

# The Mercy & Grace of God

by Paul Washer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life that brings glory to God and staying focused on Christ above all else.*

**Duration:** 1:13:37

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 29:18, Isaiah 54:13, Matthew 7:7, Matthew 22:37-39, Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 1:14

**Topics:** "Holy Living", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker urges the audience to present their bodies as living and holy sacrifices to God. He emphasizes the importance of passionately pursuing God and not being afraid to burn out for Him. The speaker encourages the audience to seek guidance from the Bible in all aspects of their lives, including relationships and finances. He also highlights the need to separate oneself from wickedness and be aware of the snares set by the evil one in the world.

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## Transcript

Glory to God. Glory to God. I know that many of the hymns that I've chosen for this conference have been unknown to many of us, but there's a reason for it.

If you were to go back, as I have done in the last two weeks, going through hymnal after hymnal after hymnal, finding hymns that have all but been lost and yet with more truth than a thousand songs sung today. And I would greatly recommend to you there is a website, I think it's [cyberhymnal.org](http://cyberhymnal.org). And I'll tell you something, I literally went through hundreds, if not several hundred songs, and it was as though literally I had just spent the days in prayer and reading the word. There was so much scripture to be found there and so wonderful, wonderful.

And if I had the time, I'm not a musician or anything, but if I had the time, I would re-edit a hymn book. I would and put in all those songs that have been lost, so full of truth, so full of theology, so full of God. And they need to be reintroduced, definitely need to be reintroduced.

Well, here we are and there I must pray, Father, help me, help me. Lord, I only say amen because I trust that I have been helped. Amen.

I look out over in this congregation, I have a burden for everyone here. But I have such a special burden for those of you who are younger, wanting to go out into the ministry, those of you who are young in the

faith, those of you who are older, your children that you've brought with you, they're the great burden for me because I, too, have children and I'm reminded as I look out over the faces that I see of a song that I always sing at night to my boys. And it's, oh, Lord, I am weak and I'm trembling for the Lord.

I am always remembering, oh, what a strong shepherd holds you in his arms. He'll break you and make you his own. I have not walked with God long, 23 years is not long, but that is one of the most precious things to me.

Even after 23 years of very little progress in the faith, I would have no hope except for I know this God before whom I am weak and I am trembling. He will continue to break me and continue to make me his own. The greatest gift I'm convinced that the Lord can give a man is to capture him, is to capture him and not let him go.

You see, prior to coming to Christ, you were not some victim groping to find the truth. You were a hardy and stout rebel who hated God and would bite at every hand that reached out to you. And the fact that in your salvation, he captured you and continues to capture you, to continue to take more and more possession of your land.

If you got to know me, if you knew me 23 years ago, I would have been a great disappointment to you. If you knew me now, as some know me, I would still be somewhat of a disappointment to you. But know this, he who began a good work will finish it.

And that is the confidence that we all have. It's the only confidence that we have. And so I'm going to be talking.

There's three different things I want to do, and I don't think I'll be able to do all of them. But I want to continue for a moment speaking about holiness. I must, because listen to me, young people and young ministers.

I don't know most of you, but as young ministers go and young people go, I see young people that seem to me to be quite the contradiction. Seminary students and college students who talk to me about the high things of God. And yet I can I see what they watch, what they listen to and what they wear and how they act.

And I find no continuity, I find no agreement between what they study and what they purport to love and what they are. And it is not, I'm assured that it is more to deal with the culture that is around you, that as each passing generation becomes more and more ungodly, we become less sensitive to sin. And I'm to preach on the power of God, but how can anyone think about the power of God? If they have no nearness to God and if there's no concept of personal holiness in our lives, there's no need to talk about power.

One of the great problems with the seeker movement today, the movement that speaks much, charismatic movement and things that speak much about coming into the presence of the Lord, is that they don't understand something. It's like I gave the illustration of my little boy who would grab a hold of a chair when he was first learning to stand and then reach out to his father. And I would always stand farther than arm's length so that he would have to let go of the chair or the wall in order to come to me.

It's the same way, don't you understand? Don't talk so much about drawing near to God unless first you've understood the idea that to draw near to him, you must separate yourself from the things he hates. You cannot have both things, and if you truly want God, and this is something I want you to understand. I think

many who declare themselves to want God do not want God because in order to truly want God, there must be a reason for it.

And if there is a true reason for wanting God, you'll hate the things he hates. There is this necessity to build within us, to pray that it be formed in us a solid, biblical, burning hatred. Not for men, not even for the wickedest of men, but for the things that would steal our own heart away.

For the things that would stain us. I burn with zeal when I walk into a church. And because of lackadaisical preaching, there is no concept of this hatred for sin.

So I want us to look just quickly, let's go to first Peter. We're not going to be profound in any verse, but we're going to reach out to many. First Peter, chapter 1, verse 14.

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance. As obedient children, you and I are called to obedience. It is amazing to me that when I begin to talk about principles and wisdom and laws, I'm labeled a legalist.

But it's impossible to be obedient unless there's a command. And the scriptures have not left us just to float in the air. God has given us commands and precepts and wisdom with regard to every aspect of our life.

