

“A Single Purpose, Part 2”
(1 Corinthians 10:31)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

This morning, we saw

That God wants us to live

With a single purpose –

With a single goal in mind:

That we might seek the glory that comes from Him.

The problem is,

We come into this world seeking its glory.

When we’re young

The world is all we can see,

And it’s all we want.

When we first come to the Lord

It still looms largely in our hearts.

It takes a little while

To see that it’s the spiritual things that really matter,

To see that this world really is the enemy of God

And its glory is worthless.

But once we do see it

We know that what God says is true

And so we strengthen our resolve
To seek for His honor.
We begin to use our talents more for Him,
Looking to the reward He has promised
Both in this life and in the life to come.

B. Preview.

This evening, I want us to focus more
On how we are to seek for this honor.

Most simply put,
The way to receive more honor from the Lord
Is to give Him more honor.

And so we should seek to give Him

All that we can –

Paul tells us,
Everything we do we are to do for the glory of God.

Let's consider two things:

First, that we are to do all we do for God's glory.

And second, how we can do this.

II. Sermon.

A. First, Paul says we should seek to do all that we do

With the single purpose of bringing glory to God.

In the context,

Paul is talking about eating meat sacrificed to idols.

He is very clear that we can't participate in two tables.

We can't eat and drink from the Table of the Lord

And from the table of demons.

He isn't saying we can't eat meat sacrificed to idols.

He says it doesn't matter

Since idols are really nothing (vv. 19-20) –

As long as you don't eat it

As though it's sacrificed to an idol –

Or as an idolater.

This goes very well with what we've been looking at:

We can't be Christians and idolaters.

We can't serve two masters.

We can't serve Christ and the world.

He also says we should abstain

If our eating causes someone else to stumble –

If by your eating

You encourage a brother or sister to eat

When they still believe it's wrong.

Sometimes the example of a stronger believer

Can cause a weaker believer

To sin against their conscience.

You don't want to do that.

But both of these things –

Not eating meat as though sacrificed to idols,

And not eating it in front of a younger believer –

Resolve into the same principle:

Make sure when you eat or drink

You do it for God's glory.

This applies to everything we do:

Paul says, Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

Why does Paul say this?

Why can't I just do what I want to do?

As you already know,

There are several reasons:

For one thing, it's the only right thing to do.

God is the only One worthy to receive honor –

He made you and gave you the ability to do what you do,

And so you should do all you do so that He gets the credit.

This is also why He made you –
For the sole purpose of glorifying Him.

And why He redeemed you –
That you might glorify Him
By making you a trophy of His grace.

If you violate what He says here
And eat and drink to idols –
Especially the idol of this world,
If you become the friend of the world,
And commit spiritual adultery
You will provoke the Lord to jealousy.
You don't want to be an unfaithful spouse,
But a faithful one.

As we saw this morning,
If you don't glorify Him
But seek glory for yourself from the world
Then you can't be a true believer –
Love for God and for the world
Are mutually exclusive.

But for our purposes this evening,
There is one more reason I would like to focus on:

Because the more honor you give to Him
The more He will give to you.

This is how your short life in this world
Can make the biggest difference –
If you give it all to Him,
He will honor you by using it.

Do you want to make a difference for Him?
This is how you do it.

B. The biggest question is how?
How can we glorify God in everything we do?

First, by not doing certain things.
We need to come to grips with the fact
That there are some things we shouldn't do –
Namely, anything that's sinful.

Remember, we saw this morning
That God hates the world, the things of the world,
And those who seek to be honored by the world.

If you want the honor that comes from Him,
You won't find it in that direction,
Nor will you find it in any sinful direction.

He won't honor us

If what we do offends Him.

At the very least,

He will discipline us.

Again, how can you know what's sinful and what not?

As we saw this morning,

Spend time with the Lord.

Get to know Him

Talk to Him in prayer,

Let Him talk to you in His Word,

Walk with Him in obedience to His commandments.

The more you do this,

The better you will know Him,

And the more you will know what He likes

And what He doesn't like.

