

**Ray E. Heiple Jr., B.A., M.DIV., PH.D.**

Foreword by C. J. Williams

# **Preaching with Biblical Motivation**

*How to Incorporate the Motivation Found  
in the Inspired Preaching of the  
Apostles into Your Sermons*

**REFORMED ACADEMIC DISSERTATIONS**

“In *Biblical Motivation: How Preaching Should Motivate according to the Word of God*, Pastor Ray Heiple works to give his fellow pastors a kindly, firm rebuke. After examining scholarly views concerning the nature of motivation, Heiple provides representative quotes showing how preachers today place their faith in various motivational schemes, rather than God’s truth. The core of Heiple’s book is a careful analysis of five sermons in Acts, each demonstrating that apostolic preaching motivated listeners by declaring the truth.

“When I first started this book, I wondered whether it would develop into a typical Reformed harangue against the emotions. Not at all. Heiple never denigrates the emotions. Rather, he relegates them to their proper biblical place. ‘The biblical preachers . . . do not shy away from expressing passion and emotion, but all of their effort is concentrated on the truth and certainty of their message.’ We are not to work to elicit feelings about the truth, but to appeal to the truth, directly. The apostles never called for any emotions other than the fear of God.

“This book was helpful, and I commend it to other preachers. It got me to think carefully about whether my preaching is more dependent on my own ability to communicate than the truth of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.”

—**Tim Bayly**, senior pastor, Clearnote Church, Bloomington, Indiana; author of *Daddy Tried* and *The Grace of Shame*

“The modern church has been awash with various motivational theories, each claiming to hold the golden key to effective preaching. Dr. Heiple subjects them to insightful critique, and then offers a helpful explanation of human motivation informed by the Bible and Reformed theology. May the Lord use this book to encourage and equip preachers through whom he fulfills his promise to the church, ‘And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free’ (John 8:32).”

—**Joel R. Beeke**, President, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan

“Finally—a book that builds its understanding of motivation in preaching squarely on the sermons found in the Bible itself! Dr. Heiple shows in detail how the apostles Peter and Paul sought to motivate their audiences, and how preachers today can follow in their inspired footsteps. Heiple’s work evidences careful scholarship, is very enlightening, and is deeply convicting. A much-needed antidote to emotion-heavy but truth-light preaching.”

—**Bailey Cadman**, PCA, retired senior pastor, Providence Presbyterian Church (PCA), Robinson Township, Pennsylvania

“I am excited about this study! Here are a few of the reasons. First, a student listened to something I said and picked a significant study. Second, it is a sound exegetical work that is clear, is well written, and does not tire the reader with unnecessary verbiage. Third, it is an excellent example of useful academic work that must not stay on the shelves of libraries, collecting dust. Fourth, it is saying something new, fresh, and needed. Fifth, it is significant for the church and not just the ivory tower of graduate school. Sixth, it helps preachers and preaching. Seventh, and most significant, it is God-centered and God-honoring. It sounds trite, but it is true: every preacher must interact with this book’s position. May God use it to help revive preaching so that the needed revival and reformation of the family, church, and state may become a reality before I die and go to glory.”

—**George C. Scipione**, Director, Biblical Counseling Institute, Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary

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*A Series*

*Series Editor*  
John J. Hughes

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Ray E. Heiple Jr.

  
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*Preaching with Biblical Motivation: How to Incorporate the Motivation Found in the Inspired Preaching of the Apostles into Your Sermons*. Ray E. Heiple Jr., D.Min., M.Div., B.A. Submitted to Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 2013, for the D.Min. degree. Supervisors: Dr. Jack Kinneer, Dr. C. J. Williams.

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To Don Blank, who pushed me to become a preacher; and  
To Bailey Cadman, who showed me how to do it.





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## Series Introduction

P&R Publishing has a long and distinguished history of publishing carefully selected, high-value theological books in the Reformed tradition. Many theological books begin as dissertations, but many dissertations are worthy of publication in their own right. Realizing this, P&R has launched the Reformed Academic Dissertation (RAD) program to publish top-tier dissertations (Ph.D., Th.D., D.Min., and Th.M.) that advance biblical and theological scholarship by making distinctive contributions in the areas of theology, ethics, biblical studies, apologetics, and counseling.

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We look forward to seeing the RAD program grow into a large collection of curated dissertations that will help to advance Reformed scholarship and learning.

