



Does is 'count' if you do what God asks - even if you don't want to?

In other words, "Would I be better off not doing it, since 'my heart is not in it'?"

This is a question I've fielded from time to time, and again recently in a Bible study. It's a great question, because we know there are lots of times we just don't 'feel like' doing something God wants.

I'll answer the question with a few more questions:

Do you get paid when you show up for work - even when you don't feel like it?

Do you get an "attendance" mark for showing up to class at school even when you'd rather be doing.... pretty much anything else?

Does your vote on the jury count even if you'd much prefer even sitting in the dentist's chair having a root canal?

Hopefully, the answer is obvious: Of course !

There are many times in life that we need to do the right thing, just because it is the right thing - not because we "feel like it." In fact, if we waited until we felt like it, we may never do the right thing, because the right thing is almost always the harder thing to do.

Unfortunately, our society is extremely focused on "feelings" as a determinant of our actions. For example, "If it feels good, do it!" and the flip side: "If you don't feel like it, then don't do it."

Basing your actions on whether or not you 'feel like' doing something is a sure way to guarantee that the only things you ever end up doing are either 'easy' or 'fun.'

God's ways are often the direct opposite of the ways of the world. For example, in marriage, there will be times when you just don't "feel like" loving the other person. The world says, "If you don't feel it, you can't be loving, because love is based on feelings. But God's definition of love is NOT feelings-based. A good definition of love in God's world would be: "Love is a conscious decision to do what the other person needs you to do - even when you don't feel like it." God's way is for you to do loving things - even though you don't feel like it, and - funny how this works - He will bring the feelings of love later!

Jesus may be the prime example of doing the right/loving thing even though He didn't "feel like it." In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed for God to find another way to accomplish the forgiveness of mankind, because He knew that having His back ripped to shreds before being executed as a common criminal was not going to "feel" good. But there was no other way, so He made the supreme sacrifice anyway! He did the right thing, because it was the right thing, not because He "felt" like it.

So, will God bless you for doing the right thing - even though you didn't feel like doing it? Absolutely! Do the right thing, just because it is the right thing. Then pray for God to work a change in your heart and help you "feel like" doing the right things next time.

Thanks for Asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net