

Total Devotion to Christ

Salvation is a miracle accomplished by God's grace. It is also a miracle when a believer and especially a church reaches maturity and becomes whole-heartedly devoted to Christ.

Max impact: Christ - free from the domination of Old Man / worldly thinking and totally devoted to Christ

(2 Cor 11:3) But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

1. 1 Timothy 2:4 Paul discusses God's intentions for the whole human race.

1 Tim 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Saved – grace salvation by believing the gospel; Full knowledge of truth – sp. growth unto maturity & total devotion to Christ.

Short Summary of CWL – progression of growth reaching total devotion to Christ

Salvation: Judicial/Positional transfer kingdom/darkness to kingdom of His beloved Son. Knowledge Truth:

Renew the mind by learning the whole realm of bible doctrine.

- Milk – secure salvation; Meat – advanced function in CWL 1Pt 2:2; Heb 5:14

Spiritual Growth: exchange OM beliefs/behaviors for NM beliefs/behaviors

- Break OM thoughts & actions – embrace NM thoughts & actions Eph 4:22-24

Spiritual Freedom: live free from slavery to OM – sin, human good & evil

- Free to choose GHS/Truth & say no to OM/Lies Gal 5:1; Rom 6:12; 2Pt 1:4

Total Devotion/Christ: Love Lord w/all heart, soul & mind; pure devotion to Christ

- Every thought, motive, priority & strategy brought into captivity to Christ 2Cor 10:5

2. Everyone has equal opportunity to be saved & grow into total devotion/Christ.

Equality	God: no respecter of persons – no blessing based on human assets Eph 6:9
Opportunity	an option/choice provided by God's grace – CWL is all opportunity
Saved	every human ever to live has been offered the opportunity to be saved. Jn 3:16
Grow	same capacity to process spiritual ideas; same power to apply truth to life; same access to God in prayer; same chance to take off OM & put on NM; same adversities inspiring growth – God's desire for all of us is to reach a place of total devotion/Christ.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equally lost, condemned & depraved \Rightarrow Equally saved, union/Christ & justified• GAP – Grace Apparatus Perception – GHS equal ability to comprehend the word• GHS equally indwells, fills & enables the walk – equal opportunity for sp. Function• Equally but multi functionally gifted & equally important to the health of the church

God has equally provided everything any of us need to be saved, grow spiritually, take off OM as a way of life, put on NM as a way of life & reach total love/devotion to Christ. (Mat 22:37) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.'

3. OM system is built on the priority of self-interest over all others including God.

Self interest itself is not wrong – becomes wrong when it supercedes God's interests

Lk 22:42 – Let this cup pass (self-interest) not my will but yours be done (God interest)

Eph 2:3 – by nature, children/wrath – sin nature corrupting self-interest over all others

- a. The sin nature inherited from Adam causes us to see self as the center of all things
- b. Being the center of all things places our self-interest in the priority position.
- c. OM = belief/behavior system built on premise that self is more important than God
- d. Believer/OM is unable to be devoted to God's agenda over his own worldly agenda
- e. Believer/OM reads worldly & material significance into God's promises for time.

- f. Believer/OM misuses divine assets to leverage God to supply worldly agenda
 - Prayer: Jn11 avoid all adversity/loss; Assume: Jam 4:13 give us material prosperity, Works: Gal 3:1-5 Christian works as a trade for relational or material blessings

4. Believers must take off OM B/B system to be able to totally devote self to God.

Passages teaching we must take off OM before we can put on & fully function in NM

Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10; Romans 12:2; Hebrews 12:1; Romans 13:12; James 1:21; 1 Peter 2:1-2

Negatives of holding on to OM

- a. OM beliefs are the first ideas we believed, forming our core self-serving concepts.
- b. OM beliefs function unconsciously causing us to habitually place self before God.
- c. Enslaved to OM = Lust/flesh-eyes & pride/life competes with joy of love with God.
- d. Fear of loss of worldly assets = insecurity hinders depending on & giving all to Christ
- e. Hold on & refuse to confront OM; can't allow God to bring about His will for you.

Positives of taking off OM

- a. When we take off OM, it allows NM to become our dominant habitual belief system
- b. Break slavery of pleasure of lust/flesh-eyes – allow experience joy of God's presence
- c. Break insecurity of worldly assets – allow security of God's promises to be real
- d. Break free of OM – look to God day by day to lead us into the life of total devotion

5. Spiritual growth occurs in stages requiring specific tasks in each stage.

Brephos: baby; nepios: not speaking; pais: toddler; teknon: under authority; huios: adult

Baby – secure/salvation 1Pt 2:2 – craves pure milk/word - grow into your salvation

Child – talk, walk Gal 5:16 walk/GHS & you will not fulfill desires of the flesh

Adult – fight/soldier Eph 6:10-17 – Put on the whole armor of God to fight forces of evil

Mature – take off OM – Eph 4:22 – take off OM being corrupted by deceitful desires

- a. Each stage/growth has sp. capacities to be developed to move to the next stage.
- b. Baby stages: must develop security/salvation to move into adult functional stages.
- c. Adult stages: must develop function/GHS + big picture of A/C to be effective
- d. All stages involve abandoning human assets to utilize grace assets – empty vessel

6. To go from maturity to super grace stages, believer must take off OM BB system

2Tim 2:20-21 – vessels/honor & dishonor – purify self à vessel/honor à useable

When functional & philosophical capacity is built, God focuses on purifying His vessels

- a. Basic order of growth: security, function/GHS, good/evil, A/C à purify motivation
- b. OM is motivated by self-interest & retains unconscious selfish motives at the core.
- c. Faithful believer builds mechanics/strength, and then come to love God more than self.
- d. Only believer who loves God more than self can be loyal under unjust suffering.
- e. Take off OM = take off self-interest, human security systems, worldly pleasure systems, expectation/demand for prosperity, human ability/works systems.
- f. NM loves God more than anyone, is devoted to God's will even if he suffers for it, and sees His glory as priority, sacrifices self-interest for God's interests.
- g. NM hungers for God's person, for His approval, devoted to His glory, craves new insights from His word and longs for eternity where we will be with Him forever.