John J. Hughes  
Series Editor



## Foreword

When I was first asked to serve on the committee to oversee this dissertation, I was intrigued by the topic but somewhat skeptical that it could be parlayed into a work of great depth or substance. Biblical motivation in preaching? I had never come across any works on this specific subject, and my first thoughts about it were simplistic. I knew that the motivational model of human-centered emotionalism popularized by television preachers was to be avoided, but could one articulate a comprehensive, biblical doctrine of how a sermon should properly motivate the hearer? I agreed to the task partly out of curiosity, but mostly because of my confidence in Mr. Heiple's ability to tackle such a topic, however difficult it may have first seemed to me.

I was not surprised that the end result was an outstanding piece of scholarship. I expected as much from my friend and student, Ray Heiple. I *was* surprised that a topic I first viewed with a little skepticism had taken the form of a dissertation that I found myself recommending to every pastor I know.

Mr. Heiple brings out the point that motivation lies at the very heart of preaching, and that every sermon is preached on some notion of how people are motivated to respond. These notions are sometimes consciously articulated, but for many preachers they remain undeveloped assumptions. Most preachers of the Reformed persuasion could tell you what motivations should *not* be used, but a great number of the same preachers have likely not thought

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through and employed a coherent, biblical model of motivation. The following work will lead pastors a good way down the path of discovering and applying a biblical model of motivation in preaching that honors the Lord, upholds his Word, and produces conviction in the hearts of conscionable hearers.

Motivations color every human act with the light hues of virtue, the darker shades of corruption, or the gray tone of suspicion. Motivation often reveals the heart even more than the act it produces. When it comes to the motions of faith, motivation means everything, as Jesus so powerfully reminded us in Matthew 6. Therefore, biblical motivation in preaching is a subject that we cannot afford to overlook. If we would preach the Word with the right motives, we must lay the right motives before our hearers, and pray that our gracious God would sovereignly use them to produce true faith and sincere obedience.

In nineteen years of pulpit ministry, few works have impacted my view of preaching like this one. I am delighted to recommend it to pastors, seminary students, homiletics professors, and anyone who takes pleasure in God's Word and the preaching of it. I pray that God would use this work to strengthen the preaching of his word with biblical motivation that brings many to their knees before Christ.

C. J. Williams  
Professor of Old Testament Studies  
Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

## Preface

The experience of getting a book published stirred up a variety of emotions in me. The emotions began when P&R Publishing first expressed interest in the work, and they continued to ebb and flow throughout the approval process, during the copyediting, proofreading, and even now as I write this preface. Some are beneficial emotions of excitement, satisfaction, and desire. They help me to stay focused and to work in a timely and attentive manner. I am trying to keep them going. Others are impeding emotions of anxiety, stress, and worry. I have to resist and suppress them so that I can stay diligent, continue working, and meet all my deadlines. However, all of the emotions came as a result of my knowing and assenting to each of the successive tasks I had to accomplish in order to get this book published. They came as I learned and was convinced of the truth of the information I received. It was the instructions, as I understood and believed them, and as they interacted with the rest of my character, which produced the emotions. That is the way emotions are always produced. We do not consciously choose to feel a certain way or to have this or that emotion. We can cherish certain emotions or try to control and hold them back, but emotions and feelings for the most part simply come. They come differently to different people. They flow out of who we are and what we believe as we interact with our environment.

Man is an emotional being. Man is a rational being. Man has physical strength. Man has an intellect. These things are all good in that they are necessary elements of human nature as God has created it. When a person loses some ability in any of these areas, whether



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from a genetic defect or from some accident after birth, it is a tragedy which we ought to mourn and do all that we can to remedy with our science, technology, and medicine. Man, in the way that God created him in the beginning, both male and female, was, to use the old philosophical language, a *perfect* being. That is, man did not lack anything in his being to be what God created him to be: the sinless and righteous image of God, glorifying and enjoying Him forever as he exercised his God-given dominion over the creation, filling and subduing the earth and being fruitful and multiplying. Had man not sinned surely all of his powers in body and soul would have been used perfectly forever. We would never have to worry about someone abusing his abilities in a way that is against the nature of those abilities, whether intentionally or out of ignorance. But since man did fall into sin, such is not the case.

