

**2023 Theme - Focus On What Matters**  
**Sermon Series - Focus On What Drives Us**  
**Sermon Title - Focus on Motivation**  
**Sermon Text - Ephesians 4:32-52**  
**Sermon Presenter - Pastor Larry**

### **Focus on Motivation**

“Let the King of my heart Be the wind inside my sails  
The anchor in the waves, Oh, He is my song  
Let the King of my heart Be the fire inside my veins  
The echo of my days, Oh, He is my song”

When Jesus is the King of your heart He becomes the wind inside your sails! He becomes the One who motivates you and inspires you to live your life as much like Jesus as you can! And when Jesus is the King of your heart, the things that motivated Jesus will burn deep within your soul and His Holy Spirit will inspire you and empower you to follow in His footsteps. Let’s pray and today we’re going to focus on motivation! Pray!

### **Motivation Examined and Explained**

The last four weeks we’ve looked at focusing on our church purpose, mission, vision, and doctrine. Today I want to focus on what motivates us to live our purpose, do our mission, accomplish our vision, and stay true to our Biblically derived doctrines! We will look at what motivated Jesus to live out His purpose, fulfill His mission, and accomplish His vision. When we first started our church, besides our purpose, mission and vision statements, we also had a motivation statement. Here’s what it said...

“We are motivated by the supreme example of Jesus in His life and the extreme sacrifice of Jesus in His death on the Cross!”

I pray that this is still what motivates Northshore Church even today because this motivation statement is based on God’s Word in Ephesians 4:32-5:2. **Annaliese & Julianna** are going to read these verses to us! Give them your attention and listen carefully...

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 5:1 Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children

Ephesians 5:2 and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Thank you Annie and Julianna! Why does it say “follow God’s example” and then say “walk in the way of love, Just as Christ loved...?” The reason is that Jesus was God in the flesh! Jesus

had come to this world to show us The Father. You might remember when Jesus was talking with His disciples and this conversation took place...

John 14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.

John 14:2 My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

John 14:4 You know the way to the place where I am going."

John 14:5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14:7 If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

John 14:8 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

John 14:9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

John 14:10 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

So we know that Jesus came to show us the Father and to be the example to us all of God Almighty! When we seek to follow Jesus and live like Jesus and love like Jesus, and forgive like Jesus, and give like Jesus, and care like Jesus we are following God's example through Jesus! You see, God had told people the right way to live through His written revelation to us found His Word in the Old Testament. He had given us, through Moses, great and powerful principles to live by in the 10 Commandments, and He gave us great inspiration in the books of the prophets and great wisdom in the Psalms and Proverbs! But we needed an example of what it would look like to live that kind of life! We needed more than the written revelation of God's Word, we needed a living revelation, someone who could show us what a life totally surrendered to God looks like! But who could ever live up to the letter of the law? Who could ever be that example to show us what God's will for us really looks like? Thank God for Jesus!! Jesus left heaven and came to this earth to be our living revelation of God! You see, the word revelation means to have something revealed or shown to you! And when we ask the question, "Who could ever be good enough to show us God, the answer is Jesus! When we look at the life of Jesus and see what motivated Him to do what He did we get a beautiful picture of who God is and His love for us! What is the definition of motivation? According to the Oxford Languages dictionary...

mo·ti·va·tion

/ˌmɒdəˈvʌʃ(ə)n/

noun

the reason or reasons one has for acting or behaving in a particular way.

The reason you do what you do is important. And we talked a few weeks ago about...

Our Purpose to see the One who gave His life for us exalted and the ones He gave His life for transformed!

Purpose is the reason we do what we do! It's the WHY we do what we do! But what motivates us to fulfill our purpose and complete...

Our Mission of transforming worship, people and the world?

You can have a good reason for doing something and that should provide motivation, but I believe motivation is more than just a good reason! Motivation is what inspires you, encourages you, and pushes you to do what you do or don't do! You might say that motivation is the passion behind what you do. Do you know what the original word for passion meant, in both Latin and Greek? It meant...

Suffering, to bear something, or to have great patience

So when they talk about the Passion of Jesus and Passion Week, they are talking about the suffering of Jesus and all that He endured for us in the events leading up to His crucifixion. But here's something to think about: Jesus was willing to suffer in order to fulfill His purpose, complete His mission, and see His vision come to pass! What purpose, what mission, and what vision could possibly motivate Jesus to be willing to go to the cross and give His life? Before we answer that, let me tell you what the English definition of the word Passion is, according to the Britannica Dictionary.