And the reason why there is so much perishing is because of a lack of knowledge. You hear, where there is no vision, the people perish. Oh, my goodness, how that is twisted.

Usually it's some, it's some pastor or great churchman who wants to build a gigantic church. And he's got this great vision. And he says, you need a vision to do great things or else we'll perish.

That's not what that means at all. It's saying basically where there is no revelation of the law of God, where there is no revelation of God's will being preached, the people perish. And so he's calling us to obedience and to be obedient.

First of all, you must not be conformed to the former lust which were yours in your ignorance. You have to understand something. You coming to Christ, come to Christ in ignorance.

I'll never forget when we, Chato and I, we discovered that she was pregnant. I remember getting down on my knees on the second floor of our house in the room where I used to study. And I cried out to God, God, how can a pagan raise a child? I'm ignorant of everything in Scripture that deals with child raising.

I'm a worldling. You come with all the knowledge that you have when you come to Christ. It is pure ignorance.

Everything is wrong. I had a young man discipling me when I was at the University of Texas. And we both had this same psychology class.

And he had it the hour before me. And the man was, he attacked God, attacked Christ, did everything in his class. He was a horrid, immoral man.

And the young man who was discipling me came out of the class one day smiling. And he said, I love that class. I just, I'm learning how to live in that class.

And I said, Mike, how can you say that? You're the one that's taught me out of Scripture that that man is apostate. He goes, no, Paul, you just got to understand. Listen to everything the world says.

Do just the opposite and you'll have the Bible. Well, let me tell you something. It's true, but you're not recognizing it.

Who has taught you? To what have you submitted with regard to your mind? Have you been taught by Christ or been taught by the world? What should enter in there? What should go through your eyes? What you wear on your body? Who gave you the rules? Where did you learn how to dress? Where did you learn how to talk and walk? Where did you learn about relationships and marriage and sex and children and everything else? I can tell you, if you're like most, you learned it from the world and it's still there. You have to understand, he says, the former lust, which were yours. We come to Christ and yes, in regeneration, there's this powerful transformation.

But we come with so much baggage that's wrong. And the problem is we are unwise in that we compare ourselves by ourselves and no one changes. Most young people, their peers are not godly parents, but other ignorant, confused children.

And then they go on to high school and it's the same. And then they go on to college and it's the same. And they go on to Bible college and it's the same.

And they go to seminary and it's the same. You have children's church, teenage church, every kind of church, but the right kind of church where the word of God is preached. And we've got to attack these former lusts in our own lives.

We must. He goes on and he says, he says, as obedient children do not be conformed to the former lust, which were yours in your ignorance. But like the holy one who called you, be holy yourselves.

How much striving, how much striving is in your life towards godliness and towards holiness? How much do you strive for that, work for that? I read some of the biographies. I just got through with Daniel Rowland, the biography on him, The Great Awakening in Wales. And I was amazed at these men.

They were, I don't know how they lived. They were literally consumed like, like moths into a flame. They were either preaching or they were praying and fasting.

Or meeting together in groups and encouraging one another unto holiness. Church isn't that anymore. People come to church, hear a message and all it is, is saying grace before the meal they're going to eat on Sunday.

It's not coming and encouraging one another to be holy. When was the last time someone came up to me and rebuked me? When was the last time someone came up to me and dealt with me, asked me, what's going on? How are you loving your wife? What are you doing? You see, we're to be a community of people promoting one another to godliness in love and in compassion. I am so tired of church.

He goes on and he says, look at this, like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves. Be a reflection of your Father. Is that your goal? It's the same thing.

Do you realize this is the same thing as be conformed to Christ? Because Christ is a reflection of his Father. When he says, be holy like I'm holy, he is saying exactly the same thing as my great purpose for

you is that you be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, because Jesus Christ is the image of the Holy One. And he says, because it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy.

You shall be. Now, the two things here that are very important and Brother Mack last year brought these out. It's the divine and the human side of this.

If you are truly a Christian, truly called of God, you will be holy because without holiness, no one will see the Lord. And God is going to work supernaturally in the lives of his children. And Ezekiel puts it for us so wonderfully, he will be cleansing us from all our filthiness and from all our idolatry.

That's what he'll be doing all the days of our life. Hebrews chapter 12, he'll be disciplining us. Assure yourself that God is working if you're truly converted.

But at the same time, we are not just encouraged, we are commanded to strive to be holy. I hear so often this person is so heavenly minded, they're no earthly good. Well, I'll tell you, you're so earthly minded, you're no heavenly good.

He goes on and he says, and if you address as father the one who impartially judges according to each man's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth. I've been asked several times when I have preached once by a reporter, why are you always telling people to be afraid or to fear? I said, because they ought to fear. The Bible commands us to fear, to fear in the right way, but to fear nonetheless.

This is a wonderful, awful, terrible salvation. This is not you and Jesus got your own thing going. This is God invading humanity.

And he says, and I love this, during the time of your stay upon the earth. Look at that. Young people, listen to me.

It is a stay. It is like that. Yesterday, I was nine.

Today, I'm 43. Tomorrow, I'll be 90 and gone. It is a stay upon the earth.

It is a stay. Your beauty, your youth, your strength, everything. It is going.

