Dear Reader,

I am new to producing reading sermons. So, if you have any suggestions as to how I might improve my format or what I include – please email me at cdanielwilson@gmail.com. **I will warn you, that I do not use short sentences**. I will endeavor to work on this over time, but I don’t naturally write that way. However, you can easily break most of my longer sentences into 2 or 3 smaller ones where I have “…” or “–“ or commas. If you do the work on making it into smaller sentences – feel free to email it to me, and I am happy to share your work with others. I do have some of these available which people have sent me. I will eventually make them available as part of the normal manuscripts.

I have left my sermon manuscript formatted the way I normally write and read my sermons. They are colourful and written in conversational English. If you are a grammar nazi – then you will be frustrated with my punctuation and phrasing. However, once you read it out loud, you will normally be able to tell what I meant to say. SERIOUSLY, READ IT OUTLOUD. You will also see that I use a good bit of bold, italics, underlining and different colours to signal what are the most important things to say, and also to make it easier for my eye to pick up my place in the middle of paragraphs. I would recommend that you keep as many of those things as possible to help you keep your place. However, you will probably want to increase the spacing between lines. I highly encourage you to commit as much of the introduction or children’s illustrations to memory as you can, so that these can be delivered to the congregation with maximum eye contact.

**Where possible, I highly recommend that you listen to the sermon as I preached it at either the Nelson website or the website of North Shore.** I recommend that because that will also help hear the places where I added or skipped over material in the manuscript, and the places where I clarified my meaning. I have edited bits and pieces which I thought most important, but I have not sought to include all the additional material that comes to me while in the pulpit. I would practically have to use a transcription service for that. However, I hope and pray that this sermon will be a blessing to you and to your congregation. To God be the Glory!

Blessings in our Lord, Pastor Daniel Wilson

**My Suggestions for the Order of Service**

Song before the service: #56

Brothers and Sisters: ***Our help is in the name of the Lord … Doesn’t forsake the works of His hands***  Grace, Mercy, Peace and Love be yours in abundance from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Let us respond to God’s call to worship Him **Psalm #104 “My Soul Bless the Lord!” vs.11-13**

***We will profess our faith using Heidelberg Catechism #1***

***{please be seated} – Continue to read Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day 32***

***Please turn in your Bibles to our first reading of several:* Ephesians 2:1-10** *and Also* **Matthew 6:19-24**

**Song of continued worship and Praise #123 “To You, O Lord, I life my eyes”**

***Congregational Prayer***

***Please turn in your Bibles to our reading from* 1 Peter 1:13-19 + 2:11-25**

**Let’s now cont. To worship as we bring to the Lord His Tithes and our Freewill offerings:** ***As the Deacons come ...***

*Let’s cont. to worship as we sing* **Our Song of Prep: Psalm #509 “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God”**

***Sermon Text: 2 Peter 1:2-11 Sermon Title: “****Motivations for Godiness”*

***Let us now sing a* song of Response *–* Psalm #452 “On the Good and Faithful –** *God has set His love***”**

***May God the Father*** *bless you & keep you,* ***May God the Son*** *turn His face toward you & be gracious to you,* ***May the Holy Spirit*** *lift up his countenance upon you & give you peace!* ***Amen***

***Doxology*: #117**

# Evening Sermon: “Motivations for Godliness” Heidelberg #38

Text/Readings: Ephesians 2:1-10, Matthew 6:19-24, 1 Peter 1:13-19 +2:11-25, 2 Peter 1:2-11, LD 32

**Introduction:** Children, Have you ever asked your parents “why?” – Perhaps they told you to do tidy up the toys in the lounge… You know you should obey right away without back talk or questions, but instead you asked, “Why?” and maybe you kept asking why even after your parents told you…

 Sometimes we really don’t want to do what we know is right because we don’t want to. We don’t want to because we don’t think we have a good reason. *A GOOD REASON MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!*  **For example:** If you children knew that you needed to tidy up the lounge because your friends were coming for a party, you would work hard and fast (because to you, a party with friends is a good reason). But we sadly tend to only look for selfish reasons! But the best reasons to obey are the ones we often ignore…

Tonight, we will be looking at some of these reasons to obey. God tells us to be perfect as He is perfect – but we all tend to ask, “Why?!” Before covering God’s law and His requirements for believers, the Heidelberg Catechism addresses this problem of motivation!

And tonight, we will look at 5 reasons or motivations WHY we should change our lives to look/act more like Christ. (4 of these reasons are outlined in Lord’s Day 32, and one other notable one from scripture.)

