

# Truth in Grace

Truth in Grace Ministries

Dan Hayden, Director

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## Where are all the MEN?

2 Timothy 3

### Dan's Desk

It is increasingly hard to find a good man.

Recently a woman who had been abused and abandoned by her husband asked me if I knew the difference between a man and a battery. The answer to that question was that a battery has a positive side. Knowing her circumstances, I had to sympathize with her analysis of the male species.

As a pastor, I am appalled at the number of men I am currently observing who pursue their own selfish interests at the expense of their wives and children. Personal fulfillment is their only goal, and their willingness to sacrifice significant relationships on the altar of their hedonistic self-interest defies imagination. They don't always walk away from their marriages and families, but most often it's a relief when they do. The lies, the deceit, the broken promises, the lack of sensitivity and concern, the emotional and physical abuse, the neglect, the tension and hurt—it's a slow and deliberate torture that mangles the soul. It's a horror that rivals Alfred Hitchcock and Stephen King. I've seen it before, but now I'm seeing it more.

The Apostle Paul told Timothy, "*In the last days, perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves*" (2 Tim. 3:2). For many women and children, we are living in the last days—the peril is great and male self-lovers are the cause. I am beginning to understand the female passion for liberation, but I am also convinced that the answer is not for women to become men; it is for men to become men.

*continued on page 2*



It's not that there are no men of personal integrity with a desire for godliness—there are. And it's not that women are without fault—God knows the contribution they have made to our declining culture. The point that I am making and the concern that I have, is that there is an increasing number of men who are caught in the vice of their own selfishness with a diminished sense of personal discipline, sacrificial perseverance, and moral responsibility. They are weak in character and pathetic in spirit. They indulge themselves and blame others. They're never wrong and always critical. It's a crying shame—literally.

Now a lot of this kind of behavior can be blamed on substance abuse and other obsessive-compulsive behaviors that weaken the spirit and feed the flesh—drugs, alcohol, pornography, gambling, even an obsessive indulgence in sports, etc. Our American society is plagued with this type of destructive influence, and it is undermining the stability of our men. Yet, the problem is even more pervasive than that.

There is a spirit of “selfism” that defines the prevailing philosophy of life in America, an existential preoccupation with self, and even good men are succumbing to its influence. They are not as thoughtful and caring as they used to be. They have lost the ability to give sacrificially of themselves for the welfare of their spouse and children. It's not that they are necessarily bad—it's just that they've ceased being good.

This is certainly true of the secular man in the world, but the real tragedy is that it is increasingly characteristic of the man in the pew. He goes to church, but he doesn't walk with God. Therefore, any meaningful distinction between the man in the church and the man in the street is substantially cosmetic—the man in the church is wearing a suit on Sunday.

So, what is happening? Why are we seeing so many men with a decreasing sense of integrity and honor? Why is selfishness becoming the male norm? Why are so many men so weak in spirit?

### Why Are Men So Weak?

Our contemporary view of strength tends to reflect our obsession with physical fitness, athletics, and Hollywood tough guys. Unfortunately our modern heroes of muscle are also, more often than not, classic illustrations of personal weakness.

A championship fighter steps into the ring and demolishes one of the toughest men in the world in less time than it takes to sing the national anthem. He then goes home and finds himself powerless to hold his marriage together, while the media exposes his personal life as a shamble of emotional

instability. Is this what it really means to be strong?

Our idea of strength in the spiritual realm is often equally anemic. We may be able to deliver a knock-out punch when it comes to singing a solo or preaching a sermon, but at home we are as impotent as a shorn Samson to overcome the impulses of the flesh. Our interpersonal relationships seem to fare no better than our hero of the boxing ring and our indulgences in the pleasures of life are as flagrant as his (or would be if we had his money). What is our problem? Where have we gone wrong?

God exhorts His people to be “*strong in the Lord*” in order to withstand the “*wiles of the devil*” (Eph. 6:10-11). Obviously we need to understand something of what that means. Jeremiah gives us a clue when he says, “Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, *neither let the mighty man glory in his might*, let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me...” (Jer. 9:23-24, emphasis mine). It appears that God is more interested in developing a healthy respect for godliness than a personal infatuation with manliness. God is exhorting us to inner strength—not the strength of muscle, but the strength of character that comes from a personal fellowship with the Lord.

