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The Eternal Reward of Grace-Energized Kindness



Part 48 (070902AM)

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Can you imagine how liberating it would be to know how to choose the best in life? We live in a complex world of multiplied choices, many of which are good. We have more new information and more new opportunities offered to us each week—than the average 18th century person was offered in a lifetime.

Often this leads to an overloaded mind, and overloaded life—and a short-circuited decision making system. We just don't know which opportunity and what activity to choose to spend our time doing. Wouldn't it be incredible to confidently go to work or school and know that you are doing exactly what God wants done? And think of life at home, as you travel, in your free time and everywhere you are—just to know that we are pleasing God by our actions? We can only make one investment of that portion of the river of time that flows by our lives at the speed of 60 minutes-per-hour. We can't get time to use over—but we can redeem time as an investment for God.

Does God offer a plan to help us know what is our best use of time for His Kingdom and His Glory? Yes, and it is simple. Paul explains this way of life in Philippians 3.

Paul learned how to live a simple, singularly-focused life as a believer. He knew why he was here, what he was doing—and he did both with all of his strength. In fact, Paul says in Philippians 3 that he was straining every ounce of his body towards the goal of his life which was Christ-like living.

Paul made the Christian life simple because he simply lived life for Christ. He stated his simple goal in Philippians 3.

Philippians 3:12-14 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. NKJV

Paul confidently could say—

One Thing I Do

One thing I do.

Have you come to that point?

It's a life of many things—done for one supreme purpose.

Paul was consumed with one goal in life, one purpose for living. He did many things—

- he had a skill in tent-making that he used to earn a living,
- he had a love to travel,
- he had a tremendous communication skill set in both speaking and writing,
- he was a genius in making and staying in touch with friends,
- he loved to sail around the Mediterranean Sea,
- he was somewhat of a power-walker (walking hundreds of miles in walks around the Roman Empire),
- he had social skills that made him able to comfortably move among the highest circles of the wealthy,
- he was very sensitive to the needs and concerns of the poor—and on and on we could go picking out the multi-faceted life of this accomplished person.

But, here in Philippians 3 Paul confesses that everything he did was harnessed to one dominating purpose in his life. One thing connected every other thing.

"Paul had reduced the whole of sanctification to the simple and clear goal of doing "one thing"—pursuing Christlikeness".^[1]^[1]

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Paul had connected with the very purpose of God in election and predestination. As he had previously stated in Romans 8, he was focused on his reason to even be alive. We like Paul were divinely chosen to be conformed to Christ-likeness. As Paul says to the church at Rome:

Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. NKJV

Conformity to Christ is Christ-like living.

Christ-like living, as we saw last time, is personal sanctification.

I Press Toward the Goal

Personal sanctification is a life long 'pressing towards the goal' of Christ like behavior. This singular goal can pull together all the rest of the many pieces of life.

We look at everything we must do and weigh each one as to whether or not it contributes to the one great finish line of our life—Christ-conformity!

So what exactly is Christ-like behavior? How do we know where to point our lives, our time, and our energies? Last time we saw in [Philippians 2:12-13](#) we were to work on something in our progressive sanctification.

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. NKJV

Paul said we are to pursue living God's desires for our life. And where would we find that? Paul would say, "That's simple!"

So that there is no confusion of what we should work on, God wrote it down. We have it this morning.

God's Word is God's plan for our life. No matter where you go in this book we find the will of God for us His children. Paul saw his purpose was to obediently yield his life to ever increasing levels of Christ-conformity. He saw life as being more and more conformed to Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. NKJV

This morning our quest for personal, progressive sanctification—or living life continually surrendering my life to God's plan, is what's written down in Titus.

Paul left Titus in Crete with a simple assignment—do everything you can to help these new believers become like Christ. Note the purpose Titus had in chapter 1.

Titus 1:5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order (also KJV, NASB; NIV 'straighten out') the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you—NKJV

What did Paul want Titus to set in order or straighten out? He was to address the wrong doctrine and practices that were going on in the Cretan church. Now look at chapter 2.

Titus 2:1 But as for you, speak [present active imperative "I command you to keep on speaking"] the things which are proper for sound doctrine: NKJV

The best way to get the whole church headed in the right direction was to get them focused on "healthy" doctrine. The word "sound" is *hugiano* (we get the word hygiene from this word) it means healthy—and Paul uses this word 9 times in the pastoral epistles (5 times in Titus). Paul always emphasized that truth produces spiritual well-being.

The "things" (v. 1) Paul commands to be taught in vv. 2–10 are the doctrinal truths of godly attitudes, Christ-like behavior. "In order not only to please God, but also to have an effective witness to unbelievers, God's people must know the truth that leads to spiritual health."^[2]^[2]

The plan was that the older believers, who are living the life, train the younger ones in how to do likewise.