PASSION. 1. a : a strong feeling of enthusiasm or excitement for something or about doing something

That's probably the definition you are more familiar with. Do you have a hobby or a sport that you have a strong feeling of enthusiasm about? A style of music? Or maybe it's your work. Or even better still, it could be your family and spending time with your children, and your spouse. There's a lot of things a person could be passionate about in this world, some good, some not so good! And of course I feel that anytime we are passionate about following and living for Jesus, that's a good thing! So let me say this about the "passion of the Christ," the passion of Jesus. We know that Jesus was not excited about the suffering He was going to endure before the cross, the ridicule, the beatings, or having to carry that heavy cross on His way to be crucified, but He was excited about what He was going to accomplish on the cross. So we could say that His "suffering passion" was motivated by His "excited passion," His strong feeling of enthusiasm about what He would be able to do for you and for me through His suffering and sacrifice! The writer of Hebrews put it this way in a verse we recently read...

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

What was the joy set before Jesus that would cause Him to endure the cross, and what does “scorning its shame” mean? First of all, I believe that the joy set before Jesus was twofold! I believe Jesus knew that if He died on the cross and paid the price for our sin and our shame, and took the punishment that we deserved, He knew that we could be forgiven, cleansed, made new in our hearts and minds and that we could have eternal life someday! I believe that made Him super excited. And Jesus knew that His Father loved people because we were created in the very image of God! In other words, God had loved us so much that instead of creating us like animals that do things mostly by instinct, God breathed into us the breath of life and we became living spirits, living beings, with the ability to make choices and decisions based on more than just our natural instincts of hunger, and survival! So in that way we are extremely special to God! Jesus knew that and He wanted to please and glorify His Heavenly Father. That’s why He prayed this prayer just before He was arrested and eventually crucified.

Luke 22:42 “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”

What cup was He talking about? The cup of suffering that He was going to endure on the cross. But Jesus knew that His Father would raise Him up from the grave on the third day! Jesus knew that His obedience in suffering would give us the opportunity to be saved from our sins and would bring glory to God the Father all at the same time! And bringing glory to God the Father was one of the ways Jesus showed His love to the Father! Jesus had made it clear that **His purpose** was to Glorify the Father...

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

Remember that Purpose is why you do what you do! So we know why Jesus had come, to do the will of the Father. But what was His motivation to fulfill His purpose?

### **Jesus was Motivated by His love for the Father!**

Jesus prayed to His Heavenly Father before every major decision of His ministry. He would often rise before the sun, to go into the mountains to spend time in prayer! Sometimes He had disciples with Him and at other times He was alone. But Jesus had such a wonderful relationship with His Heavenly Father! Once when He was talking with His disciples He began praying. Listen...

John 17:1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.

John 17:2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

John 17:4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

John 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

### **Jesus was Motivated by His love for You!**

Scorning the shame, did mean that Jesus despised the shame of the cross because of what it stood for! The cross was for criminals. It was for the worst of society! It was for the outcast. A cross was the Romans' most hideous form of capital punishment. It was so bad they would not even allow a Roman citizen to be punished in that manner. And remember that Jesus had been falsely accused and He had lived a perfect life. But let me share with you what I believe these words also are saying! It's like Jesus was thinking, "nevermind the shame, regardless of the shame, despite the shame, I'm going to reject the temptation to walk away from the cross because of the shame, because I know if I don't pay the price then lost sinners will have no hope and that's unacceptable! But if I do pay the price, they will have the chance at a new life! And that was the second part of the joy that was set before Him! I want to give you a very practical illustration of this that might help you understand the deep, deep love Jesus has for you and me.