Second, we need to understand

That there are things we can leave undone

That are equally offensive to Him.

We know very well

That doing things He tells us not to offends Him.

But how often do we think about the fact

That He is also offended,
When He tells us to do something
But for one reason or another
We're just not willing to do it.
When we commit sins of omission?

We're not surprised when a commanding officer
Throws one of his subordinates in the brig
For being unwilling to do what he commands.

Nor when a supervisor
Writes up one of his or her employees
Because they're late to work,
Or drag their feet on the job,
Or don't do what they're told.

But somehow we're surprised
When God disciplines us
For disregarding His commands.

We need to remember
God isn't called our Father for nothing.
We are to honor Him as our father.

And Jesus isn't called Lord for nothing.
He is the Lord, and we are His servants.

When they speak,
We need to honor them through our loving obedience.
Remembering at the same time,
It is just as unloving
Not to obey what He commands
As it is to do something He forbids.

Finally, we need to do make sure
We do what we do,
Or don't do what we don't do
With the right motives:
Because we love Him,
And want to honor Him.

It's not enough simply to stay away from what's wrong
Or to do what's right.
Remember the Pharisees.
They did a lot of wrong things to be sure,
But they also did right things for the wrong reasons.
They prayed for themselves,
Gave money to the poor for themselves,
Worshipped God for themselves,
Seeking nothing more than glory from others.

It's possible to go through the motions of obedience,

But to do them with the wrong end in view –

For ourselves and not for God.

And so if we would honor Him in everything,

When we're faced with a choice,

We need to ask ourselves these questions:

First, is this something God tells me I shouldn't do?

Here's a question for our young ladies tonight:

If a young man who isn't a believer

Became interested in you,

Should you allow yourself to become interested in him?

No!

Why not?

Because the Lord tells you not to, "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14).

The same applies to you young men:

Should you become interested in

And pursue a relationship with a young woman

Who is an unbeliever? No.

You should never allow yourself

Even to begin to desire this

Because the Lord forbids it!

There are many young men and women
Who are either unhappily bound
In a relationship with an unbeliever,
Or who have had their marriages end
Because they wouldn't submit to God's Word.

Second, is this something I should do?

What if the person you're interested in is a believer,
But your parents don't think the timing is right
Or that it's a good match?
What should you do?
You should listen to them
Because that's what the Lord tells you to do.

Finally, am I doing this for the right reasons?
Am I doing this for myself?
Or am I doing it for the Lord,
Because I love Him and want to honor Him?
Make sure you do it for Him.
If you honor Him,
He will honor you.

Some people – even professing Christians –

See this kind of obedience as legalistic or cultic.

It's really neither.

God calls it love.

Jesus says, If you love Me,

You will keep My commandments.

Not just some of them,

But all of them.

I've run into Christians in the past

Who didn't want to read their Bibles because of this

Believing if they didn't know what it said,

God wouldn't hold them accountable.

Were they right? No.

God commands us to read His Word

So that we will know what to do,

Because it's honoring to Him,

And it's good for us.

The Bible was written to be read.

Paul writes to the church at Thessalonica,

"I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren" (1 Thes. 5:27).

The angel said to John

Regarding what he would write,

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near” (Rev. 1:3).

The author to the Hebrews

Reproves his readers

Because they weren't learning God's truth as they should,

“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil” (Heb. 5:12-14).

Luke commended the Jews at Berea

Because they searched the Scriptures

To find out whether what Paul was saying was true (Acts 17:11).

So don't avoid evil merely to keep yourself out of trouble –

Do it because you love God.

Don't do what is right

To keep up appearances

Or to be thought well of by others,

Do it because you want to honor Him.

If you will do this,

If you will honor God,

He will honor you,

With blessings in this life –
Your life will count for Him –
And blessings in the life to come –
He will honor you in heaven for all eternity.

May the Lord grant to each of us
That we might have a single purpose in life:
To seek for the honor that comes from Him
By doing what honors Him. Amen.

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