Paul then spells out a list of the 24 character qualities, 12 each for godly men and women. We are now in the 11th of 12 virtues or godly character qualities God wants in women. This quality in God's 12 part list for women is the quality if being "good" or "kind". Kindness energized by grace is what we are all called to demonstrate.

God's Word portrays in a very clear way exactly how God measures kindness. And that is what we want to open our hearts to as we look into His Word today.

God Seeks Grace-Energized Kindness

In [Titus 2:5](#) Paul says grace-energized women ought to be characterized by being gentle, tender-hearted, and merciful toward others. As His children, there is nothing we want more than to please Him. And when we think of Heaven, and when we seek to have a crown to cast at Christ's feet—think of living life, doing good works with grace-energized kindness.

God wants older women of the faith who have surrendered to the Spirit of God and have become examples of kindness. Paul asks Titus to train women in the church how to become kind in their personal life, marriage, home life, and in their ministry to others in Christ's Name.

Is there any example to follow? Is there a clear pathway God has laid down for us? If this is what

determines my eternal rewards, it is something God must have very clearly explained, right?

Yes, and Paul illustrates exactly what those "good or kind" characteristics look like in [1 Timothy 5:10](#) where he said that women of kindness were:

"well reported for **good** works: if she has **brought up children**, if she has **lodged strangers**, if she has **washed the saints' feet**, if she has **relieved the afflicted**, if she has **diligently followed every good work**" NKJV.

Grace-energized women of kindness are the models to follow; and they are the teachers to be revered.

They are the women of God, useful to Him, rewarded by Him!

So these five simple choices should become the daily goal for every woman in Christ's church this morning. Grace-energized women of kindness are:

1. –intentionally family first.
2. –purposefully hospitality conscious.
3. –prayerfully humble servants.
4. –compassionately Good Samaritans.
5. –energetically devoted to ministry.

This is Christ's list of "Who is valuable for my church". Here is who enriches my church in a strategic way; and that helps my church grow in godliness, grow in ministry, and grow in worship.

Last time we met the first two priorities of these godly women.

Grace-Energized Women of Kindness are Intentionally Family First in Their Priorities

"well reported for **good** works: if she has **brought up children**..."([1 Timothy 5:10](#) NKJV).

Paul describes the first grace-energized good work this woman of renown has done is she "brought up children". This means that they church would actually ask: "What kind of mother was she?"

And based on the high calling to be a homemaker in God's plan, the church would find out: "Was her home her priority?"

This reminds a godly woman that part of her assignment God gave her in the home is to watch over both the house and the people within. The meals, the schedule, the clothes, the health, and so much more are done as an offering of worship to the God who called and assigned this highest of duties.

Grace-Energized Women of Kindness are Purposefully Hospitality Conscious for Christ's Church

"if she has **lodged strangers**"([1 Timothy 5:10](#) NKJV).

Paul next describes her second grace-energized good work as whether she "lodged strangers".

This is another way of asking, "how did she use her home"? When her God-given priority for caring for her children was done, did she offer her home to be opened to ministry to others in an unselfish way? This means, were sacrifices made to serve others through her home for Christ's sake?

Hospitality to strangers is a quality God esteems highly. He made hospitality one of the clear qualifications for elders in Christ's church ([1 Timothy 3:2](#); [Titus 1:8](#)).

God's Word also say hospitality is often one of the marks of spiritual maturity ([Romans 12:13](#); [Hebrews 13:1-2](#); [1 Peter 4:9](#)).

So Paul says that older women in the faith are to train the younger women how to use their home in a godly, hospitable way for 'strangers', those not yet connected and nurtured in Christ's church.

Grace-Energized Women Prayerfully Invest Their Time in Humble Ministry

"if she has **washed the saints' feet**"([1 Timothy 5:10](#) NKJV).

Paul next describes her third grace-energized good work as whether she has "washed the saint's feet".

The New Testament Gospel was spread down the dirty and dusty roads of the ancient world. In those times the care of feet was a daily chore. At the Last Supper Passover Seder (John 13), do you remember how Jesus used this common and menial task to demonstrate the servant-hearted humility He desired to see in all of us?

Paul says that this grace-energized servant of Christ's church will share her humble heart in serving others. This woman is Christ-like because she also came not to be served, but to serve. She is not above humble ministry, she is characterized by it!

Grace-Energized Women of Kindness Compassionately do Selfless and Sacrificial Deeds

"if she has **relieved the afflicted**"([1 Timothy 5:10](#) NKJV).