Do not waste it on things that only bring judgment. Do not be deceived by empty words. Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming.

But live your life as a people weak and trembling and broken and yet filled with the power of God and rejoicing and tasting of divine things as a down payment, as a reminder of the great immense glory that is coming. And he says, verse 18, knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood as of a lamb, unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. I so often look at this passage and I go, oh, Paul, what have you done? What have you done? The way you have lived today, Christ redeemed thee with blood.

Have you trembled such blood? Have you treated it as a small thing? Have you not? What is the great crime? The great crime is to not esteem the worth of God. Is to not esteem the worth of the blood of the Son of God. I want you to know that if you're to get anywhere in the Christian life, understand this.

Everything God has ordained, everything that it will be about His Son. God loves His Son more than everything and everybody put together. And if you want to be pleasing to the Father, you adore, you honor, you bless, you revere, you worship, you serve, you esteem with the greatest worth His Son and He will be pleased with you.

Over all the works that mighty men can do, God will set His seal upon you if you cherish His Son. One of my prayers in my prayer journal, I feel like I've asked the Holy Spirit to give me certain prayers to pray. One of the prayers that He's given me, it's, Lord, I desire to give my two sons to Your Son, even if it means they're martyrdom, that they live a cruel and broken, impoverished life no matter.

Take my two sons for Your Son, that they be totally and completely devoted to Him. I don't want them to be famous preachers. I don't want them to be great writers.

I don't want them to be high intellectuals, but that their heart would burn almost insanely with a devotion for Your Son. Oh, that is the thing. That is the thing.

That is the thing. I want us to go now to Second Timothy, chapter two, verse 19. Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands having this seal.

The Lord knows those who are His and let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness. Young people, listen to me. Your prayer time is canceled out and nullified and made worthless by your television time.

Now, I know I need to maybe speak of glories and things not so vulgar as TV. But in my opinion, if I were to say if there was one thing sucking away any chance or any opportunity of young men to be filled with the power of God, it is that. What benefit do you gain from all that watching of yours? You cry out and want revival.

But look what he says. Let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness. I find almost nothing true, nothing noble, nothing honorable there.

I received a track from Leonard Ravenhill before he died. A friend told him about the struggles I was having and and I was just and so he sent it to me. This little track, others can, you may not, you cannot.

And it all comes down to this. How much do you want to know him? How much do you want to have a sense of his manifest presence? How much of his power do you want? And what I mean power, I'm not meaning principally power for ministry, but the power of God in a changed life that will glorify him. You will know that always to the same degree that you are willing to separate yourself and abstain from wickedness.

You walk through this world afraid, you walk through the world afraid, you walk through the world knowing that there are landmines and snares and the evil one has set out many things. You walk through this world like the like Christian in Pilgrim's Progress, in a vanity fair, all around you, distractions taking you away and not just evil things, but good things that are not the most excellent thing. Even ministry, the only proper way to see it is refuse compared to knowing Christ.

I don't want a ministry. I don't want to be a great preacher. I don't want to write.

I just I just want to be a Christian, just want to follow him. And if you have this idea, yes, to be mightily used of God, I need to abstain from these things. Behold, your idol being used of God.

I want to abstain from these things because they break the heart of my father and they show I do not esteem the blood that was shed for me on Calvary to the wind with the ministry. You will be very, very surprised on that great day when all men stand in that granite hall and bow their knee before God, that it will not be the famous ones who stand there at the head of the line, will not be the great ones who are known and pointed out first. It's not ministry.

It's all about him. It's all about him. That my sons be basically worthless and everything because they're just so totally and completely distracted by Christ.

The goal is not to have a ministry, young man. The goal is to have a life, a life. And it's so freeing when you no longer have to be anything.

But a follower of Jesus Christ has no reputation now to be lost. There's no one to be concerned with, just Christ, just Christ. That's what I want for you.

Don't go through all the hamster wheels that I've gone through to get to this point. Recognize it now. I want us to go to I've written down so many passages here.

I want to I want to take you through, young person, especially listen to this, whether you're in the ministry or not. I want to take you through something that has been extremely helpful in my life, extremely helpful. And it's something that that I've lived by.

And I call it my fence, my wall, strong wall, a strong tower. It's a wall that Scripture builds around me, helps me to recognize whether or not I'm in the will of God. In the place I ought to be.

It's a fortress of holiness. I'm going to set out some fence posts that when you connect them together with strong cable, nothing can penetrate them. And you'll be safe.

The first one is 1 Corinthians 10, 31. This is my first fence post, whether then you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Now, you say the will of God is complicated.

Well, we've made it quite simple now. If it brings glory to God, if it honors God, if it demonstrates esteem and the worth of God, you can think it, do it, say it, wear it. Everything in your life, just ask yourself this question.

What I'm watching on TV, does it glorify God? Does it bring glory to God? If not, cut it off like a right hand or like a right eye. Pluck it out. You say, well, this is this is just my dear friend, radical Christianity, which is nothing more than real Christianity, is much deeper than wearing a Christian T-shirt on your back or holding up some contemporary Christian group that I doubt is even converted.