1. **Christ Saved Us for Godly Living**
2. **Godly Living Praises God.**
3. **Godly Living is Profitable.**
4. **Godly Living is a Witness to Others.**
5. **Godly Living is a Source of Assurance.**

*Let’s begin with the first and most fundamental reason to obey:*

1. **Christ Saved Us for Godly Living** (REPEAT)
	1. **Christ died to make us Holy!**

In the past month or so, I have preached on Ephesians 5 at two different weddings. In that very familiar passage, we have the explanation of how marriage pictures the relationship between Christ and the Church. There, Paul explains that Christ died ***in order that He might*** sanctify or make us holy through the washing of the water of the word. Paul says elsewhere that God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him WE might become the righteousness of God. ***This purpose for Christ’s death is*** repeated again and again in the New Testament, and we read about it in Ephesians 2 tonight: Listen to vs. 10 again - ***READ***

Those of us who have repented and put our faith in Christ are new creatures in Christ. And you and I were created in Christ Jesus FOR A PURPOSE – For Good Works! And not just any good works, but those which God particularly prepared for us to do! Far too often, people have this crazy idea that since Jesus lived the perfect life that we could not live, that we don’t have to even try to obey! But that is not true!

It is so absurd that so many believe that Christ died to save us from our sins so that we can sin as we please… Sin was so wretched in God’s sight that He couldn’t brush it under the carpet. If we were to be saved, He had to send Christ to pay the penalty for us as we saw last weekend over Good Friday and Easter! THE fundamental reason that Christ died was to take us ***out*** of darkness (away from sin) and to bring us into His marvelous light (so that we might be dedicated to Godly living).

* 1. **So… What is the key to this Godly Living?**

The key to this Godly Living is recognizing the magnitude of our salvation – we were moved from death to life! …from being slaves to sin to being slaves to Christ. ***The Heidelberg*** uses the idea of gratitude as the overarching theme to explain our response – but I think it is bigger than the way we use the word gratitude. For instance, if someone does something nice for us, or gives us a gift – we are grateful, but that gratitude very rarely brings much more than a verbal thank you! ***However, Gratitude for our salvation is much more compelling, much more powerful.***

It’s like many ancient cultures, where if someone saved your life, you would become their slave. Picture yourself, before Christ. There you were, blind and chained in the dungeon of sin – ignorant of the sentence of death that was on your head. And then Christ broke down the walls of that dungeon, having fulfilled the law and paid the penalty of sin – and **He removed your blindfold, showed you your deadly circumstances, unlocked your chains and set you free!!** – *You wouldn’t sit back down in that dungeon and close your eyes would you?!* **No, you would get up, and follow the one who set you free!** That is what should happen in conversion and Christianity! You must leave the dungeon of sin and follow Christ in obedience! That is the response of TRUE Gratitude - complete humility, complete submission to your Saviour!

*And that complete dependence and submission is exactly what gives glory to God:* **which is our second point**

# Godly Living Praises God (REPEAT)

* 1. **This Praise is both a REASON and a RESULT of Godly Living**

The Apostle Peter explains in **I Peter 2**. There he instructs us to live such good lives among the pagans of this world, that though they accuse us of doing wrong, they may see our good deeds and glorify God on the Day of Judgment. He then expands on that idea of godly living among pagans : ***We are to be:*** good obedient citizens, respectful hardworking employees/slaves, and even be willing to suffer for doing good (without trying to take revenge). ***God desires that praise, and so commands our obedience – and when we live like that, even pagans will praise God on the Day of Judgment!***

* 1. **But *HOW* does our living godly lives bring God Glory?**

We have already seen that pagans see our good deeds and will one day praise God – but what would it be that would make our lives any different from the typical nice pagans we meet every day? The difference between us and nice unbelievers is *your motivation*. You and I are not supposed to live for ourselves, our happiness, our success. Instead, we are to live to serve Christ (and bring Him glory), and we bring HIM glory when we serve/love others sacrificially.

***BUT:*** How do we make God’s Glory a motivation for daily life… I mean, most of us would say we are living for HIS glory and yet, if we honestly evaluated our motives for much of what we do – it isn’t the glory of Christ!! Fundamentally, it comes down to this: Whose praise are you seeking? Your own or Christ’s? Would you be content if your boss or loved one saw your good work and simply said, “Praise the Lord, that job was done just the way I needed, Thank you Lord” **OR** *in that moment* ***would you be tempted to inform them who REALLY did that good job – so the praise would go where you really intended – YOU?!***

*The reason we might want to interrupt and bring praise to our self, is that we really don’t believe that:*

# Godly Living is Profitable (BUT IT IS… *And that is our 3rd point:* REPEAT *praising God is profitable…*)

* 1. **Jesus taught that real lasting treasures are those we store up in heaven…**

**Matthew 6:19-21**  19 ¶ " Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

**Too many doubt Jesus’ words on this topic!** Jesus plainly commands you to store up treasure in Heaven which cannot be destroyed. And in Luke 12:33, Jesus actually tells us one way to store up such treasure is to sell possessions and give to the poor! *Christ actually taught that when believers obey God’s commands to care for those in need that He will reward that obedience with treasure in heaven*.

Jesus confirms this again in Luke 16 with the parable of the unjust steward – who used money to provide a retirement plan of sorts, and Jesus encouraged His disciples (and all believers) to be just as shrewd in the way we spend our resources so that we might make a heavenly retirement plan!

