity?

[6 : 53] Is my motivation that I want to please myself, or is my motivation that I want to please God? Good. And once we make that shift, to me, that's significant.

Yeah. When suddenly my desire is to please God. So then it's not about what am I going to get from the master's table, it's how can I please God? Good. And even to take the next step after that, too, is my desire is to please God because he is God, not because of what he'll give to me as a result.

So that's the difference between the true gospel and the health and wealth gospel, you know. You might hear somebody, oh, yeah, sure, I want to please God. But the next question will be, well, why? Why do you want to please God?

Is it because he's God? Do you have something, Brandy? Hold on, we'll get you a microphone.

Even you get a microphone. I'm just going to make a comment because it's so astounding to me, the difference coming from where I came from.

I just remember, I don't know if this answers the question, but just living in that fear of God just constantly, every time you mess up, it's just like, oh, my God, I forfeited my blessing. You know, that fear, and I just remember the shift of the sorrow you feel whenever you sin, and you want to please God.

[8 : 11] And like Julie was saying, that shift is so significant, and it is, because now it's like, oh, it's such a sorrow when you, you know, whenever you disappoint God.

And then, and also, too, as I've been reading through the Old Testament, I've noticed, like, how God keeps telling them to remember, remember. And I've noticed as I read, you know, just keep remembering what he's done for us and keep remembering, you know, how he's, the sacrifice he's made for us.

Because, like, it's like, that cultivates that love for God, and then you want to, you want to obey God, and you want to serve him. And I think that, it's so significant to me, I guess, because of, I live the other side, I guess, is what I'm trying to say.

So, you know, that fear, it's a whole kind of different fear. Yeah. Yeah. Well, and I'm glad you shared that. Because, you know, we all, we encounter people in your family, in our community for certain, who, we all talk about God in the Bible and Christ, but are we saying the exact same things?

And, you know, we do encounter, different times, people who are motivated out of fear only, but they haven't experienced the love of God, you know, and that is crippling. Because they feel like they can never, you know, it's, for them, it's like, I've always got a do to earn God's love, but they've not experienced the gospel.

[9 : 29] Yeah. And then you have others who are the opposite, where it's, where it's all about, you know, they haven't experienced the love of God either, but their focus isn't, they haven't

experienced the fear, it's all about the reward.

Good. Good. Then we talked about how Christ paid a ransom for the justice of God and about propitiation and what that means in Romans 3.25.

Talked about how God could save the Old Testament saints because they believed in faith and what God would do for them in sending his son. That Jesus rescues us from God, that we are saved from God, by God, for God, Romans 5.9.

And then, and then Rob Bell's name was mentioned. And Rob Bell is not nearly as well known now today, I don't think, at least not in our circles, as he once was.

And, and John Piper's comment, farewell, Rob Bell, and I'll kind of, and I've shared this experience with you before, but, you know, I really love my seminary because that's where I learned.

[10:49] You know, I was saved and I had some knowledge, but it was in seminary where I really learned doctrine and theology. And that's why I'm so thankful for my school because they set a lot of things straight for me that were squishy before.

And, and I remember prior to that, Rob Bell was a big deal, especially with youth ministry. You know, I helped out with my, the youth ministry in my church and the youth pastor there.

You know, we would watch these NUMA videos that he put out. They're about five minutes long.

But they really, and if you're younger, you know, I see Michael's head nodding. If you're younger, you know, I mean, they were a great resource for a time because the kids would watch them.

They were really well put together. And then I remember he came out with one and Danny helped two and we both were kind of watching it and we kind of turned and looked at each other at the same time.

Like, what did he just say? That doesn't sound right at all. And then from there, it just was a spiral towards the point where he denies the existence of hell.

[11:53] You've seen him. He's the guy with glasses and short hair. Oprah is a big fan of him now. And, and I remember when all of that was going down, when he wrote this book, like, yeah, you're, it was kind of heartbreaking because, you know, I was like, man, you know, I remember one of those videos really, I thought it was helpful for me.

But anyhow, I guess my question with, to you with that is at what point in time do we say farewell to these different teachers? You know, if you've got a person and maybe they've written something or preached and, you know, that message or that book was impactful for you, but later on you find out they start to say things that are questionable.