It is a radical, violent sort of thing in one way. If it does not glorify God, what part do I have with this? What part does righteousness have with lawlessness? What part the temple of God with idols? Cut it off from you. If it does not glorify God, if the relationship you are in or thinking about being in young person does not glorify God, cut it off from you like a disease, because that is exactly what it is.

If it does not prosper you spiritually, it's not of God. Your speech, let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth except such a word that is good for edification according to the need of the moment.

Everything, your thought life, if it is a thought that does not glorify God, reject it.

Even if at that very moment in the middle of a city street, you have to get down on your knees, reject it. What you do with your hands, the direction of your life, if it does not glorify God, change it, drop it. What you're looking at, what you're listening to, everything, it must glorify God.

You are given breath to glorify God. Your heart beats to glorify God. The only reason you're alive is to glorify God.

Every moment lost to something else is a moment lost to vanity and stupidity and carnality, and it will burn. All for the glory of God. You say, well, Brother Paul, are you saying we're to be a cloistered people, do nothing but read our Bibles and pray? Oh, my friend, the kingdom of Christ is very broad.

I can fast and pray and read the word to the glory of God. I can attend a conference to the glory of God. I can wrestle with my two boys on the bed to the glory of God.

I can love my wife to the glory of God. I can dance with all my might in the middle of the cornfield when no Baptist is looking to the glory of God. I can do it all to the glory of God.

Breathe in the air on a cool morning at five to the glory of God. Watch snowflakes fall and fall down on your face and worship to the glory of God. Take your child out and show him his first tadpole to the glory of God.

There is no good and perfect thing withheld from you. Only the wicked, vile medicine of a world that hates you. I'm so sick and tired of all these silly contemporary Christian artists that are always asking the question, why does the devil got to have all the good music? He doesn't have any of it.

God's given us everything good, everything. This kingdom, the pots and the pans in your house, if you're a Christian, are sacred. Everything.

Godliness does not restrict a man. It sets him free. It sets him free.

It truly does. And this is what God desires for you. Do you think he's a God of bondage? Religion? Some have taken that word and said that the root of it means to bind one.

That the whole idea is to bind something in order to please a deity, to bind yourself in order to please a deity. No, my friend, not Christianity. Loose him and let him go.

That's Christianity. Every vile snake that's been tied around his leg, every leech that holds him together and binds him and holds him down. Every wicked heap that's been poured on his head, rip it all off and set him free.

You won't know life until you taste him. They tell me that those who are given to smoking can no longer taste the wonderful flavors of food. That is a great, great illustration of those who still eat from the world's trough, cannot taste the delicacies in Yahweh's table.

Oh, clean yourself up and come to the table. And we go on. Everything for the glory of God.

My wife and I, we, the rules, the rules, we've got them down pretty much now, the rules with regard to marriage, the things that Scripture says about, well, you know, you don't divorce and you and you don't go

to bed mad and you know, all these different things. But here's the one thing that we seek for. You can have all that, but is the glory of God manifest in your relationship? Is the presence of Christ, does it fill your home? You see, you can take and force yourself into an image, in a mold, but the presence is not there.

The power is not there. The joy is not there. The reality is not there.

And that's the thing about the Christian life. It is not just keeping rules. It is a manifestation of the glory of God through earthen vessels.

So ask yourself, young person, in everything, does this glorify God? Does it glorify God? Because if it doesn't, it's gone. If your right eye offend thee, pluck it out, if your right hand offend thee, cut it off, cast it from you. That's the first question that ought to always be asked.

You go back to Bible college on Monday, back to seminary on Monday. You walk in the student center or whatever, in a friend's room, TV's on, things are going on that television. Say, well, it just has a little bit of cussing, just has a little bit of nudity.

Well, just how much sin does it require before the Holy Spirit is grieved? The biting of a fruit will just about do it. The glory of God. The next is Romans chapter 12, verse 1. I urge you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and a holy sacrifice acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

Paul says, I urge you, therefore, brethren, here is the heart of a pastor. Here is the heart of a father. Have you ever seen this? Some of you have experienced this as parents.

You've literally almost got down on your hands and knees and begged your child not to turn from the way. Begged your child to come out of darkness into the light. Begged your child to flee from the wrath to come.

Literally, your heart on the ground, broken in a million pieces because of the love that you have in your heart for them. This is what we see here in the Apostle Paul. This is what we see in any man of God who truly loves Christ's bride.

There is a sense in which we as men of God, and listen to me, those of you called in the ministry. There is a sense in which we are a part of the bride of Christ. I mean, we're part of that bride.

But there's another sense, if we look at the Apostle Paul, in which we are stewards of her, protectors of her. We burn for her. We burn for her.

Who does not fall and we don't mourn? Who's not carried away by some snare of the devil and we do not burn with heat? And that's the way Paul is here. He says, I urge you, brethren. He's going to urge them to do something.

Same thing I'm going to plead with you to do, to offer your life as a living sacrifice to God. Now, Job was right. I mean, the devil was right when he said this, you know, do a lot to a man, he'll still hold true.

Touch his life, touch his body, then you'll see what he's made of. Same way, I'm not asking you to give away a car or a home, not asking you to even give away a future. I'm asking you to give away your own life, the only one you have.