This book examines a subject—motivation—that is in need of a lot more examination. Not from secular psychologists, but from theologians and ministers of the gospel. In fact, one of the main reasons why motivation so desperately needs to be studied by the true doctors of the soul—the teachers of the Word—is because of all of the clutter and confusion heaped up around it by the secularists. And because we in the church have for too long neglected the soul and its powers. We do not even know what a soul is anymore. If we cannot put it under a microscope and map its DNA, it doesn't exist for us. But the soul is not physical! It has no matter, atoms, or cells. You cannot measure a soul. You cannot weigh a thought. The soul and its powers belong to the realm of being. And to directly study being one must go beyond physics, after physics, which is to say *metaphysics*. Yet our almost idolatrous confidence in science and physics has for all practical purposes slain metaphysics. (Apart from a few antiquated Roman Catholic theologians, does anyone even study metaphysics anymore? Where are the Protestant evangelical metaphysicians? Please call me when you find them. I would like to join up. I hope they accept novices.)

Soul and body make up the individual human being. What

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affects the soul affects the body and vice versa. We can measure, observe, and describe how the body is affected by thoughts and desires. Emotions, though occurring in the *soul* (which is to say the *heart*, which in turn is to say the *mind*) affect the body. Emotional states can be measured by the heart rate, blood pressure, perspiration, body temperature, and other physical indications. Different kinds of thoughts can be quantified according to recorded brain waves. Yet these bodily accompaniments are the effects and not the causes of activities which occur in that nonphysical, noncorporeal entity which we call the soul. The soul is not measurable. The soul is not observable. Yet the soul is real. Identical twins with exactly the same DNA, raised at the exact same time, in precisely the same way, by the same people, in the same environment, consuming the same kinds of food and water, and participating in the same exercise and experiences, have entirely different thoughts, affections, desires, senses of humor, likes, dislikes, and personalities. Though exactly the same physically and bodily, they are two distinct, different people because each one has his own individual soul.

Psychologists by definition study the soul, and motivation takes place in the soul, so psychologists are right to talk about motivation. When someone is motivated they are moved to action. Motivation begins when a person becomes aware of a present motive or motives. He considers them and understands them; whether he is correct in his understanding does not matter. What matters is that he has an apprehension of the motives that are before him. Then at some point the apprehended motive or motives has become effectual to the point that what was a potential incentive has been received and accepted by the person. The motive has persuaded him to do something; whether merely in his mind or also in his body, he has assented to and not rejected the motivation that was before simply *there*. Now it is his motivation. This is true for what has been classified as both “external” and “internal” motivation. When a person becomes motivated, the potential or possible motivation of which he was previously aware, of which he was previously merely considering, though

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possibly quite unconsciously, he has now adopted and is acting upon it and by means of it.

Many factors are involved in the motivation process but the one that has dominated modern psychology for more than fifty years is emotion. People can be moved by emotion. In fact they are quite easily moved by emotion. Emotions are powerful. They are easy to excite and stir up, and they can just as easily be turned or controlled. Very little thought is required to bring about an emotional state. In fact we often react with strong emotion before thinking things through, sometimes getting ourselves into trouble. As noted above, emotions are part of our human nature; therefore, emotions in and of themselves are good. It is good that we are emotional beings. God made us that way. It would be bad for us to be nonemotional or unemotional beings. If one were to lose one's ability to have emotions, it would be a tragedy and a malady for which one should seek treatment. Emotions are part of our created natures and as such they are good.

Like the rest of our powers, however, emotions can be used for evil. They can also be misused in a way that is not in accord with their natures. So, for example, seeing that God has not given us emotions in order to determine good from evil, to judge something to be good or evil based upon one's emotions would be to judge wrongly, even if you happened to make the correct judgment. It would be like an algebra teacher requiring her students to complete a regimen in the weight room to "study" for their exam. Increasing their physical strength will not help them to correctly apply the quadratic formula—for that they need to engage in mental exercise. Similarly, we must not look to emotions to do what they were not given by God to do. Even when we do so unintentionally, we misuse God's good gifts resulting in harm to ourselves.

In this book I present a thesis on how preachers ought to seek to motivate when they preach a sermon and how Christians ought to seek to be motivated when they listen to a sermon. My evidence to support this argument is based upon five sermonic events

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recorded for us in Scripture in the book of Acts. From my study I am convinced that there is a biblical way, a correct way, for a sermon to motivate. The preacher should seek to motivate and the listener should seek to be motivated according to this biblical way. Whether or not a person actually is effectually motivated in a sermon is God's business, but both preacher and listener are still responsible to do things the right way. Such is the case with all Christian duties; whether praying, evangelizing, worshipping, or anything else, we are always to seek to do things rightly. We leave it to God to sovereignly move as He sees fit. We pray for Him to help us and bless us but even then we pray, "Thy will be done." A cursory look at the contemporary scene reveals that to be motivated or to seek to motivate in an unbiblical way is not only a possibility for churches but is the majority report in today's church. As goes without saying, doing anything in an unbiblical way is not pleasing to God. Specifically, to motivate in an unbiblical way is manipulative and sinful. In Christianity, the ends cannot justify the means.

