

*Purge the Old Leaven:  
Aspects of Church Discipline in the Bible, Theology, and Culture*

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## Self-Discipline

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### KEY WORDS

| Self-Discipline | Self-Denial | Authority of Scripture |  
| Life of the Mind | Apologetics |

### ABSTRACT

Christians are disciples. This means they must be self-disciplined under the lordship of Jesus Christ, who has all authority in heaven and on earth. There is no self-discipline without self-denial. We must resist worldliness in order to embrace godly habits of the mind. That means recognizing the truthfulness and pertinence of the Holy Scriptures and studying them arduously for the sake of the church and the world. If we do not, we may give a false witness to the gospel of God and so disgrace ourselves and the church. However, as we lean on the Lord and are filled with the Spirit, we know that our labor in the Lord is not in vain.

### INTRODUCTION

For twenty-five years, I have taught philosophy full-time at an evangelical seminary, as well as teaching as an affiliate faculty of philosophy at several secular schools. My deepest joy is inspiring students to attain knowledge about things that matter most. Some students stride into class with false assurances about their abilities. They are quickly humbled—or angered. Others slip in quietly and discover intellectual resources they knew nothing of. But wherever a student may start, I yearn that he advances intellectually, so that his thinking becomes more conducive to knowledge, especially about the nature of truth, God, morality, and salvation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I understand knowledge in the classical sense as being “justified, true belief” (JTB).

My greatest lament is not for those who labor long, but improve little. Nor is it for those who work much but remain weak. Sad though these cases are, I lament most for those who are smart but lazy—ill-equipped to develop their God-given skills through self-discipline. To become a Christian philosopher or apologist, you must acquire a certain cast of mind. You immerse yourself in the discipline, not just do well on assigned papers. You attend lectures, discussions, and debates related to your studies, not just give presentations in class. You need to read thoughtful books on your own time for a lifetime, not just fulfill reading assignments only to then stop reading when your schooling is done. In other words, you need self-discipline

in your discipline. No book or teacher by themselves can make this happen.

### THE CALL TO BE A DISCIPLE AND TO DISCIPLINE

Discipline is not optional in the Christian life. When Jesus called his first followers, they were called “disciples” and were given special authority because they were Jesus’s followers:

Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. (Matthew 10:1-4)

The summons of Christ is what confers authority on the apostles. But Christ’s call—and its sobering reference to Judas—is not limited to the original twelve, but is given to all who would confess Christ as their Lord and their Savior.

Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? (Luke 9:23-25)

Jesus also proclaims, “If you are truly my disciples, then you shall know the truth and the truth will make you free” (John 8:31-32). After his resurrection, the risen Lord charged his disciples to make disciples of the nations.

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given

to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20; see also Acts 1:8)

Since Jesus possesses all authority over every realm, his disciples must make disciples and teach the world to observe what Jesus commanded for the human race. In other words, this Great Commission demands that we bring the whole Bible to the whole world that the world might recognize and obey the authority of Jesus and the Bible. This cannot possibly be done without the disciplines of teaching and learning, so that error is unmasked and so that truth may be unleashed.

Followers of Jesus were first called “Christians” at Antioch (Acts 11:26). This was because they desired to be like Christ. But in a fallen and broken world, we are not naturally Christ-like, but, rather, slaves to sin and the devil (John 8:44). Jesus did not soft sell or down play the plight of people east of Eden and under the sun.

### THE MEANING OF DISCIPLINE

To be disciplined means to come under a higher authority in order to please that authority by one’s thought and actions. While “discipline” can mean a kind of restorative punishment, the concept is not based on there being a need for punishment.

Jesus was without sin, but learned discipline in his earthly sojourn. But how can the perfectly righteous and sinless Son of God experience this? The writer of Hebrews explains.

During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent

cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 5:7-10)

The crucial word in this passage for our concerns is “obedient.” One cannot be obedient unless one has been disciplined. This is simply because one is disciplined *unto obedience*. Even Jesus, “Son though he was,” became obedient to God, the Father, through his fervent desires for godliness. In this, he was made “perfect” through his life-long ardor for God, which culminated with his incomparable suffering of the Cross. It is because of all this that he “was designated by God to be a high priest...” This pattern of Jesus’s obedience found in discipline compels his followers as well, since Jesus is “the source of salvation” who *obey him*.