Now, in order to do that, I need some strong medicine to motivate you. I mean, why on earth would anyone give their life away as a living sacrifice? And Paul gives the motivation. He says, by the mercies of God, I urge you to do it.

What are the mercies of God? The first eleven chapters of this book. No, that is true. I mean, that's why he's got he's got therefore there.

He's linking the whole thing up to the first eleven chapters. In the first eleven chapters, he has told us all the glorious things that God has done for his people in Jesus Christ. And he says, therefore, do this.

So everything is based upon our knowledge of God in Christ. That's why I don't want to fire you up with some just some camp meeting that's a camp meeting. I don't want to fire you up so that when you get out Monday, everything dies.

What we want to present to you is a God worthy of your life. Worthy of your life that will cause you to say, yes, Lord, I gladly, I joyfully offer my life to you as a living sacrifice. I weep because I wonder why you would even want it.

It's too great a privilege for me to give it. It's no longer a burden. My eyes have my ears have heard of thee, but now my eyes have seen thee.

It is no longer a burden. Oh, my God, to give my life away. Take it, take it, take it and seal it so that I never ask for it back.

By the mercies of God to present your bodies, the word present here is very, very important in that it is an heiress tense and it indicates not this continual every week rededicating your life to God. It's this sort of prophet's call of how long will you live between two opinions if Baal is God? Go for it. But if God is God, worship him.

It's this call for once in your life. Set down and make a decision. Yes.

Yes, he goes on and he says. Then your body is a living and a holy sacrifice, something that is very important for you to understand. There are many lost people who in some shape, form or fashion offer their lives to God.

Want to do things in order to be saved. None of it is acceptable. The sacrifice that God desires is living.

A spiritually dead man can offer nothing living to God in order to offer something to God. You must first be made alive by God and the very thing you offer to him came from him because God is no man's debtor. You're not giving something to God so as to add to him.

You're giving back to him what he gave you. Yes, the spiritual life that you have, you lay at his feet. Whatever, Lord, you have made me alive, command me, Lord, what shall I do with this gift that has been given? He goes on and he says a living and a holy sacrifice acceptable to God.

Something again about living that just came to my mind. Jim Elliott, I believe it's his brother, served in Peru for I don't know how many years. He's eaten with me at my table.

It was a great honor to to entertain him and and his wife. Most of you didn't even know he was alive, you didn't even know about him. Now, I don't want to take anything away from the sacrifice and the martyrdom

of Jim Elliott, but I want you to realize something.

Jim Elliott barely served the Lord for six months or so out in the rainforest and was martyred. And that is the way it pleased the Lord to take him. And I honor that.

But may I submit to you that Jim's life was a lot easier than that of his brother. His brother, unknown, has served the Lord for decade after decade after decade. No fame, no books, no anything.

My point is simply this. It is much easier to die for the Lord than it is to live for him. It is a continuous everyday thing.

There is a sense in which it is a marathon, but don't let old dead pastors tell you it's a marathon. Therefore, take it easy. It is a marathon, but sprint anyways and burn yourself out if necessary.

I would rather have my sons burn themselves out for three or four years of hard pressing after God than to float their way to heaven. Burn for God. Burn out for God.

All those stars are in the heavens and you notice them and you take glory in them and you like them. But it's the shooting star you only see for a second that catches your attention and makes you marvel. Be not afraid to burn out for God.

Be not afraid to throw yourself straight into the lion's mouth or the flame of the fire. So, Brother Paul, you're telling them some dangerous things. God will sort it out and keep you safe.

But you need to hear some dangerous things. Goes on and he says, living sacrifice, a holy sacrifice. God gave you the life.

God desires that you be holy and God is the only one who can grant you the grace to be holy. Holiness does not come apart from prayer. Listen, we all have the correct theological background.

We all recognize that everything comes from God. We all recognize that we are going to be holy because of God's providence and His sovereignty and everything else. But if you use that as a bed to lie in, you're not doing what Scripture says.

You are to seek and strive after being holy. You are to pray for grace to be holy. My wife came to me just after she was saved and it's wonderful testimony.

If you probably got the CD out there, if you'd like to hear. But my wife was saved last year. And she came to me one day and she just she said, you know, something I just need to share with you.

And I said, well, what? She goes, you know, we've got it all wrong. And I said, well, why? She goes, we we recognize there's something in our life that is not conformed to Christ. And so we go after that for a period of time.

We pray and we fast to get victory over it. I said, yeah. She goes, have you ever done that? I said, of course I have.

She goes, well, did you get victory over it? And I said, well, yes. She said, how long? I said, as long as I kept praying and fasting and asking grace to overcome. And what happened when you stopped? I stopped having the victory.

She said, precisely, I said, dear, all your learning has made me mad. What are you telling me? She said, God does not want us to recognize some need in our life and then go to him and press hard after him until we get victory over it and then leave him again. He's going to give us victory only daily as we keep coming every day with empty buckets for more grace to continue walking in the victory.

And that is so true. You open up your eyes in bed. Do not move a quarter of an inch to the left.

Do not move a quarter of an inch to the right. The moment your eyes are open, pray, oh God, apart from your grace, I will deny thee before I put my slippers on. Give me strength.

Anoint my head. Fill me. I hold my mouth open.