At what point in time do we say farewell to them? Danny? I would simply say when they veer from the word of God and that they, yeah, I mean, you know, they think they're going to expound on some new kind of teaching or new kind of truth, but throughout the Bible it gives the same truth every time.

And so that's just why we need to know the word so we can tell. Yeah, absolutely. Once we start hearing something that doesn't match what scripture says, alarm bells should go off because we know the Bible well enough.

And we're like, well, that doesn't sound right. And then we should do our own investigating to try to determine whether or not, you know, what they said was a statement that contradicts scripture, that is anti-scripture.

[13:41] And at that point in time we've got to think, you know what, maybe this person's ministry isn't a ministry that I should support anymore. This isn't a pastor that I should listen to preach anymore or I should read their books. Anybody else have had a similar experience maybe where you've had to learn to say farewell to someone who, a Christian teacher of some sort or another?

Maybe not because you all listen to all the right people, I guess. Read the right thing. Amy? Amy? Be careful about what commentaries you read. Yeah? I said be careful about what commentaries you read.

Two. Yeah, just because somebody has a lot of degrees and whatnot doesn't mean that they know what they're talking about or that they're coming from the right position. So then the movie, the film talked about penal substitutionary atonement.

The question was presented by those who don't agree with it that this was a recent development. I think that they did a pretty good job of showing that it's not a recent development, that this is what the Bible has taught.

Teach it. I'm like turning into a, it's like King James Version or something. That this isn't something, this wasn't a newer development.

[15 : 04] It's something that the Bible has always taught, talked about the different theories that exist about the atonement, the victory theory, that Christ on the cross was victorious over sin, death, and Satan, that that is a biblical understanding of what happened on the cross.

Not a contradiction of the penal substitutionary atonement theory. And there was the ransom theory, Matthew 20, 26 through 28, where, you know, we, Jesus talks about the fact that his death, his sacrifice will be a ransom payment to God for his justice, not for Satan.

Was anybody, was that new to you or have you dealt with that before? And people talk about how Christ's death was a ransom payment to Satan, that Satan had to be somehow appeased so that God could save people.

Have you ever come across that? Yeah. Danny? Do you want to talk about it? Okay. Well, I was raised in the churches that followed Kenneth Copeland and lots of those speakers that are up there. And so we had a repetitive play that I would be in, in my church of around 30 or 40 people. And it was set to Carmen's song that he had.

[16 : 34] And Jesus would come down and he would, there was a boxing ring and he would box the devil. And then there was a set of keys and then he'd take the keys from Satan. And so it wasn't until college, really, that I came to realize that that was completely false.

But it also, you know, even now thinking about that, it caused a fear of Satan that shouldn't have been there. And, you know, I guess it kind of took away your fear from God, too, because it placed your fear in Satan having authority over God and needing God to rescue you from Satan.

And so it just, I don't know, there's a whole lot of people that are raised in that and they're still in that. And so, yeah, that's my two cents.

Yeah. Good. Thank you. Because I'm glad you said that, because that was one of the things that I was thinking about and watching them talking about those who say that Satan had to be paid off or, you know, that Christ's death was a ransom payment to him, is that false religions magnify Satan's power.

Have you ever noticed that? They magnify. And even in the world, you know, in Hollywood, these movies come out about possessions and whatnot, and they really magnify Satan's power.

[17 : 58] I always talk about Looney Tunes theology where, you know, the person dies and their ghost either floats up to heaven or they go down to hell, and Satan is there, and he's the ruler of that kingdom, and that's his dominion, and he can't wait to torment you.

And so it's like, well, wait a second. That's not at all the way that the Bible talks about hell. Hell is a place of eternal torment for Satan. That is not his kingdom. And he does not want to go there.

He dwells in this world, you know, this world. He's the prince of the power of the air of this world, of this evil world system. Hell is a place where he will be tormented forever.

He will not be the tormentor. He will be the tormentee. Danny? I think it's so interesting, too, that the very first battle was Satan getting kicked in heaven.