Our real problem seems to be that we have been seriously (perhaps even fatally) influenced by a subtle philosophy which has steadily pervaded the thinking of the western world. This philosophy has caused us to view personal fulfillment as the goal of life. More than anything else, it has led us into the trap of expecting that God should give us whatever we want.

So self-indulgence has become the rule of the day. The slogan of the existential culture is “If it feels good, do it.” This has been reinterpreted by twentieth century Christianity to say, “If it feels good, God owes it to us.” The problem with this philosophy, however, is that it is very man-centered and reduces God to a mere celestial bellhop—we ring the bell, and God is supposed to hop. Instead of living life to the glory of God, we live our lives in order to find fulfillment for ourselves.

It is my observation that this erroneous view of life is killing us. We are experiencing a serious breakdown in the realm of personal character which, in turn, is making it increasingly difficult for us to sustain meaningful interpersonal relationships. The selfish pursuit of personal fulfillment appears to be the biggest culprit in the ruining of our marriages, families, and churches.

Let me explain to you what appears to be happening. When men become “fulfillment” oriented, they tend to adopt the idea that hardship is evil and pleasure (in the sense of what pleases them) is the only good. Consequently, they prefer to

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reject the rigors of spiritual discipline and self-denial taught by God in His Word and engage themselves, rather, in a vigorous pursuit of personal enjoyment.

The fact that this philosophy doesn't reflect a realistic view of life seems to be beside the point. They prefer to think that it ought to—perhaps because they have been led to believe that they are worth it (as the L'Oréal ad tells them), or at least because as “the children of the King,” they feel that they deserve it. So they manipulate circumstances to obtain those things that please them and to reject those things that cause them pain as a means of assisting God in the task of making their lives more personally meaningful.

One of the major problems with this, however, is that too much pleasure, like too much candy, tends to weaken them, while hardships and struggles are the elements of life that strengthen them. So increasingly, there are more and more men who are weak in character and who consequently find it difficult to cope with challenging circumstances. They are more likely to break a relationship when there are problems than to give themselves sacrificially to a healing process. They are not strong anymore—they prefer the fulfillment of their pleasure to the discipline of their faith.

### Is There Any Hope?

So what's the remedy? How do we reverse the process and encourage men to put away their selfishness for the purpose of pursuing a life of godliness? Well, let's go back to 2 Timothy 3 and observe what Paul said to Timothy about his response to these perilous days and selfish men.

The first nine verses are Paul's analysis of the last days culture. It describes our twenty-first century American culture to a tee—loss of character (v. 2-5), gender conflict (v. 6-7), and religious confusion (v. 8-9). Then verse 10 begins with the words “*But you.*” In other words, after describing the deplorable condition of the perilous times, Paul then tells Timothy what he ought to do about it. In essence, he says that there are two specific things that Timothy ought to do: (1) recognize the value of godly living over carnal living (v. 10-13), and (2) go to the Word of God to correct his behavior (v. 14-17).

#### 1. Follow Paul's Example (v. 10-13)

Living a life of godliness in a crazy, ungodly world is not an impossible task. Paul did it. And he told Timothy to do it by observing how Paul did it. The point is that every man ought to

line up behind Timothy and observe Paul's life as the example of godly living. Here is a flesh-and-blood situation that every man can understand as to how God wants him to live.

The qualities of life mentioned in verses 10 & 11 are certainly challenging for any man, but they are also the kind of things that make for a strong and stable life. Paul's “purpose” in life was to glorify Christ in all that he did (Phil. 1:21). That was what he taught and that is how he lived. He was a man of faith who was patient and loving. Furthermore, he knew how to persevere under the hardships of life, and he didn't let persecutions and sufferings deter him from doing what was right. This is the example he set for all men who would live their lives in a manner pleasing to God.

So there it is! If a man is willing to look at Paul, and the above qualities of life reflected in verses 10-13, he can know the kind of life he ought to live and he can be confident that God is in the business of enabling men to live that way. “I can't” is never an excuse. Paul said, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*” (Phil. 4:13).

#### 2. Read the Word of God (v. 14-17).

Paul encouraged Timothy to go to the Word of God for his instructions concerning life. For most men, the heroes of life are those who are successful at what they do, and make a lot of money. Achieving the good life is the message that catches their ear. Having enough money and sufficient freedom to indulge their passions is all they want. Knowing the ways of God does not interest them.