Fill it, Lord. And he goes on and he says, which is your spiritual service of worship. You want to do something spiritual, give your life to God as a sacrifice.

Lay it down. This word also means reasonable. The only reasonable thing to do in light of the mercies of God in the face of Christ is to give him our life.

It's the only reasonable thing to do. It is obnoxious and filthy to lay down your life to follow some leader of a cult. Or even some evangelical great preacher.

But it is not obnoxious or filthy, but splendid and honorable to lay down your life for Christ. He goes on and he says, and do not be conformed to this world. Literally, do not be made of the same mold.

We have no idea how much the world presses in on our churches and our own private lives, including this preacher. We are pressed in so much with what the world dictates, with what religious tradition dictates, but not the Scriptures. I think if I hear one man, one more man stand up and say, in this place we follow the Bible, I'm just going to scream.

Because my dear friend, we've got to look at this thing in all our lives. I am finding almost every day in my life, and through my brothers and sisters in Christ, things in my life that do not conform to God, nor His will. An old preacher told me one time, your best friend is the one who tells you the most truth.

That is true. That is true. Semper reformanda.

I don't want to use words to make me sound like I'm goofier than I actually am. But in Latin, that simply means this. Always reforming.

Always reforming. You don't reform to a certain stage and then stay there. It's just like God did not create the world and then leave it.

He created it and He must sustain exactly what He created or it will fall apart. The grace must come daily from His will. It's just like manna.

You could write 20 books on manna. Because manna, if you picked it up and you picked up too much so that you'd have some extra for the next day, it would rot in your mouth. Every day you had to go out and get the manna.

Every day you have to go out. Young minister, every day. You cannot, listen to me, you cannot live on past experiences with God.

You cannot live on past manifestations of His power. You have to go out there every day. Look for Him anew.

Look for Him anew. Remember, Jesus was always passing by the boat and I continue, I believe He would have continued every time to pass on by the boat if they had not called Him. Jesus is always passing by.

Call Him so that He might turn in. Call Him so that He might turn in. Call to Him.

He goes on and He says, do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed. Now, conformity is this, it's a mechanical thing. It's the world pressing down on you mechanically, forcing you, molding you, teaching you, making you a product, a widget of theirs.

But when it comes to God, we say, but be transformed. Not mechanically, not rigidly, but organically. As His life, the divine sap of God, is flowing through you, be transformed, be metamorphosed.

It is a supernatural work of God. You will get nothing, no advance in Christianity apart from the supernatural nature of Christianity. It's all supernatural.

And just because there are false prophets and fools parading around, declaring great things supernatural in their lives and ministry, should not make us deny what Scripture holds to be true. Every aspect of the Christian life is supernatural. It is not a mere human decision, it is a supernatural work of God, that we are to draw from, to draw from.

And it goes on, and He says, by the renewing of your mind in God's Word, in fellowship, prayerfully. I want to tell you something, you can read that Bible like a textbook, and you will not be renewing your mind. Now, that's just all there is to it.

For those who are physically able, you ought to just read through the Bible systematically on your knees. And those who are unable physically, at least in an attitude of prayer. Young man, the greatest thing that will help you in the ministry is to read this Bible from Genesis to Revelation, over and over and over again, systematically, while you are praying.

The renewing of your mind, also, now listen to me, the power. Most people, when they come to this conference, I have heard more people speak about the blessing of the fellowship, than the blessing of the teaching. What does that tell me? True biblical fellowship is of supernatural power.

It is an ordained channel of grace, totally and completely perverting. Going to have fellowship, find me one person out there talking about Jesus. Fellowship is Jesus.

It's partaking. I think that there is a sense in which the greatest fellowship the church should ever have, probably, is the Lord's Supper. Because we are partaking together.

We are remembering together. But that in itself is just sort of an example of absolutely every aspect of our lives. I remember, and I don't want this just to, let me give you just a vulgar example.

Last year, first time in my life I ever went, I actually traveled somewhere, my pastor, myself and Darren. And we went down and we went to a little cabin down in Alabama and we went hunting. And the reason why I'm sharing this with you is because I want you to see that this is not, I'm not talking about some cloistered, priestly, monkish type of thing.

And the believers who met, the fellows who met us down there, Brother Knoblet and some of the men in his church and things. I love to hunt. It was a wonderful time.

It was one of the freest times of my life. But what made it so blessed was just, hey, brother, and praying and talking about the Lord and just so many things that went on there. And it was just spirit bearing witness with spirit.

And there was joy. And so what I'm trying to tell you is I don't want you all to turn into a monk. I want you to realize this is the most freeing thing.

And this whole thing here, it's a fantasy. We've come to believe, I mean, I love this building. But I mean, it's not done here.

It's done out there. It's done in our families. It's done in our friendships.

It's done in our inviting people over to the house. Why do you invite them over to the house and talk about Jesus? Everything about him. I go back to that old mystic who said every conversation where Jesus is not the principal theme is absurd.

It's absurd. It's a waste of time. And you go on and now I'm going to put in, remember what I said, that that whatever you do, whether it's eat or drink or anything, you do it under the glory of God.

That's your first post. A second post is this. He's going to describe to us what the will of God is.