I mean, that's at the very beginning, the war in heaven and him being thrown down. He already lost. So that battle has already been won. You know, and so then we lose track, and people can say this and that.

[19 : 05] But, you know, he even had Michael, the archangel, drag him down here. So we forget. Yeah. He's Willard and then Julia.

I'm sorry. Or Julia and then Willard. You've always spoken tonight, so that's sufficient. Forgive me for not remembering where it's at, but I mean, a number of years ago, I remember finding in Scripture a description of Satan.

And the picture I found in my mind was, you know how they paint him as the pitchfork and the forked tail and horns and all of that.

But for some reason, the passage that I read gave me the idea that when those in hell see him, they're going to be baffled.

Is this the guy that we served? Like he's a wimp. You know, I wish I could remember.

[20 : 07] Anybody come across anything like that? Did you? Thank you. Michael's raising his hand. Is it okay? Okay.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. It'll far exceed the toilet paper panic. Yeah. Yeah. All right, Julia. I just have a question. I got a little confused in the film where they were talking about those different theories, the ransom theory, the victor theory.

Were they trying to say that those theories are incorrect? Because they obviously also showed that there was biblical basis. Yeah. Yeah.

[21 : 27] We do believe it was a ransom paid. And we do believe that God is victorious. And I think they were saying that they are correct. In a way that they don't contradict one another.

The ransom payment was to God to satisfy his justice. That Jesus was the penal substitution. He was the sacrifice that atoned for our sins. But the...

And he was victorious over sin, over death, over Satan. So all of those things. Well, it kept the hint where there's this theory, there's that theory, and then... Yeah. But I think, you know what?

And I was... There's a... John Stott, The Cross of Christ. If that's the right title, right? It's been a while since I read it. And it was out here... I've seen it out here on our little wall.

But he talks about all those different theories. And he shows how they blend together. Yeah. That Jesus was victorious on the cross. But he was a sacrifice for our sin.

[22 : 28] That he was paying the ransom payment to God to satisfy his wrath. And to be able to justify us in his presence. But one that was wrong...

Okay, go ahead, Elsa. Real briefly. I just think it's wrong to magnify the enemy. But it's wrong to minimize his power. Good point.

In the Lord's Prayer, we're supposed to pray to God to deliver us from the evil one. Good. There's translation that says evil, from evil.

But it's the evil one in the Greek. And also, he's very crafty, very subtle. He appears as an angel of light.

Mr. Smiles. He's not going to appear... Yeah. He's a spiritual foe. But he's not going to appear like a bouffant. That's it. Yeah.

[23 : 29] Great point. So I think... And that's important for us to keep in mind. Satan is no match for God. Right? But let's not pretend as if he's nothing or nobody.

You know? And so, I think the problem is they elevate him to a point where it almost seems like maybe God just has a little bit more power than Satan does.

Almost like it's this yin and yang. That God loved us so much that he had to try to... He wanted to save us, but Satan prevented him from being able to do that. So God was like, here, I'll give you my son and that'll be the payment so that I can have them kind of a thing.

So, yes. We should not magnify his power. But yes, we should not act as if... Yeah. Yeah.

As if Satan is nothing. That he does... He is at work as we've seen. I think we've seen in the panic in our world, you know, as sort of an example of that as well.

[24 : 33] And that, you know, we are told to pray to deliver us from the evil one, right? And we understand that Satan is very crafty and that he's the tempter.

He's the deceiver. He's the father of lies. And so that's why it's so important that we know the Bible so well so that we can distinguish, you know, and discern and know when those temptations are coming.

Okay, Michael. Just to add to a little bit to what you were saying there, I mean, Satan is still an angel and he hides behind his beauty.

I mean, in Ezekiel, it spells it out for us. He hides behind that beauty to hide the false teachings that he is preaching and that we see and are deceived by.

So, remember that as we go through life, the things that we see and can feel and touch, right? You know, the devil sometimes hides behind those things in this mask of beauty that we see through it, right?

[25 : 35] And want so much to believe in and have faith in. But it's all false lies taught by the devil. Good. All right, Wes. Wes, and then we'll pray.