We can also trace the idea of discipline to our first parents in the garden. Even before disobedience to God and their fall into sin and death, God told them to obey him, to be under his discipline. Before promising them all the good of the earth, God says:

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” (Genesis 1:28; see also Psalm 8)

Later, after God unveiled more blessings for man under God’s authority, he spoke again of blessings of obedience, but also the consequences of disobedience or insubordination.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the

man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.” (Genesis 2:15-17)

Of course, the original man and woman turned from God and his promise of blessing aside and instead turned toward the serpent’s lie. In being disobedient, in not learning obedience through discipline, they were cast east of Eden, out of the garden, and into a world now “under the sun,” as Ecclesiastes poetically puts it. God called the man and the woman to be disciplined unto obedience—even before sin entered and effaced the human race. Thus, discipline is intrinsic to creature-hood, to our status as finite and dependent beings. As Paul preached at Athens, God “is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else” (Acts 17:25; see Hebrews 1:3).

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR SELF-DISCIPLINE

Christians are under the authority of God as found in The Holy Scriptures. Every discipline requires a reliable source of knowledge to inform that discipline. Lawyers must learn the legal codes to practice law well. Doctors need to master anatomy, physiology, and pharmacology to practice medicine wisely. Christians, whatever their specific vocation, must read, study, memorize, and meditate upon God’s special revelation to humanity: the sixty six books of the Old and New Testaments. Postmodern distortions aside, the Bible carries an objective, ineradicable, and knowable authority because it is inspired by an all-good and all-powerful God.<sup>2</sup> It is not a book to augment our personal,

2 On the postmodernist attempt to undermine

private, and subjective “spirituality.” May it never be. We are held accountable to the Bible as the ultimate standard for all of life. This was the formal principle of the Reformation: *Sola Scriptura*. Neither tradition nor any religious spokesman can trump “the word of God,” which “is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12). Paul affirms this of the Hebrew Bible to Timothy, and by extension to the New Testament as well.<sup>3</sup>

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; see also John 10:33, 2 Peter 1:16-21)

In a time of biblical illiteracy and mushy syncretism, it is incumbent that Christians know and seek to live out biblical truths. Without this self-discipline, “the salt loses its savor” and we blend in with the world, as the Apostle John warned:

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever. (1 John 2:15-17; see also James 1:27)

Time with the biblical text is paramount. In a

this concept of truth, see Douglas Groothuis, *Truth Decay: Defending Christianity against the Challenges of Postmodernism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000); and Millard Erickson, *Truth or Consequences* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> For this argument, see Douglas Groothuis, *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011).

media-saturated culture, followers of the Word made flesh must attend to the Word written and so avoid the manifold worldly diversions that cyberspace offers. This, too, requires a disciplined exegesis of every communications medium to discern its effect on our lives. What Paul says about prophecy applies to all our life in a fallen world: “Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22; see also Galatians 1:6-11; John 4:1-6; 2 Corinthians 11:14).

Second, a Christian’s self-discipline is demanding and rigorous. The followers of Jesus are exhorted by their Lord to abide by the highest standards and to do so at the deepest possible level. The Apostle Paul, following his Lord, implored Christians to be ardent and competent followers of Christ.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:1-2)

To the young pastor, Timothy, Paul says:

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15; see also James 3:1-3)

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus strikes at the root of sin—one’s thoughts and emotions. Jesus indicts those who murder or commit adultery in their hearts, and exhorts them to strike at the root of the problem. In language that makes many balk or wince, Jesus says:

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. (Matthew 5:27-30)

Those who govern their thoughts will govern their bodies, and present them as living sacrifices to God (Romans 12:1). This is possible only through the Holy Spirit.

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:19-23)

Third, we need to be sober and serious about the consequences of not disciplining ourselves through knowing the Bible and doing good works in the power of the Spirit of Truth (Matthew 7:15-23; John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; James 2:14-26). If we claim to be Christians, then there should be evidence of a life changed for the better, a life that lives for Christ and his Kingdom (Matthew 6:33). One can never know Christ as Savior without knowing him as Lord, no matter how poor our discipleship may be.<sup>4</sup> Paul delivers this clarion call to self-discipline

<sup>4</sup> See John MacArthur, *The Gospel of Jesus: What is Authentic Faith?* rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).

in light of God's great redemptive work:

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. (Titus 2:11-14)

As God's children and heirs of grace (Galatians 4:7), God holds us accountable for our discipline or lack of it. Our thoughts and works do nothing to justify us before an infinitely holy God. Our standing with God is accomplished by "the finished work of Christ," as Francis Schaeffer put it (Ephesians 2:1-8).<sup>5</sup> When we confess our sin, we can know that God forgives our sin and cleanse us of unrighteousness (1 John 1:8-10; See also Psalm 51). However, God may chasten us, such that we become more earnest and devout disciples:

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11)

This discipline may be quite severe, as Paul makes clear about partaking in The Lord's Supper in a flippant and ungodly manner.