Paul next describes her fourth grace-energized good work as whether she has "relieved the afflicted".

This grace-energized woman has surrendered her life to be on the lookout for selfless ways to serve others. She knows that Jesus said even a cup of cold water held out to a child in the Name of the Lord will never lose its reward. She has that Good Samaritan heart of reaching out to those stricken with need.

For all the centuries of Christ's church, and in all the cultures of this world, the Spirit of God finds these willing servants and He gives them the strength to spend their life doing selfless deeds of kindness and sacrificial service for others.

Grace-Energized Women of Kindness Energetically Devotes Their Life Towards Works that Please God

"if she has **diligently followed every good work**" (1 Timothy 5:10 NKJV).

Finally Paul tells Timothy these grace-energized women are characterized as one who **has devoted herself to every good work**. The Greek word Paul uses is a very strong verb (**epakolutho** translated 'has devoted herself to') and it captures the idea that this widow devoted her life towards the pursuit of good deeds like Dorcas, energetically and diligently.

Since Paul states that this is the kind of woman that should be sought out to be a paid servant of Christ's church, that makes this life-choice the standard that should be recognized and sought out by every woman in Christ's church. Each woman who wants to please God by her life should follow this quality now, so that at the end of her life she will be a sought out as a qualified servant to Christ's church.

These five qualities laid down in God's Word are the plan of God for a godly, useful woman. Any woman that pursues these qualities in her priorities of life will accomplish a profound and eternal impact through the ministry of her life.

Everything we ever lived for that wasn't offered to God the way He desired it done will be incinerated. It isn't just **what** we do—it is also **why** we do it that matters so much to the Lord!

Every deed, every word, every motive, every moment lacking this one quality of goodness or kindness will in an instant be reduced to a puff of smoke and then forever be gone. Because that Judgment Seat of Christ is coming, the Lord asks for five areas of your life to be surrendered to the control of His Spirit.

Grace-energized women of kindness are:

1. –intentionally family first.
2. –purposefully hospitality conscious.
3. –prayerfully humble servants.
4. –compassionately Good Samaritans.
5. –energetically devoted to ministry.

Someday we are going to stand in front of Jesus Christ and watch him open the history files of our lives. Better than any web program God has logged the keystrokes of our lives. Our actual motivations, our genuine intentions, our literal thoughts will all be exposed as the frames around each action. There at last will be exposed the complete picture of God's servants. And everything done for Jesus that was done in grace-energized kindness will last forever.

Appendix One: Grace-energized Women have the 'law of kindness' on their tongues.

One final word about how vital this quality must be to God. We can conclude from God's Word that when the love of God is not in a woman's heart, the law of kindness is absent from her lips.

This means that grace-energized women of kindness must *speak* well of people, even their enemies. As Jesus said, '*Bless them that curse you*'. "When we speak to them, we must answer their revilings with courteous and friendly words, and *not render railing for railing*; behind their backs we must commend that in them which is commendable, and when we have said all the good we can of them, not be forward to say any thing more. See 1 Pt. 3:9. They, in whose tongues is *the law of kindness*, can give good words to those who give bad words to them."^[3]^[3]

The words of a grace-energized woman of kindness must be guided by this law of kindness, as well as truth and justice. Remember how Solomon made this a necessary part of the character of the virtuous woman, *that she openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness* (Prov. 31:26). This quality is imperative and must be a part of the character of every true Christian. Consider what James said so strongly (James 4:11) '*Speak not evil one of another*'.

"Since Christians are brethren, they should not defile nor defame one another. It is required of us that we be tender of the good name of our brethren; where we cannot speak well, we had better say nothing than speak evil; we must not take pleasure in making known the faults of others, divulging things that are secret, merely to expose them, nor in making more of their known faults than really they deserve, and, least of all, in making false stories, and spreading things concerning them of which they are altogether innocent."^[4]^[4]

As Jesus reminds us, it is 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh' (Matthew 12:34). A grace-energized woman has a heart full of love and opens her mouth with wisdom, and in her lips there is that law of kindness. But if her heart is full of prejudice, anger, suspicion, or any unkind temper, she will surely open her mouth "in a manner corresponding with the disposition of her mind. And hence will arise, if not lying and slandering, (which yet will hardly be avoided,) bitter words, tale bearing, backbiting, and evil-speaking of every kind."^[5]^[5]

To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men [Titus 3:2].