Just a few days after Hurricane Katrina I drove back to my house. 5 ½ feet of gulf and marsh water had invaded our home. When I went into our walk-in closet in the master bedroom I saw all of the clothes that had been hanging up, lying on the floor in a messy, stinky, pile! I saw suits and shirts and then I saw it! There was my black leather harley Jacket that had been given to me by a friend in Pleasant Grove, Alabama. It was a heavy jacket because it was solid leather, but now it weighed a ton, waterlogged and covered with mud and who knows what else! A little history. This friend of mine didn't have a Harley motorcycle, but he went to the Harley Store and bought this 500.00 Jacket, complete with frills and matching leather gloves. He was so proud of it. A few years later He asked me to officiate his wedding. He married a really wonderful lady, who was an elementary school teacher. Believe it or not, she had never seen his Harley Jacket before. One cold fall day, just a short time after they were married, he pulled out his Harley jacket to wear it to the State Fair. When she saw it she was taken back. She said, "What is that?" He said "it's my Harley Jacket!" She said, "You can't wear that, some of my students' parents might see us and think I'm out with some kind of biker dude!" He said, "But honey, it's my Harley Jacket!" She said, "You just can't, please! I would be so worried. Hey, why don't you give it to Brother Larry, he'll wear it!" I guess Harley jackets and old rebels, kind of go together! So he called me and said, "Hey Brother Larry, do you want my Harley Jacket?" I was like "What, David, why would you give me your Harley jacket? Then he told me the story. Here's why I'm telling you this story. As I looked at that Jacket lying there in the mud and mire of Hurricane Katrina I picked it up. I thought to myself, "Man, that was a 500.00 jacket. It was so cool. I'll never have another jacket like that, I don't think I could ever bring myself to pay 500.00 on a jacket! So as I thought about it, I realized, I can't just throw that jacket away, I'll never have another one! So I got a big garbage bag and put it inside mud and all! My wife and youngest

daughter were staying in McComb, MS with my parents so when I went up to see them, I carried my jacket with me, still in the garbage bag as I had found it. When I got there, I got their garden hose and began spraying it down. It smelled horrible. After I got everything off of it I could with the hose, I took it inside and put it in a tub of warm water and began scrubbing it with Saddle soap. All the little frills didn't make it any easier. But I finally got it clean and then hung it out to dry. Later I took Neatsfoot oil, a leather conditioner, and wiped it down. It was clean, smelled really good, and was almost like new, but no matter how many times I treated it with the leather oil, when it dried, all of the natural little lines in the leather of my black Harley jacket looked like it had been dusted with a white powder. But at least it was wearable. Sometime later I was polishing my black leather dress shoes and thought, black leather jacket, black shoe polish. I got my jacket and polished it up and then buffed it out like I did with my shoes, and guess what, now it not only smelled new, it looked new! Now, why the story? That leather jacket and I have a lot in common. When Jesus found me He found me covered in the mud and mire of sin! I can't even imagine how I must have looked to a holy, righteous, Almighty God, but when He saw me in my devastated state, nevermind the filth, the stench, the stains, the deplorable condition, He looked at me with a deep, deep love, and even though He knew everything about me, the good, the bad and the ugly, all of it, He thought about how He had lovingly created me and had a plan for my life and He knew the potential I had. He thought, "there will never be another Larry McEwen, if I don't save him, that will be the end of him. I refuse to just throw him away. I'm going to give him a chance at new life. He's worth so much to me!" Here's the difference between me and my Harley jacket. My jacket had no choice but to get in the bag and go with me to McComb to go through the cleaning process. But with me, God lovingly looked down at me in my sin, my filth, my shame, and He offered to cleanse me, to change me, to save me from the destruction that was surely coming my way! But I had a choice. I could refuse His gracious offer and stay in my devastated condition or I could let Him pick me up out of my mess and cleanse me and make me whole again. The choice was mine. Thank God I said yes to Jesus and like the old song says, I decided to follow Jesus no turning back! And when I called upon His name The Lord Jesus, Holy, righteous and without sin, He reached His hands down and scooped me up out of the mud and filth of my sin and cleansed me with His precious blood. He washed me and made me new! He saved my soul for eternity and gave me a new life in this world, a life with a purpose, a mission and a vision! I was so radically transformed that I knew I wanted to live my life to help others find the peace, the hope and the wonderful cleansing from sin that can come to anyone who is willing to say yes to Jesus. All who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved! Amen! So we've had motivation examined and explained. Now we're going to finish the sermon with our second part...

### **Motivation Exemplified**

Hey kids, what in the world does exemplified mean. To exemplify something simply means...

"To be an example of something!"

So I have some questions for you. Do you believe Jesus was a good example? Are we supposed to be motivated by love for our God and Heavenly Father like Jesus? Are we

supposed to love people like Jesus did? And did Jesus practice what He preached? Absolutely! In fact, we are to be motivated by what motivated Jesus and He gave us a **blueprint** for what should motivate us in the greatest commandments! **Grace and Adaline** are going to come and read to us what Jesus said about us loving God and others.