So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

<sup>5</sup> Francis Schaeffer, *The Finished Work of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998). On the spiritual life, see Francis Schaeffer, *True Spirituality* (orig. pub.. 1971; Tyndale House, 2001) and Francis Chan, *Crazy Love* (Colorado Springs, David C. Cook, 2008).

For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world. (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)

But if we are discerning about our hearts and conduct, we can avoid this strict judgment. But even if so judged, this discipline from God is restorative, “that we will not be finally condemned with the world.” And there is blessing in God’s discipline:

Blessed is the one you discipline, Lord,  
the one you teach from your law;  
you grant them relief from days of  
trouble,  
till a pit is dug for the wicked.  
(Psalm 94:12-13)

Fourth, if one does not discipline himself, and brings dishonor on God’s name and corruption to God’s church, he may come under the discipline of the church. Jesus tells us what pattern to follow in this--confront the person personally. If this fails to bring repentance, bring others. If this fails, it must be brought before the whole church. As the last resort, the sinner must be treated as “as you would a pagan or a tax collector” (Matthew 18:15-18). In the early church, Paul addressed these matters sternly, but lovingly as well, even commanding that an erring brother handed “over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord” (Corinthians 5:5).

## SELF-DISCIPLINE AND THE LIFE OF THE MIND

As a Christian teacher and writer, I hope I can offer some wisdom on one’s discipleship of the mind. Through reading Francis Schaeffer’s book, *The God Who is There* (1968) shortly after my conversion in 1976, I discovered that the Christian worldview and the Lordship of Christ covered the whole of life. Most significantly, Schaeffer ranged over myriad topics – philosophy, theology, art, music, etc. – with intellectual confidence and competence rooted in Christian truth.<sup>6</sup> That inspired me to attempt to do the same.

The subject of teaching, learning, and publishing as a Christian has many facets, such as pedagogical philosophy, the intellectual substance of sermons, and more. These are group endeavors practiced in the classroom and the church. They are neglected to our shame. Since our topic is self-discipline, we will address ways that Christians can develop habits of intellectual discipline under Christ’s absolute authority.<sup>7</sup>

First, a disciplined mind is an integral part of the Christian’s sanctification—becoming more Christ-like as one matures in faith. In correcting passionately the false gospel being taught in Galicia, Paul explained the foundation of sanctification:

But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit

6 Francis Schaeffer, *The God Who is There* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1968).

7 For a specific application of self-discipline to Christian scholarship, see Andres Kostenberger, *Excellence: The Character of God and the Pursuit of Godly Virtue* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2012)

who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. (Galatians 4:4-7)

These glorious realities of salvation must spark the Christian's zeal for intellectual discipline and achievement. Leaning on pride, ego, and status will only grieve and quench the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19).<sup>8</sup>

Sadly, many Christians fail to view intellectual self-discipline as a *spiritual discipline*. After I taught on this to a large class at Denver Seminary, a man about fifty years old contacted me. He was troubled and confessing his faith had little rational basis. I counseled him to follow Peter's admonition:

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. (1 Peter 3:15; see also Isaiah 1:18; Romans 12:1-2)

When Jesus was asked the toughest theological question of his day, "What is the greatest commandment in the Law?" he replied:

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:37-40)

On the authority of Jesus, we must love God with all our being, including the totality of our minds. Jesus himself brought his intellect to bear on all aspects of his ministry, outthinking the

best minds of his day on the thorniest issues. He avoided all their traps and answered brilliantly on, for example, matters of church and state (as we would put it), marriage and the afterlife, and his status as a "son of David."<sup>9</sup>

As Francis Schaeffer often put it, Christ is the Lord of all of life and all of our being. His stature as a thinking pastor and prophet and apologist gave great power to these words.

True spirituality covers all of reality. There are things the Bible tells us to do as absolutes which are sinful- which do not conform to the character of God. But aside from these things the Lordship of Christ covers all of life and all of life equally. It is not only that true spirituality covers all of life, but it covers all parts of the spectrum of life equally. In this sense there is nothing concerning reality that is not spiritual.<sup>10</sup>

The essence of intellectual discipline is holding oneself accountable to God for the truth and credibility of one's beliefs. This is no small task, east of Eden, as the Psalmist knew well:

Take notice, you senseless ones among the people; you fools, when will you become wise?  
Does he who fashioned the ear not hear?  
Does he who formed the eye not see?  
Does he who disciplines nations not punish?  
Does he who teaches mankind lack knowledge?  
The Lord knows all human plans;  
he knows that they are futile.  
(Psalm 94:8-11)

Despite the "futility" of human plans—given human pride, arrogance, and intellectual sloth—we may heed God's revelation and,

8 See Charles Spurgeon's sermon, "Grieving the Holy Spirit" (1859) available at: <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0278.htm>.