Well, we got a couple minutes. Well, like the song said this morning, his wrath and power is great. So, he is powerful, but God is all powerful. So, totally trumps him and God has nothing to sweat.

It's not going to be a long fight and he's going to finally beat him out in 15 rounds or something like that. I mean, one little word will fail him, right? But also, you know, the Bible talks about in Revelation when the Antichrist comes and stuff, people are just going to be mesmerized by this guy.

He's like, whoa, what a dude. Yeah, they just can't believe him. I really believe he's probably a beautiful angel or was anyway. Maybe he's distorting through time or something. But it's not the horns and all that kind of stuff.

And then I was going to say one other thing, but I forgot. So, I'll just be quiet. Okay. Maybe it'll come back to you. I think, if anything, we've seen this week just how powerful of an emotion fear is.

[26 : 43] And to me, in a way, you know, the people going to the store and, you know, buying everything up like they can and toilet paper and hand sanitizer, you know.

And I also think it shows the true character of people. Because it's like, okay, the coronavirus, those who are getting it and who are having the most problems with it are seniors.

It's like, you know, shouldn't we care more about them and making sure that they have the protection that they need if they want it? And so, anyhow, you just see the panic that exists over this thing.

And when Jesus returns, it's going to be a much bigger thing. I think we've seen in just a very small glimpse to me of the fear that is going to be on planet Earth.

And I believe that we'll be raptured before the tribulation. I hope that I'm right because I don't want to be here during that time. Because I think we've just gotten a very small glimpse of what that will be like.

[27 : 56] So thank God that Christ has come and that he has atoned for our sins. Thank God that, you know, the joy of heaven will be being in his presence forever. All the other things that come along with that are good.

But, you know, I think like I heard John MacArthur said, when he gets to heaven, you know, the thing that he's going to be most preoccupied with, especially when he first gets there, is just being with God, just seeing God.

And I think that's the joy, you know, to be able to see Jesus face to face. You know, that's going to be greater than anything. Whether you're going to live in a dwelling place or a mansion, to be with Jesus is going to be so incredible.

All right, let's pray. Pray and then we'll sing happy birthday for our happy birthdays, right? Okay.

Lord, thank you for this time that we have together. Thank you for this film that we've been watching, for the discussion that's been taking place.

Lord, we know that in this world there are a lot of people who claim to know you, who claim to speak for you. But God, on closer inspection, it's revealed that the things that they teach and the things that they say don't match what your word does.

[29 : 12] Lord, it's heartbreaking whenever we see one who seemed to be walking in the truth, all of a sudden desert that path and going away with a message that is much more appealing to people and to fallen, sinful human beings.

God, our prayer and our request would be that we would be people of your word, that your word would truly abide in us as you told us that it should, that we would know it well.

And know it so well that whenever we hear someone teaching something that doesn't match, that we know that it doesn't match and we know why it doesn't match.

But also, Lord, as we live in this world, as your followers, we know that here in Bartlesville and in our nation that the health and wealth gospel and other moralistic, therapeutic deism kind of beliefs exist.

And we encounter those people, Lord. I pray that not only would we be able to distinguish the truth from a lie, but that we would speak the truth to those who have believed in the lie, that we would do so in gentleness and with respect, that people would know the hope that is in Christ alone and that they would understand what his sacrifice on the cross has meant for us.

[30 : 43] Lord, I pray that you would just continue to be with what's going on in our world. Lord, I pray that as Christians, we would see that this is our opportunity to pray, but it's also our opportunity to witness.

It's our opportunity to continue to live our lives and to let people know that our faith is in Jesus Christ and that we know that no matter what happens as a result of this or anything else, anything else, that our home is with him, that our joy and our victory is in him and that all that we have and all that we need is found in Jesus Christ and that to live is Christ, but to die is gain because then we know, Lord, that we will see you face to face.

And what a great day that will be for all of us whenever we see your face and whenever we're able to embrace you, our Lord, our Savior, and our God, who paid the ultimate price for the salvation of our souls to give us life eternally.

And Lord, we thank you for that. May we live lives that glorify and honor your name. We pray and we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.