### **Grace**

Matthew 22:35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question:

Matthew 22:36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

### **Adaline**

Matthew 22:37 Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’

Matthew 22:38 This is the first and greatest commandment.

Matthew 22:39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 22:40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

That’s so powerful! Thank you girls so much! Now I said Jesus gave us a blueprint for what should motivate us. Let me explain what a blueprint is. A blueprint is like a set of directions printed out so you can know what to do first, second, and next and last! It’s like a map that gives you directions! It’s a picture, rather than just words. It is a guide to help you get where you want to go, or to build what you want to build, or to accomplish what you want to accomplish! So Jesus lived His life as a blueprint for us to follow in accomplishing all that God wants us to accomplish! It’s a set of instructions for life. Jesus was a perfect example of how we should love God and love others! What motivated Jesus in the life He lived and the death He died should motivate those of us who have chosen to follow Him! We should desire to be just like Jesus and value what Jesus valued! Because what Jesus valued motivated everything He did! Jesus valued bringing glory to His Heavenly Father, He valued loving His Father and people! He loved forgiveness, justice, truth, truthfulness, compassion, fellowship, the one lost sheep, friendship, discipleship, teaching, healing, praying, helping others, and Jesus values you!!

**Anna Liese & Julianna** are going to read the verses of our text to us again! Give them your attention and listen carefully...

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 5:1 Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children

Ephesians 5:2 and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Hey Kids, do you think it made the Heavenly Father happy that His Son Jesus was kind and compassionate, and even forgave people when they were mean to Him? Absolutely. What motivated Jesus to be like that? Well, first all...

**Jesus made it clear that His purpose was to bring glory to the Father!**

John 17:1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.

Do you think it brought glory to His Heavenly Father that He was kind, compassionate and forgiving? Yes indeed! Should we follow His example? Yes! And...

### **Jesus made it clear that His mission was to save Humanity**

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

And our text says that "Jesus gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God!" You can't have more love than that can you? Nope. Jesus told His disciples this...

John 15:12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

John 15:13 Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

And Jesus did that!

### **By living His purpose, and fulfilling His mission Jesus fulfilled His vision, and it was twofold...**

A. Here on earth...

John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Jesus was motivated by His desire to help you have life to the full! That means life with purpose, mission, vision and motivation! And Jesus wanted to save you from the darkness and sadness of living in sin and doing bad things that hurt others, God and especially you! Jesus said...

John 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

But Jesus was also motivated for you to have eternal life...

B. In Heaven some day...

Jesus said...

John 5:24 "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.



Now I want us to close out our message with a look at some examples of Jesus' motivation and how it influenced how He lived His life! These examples are our blueprint for living as followers of Jesus! **Madi** is going to come and read Matthew 9:36...

Matthew 9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Thank you Mattie! Jesus had compassion for the sheep because they were harassed and helpless. Now listen to this example that **Connor** will read from Matthew 23,

Matthew 23:37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.

Thank you Connor! Don't you know that broke His heart! He wanted to show His love to the lost people of Jerusalem but many refused His love. But others were delighted to receive His love. Like the leper. A leper was someone who had a disease and was covered with sores! Most people wouldn't even walk on the same side of the street as a leper, let alone touch them. But look what Jesus did...

Matthew 8:1 When he came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him.

Matthew 8:2 A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

Matthew 8:3 Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cured of his leprosy.

He was healed physically, but can you imagine the emotional healing that touch brought to the heart of this poor leper? He must have thought, "Wow, He touched me! He's not scared of me! He doesn't think I'm horrible and gross! I am somebody! Jesus touched me and made me okay again! What love!"

There's your blueprint for kindness!

And then there was the sinful woman who the religious Pharisees and others wanted to stone to death, but Jesus must have confronted them with their own sin when He knelt down and wrote some things in the sand and they all walked away.

John 8:10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

John 8:11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

There's your blueprint for compassion!

And then at the very end of His life while He was suffering on the cross, Jesus looked down at the very people who had cursed Him, mocked Him, beat Him, spit on Him and nailed Him to the cross and He said...

Luke 23:34 ... "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do..."

There's your blueprint for forgiveness!

**Brayden**, come on up and read our last verse...

1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

Thank you Brayden! What better motivation could you have than that! We love because he first loved us! Let's pray!