My thesis is that a sermon ought to motivate by its content as it is presented and proven to be true. The preacher ought to show that what he is saying is from God and therefore is true and should be believed by everyone who approves of the truth. The listener, if he is a Christian, ought to be seeking to see and be persuaded by the truth of the Word of God. In Scriptural preaching events, unbelievers are shown to be converted when the Holy Spirit (savingly) convinces them of the truth of the message. So the preacher's goal and aim is the same for both believer and unbeliever: to present and prove the truth of his message. A message or report persuades or motivates as it is believed. It is more likely to be believed when it is demonstrated to be true. However, even if the message is true and shown to be true, people can still refuse to believe it. Such is especially the case with regard to the truth of the Word of God, the truth which fallen man naturally hates. When a sinful man rejects God's true Word, he is guilty and will be judged. God's Word, though perfectly true, only benefits those who believe it. Those Jews who failed to enter the

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Promised Land were not able to enter it because the gospel which they heard did not profit them. It did not profit them because they did not believe it. Those who believe are moved by faith to respond and they enter God's rest (see Heb. 3:18–4:3).

Therefore, the instrument of biblical motivation is faith, as God is pleased to give it or strengthen it. As a preacher I cannot make an unbeliever come to faith. I cannot make a Christian grow in his faith. But I can give the means by which both can occur: the truth of the Word of God. Furthermore, I ought to do all I can to show that the particular part of the Word of God that I am preaching is true, for my goal is to persuade by the truth. Listeners have a similar duty when a sermon is preached. As Christians you and I cannot make ourselves believe more today than we did yesterday, but we can focus our attention on the Word of God and ask God to help us grow in believing it. I would argue that it is only as we see and are convinced of its truth that our faith in God's Word grows. As they hear sermons Christians should do all that they can to see the truth of the message, to allow it to remove their doubts, and to let it answer their questions. Only as we are convinced of and persuaded of the truth of the message preached can we be rightly motivated to grow in our believing in and doing what God says.

Although I specifically reject emotion as a means of biblical motivation for the preacher and for the listener, I do not reject emotions! I hope and pray that no one will say that my work advocates for a sterile or emotionless preaching event. That is not at all what I am trying to say. If you listen to any of my sermons or come to my church you will know that is not the case. You will see and hear me express emotions. You will see and hear me plead with listeners to believe in God's Word and to do what it says, and to do so sincerely from the heart, from the whole man. I hope and pray that God's Word moves my listeners, including their emotions. Emotions are a vital part of our humanity and we should seek to express them in a God-honoring way. It would be rebellion against God and our very natures to seek to be without emotion. I hope and pray that

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beneficial emotions are stirred up in you in a preaching event. But I hope and pray that those emotions flow from your being convinced of and of having believed in the truth of the message, that it is the truth heard and believed that causes you to feel in God-honoring way. Right emotion can only be produced by believing in right doctrine. However, for the preacher or the listener to deliberately seek motivation through emotion without regard to right doctrine is to abuse emotion and use it in a way for which it was not designed. Converted people must seek to be transformed through the renewing of their minds—that is how they will prove that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God (Rom. 12:1–2). They must be motivated through their faith, for whatever does not come from faith is sin (Rom. 14:23).

Motivation that comes from intentionally appealing to the emotions or stirring up feelings does so without any regard for the truth of the message. I cried at the end of *Old Yeller*, and then went out and hugged my dog. Adherents of false religions are often strongly motivated. The one is fiction, the other idolatry. Feelings cannot on their own authenticate or embody truth. Only that motivation which flows from faith in God's Word of truth can generate emotions that are pleasing to God.

