

Grace Energized Men: Reversing the Erosion of A Reverent Mind Titus 2:1-2

God offers to all of us the incredible power of the Spirit to free us from the shackles of sin. Everything I will share this evening about personal sanctification can only be accomplished through the grace of God, by the Spirit of God—when you as a believer choose to obey.

God does not force our choices in personal sanctification, nor does He make them for us. He simply unleashes His power when we seek to obey Him. That power is described clearly in Romans 8, the premier chapter in God's Word about personal sanctification. Reversing the erosion of our minds by the world around us can be reversed by simple choices to obey in the power of the Spirit.

The Power of God's Spirit

And what happens when we obey? We discover that the Spirit of God can set us free. I like to call Him the Liberating Spirit of God. Look with me at:

*Romans 8:1-4 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
NKJV*

He lifts us above the law of sin. In 1983, as I led a team to minister in New Delhi, India we flew on Air India. Air India has a reputation for over filling the planes with people and cargo until it groans with the weight. At the New Delhi airport, we raced down almost every inch of the runway with cows at nearly eye level, until at last we felt our plane shudder, slightly groan and lift away from the ground. Our 899,490 pound Boeing-747 had been earthbound to nearly the end of the runway until a higher law than gravity, the law of lift took over and snatched us off the ground.

Just like the law of lift, aerodynamically teaches that the faster the plane moves down the runway the sooner the lift of the wings tear away the chains of gravity. So the Spirit of God teaches us that the faster we develop our grace-energized resistance to sin, the sooner we tear away at the anchors of sin and the flesh chaining us to mere earthliness, and we begin to regularly soar to even greater levels of fellowship with Jesus!

We are in the midst of our look at Titus 2, grace-energized men. The second quality described the man God seeks—he is an older man who model what its like to live life reverently. This man thinks deeply about God in an amused, shallow-thinking culture. This man lives a life that is not entertained by sensuality, and never amused by vulgarity. He is an older man in the faith who understands the brevity of life, the gravity of God's Word, and the reality of eternity.

Because the Tsunami of sin sweeps across our lives each day, this man always seeks to...

Reverse the Erosion of a God-controlled Mind

The only way to recover from an eroded mind, a mind that has gotten neutralized, where evil seeps in a bit more each day, is to pursue personal sanctification:

- 1. Grace-energized Men Abstain from Lust Promoting Activities** (1 Peter 2:11).
If there are specific areas you know right now are sin, you must repent of them.
Stop now!

1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, NKJV

Watch out for AMUSEMENTS that can **infect your mind to satanic ideas and stories**. We are all aware of attachments in email that can infect our computers with viruses. Often these programs lodge themselves deep in our hard-drives and wait, springing to life infecting, corrupting, and destroying precious data we need and use. That is exactly the picture of how Satan operates through media.

Some examples of media that has infected attachments that can harm you spiritually are:

- ⇒ Movies that follow the theme of sensuality, rebellion to authority, horror, or witchcraft.
- ⇒ Science fiction that portrays superhuman powers available from cosmic sources leave unguarded minds open to endless fantasies about what if this may be true, and thus a conflict with the authority of God's Word.
- ⇒ Television programs dealing with adultery, fornication, or vulgarity.
- ⇒ Music that popularizes eastern religions, satanic words and occultic mantras.
- ⇒ Games which encourage you to be involved in killing, facing horrific demon-like monsters.

⇒ Actual Occult Practices which bring with them demonic contact: black magic, astrology, fetishes, fortune-telling, séance meetings, witchcraft, palmistry, spiritism, ESP (extra-sensory perception), pictures of witches and occult propaganda, voodoo dolls, tarot cards, Ouija boards, crystal balls, black cubes and related occult practices. Each of these items causes contact with demons and should be avoided and burned! (This is the scriptural method of dealing with all such things that offend God, grieve His Spirit, and defile and ensnare us as believers.)

Godly believers should regularly repent of all evil amusements, exposures in their hearts and lives.

2. Grace-energized Men Starve their Flesh (Romans 13:14).

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. NKJV

Cut all supply routes. If there are websites, TV shows, magazines, videos, and so on, that are less than Christlike, destroy them. If there are avenues that defile, such as cable TV/HBO and ungodly internet access, get rid of them. Do whatever it takes to starve the evil desires of your flesh, and those of your family. **Put on Christ by starving your flesh!**

- ⇒ Have a *no-television* week or month.
- ⇒ Read God's Word before email or online news each morning.
- ⇒ Pray in the car or meditate on a verse instead of listening to the radio.
- ⇒ Cancel the newspaper or magazine.
- ⇒ Create an intentional solitude.