And in our Reading from 2 Peter, we saw that living good, faithful, self-controlled, persevering Godly lives that we will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

* 1. **The biggest objection to this motivation is that it sounds selfish…**

AND I am not encouraging you to come to Christ to get rich in a carnal/earthly sense. This is no health/wealth Gospel. No, instead what I am urging you to do is to be motivated by the clear teaching of Scripture – **YOU WILL NEVER LOSE OUT BY OBEYING CHRIST AND LIVING A GODLY LIFE!** X2

As Jesus said in Mark 10:29-30: ***Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, (houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms)* along with persecutions*; and in the age to come,* eternal life*.* God will not let you lose totally in this life, and in eternity He will more than make up for it a hundred times over!**

 **As Hebrews 11 puts it: Whoever would draw near to God must believe that God exists, and that God rewards those who seek Him…**

*If you believe God’s Word, that God HIMSELF will repay you a hundred times over for any loss you incur while obeying/serving Him* … ***Imagine the impact on your life and those around you!*** What confidence you would have… what sacrifice you would be willing to endure… What love you would show… ***AND You would never interrupt to tell someone that you did the good job, when they were praising the Lord – You would simply Praise God with them!***

*And that kind of life is exactly what God uses to make us a witness to others:* ***And that is our 4th motivation:***

# Godly Living is a Witness to Others (REPEAT)

* 1. **Living for another world is different from everyday nice pagans…**

Unbelievers can’t help but notice when someone loves/serves without hope for repayment. It is so rare that it happens, and they know they would never do it themselves … and so God uses it to make them ask – WHY?! Why would you serve that way? What makes you love even when it hurts? – and it is in such times that we explain the love and forgiveness of Christ. ***Christ is the reason for the hope that should shine through our actions!***

* 1. **Godly living is such a powerful witness…**

 **…***that new believers are encouraged to remain married to their unbelieving spouses!* In I Corinthians 7 and I Peter 3, husbands and wives are encouraged to live as God commands so that their purity and behavior might witness to the power of the Gospel to their unbelieving spouse! And it is this same power of true HEART and ATTITUDE obedience to God’s commands that God uses to bring sinners to Himself!

*Finally, I saved the most challenging motivation for last:*

# Godly Living is a Source of Assurance (REPEAT)

* 1. **We are not saved by obedience, but *if we are saved* we will obey…**

We saw it so clearly taught in James chapter 2, Faith without works is dead – If you say you have faith, and you even know all the right doctrines, but that doctrine/faith hasn’t touched your heart and affected your life – then it isn’t real saving faith! **As we read in 2 Peter,** Therefore, my Brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you. FOR as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble! …. **NOW,** WHAT is Peter saying? He is saying, God calls and God elects, but ***Don’t presume you are saved…*** make sure that you truly are a believer by looking at whether you are practicing “These things”. NOW, be careful here… It isn’t that your actions save you, RATHER, they prove whether you have been saved! (kinda like how a receipt doesn’t help you buy something, rather it simply proves that you already have!) **And He told us those things in verses 5-8:** For this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, in your moral excellence, knowledge; 6 and in your knowledge, self-control; and in your self-control, perseverance; and in your perseverance, godliness; 7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless or unfruitful the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. These attributes are the things which we ought to be doing to confirm our calling and election.

* 1. **Is your Calling and Election sure?**

When you look at your life what do you see? Some of you are good, some of you have great knowledge, some are very self-controlled, or loving or godly etc… but Peter doesn’t say you should have one or two of these – He stresses that all of these things are to be what we are making every effort to add to our faith. THEY AREN’T Optional…

**So, if you are anything like me,** **then you might be wondering about your calling and election right now…** but it is important to take the long view when evaluating your life as a source of assurance. You see, our struggle with sin and godliness is a lot like the stock market – it fluctuates daily. To see whether a stock is good, you normally have to look at it’s growth or loss over the long term. And the same applies for us… we need to look over the years to see God’s hand at work… and if we still have doubts then we have an even greater motivation to humble ourselves before Christ and do that greatest work with God requires: Jesus gave it to us in John 6:28-29: The Work of God is this: to Believe in the one He has sent.”

You see, our lives can be a great motivator both positively and negatively. We can be motivated to live in a godly way to make our calling and election sure as Peter calls us to do… but when we see our failures and all the negatives about our less-than-godly lives – we are reminded that we don’t save ourselves, and we are motivated to humble ourselves yet again at the feet of HIM who died to save us from sin!

Christ did that while you were still dead in your sins, without a word or a hope to commend you. **And after decades of being a Christian, you will still need Christ just as much as the day you believed!** For HE Paid it all.

Ultimately it is Christ’s Great Love & Sacrifice which serves as the Greatest Motivation and Model for your Godly Living! He has thrown off your chains, therefore, rise up and follow Him in newness of life!

**Amen.**