Moreover, emotions and feelings are not the same. Experts in the field will tell you this. The best Christian counselors know this. I do not go into the distinction in this book, but there are differences between them. One of the more obvious differences is that emotions always have some physical manifestation: sweating, increase in heart rate, and so on, whereas feelings can be wholly concealed. The reason is that while emotions touch both body and soul, feelings are generated entirely within the soul, the nonphysical aspect of our personhood. We are living in a day in which feelings have been given permission to trump objective reality. A person who is genetically, biologically, and unchangeably male can now call himself female, or vice versa, and our world says it's true. His feelings are more determinative for what is real than truth or fact. I do not believe

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this is simply relativism taken to its logical extreme. I think something more profound is going on here. In and of itself this particular example is sinful and wrong, even absurd. Male and female are two distinct cellular realities, observably and demonstrably absolute and undeniable. Yet man is more than what can be observed, measured, and weighed in a laboratory or petri dish. And that nonphysical, incorporeal aspect of our being has been neglected, disallowed, and even mocked for far too long. The human soul is real. It is crying out to be heard. Could it be that in the mysterious providence of God, today's sinful denial of "male and female He created them" is not simply a naked rejection of the truth of God (as if there ever was such a thing), but comes camouflaged (as rebellion is so wont to do) under something truthful: that man is more than physical? Like a voice from the metaphysical realm, though irrational and ludicrous, yet by its sheer force it compels the physical realm to acknowledge its reality, even to the point of making it promote the preposterous. Call it the revenge of the metaphysical or the humiliation of the physical. Maybe if theologians and preachers had been teaching rightly the reality of the soul and its powers, we would not be at this strange place of denying what is undeniably true and affirming what is patently false. The soul is real. It has affections and desires. It is no more an authoritative voice than any piece of our sin-laden creation, but it has power, and we ignore or deny it to our own peril.

All of these things were not at all in my mind when I chose this topic on which to write my dissertation. One of my professors, Dr. George Scipione, a biblical counselor for over thirty years at the time (over forty now), was explaining to the first doctoral cohort at Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary (RPTS) how a doctoral project needed to examine something not before studied. We had been talking about counseling and discipleship and about why people do the things that they do. Dr. Scipione mentioned how confused and distorted the study of motivation had become, not just outside the church but also within it and that a good topic for a doctoral dissertation would be to go through the Bible and

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examine how God motivates people. As one of the students in that cohort, his suggestion did not particularly interest me at the time, but I remember thinking something to the effect of “Well, if I can’t think of anything better, that could work.” Once I seriously began to look at the topic, however, I saw how motivation touched nearly everything in which I had an interest. Soon, in order to in any way adequately deal with the topic, I had to seriously narrow the focus from how God motivates people in the Bible to how five sermons in Acts sought to motivate their listeners.

Although I credit Dr. Scipione with giving me this topic, I take all the blame for every way in which this work falls short of its goal. It is my prayer that despite its shortcomings it would be used by God to help Christians to seek to be rightly motivated by the Word of God through their faith in its truth, and recognize and reject all emotional manipulation that would bypass the mind, and to even be the beginning of a Protestant and evangelical focus on the objective reality of the soul and its powers, that some light could shine on a place that has been in the dark for far too long.





## Acknowledgments

This book would not have been published without the strong support of my examiners at Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary (RPTS): Dr. Jack Kinneer and Dr. C. J. Williams. I thank them for all of their help and encouragement. I want to thank Judith Dinsmore and Elizabeth Bortka for their excellent work in getting this manuscript ready for printing. Without them it would barely be readable, let alone publishable! I pray for our sovereign Lord's richest blessings upon them and their families. I also want to thank John J. Hughes and everyone else at P&R Publishing for their interest in this work. May our good God be pleased to bless them through it. Finally, I want and need to thank my faithful wife Robin and my children Calvin, Daniel, Jacob, and Sarah for their love, respect, and support in life and in ministry. I would not be able to do anything without the grace that God gives me through each and every one of them. May God forgive and cause to quickly be forgotten all the errors in this book. But may He be pleased to mightily bless and multiply any truth that is in it.



## Introduction

One of the most solemn charges given in all of Scripture is contained in Paul's second letter to Timothy, where he declares to the younger preacher:

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. (2 Tim. 4:1–4 NASB)

Preach the word! Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul wanted to so impress upon Timothy the great importance of preaching the Word of God that he would never forget it. In fact, Scripture views preaching so highly that in comparison to baptism, which was commanded by the Lord Jesus in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19–20, Paul can even say, “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect” (1 Cor. 1:17).

The Westminster Assembly echoed this high view of preaching. Question 155 of the Larger Catechism declares:

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How is the Word made effectual to salvation? The Spirit of God maketh the reading, *but especially the preaching of the Word*, an effectual means of enlightening, convincing, and humbling sinners; of driving them out of themselves, and drawing them unto Christ; of conforming them to his image, and subduing them to his will; of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions; of building them up in grace, and establishing their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Westminster Divines, it is “especially the preaching of the Word” that the Holy Spirit uses to save and sanctify His people according to the sovereign good pleasure of God. Consequently, there should be little disagreement in Reformed circles with the proposition that preaching is the most fundamental and important duty in the calling of a *preacher*.