The will of God is good. Then it is acceptable and then it is perfect. Those are three more pillars or posts.

What does that mean? Good. The will of God might result in you being crucified upside down, bathed in tar and set afire. But it will lead to your spiritual prosperity.

One who suffers does not sin. What I'm saying is when it says good is not to be interpreted in modern evangelical note, you know, that your life is just going to be wonderful with a balanced checkbook and two and a half kids in the three car garage. What it means is this.

It is going to be healthy. It is going to promote spiritual prosperity. Therefore, everything in your life that does not qualify as good, cut it out.

Even good things may need to be cut out if they become idols. And so the first thing, does it promote spiritual prosperity? Now, listen to me, young person, because it is so hard sometimes for the younger generation to understand this. What goes into your mind, the only thing you should be looking at and listening to is that which promotes spiritual prosperity in your life.

The way you act and what you and I want to emphasize this, the what you wear ought to promote spiritual prosperity in you and in other people. Why is it that as an itinerant preacher, I need to be most prayed up on Sunday morning when I go into a new church? Because I know that when I turn around in the pulpit, my eyes are going to fall upon people who are sensual. These things ought not be.

Everything in our life ought to be this, this, this, this overflowing harvest of God, of spiritual prosperity and spiritual health. They've got it all wrong when they say everything is just about. It's not.

I remember when my boy was going to be born, someone came to me and they said, well, you know, the most important thing is that he's healthy. I said, no, it's not. They said, what do you mean? I said, well, no, it's not.

I know a lot of strong, healthy, beautiful young men and women that in their arrogance go straight to hell. I don't care if I have to carry my little boy around in a shoebox all the days of my life. If his heart is broken.

And he's weak and trembling before his God. And he worships at his feet. I actually prayed that my boys would not be athletes.

I know that today in our culture is the impardonable sin. Athletics and your soccer games have sent more people to hell than all the taverns and brothels in this country. It's a God run around all over, all over the city in our vans, taking them from soccer to ballet, to piano, to here, to there and everything else.

But how much time in the things of God, how much time in the things of family, how much time in what it means to be a man, what it means to be a woman? No, distracted, fools chasing after glitter that is not gold. It's going to be good. Another thing that the will of God, it's going to be acceptable.

Acceptable to whom? Acceptable to God. There's only one that I have to answer to. There's only one that you have to answer to.

It is God. It is God, it is God. Someone asked me in a very good question, someone who was here who was seeking after Christ hard, and they said, well, you know, if I follow Christ, I mean, it seems like my friends are more and more making fun of me and things.

I said, yes, of course, that's that's good. That's a sign. You're not far from the kingdom of heaven.

I don't care what's acceptable to the media. They're a fountain of death. I don't care what's acceptable to my culture.

It's twisted and dislocated. There's no man so strong as to sit on a throne in eternity and judge me. Only God, should not I be concerned about what is acceptable to him and teach what is acceptable to him? That's all.

What does he care about? I don't even care what the church cares about. Because much of what the church is called, the church is not the church and what they care about is not what God cares about. What about the church? What about God? What about God? What about God? His church, the life you have, it's his life, his life goes on.

This is one of my favorite, it's perfect. The will of God is perfect. Write that down.

What does that mean? Have you ever heard, especially in the ministry, we hear this. A man will say, well, I had to sacrifice my family for the sake of the ministry. You know what they're saying? They're saying God's will is not perfect.

That in order to fulfill God's will in the ministry, I had to violate God's will with regard to my family. That's a lie. And that works not only for ministry, but job, everything.

It's a lie. You don't have to do that unless, of course, the ministry is your God or young person. Someone says, well, I know they're lost, but I love them so much and I want to start dating them and things like that

because I want to win them to Christ.

Oh, that's really going to work. You're going to win people to Jesus through your gross rebellion. I'm sorry, it doesn't work.

And after all, dating is not biblical to begin with. So but that's another conference, isn't it? We don't we don't. You know, the end does not justify the means, even in the secular sense and in the divine sense, even more so because you're never going to reach God's end by using means that are not according to his word.

Never at all. Now, I want to go to one other place quickly. Philippians chapter four, verse eight.

Finally, brethren, now these are posts and I love this. We start off in first Corinthians. We know everything you do, you do to the glory of God.

In Romans, we've just looked at that. It's going to be good. It's going to be acceptable to God.

It's going to be perfect. And now in Philippians, here are the other posts we're going to drive in the ground. True, honorable, right, pure, lovely, of good repute, excellence and worthy of praise.

These are all attributes of the will of God. Anything outside of these posts, outside of the fence is not God's will. Is it true that it is it conformed to reality, not the changing reality of culture, but the immutable reality as revealed in God's word, the way things really are, according to what God says.

All right, that which is valid, reliable, honest, as opposed to that which is false, a literal characteristic of God. I had written down here in my notes, let God be true, though every man be found a liar. God's the only one true.

He's the only correct interpreter of reality, is reality. Is it true? If it's not true. It's from the false one, it's a lie.

Truth, and it is truth that we use for counseling. It is truth. Truth is the only thing we have.