3. Grace-energized Men Hate Evil (Rom. 12:9). As pilgrims in this world, and with the Tsunami of sin crashing over and around us each day, Paul prescribed one constant attitude—hate evil. **Abhor, turn away from, and hate evil!**

Evil, because of our ever present flesh, is always more interesting. This obviously is not a statement about the way things should be, but simply a statement of the way things are. Once we understand this, much that is mysteriously wrong in life becomes clearer. For example, if we had forty-nine stations broadcasting healthy, virtuous programming, and only one station broadcasting violent or sexual programming, most of America would be tuned into the one channel, even church people. Evil is always more interesting.

Understanding the allure of evil explains why we watch so much of it, even when it is so clearly destructive. The sheer volume of evil our nation is exposed to on a daily basis is one of the most disturbing effects of the proliferation of media. The only remedy I know is two thousand years old:

*Romans 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. **Abhor** [hate so go away from] **what is evil**. Cling [go toward so stuck to, glued to] to what is good. NKJV*

The heart of the message Paul taught them is in Ephesians 4:22-24. Christ's Lordship must fill our lives displacing any places in our lives to the Devil. Three clear choices we must make!

*Ephesians 4:22-24 that you **put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and **be renewed** in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you **put on** the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

To apply all this, remember when Paul taught the Ephesian believers about anything tied to Satan in Acts 19:19-20, they collected and burned all of the objects associated with demonic and satanic contact. Right now, if you have music, videos, games, books, posters, or other objects that are tied in any way to the occult, destroy them today.

4. Grace-energized Men Look for God: This is a daily, purposeful, and planned focus on pleasing the Lord in all things. Start your day crying out for Christ's help. **Look for Him!**

*1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; **but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.** NKJV*

This verse has a huge truth we need to stop and really lay hold of--**God is there all the time**. The longer we meditate on this verse, the more we see God's shadow. It is He who is standing over us always ready to deliver us if we but look to Him! He is not distant; He is never closer than when we are tempted!

God is there all the time. Have you allowed that truth to sink into your soul and become a part of your operating system? God has told us that He is faithful. Whenever we think we are alone, we are not alone. We never face the adversary, the prowling lion called the Devil—alone.

God has already measured and limited the attack upon us. He has already provided an escape route if we will only look for it and take it. If we were alone and facing temptation, we would be hopelessly defeated.

But God knows that already and so He is there, all the time, and every time. And He has the best way of escape marked for us. What a Mighty God we serve!

Pause and do something before you lose that truth.

- Why not bow your head with me. Now say in your heart, "I believe You Lord that You will never leave me". Then tell Him thank you for being there with you right now.
- Now, with your heart opened before Him, tell Him that the next time you are tempted (you may even want to whisper in your heart to Him the temptation you most fear and often get defeated by)—that you will look for Him.
- Now, look up and say out loud with me—I WILL LOOK FOR GOD WHEN I AM TEMPTED!

Look for God! He is always faithful!

5. Grace-energized Men Saturate themselves With the Word (Joshua 1:8). After you read and ponder, work on memorizing key Scriptures that can help you have greater victory over sin, and then regularly meditate upon those verses.
Meditate day and night!

Joshua 1:8 "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. NKJV

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. NKJV

Discipline Yourself in Reading God's Word

We can most readily get alone with God faithfully *reading* His Word. Since the Scriptures are the very voice of God, we must discipline ourselves to *listen* to Him. It is amazing that Christians imagine they can live a fruitful Christian life without regularly reading the Bible. It's just not possible, because our minds do not retain what is necessary and must be refreshed again and again (2 Peter 1:12-15).

Since it only takes eighty hours to read the entire Bible, General Harrison's commitment obligated him to just one-half hour daily to read God's Word. Let me ask you this: Can't you also spare thirty minutes per day to cultivate the mind of Christ as General Harrison did? How about fifteen minutes to read God's Word through in a year? Or, at the very least, are you willing to devote five minutes a day to read the New Testament in a year?

		TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL MINUTES	DAILY MINUTES
THE BIBLE				
• OLD TESTAMENT	77%	62	3695	10
• NEW TESTAMENT	23%	18	1104	5
TIME TO READ BIBLE		80	3799	15

THE HARRISON PLAN				
• OLD TESTAMENT	1	80	4800	15
• NEW TESTAMENT	4	74	4419	15
MINUTES NEEDED		154	9219	30

Fifteen minutes reading per day makes it through the Bible once a year, and a half-hour equals two times. On a CD or tape, listening to the complete Bible in a year requires the same amount of time. Isn't God worth it?

I encourage you to not miss out on God's best for you. Plan to make the discipline of the Scriptures your way of life. Feast with God every day. Set aside 15 or even 30 minutes a day and say, "Lord, speak to me. Show me Your arrangements. Help me to know Your presence, yield to Your authority, and stay at Your right hand." On the authority of God's Word, I can say if you do you will live an unbelievable life—the life God designed for you to live.

Remember: God wants to invade every part of your heart, mind, and life. But He can only do so if you will say, "By Your grace, Lord, I purpose to *learn* Your Book, to prepare my heart to *live* Your Book, and to *lead* others in living and learning Your Word." That is exactly what God has put you on earth to do!