9 See all of Matthew, chapter 22 for these arguments. For the case that Jesus was a philosopher and apologist, see Douglas Groothuis, *On Jesus* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2003).

10 See Francis Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (orig. pub., 1981; Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 19.

through cognitive discipline, attain knowledge. A fundamental element of this task is forming and perfecting a Christian worldview. Much has been written on this topic in the last few decades.<sup>11</sup> James Sire sets out a concise and helpful definition of worldview in his first edition of his modern classic, *The Universe Next Door* (1976): “A world view is a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of our world.”<sup>12</sup> A worldview can be broken down into several categorical schemes, but three categories suffice for our purposes: creation, fall, and redemption.<sup>13</sup>

**Creation:**

An infinite-personal and triune God created all things out of nothing and blessed them as good. The crown of creation was man, made in the image and likeness of God, whom God pronounced “very good” (Genesis 1-2).

**Fall:**

The man and woman defected from God’s authority by heeding the lies of the serpent that deceived them. Because of the fall, all creation was marred and humans were subject to death. We all inherit this condition and labor under its constraints (Genesis 3; Book of Ecclesiastes; Psalm 90).

**Redemption:**

Despite the fall into sin and futility, God

11 Perhaps the most thorough treatment from a Christian perspective is David Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002).

12 James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalogue* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1976), 17. This book is now out in a 5th edition, published by InterVarsity in 2009.

13 For the development of these themes and their application to non-Christian worldviews, see Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004).

continued to reveal himself through nature, prophets, Israel, Scripture, and supremely in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ’s redemptive mission insures that his true followers will be saved, that the Kingdom will advance, and that the universe will be purged, judged, and perfected in the end (Revelation 21-22).

For Christians to develop, maintain, and improve their Christian worldview, they must discipline their thoughts to conform to the biblical pattern. As mentioned above, this intellectual integrity requires a deep knowledge of the Bible in addition to how the Bible speaks to the perennial issues of humanity. Christians need to deny themselves some popular amusements. Since much of popular culture numbs the mind to truth, wastes time, and desensitizes the soul to the realities of good and evil, it must be shunned for the sake of better things. Paul exhorts us to discipline our thinking this way:

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. (Philippians 4:8)

When one says No to worldliness, one can dine on far richer fare. Beside the Bible, the disciplined mind finds delight in seminal Christian thinkers such as St. Augustine, Aquinas, John Calvin, Blaise Pascal, Jonathan Edwards, C.S. Lewis, Dorothy Sayers, G.K. Chesterton, and many more. We are surrounded by a great cloud of Christian witness who had earnestly attempted to conform their minds to the realities of God and his world.<sup>14</sup> A sound knowledge of the western literary canon in general further braces

14 See Terry Glaspy, *Book Lover’s Guide to Great Reading: A Guided Tour of Classic and Contemporary Literature* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).



Christian's mind for great things.<sup>15</sup>

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

The context for Paul's insights and incentive to destroy anything that denies the knowledge of God is church discipline at Corinth. However, it is not limited to that. We know that Paul told the Ephesians to put on "the full armor of God" (Ephesians 6:10-19), especially bearing in mind the intense occultism and spiritual darkness of Ephesus (see Acts 19:1-20). The armor involves "the helmet of salvation," which protecting the head and thus the mind in intellectual combat. It further means and arraying "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God," which brings the divine power of Scripture (Hebrews 4:12) into every adversarial situation. Just as a military soldier must be disciplined in his battle skills and obedience to his commander, the Christian must be *disciplined* to "take every thought captive to make it *obedient* to Christ."

Although he wrote before the coming of Christ, the Preacher of Ecclesiastes left a legacy of careful and disciplined thought and writing, as the commentator tells us.

Not only was the Teacher wise, but he also imparted knowledge to the people. He pondered and searched out and set in order many proverbs. The Teacher searched to find just the right words, and what he wrote was upright and true. (Ecclesiastes 12:9-10)

## SELF-DISCIPLINE AND THE VICTORY OF CHRIST

We have seen that discipline to a higher authority is the essence of godly living. We are not the center of the universe. The God of the Bible forever holds that position. Therefore, the Christian should submit to the way of the Cross in order to rejoice in the resurrection power of God, always remembering this promise:

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:56-59)

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15 Louise Cowan, Os Guinness, eds. *Invitation to the Classics: A Guide to Books You've Always Wanted to Read* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006)