I learned this in a great way last year, I was at a church and I was called in to help fix the problem. And for the first about month and a half or two months, I was thinking, well, if I do this, there'll be these consequences and that'll hurt the church. And if I do this, there'll be these consequences, legal problems that we'll probably have if I do this, this, this.

And I called a dear brother of mine and he said, brother, the only thing you have is the truth. Just do the truth. So we did the truth and I was almost sued, but we did the truth.

Truth is what you're supposed to do. And it's going to cost you if you do it, because this is a world that hates the truth. Do the truth.

Don't look at, well, if I do this, there'll be this consequence. No, God commanded to do this. So do it.

That's all you have. When you've got a problem in the church, well, you go to the truth. This is what's said to do.

The truth. You're in counseling. Someone comes to you with already a Freudian background explaining all the reasons why they're not guilty for the guilty thing they've done.

You go to the truth, you rebuke them in love, point out the truth and tell them to stop believing a lie. Is it true? Is it true? Goes on, is it honorable and that is worthy of honor, respect, venerated or revered for character? Will God honor what you're doing, what you're seeing, what you're wearing, the relationship you're in on the day of judgment? Will God honor it? Because if he won't honor it, shouldn't be doing it. He goes on and says, is it right? Whatever is conformed to the God standard and worthy of God's approval.

Is it right? Is it pure? Emphasizing moral purity, purity from carnality, chaste, modest, clean. Listen to me, young people here, I must stop. You know the saying, you can't tell, you can't judge a book by its cover.

Jesus did not say that. The devil said that. Jesus said, you will know them by their fruits.

He said, well, you shouldn't judge me. I'm going to. And so is everyone else.

The moment they look at you, we have one of the things that the devil does is he is a destroyer of beauty. He is a destroyer of things like beauty, elegance, refinement. And what does he do? He twists it into sensuality, into ugliness, into darkness, into grunge.

He destroys masculinity. So that we have, you know, 19 and 20 year olds walking around the mall and that's all they do. They've got chest three inches deep.

They don't even know what they're doing there, except chasing around girls that shouldn't be there. They destroy, the devil destroys femininity. He does.

The beauty of it, the elegance of it, the refinement of it. We're just a destroyed, twisted people and we have to get back. And how do we get back? We get back.

We can get back because God has regenerated our heart. We can get back because he's given us the word to direct us. We can get back because he's given the spirit to empower us.

We must get back because we will stand before him in judgment. All these things sit down. I just keep pleading with people.

I go, look, people say, I don't agree with you. I don't care if you don't agree with me, but promise me you'll get in the word. And prove what you're doing.

Take everything, take nothing for granted, get into the word, ask yourself, young person, how am I to talk? How am I to dress? How am I to walk? What does the Bible say about relationships? What does the Bible say about everything? How am I to treat my mother? How am I to treat my father? How am I to treat my children, my siblings? What am I supposed to do? The Bible has the answer. It does go through your home and just with the Bible, am I to have all this junk laying around? Go to your finances, am I supposed to spend this way? What does God say? You've got the Holy Spirit. You've got the new covenant promise that they shall all be taught of God.

Get into the word. Now, Purer, let me just give you a little rule. I give it everywhere.

It's for young people to really be helpful. And it's this. If your clothing is a frame for your face, it's of God.

From where I can tell, it's where the glory of God most shines, from a person. If your clothing is a frame for your body, it's sensual and God hates it. But at the same time, realize this.

I have seen people dressed almost as Puritans. But when you look in their face, you see more sensuality than on a hooker. So it's not just dressing yourself upright.

It's also the heart. It's also the heart. A sensual heart cannot be concealed by clothing.

It cannot. And it cannot be homeschooled away. It is a work of grace.

Work of grace. So, Brother Paul, sometimes you use hard words. Sometimes it's necessary.

I have a biblical basis for it. Do you ever listen to the prophets? They said things that I don't even feel comfortable repeating in mixed company. Now, I want to.

We have a good repute. Would an angel, if they were leaving you and taking a report to God, give a good report? Of what you're thinking and doing and being and what you are. Excellence refers here not to top gun, you know, heard of one seminary leader that got up and said, I want all our students to be top guns.

Power of God went straight out the window if it was ever there. And it's talking about excellence. It's not talking about being a top gun.

It's talking about moral excellence and conformity to Jesus Christ. It's not talking about impressing people. It's talking about being like Jesus.

And then finally, worthy of praise, worthy of praise is your relationship, your thinking, your mindset, everything. Is it worthy of praise? Is it commented on among the brothers and sisters in Christ? Do they praise God for you in the way that you are? I can think of countless people that I praise God for them. Do people praise God for you, for your example, for your words, for your lifestyle, for everything? Father, I come before you and ask you, Lord, I'm taking more time.

Lord, bless the time. Bless the time and bless these young men that the power of God would be on their life, on their life so that they can love their wives as Christ loved the church, on their lives so that they can love their children as God loves his. On their lives so that they can be separate from the world, but separate with a purpose to be drawn unto you.

On their lives so that they can manifest the gospel of Jesus Christ and that their preaching come with not just words of eloquence, but with power, demonstrations of power. Oh, Lord, God, teach them the true gospel and then vindicate your gospel by showing up with power. Oh, God, help us in Jesus name.

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