6. Grace-energized Men Stay in Constant Touch with God (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Prayer is the best, greatest, and most powerful way to touch your family's lives! **Pray without ceasing!**

Pray for wisdom, and seek God's direction for how to promote your growth in Christ's mind. Do not let another day go by without praying for your mind. Plan for purity; expose your mind only to the right things. Read the Bible to your family, and discuss it, so they also learn how to draw practical life applications from God's Word. It is by your walk with the Lord that you demonstrate that you love the Holy Scriptures yourself.

Pray for grace to stop the indiscriminate and endless watching of TV and videos, and starting systematic, prayerful reading and studying of God's Word. We all have the time to do what is right—we simply have to make it a priority. Today, let us each choose to cultivate the mind God has willed us to have!

7. Grace-energized Men Make Little Choices (I Timothy 4:7). This is a daily pattern of saying no to specific temptations, and saying yes to the Holy Spirit as He prompts you. One small choice is to turn your monitor so those behind you can see what you are viewing. If you struggle with images online this is a great accountability step. **Discipline yourself!**

Today we can make little choices to give to God what He desires from us.

- **Give Him your devotion.** Mark 12:33 “And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” NKJV

Have we offered our devotion up to Him irretrievably, completely, and lovingly—by giving Him time each day because we love Him; by giving Him our complete attention as we focus upon Him in His Word and in prayer?

- **Give Him your life.** Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. NKJV

Have we recently renewed that offering of all we are to Him? Have we repeated those simple words of the child Samuel, that the Lord so delights to hear from us, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening!”

- **Give Him your service.** Philippians 2:17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. NKJV

Are we pouring out what we cannot keep--to Him so we cannot lose? Each time you serve, look up in your heart from the classroom, nursery, choir room, AWANA room or where ever you offer that service, and say to the Lord, “I am giving this time to you. I can’t keep it, I could selfishly squander it, but instead I give it to YOU as an act of devotion and worship!”

- **Give Him your gifts.** Philippians 4:18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. NKJV

What is the aroma ascending from our living before Christ's eyes today? Make more of your offerings by praying over each check, hold it in your hand as you mail it or place it in the offering and breathe out to God, “I give this to YOU as an offering of love and gratitude!”

- **Give Him your worship.** Hebrews 13:15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. NKJV

When is the last time we stopped and launched a wave of praise filled worship toward His Throne? Plan to burst forth in your car, or on a walk, or when you are all alone into a cry of love to the Lord. Say something like you sing, “I love YOU Lord and I lift my voice to WORSHIP you...!”

- **Give Him your good works.** Hebrews 13:16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. NKJV

What acts of kindness have we premeditated and carried out this week? Plan to do intentional sacrificial acts of kindness for others. Do things unasked, unseen, and not expecting any thanks. As you do that act (like the trash, laundry, sweeping, mowing, what ever) lift you eyes above and say, "I am doing this in YOUR Name Oh Lord because I love YOU and I want to serve like You served!"

- **Give Him your prayers.** Revelation 8:3-4 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. NKJV

What do we have in the bowl of our collected prayers? If God loves our prayers so much that He collects them all (like notes from my wife & kids) why don't we send more? Up your times of prayers. Invite God into every praise and problem, every fear and frustration...your life will be revolutionized as you say to the Lord, "I need YOU in every part of my life!"

8. Grace-energized Men Walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16). Let the Word of God fill your life, and then pass it on to your family! **Walk daily!**

Those biblical commands are meant for each of us, as Christians, to obey. They are not something to simply pray about, and then get around to doing one day. No, they are for us to actively grab hold of and obey—right now!

Please turn with me to Ephesians 5:18-19:

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, NKJV

As we read, may we find the secret they knew and followed and like them, do the same! One word explains it all.

- IMPERATIVE
- PLURAL
- PASSIVE
- PRESENT

When the Holy Spirit picked the words to write down His message He was very specific. Perhaps no where else in all God's Word is the message of the grammar clearer than here!

IMPERATIVE An imperative verb means God is commanding. He is not offering a suggestion to us for our consideration! He is commanding us as Lord God Almighty. The filling of the Spirit of God into our life is our supreme obligation.

PLURAL A plural verb here means that God is speaking to all of us. When He says don't get drunk it is for all believers. The same for the filling. So the Spirit filled walk is the high calling and spiritual duty for every one of God's children.

PASSIVE A passive verb means God is asking us to open up to His filling. Passive means allow this to come into your life. Let the Spirit fill you is what God is saying. This is a call to unreserved yielding to God's control.

PRESENT The use of a present tense means God is offering a continuous filling. Another tense, the aorist, would mean a single action like [John 2:7](#) when Jesus said fill the water pots. But a present imperative means that the river of God's Holy Spirit wants to flow into and overflow out of our lives!

So God Almighty commands:

**All of Us
To Let His Spirit
Continuously Be Filling You!**