"Speak evil of no man" means we are to malign no one, and we are not to repeat gossip. It has

been said that you can't *believe* everything you hear today, but you can *repeat* it! That is what he is talking about here—we are *not* to repeat what we hear. Many evil reports are passed from person to person without even a shred of evidence that the report is true. Another old saying is that some people will believe anything if it is *whispered* to them!^[6][6]

Appendix Two: Grace-Energized Women Meditate Upon Jesus And The Fruit Of The Spirit [Gal. 5:22-23](#)

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT is living in the conscious presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, letting His mind, through the Word, dominate everything that is thought and done. Being filled with the Spirit is the same as walking LIKE Jesus did on earth!

Fullness of the Spirit is first described as a change in our Personal Relationship with God. The Scriptures show us that a truly spiritual person will be growing in a visible way in each of these areas.

First, we will see the Fruit of the Spirit in our Personal Relationship with God.

1. LOVE is the absence of selfishness.
2. JOY is the spiritual quality that releases us from circumstances.
3. PEACE is the internal serenity that only God can give. Troubles are not absent. Rather, God is present!

Secondly, we will see the Fruit of the Spirit in our Public Walk with Others.

4. PATIENCE is the absence of personal irritation at the actions of others. Patience is also one of the supreme attributes of God. It is His character that is revealed as being gracious and longsuffering. This is patience—the ability to endure injuries inflicted by others and the willingness to accept irritating or painful situations. If I am not increasing in patience, is it because I am not yielding and submitting to the Holy Spirit?
5. KINDNESS is a beautiful reflection of God in our lives. It is the absence of an abrasive manner in my dealings with people. Kindness will soften any word or act that might hurt another. God's Spirit gives us a tender concern for others, that is reflected in our desire to treat others gently, just as the Lord treats us as believers ([Matt. 11:28](#), 29; 19:13, 14; [2 Tim. 2:24](#)). Kindness becomes a beautiful reflection of God through our every day lives when we choose to avoid any abrasive words or deeds in our dealings with people. Grace-energized kindness grows as we choose to live out [Ephesians 2:8 and 4:32](#) in self-sacrifice and love—even toward the unlovely and undeserving. Grace-energized kindness softens our words or actions so they don't hurt others.
6. GOODNESS is being Godlike! Do people see me in active kindness, exemplifying goodness ([6:10](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:11](#)), living in faithfulness, showing loyalty and trustworthiness ([Lam. 3:22](#); [Phil. 2:7-9](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:24](#); [Rev. 2:10](#))?

Finally, we will see the Fruit of the Spirit in our Private Life with our Self.

7. FAITHFULNESS is the idea here. A trustworthy and dependable life. The kind of person that keeps their own life in order so that you can count on them. Like Psalm 15 describes, this type of person always keeps his word. Faithfulness is the same as loyalty and trustworthiness.
8. MEEKNESS is the opposite of asserting ourselves. It is a humble and gentle attitude that is patiently submissive in every offense, while having no desire for revenge or retribution. In the NT, it is used to describe 3 attitudes: submission to the will of God ([Col. 3:12](#)), teachability ([James 1:21](#)), and consideration of others ([Eph. 4:2](#)). The Lord said the meek are the ultimate winners. Those who are servants of the Lord must not strive. They must resist selfish ambition because that is a reflection of Satan, not God.
9. Discipline refers to restraining passions and appetites and is defined by the Greek dictionary as "a virtue, which consists in mastery of the appetites and passions, especially the sensual ones." The only force that can control our flesh is the Holy Spirit. When yielded to the Spirit, we become vessels that are worshipful sacrifices to Him, and no longer to self. Self cannot control self; flesh is not able to harness flesh. Only the Spirit can discipline us.

When God's Spirit is at the helm, there is a remarkable change in our homes, churches, and lives. We see that as believers we are in the same family—God is our Father. We are headed toward a common goal—heaven. We serve a common Master—Jesus. We follow the same Guide—His Word. And share the same passion—Christ, who gets all the glory.

Prayer Example: Dear Lord, I pray that You will make [Colossians 3:12-17](#) a reality in my family's lives! Help us to put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, and longsuffering. Enable us to be bearing with one another, and forgiving one another. If anyone has a complaint against another, even as You have forgiven us, so help us to forgive others. And above all these things, help us to put on love, which is the bond of perfection. May Your peace rule in our hearts and home. May we always be thankful in all circumstances because Your Word dwells in us richly in all wisdom! Enable us to be teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to You, oh Lord. And whatever we do in word or deed, may it be done all in Your name, giving thanks to God the Father through You!

- [1][1] MacArthur, John: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. Electronic ed. Nashville, TN : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. [Php 3:13](#)
- [2][2] John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997. [Titus 2:1](#).
- [3][3] Henry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997.
- [4][4] Henry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997.
- [5][5] Wesley, John, *The Works of John Wesley: Sermons*, (Albany, OR: Ages Software, Inc.) 2000.
- [6][6] J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

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