

The Self-Government Principle of Motives



“No one, regardless of how shrewd or well-advised he is, can stand against the Lord.” Proverbs 21:30

Underline the key concepts found in this principle.

The definition of motive is the reason behind the action or for the action; this identifies our goals and purposes. Everyone is motivated by the satisfaction of our desires, and moved by powerful impulses or passions. Unfortunately, many of those hidden impulses are self-seeking, and they get us to manipulate others for our own benefit. We may lie, cheat, deceive or manipulate in order to get a deal or our own way, and then call it being shrewd. Webster says shrewd is worldly wise, clever or near to the truth. It is important that we always seek the truth of why we are doing what we are doing. If we don't examine ourselves or recognize we are doing things with the wrong intentions it could lead us to personal destruction, for it will all come back to us.

Today we have thousands of laws and attorneys to interpret them, followed up by lawsuits trying to outwit each other by our shrewdness. It is important to be well advised, but let's make sure our motives are pure. Then we will not be known for being smart or shrewd, but wise.

What we are today is the result of decisions that we have made in the past. Every time we make decisions, the questions will come up such as what is right or wrong, or what is the easy way out. Based upon our choices, we will assume challenges, take risks and receive benefits or negative consequences.

There are several ways that can help guide us to a positive future. One is by constantly

asking ourselves what is the motivation behind my decisions and actions. Checking our own motives can be very enlightening and sometimes we may discover that they are really very selfish. Sometimes we take the easy way out by misleading people with what our true intentions are. Some motivations come out of fear or may even be inspired by the famous Golden Rule “Do to others what we want them to do to you.” In every decision the final outcome will depend on what kind of motivations are driving our decisions.

BENEFITS

1. When our motives are right, we become open and free with no hidden agendas. People will sense the freedom and will not defend themselves against us. They will respect us and will want to do business with us.
2. If we examine our motives and rely on the truth, it will teach us common sense and practical ways that will work in every area of our lives. Then we will not be known for being shrewd but for being wise

The sooner we make good decisions with the right motivations, the better off we will be in the end. It is okay to seek our own personal goals, but we must also work for the good of others and our community. We must learn to practice right principles when facing decisions.

The good life starts when our motives are pure and we follow good principles, taking

Action Plan for Motives



responsibility for whom and what we are. We are like a product, our quality and value is based on the principles of which we are made.

STEPS TO FOLLOW

1. Be transparent. Make sure everyone is clear about the things that are said, done and felt. This effort will help us to be more authentic and truthful and will make us more consistent and real to others.
2. Learn to read people. Listen not only to their words, but also to their hearts. This is how we can discern deceit or manipulation.
3. Understand there are consequences with every decision.
4. Make sure the decision is in agreement with what is right and ethical.
5. Ask others who are wise for advice.
6. Ask your family for feedback - positive or negative. Many times we forget that our decisions affect them as well.
7. Desire to be morally correct. Our goal should be to strengthen our character.

By understanding principles, we not only understand why, but how. Principles show us the way life operates. Life is meant to be simple. At some point, we will experience the consequences of our motives and actions. This has very little to do with how smart or shrewd we are, that is why it is important for us to examine ourselves all the time.

Question your thoughts and ideas until everything is clear, this is how you avoid wrong motives. Do not rely solely on your experience or knowledge, but be mindful that sometimes knowledge makes us shrewd. That is why we need to trust in the wisdom derived from principles. We should never take advantage of people by being deceitful or do things just to feel good, but always do things that are right.

Remember... thoughts produce actions, actions become habits, habits form our character, and character determines our destiny!

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. How can you tell if you are operating with right motives?
2. What is the difference between wisdom and shrewdness?

Evaluate yourself from 1 to 10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
What specific action can you put into practice to test the benefits of this principle?										
Check list for the daily reading of this principle	M	T	W	T	F	S	S			

Completed

Not completed