

"What's the Least I Can Do?" (And Still Get to Heaven)

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Imagine a preacher and a congregation coming together to talk about working together and everything seems to be going great. They agree doctrinally, they genuinely like one another as people, and they both have a similar zeal and vision for the future. As everyone is getting ready to pack things up for the night and head home to a bright new future together the preacher says, "I have just one more question. What's the least amount of work I need to do here and still be supported? What are we talking; one, two sermons a week, a Bible class, maybe a bulletin. What's the least I need to do for y'all to be happy with me?" Immediately, I think we could see and agree that the problem is not so much the question as it is the attitude behind the question.

It's a preposterous question that we know no one would actually ever ask; right? The very concept of someone wanting to do the "least amount of work possible" is oftentimes even shameful in our society. And yet, while sometimes people may not ask the question out loud, we can observe them routinely asking the question through their behavior. People who seem to constantly/continuously "do" the least possible. The least they believe to be necessary. Consider the concept in a few relationships.

Work - The person who shows up late, complains about their job, wants to always go home early, and yet they know they need the job and they know they have to work to pay the bills, but they aren't going to give their most. They seem to always be straddling that fine line of doing the absolute least they can do and yet still be employed.

Marriage - What about the spouse that, yes, they don't drink, or curse, or do drugs, or are abusive, and don't cheat - all of these things they realize could lead to the destruction of their marriage, but at the same time they do not love, listen, forgive, participate in the marriage the way they truly should? They seem to always be seeking to give the least they can to the marriage but still remain married.

Parents - What about parents who provide a home for their children but don't engage their children spiritually? They pay for stuff and take their kids places but aren't truly involved in "raising" (training) them?

Children - What about children who make it their job to make their parents' lives difficult? Children who only call on birthdays and holidays? Children who do the least amount of work they can possibly get away with and still be in good standing with their parents.

Time and time again we observe people's actions in these various relationships and identify people who through their actions are saying "What's the least I can do in this

relationship and still have it?" But now, what has God said about all of these?

Children - "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord." (Colossians 3:20) When are children to honor and obey their parents? Always, and in all ways. That's what obedience is. (Jeremiah 35:10&18)

Parents - "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)

Marriage - "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. " (Ephesians 5:22) "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her..." (Ephesians 5:25)

Work - "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men." (Colossians 3:23) (Of course, this assumes you would work hard for the Lord.)

There is a common thread through each of these relationships and that is that the minimum effort/work God expects of us is our maximum. It is no different when it comes to our relationship with Him. "What's the least I can do and still go to heaven?" There's actually a verse that tells us that. "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30). God has given us His everything, and He expects everything from us as well. Let's work to love God and proclaim it through good and godly attitude and actions.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter." (Matthew 7:21)