The Process of Purifying Paul (Phil 3)

The Man, Paul:

From his birth until his new birth, Paul was very busy building a successful OM system that was intended to produce happiness for him in the devil's world. He used this system to please his parents and then to get ahead in life. The following discussion will provide general principles about Paul taking off his OM system, specific characteristics of his old system and methods the Lord used to free him from it.

- Paul's Human Experiences & Accomplishments Phil 3:5-6
- Circumcised 8th day as prescribed by law – Lev 12:3 – his parents did everything proper
- Tribe of Benjamin – son of Rachel the beloved; great warriors; stayed with Judah/split
- Hebrew of Hebrews – pure Jewish bloodline – considered the only legitimate bloodline
- Pharisee – the most conservative and credible in religion and politics
- Zeal – zealous – jealous, furious, fanatical – total commitment to his cause
- Persecuted the church – fanatical brutality to eliminate all opposition to the true religion
- Legal righteousness – blameless – Paul lived out his beliefs – law keeper

1. Paul began his life seeing his human assets as advantageous – 3:7

Kerdos – beneficial, advantageous, gain

- In his world all of these things were important and described success.
- His parents whom he loved had done these things & he was proud of them
- He had accomplished many things himself and he was proud of himself
- He initially believed these things might help him promote the gospel

Act 22:3-5 – Paul appeals to his own people using his Hebrew credentials

2. God revealed that his human assets/accomplishments were worthless – 3:8

Zemia: loss, damage, handicap – his advantages were a hindrance to the grace system

Skubala: dung, garbage – 1st they were a hindrance, then he saw they were worthless

- God has to show us that our human abilities & accomplishments hinder grace.
- Then He shows us that we are embracing garbage rather than embracing Him

3. Rejecting His OM, freed Paul from distractions and misdirected pursuits.

Distraction – hindrance from grace by depending upon his own abilities.

Misdirected – Using his precious time to pursue worthless worldly things

- Paul was grateful that God stripped him of these worthless false treasures
- He learned to be content with whatever God supplied and didn't interfere

a. OM operates on confidence in self Phil 3:3

Confidence in self – depending on human ability to properly relate to God/man – works

- W/out God all we have is self – OM is built w/out God's influence

2Cor 12:7-10 – thorn in flesh causing Paul to be weak in his flesh and unable to depend on his own body – had to depend on God's grace instead of himself – celebrated this

b. OM operates on competition & comparison with others Phil 3:4 "I more"

Comparison with others – measuring self by comparing with the performance of others

2Cor 10:12 – those who compare themselves by themselves – approval system – us/them

- Use a human system of comparison to evaluate spiritual success or failure – I am better/worse than others because of what I produce, what I do or don't do
- Paul drove himself not to give his best but to be better than others – "at least I don't do that"; terrified of being worthless if others were superior

2Cor 10 Some in Corinth were using human standards to evaluate Paul and were comparing him with other communicators – he learned to compare himself with Christ.

- c. OM stresses genetics, gender, culture, economics & social standing Phil 3:5**
- Genetics – bloodline – Jewish, royalty, race – I am better
 - Gender – males are smarter, stronger and better than women
 - Economics – financial status either rich or poor
 - Social standing – popularity, personality, fame – everything proper acc to culture
- Gal 3:28 equality in Christ – Jew/Greek, male/female, slave/free – no distinctions
- d. OM is determined to conceal weakness and failure**
- Paul saw himself as blameless in the law – only appeared to be blameless
 - Only Christ was totally blameless in the law – Paul blameless in the eyes/others
 - If success depends on opinions of others, weakness and failure must be concealed
 - OM has a great fear of having weakness and failure exposed – reject solutions
 - OM uses a mask, cover up and avoidance techniques to conceal weakness
- 2Cor 11:23-28 overwhelming adversities that revealed his inability to handle on his own
- e. OM must eliminate any opposing views of life**
- Humility has strong convictions and yet is able to hear and learn from anyone
 - Arrogance has to be right – approval and success is based on being right
 - Being wrong exposes weakness and must be avoided at all costs
 - OM cannot take advice – indicates need – knows everything about everything
 - Opposing views that expose our faulty views must be discredited & destroyed
 - Paul tried to destroy the church rather than listen to their message
- Act 9:3-7 Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus & revealed the truth
- f. OM must be in control**
- Controlling behaviors are generally motivated by fear and insecurity – avoid pain
 - Past painful experiences motivate controlling strategies to avoid repeat of pain
 - Mt 16:21-23 – Peter tries to control Jesus to avoid the pain of Him going to cross
 - Peter has plans for Jesus – give Peter a place of prominence in Israel
 - Legalism attempts to control God through specific behaviors – works
 - People try to control others to avoid the pain of relationship failure - manipulation
 - Active – bully, anger, threats, leave/return, withdrawal, silence,
 - Passive – pleaser, placate, helpless, needy, seek pity

Paul was supposed to send the financial offering to Jerusalem while he went to Rome. He decided to go to Jerusalem instead. God sent him to jail and then to Rome, revealing that Paul could make decisions but God was in control.

As God freed Paul from his dependence upon himself and he became totally dependent on God's grace, his heart became enslaved to the Lord and he became totally devoted to God