If we take our definition of preaching from Question 155 of the Larger Catechism, how then shall we preach? Particularly, what elements of motivation should the preacher seek to incorporate into the sermon, so that the end product would be better suited to be used by the Spirit in His work of enlightening, convincing, humbling, driving, drawing, conforming, subduing, strengthening, building up, and establishing the hearts of sinners “in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation?” This book seeks to discover how God, in His own sermonistic speech to His people, sought to motivate them, and to then set forth the ways in which the preacher can emulate Him. There are many books, methods, styles, and approaches to preaching. Much of it today is concerned with applying or moving the text in order to influence attitudes and behaviors, but my question is: Can we identify the elements of motivation inspired by the Holy Spirit in those sermonistic addresses to the people of God found in Scripture? Can

<sup>1</sup>WLC 155 (emphasis mine).

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we take our method of motivating in a sermon directly from the sermons of Scripture?

Before we can turn to the Bible, we need to define what motivation is, how it is given, and determine our criteria for identifying motivational elements in the text. For that, we need to at least briefly consider a representational sampling of the current field of motivational theory, particularly with regard to how it has been identified and applied in religion, the church, and preaching. In this first part of my book, my method will be to examine what various authors say about motivation and how it is to be most effectively used, especially in a Christian context. Apart from showing consistency or inconsistency, I will try not to extol or criticize the individual arguments or methods, except where they specifically look to Scripture for justification. Since my purpose is to identify from Scripture the biblical way to motivate, I will address appeals to Scripture as they come up in order to affirm or reject them. Finally, as patterns and similarities become evident, I will seek to aid the reader by calling attention to them and drawing conclusions that will be revisited later in the book.



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## Promoting Motivational Theory to the Church

Forty years ago, when psychological motivational theory was still somewhat new, Gary Collins sought to promote some of its alleged benefits to church leaders. In his influential work, Collins opines that difficult theological concepts could be more effectively taught by making the teaching activity as meaningful as possible.<sup>1</sup> He argues that since boredom, meaninglessness, and hopelessness are the common plagues of modern life, the main challenge of the church is “to get people interested, enthusiastic, and involved in spiritual issues.”<sup>2</sup> Yet Collins recognizes that people perceive things differently based on their knowledge, past experiences, current interests, emotions, hopes, and expectations. He gives, as an example, the way in which people of different backgrounds might view the same piece of land. The architect considers the home he could build, the farmer thinks about the crops he could plant, the geologist imagines the rocks he could find, and the artist envisions the painting he could create.<sup>3</sup>

Collins goes so far as to classify emotion *as* motivation.<sup>4</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> Gary Collins, *Man in Motion: The Psychology of Human Motivation* (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1973), 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 44–45.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.



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claims, “Emotions are so influential in motivating our behavior that some psychologists have even suggested dropping the term ‘emotion’ from psychology textbooks altogether and using the term ‘motivation’ instead.”<sup>5</sup> Yet, he notes that emotional overload can have the opposite effect, resulting in de-motivation. For example, whereas the mildly anxious student is motivated to study harder,<sup>6</sup> “high stress and anxiety can hinder our motivation.”<sup>7</sup> Collins says the desire for need reduction (I’m hungry so I eat), stimulation (going on a roller coaster or eating an expensive steak), unconscious habits, goals, and incentives all play a part in the complex way in which people are motivated.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, he notes that beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and values, which all interact with emotion to influence the way people think or act, could themselves be affected or changed by persuasion. In fact, even God uses motivation to persuade: “The Holy Spirit can and does motivate.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, the right use of persuasion looms large in Collins’ theory for the future benefit of the church.<sup>10</sup> Collins exhorts, “In the church we must be aware of how people are motivated and attempt to use this knowledge in motivating Christians to be more diligent in their service for Christ.”<sup>11</sup> Collins’ triad of persuasion, emotion, and personal factors will be taken up again and again by others.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 52. Here he cites M. D. Vernon, *Human Motivation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), and R. S. Lazarus, J. R. Averill, and E. M. Opton, Jr., “Towards a Cognitive Theory of Emotions,” in *Feelings and Emotions: The Loyola Symposium*, ed. M. B. Arnold (New York: Academic Press, 1970).

<sup>6</sup> Collins, *Man in Motion*, 51.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 56–64.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 108–9. He cites Acts 26:28, where Paul “almost persuaded” Agrippa to become a Christian.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 65.

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