Yet the wise man knows that it is the counsel of God that leads to life (v. 15). The Scriptures are “profitable” for teaching him how to live. They point out his shortcomings, correct his behavior, and train him in the right way to live (v. 16). The wise man values that counsel and humbly submits himself to its influence. He knows it will “equip” him for every aspect of his life (v. 17).

### How Shall We Then Live?

In the estimation of God, self-centered individuals are not men, they are male sycophants. They sponge off of others to fulfill their selfish desires. God's kind of man, on the other hand, is sacrificial in spirit, sensitive to the needs of others, and godly in character. He seeks to live his life to the glory of Christ. So—where are all the men? 🙏



# Truth in Grace

## RADIO BROADCAST BEGINS



given to making each devotional practical and encouraging to the Christian who is seeking to live life in the light of God's Word. At the conclusion of the program, Dan plays off of a Paul Harveyism and says, "And now you know the real meaning of the word" (a reference to both the individual word and its impact on the meaning of God's Word). Then a final challenge drives the point of that particular devotional home to the listener. It all happens in just two minutes.

Quite frankly, we were concerned at first that a study-based devotional would require more time than two minutes to be effective. The fact of the matter is, however, that we have been amazed at how much can be said in such a short period of time. Advertisers have long been masters of the thirty second commercial that gives you more information than you ever wanted to know about a product. It's all in how you say it — and every word, phrase, and thought must be carefully crafted. Well, this has been our challenge and we are loving every minute of it (every two minutes, that is).

Our real desire though, is that Christians will gain a renewed appreciation for the wonder of God's Word. The church has long understood that the Bible is verbally inspired, which means that every word is from God. We are simply capitalizing on that wonderful truth and demonstrating day after day the importance of the very words of Scripture. It is our prayer that God will be pleased to use us to stimulate a passion for more in-depth Bible study in an increasing number of people.

For those of you who do not live within the broadcast radius of the stations listed here, but would like to hear a sample of our program, you can find us on the internet at [www.truthingrace.org](http://www.truthingrace.org). Go to our Web Media page, download the free RealPlayer software, then click on the sample broadcast to hear one of our devotional features. As you do, let us know what you think—we are always interested in constructive criticism. Also, for those of you hearing us on the radio, a letter to the station letting them know of your appreciation for our broadcast will encourage them to keep us on the air. Thanks!

Continue to pray for us as we pursue this opportunity, that God will be glorified and that many will grow in their appreciation for the words of Scripture. Finally, a special thanks—first to Robert Eller, our sound engineer and director of audio development, whose tireless efforts and commitment to excellence have made this new venture in radio possible. And second, to Tom Moffit of Moffit Media, a long-time friend and encourager, and now our managing agent to the Christian radio community. A WORD FROM THE WORD is here! Thank you, Lord.

**"Hi! This is Dan Hayden, and I have a word from the Word for you today."** On June 5, in numerous locations around the country, that introduction heralded the beginning of Truth in Grace's daily devotional broadcast. For several years now, we have been dreaming enthusiastically and working diligently on a radio format that would challenge God's people with the excitement of studying God's Word more deeply. A WORD FROM THE WORD is the fulfillment of that dream.

If you have been receiving this Truth in Grace ministry quarterly, you have noticed that Dan usually includes a word study article in each issue. The column is entitled, "A word from the Word" and highlights a particular word used in some passage of the Bible. Insights from the original Greek or Hebrew text bring the meaning of that word to life and, along with pertinent illustrations, there is a practical application as to how the truth revealed in that word affects our lives. It all centers around how word studies impact the understanding of the Word of God. Thus, the column is entitled "A word from the Word".

Now it is this same idea that undergirds the format of our radio broadcast. A WORD FROM THE WORD is a two minute devotional that stresses the importance of word meanings in correctly understanding verses of the Bible. Careful attention is

Listen to "A WORD FROM THE WORD" Monday thru Friday on these radio stations:

**WCSG 91.3 FM**  
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**WRJZ 620 AM**  
Knoxville, TN  
9:27 AM

**WVCH 740 AM**  
Philadelphia, PA  
8:57 AM

## A Word from the Word

# LOVERS OF SELF

φιλαυτος

2 Tim 3:2

**Self-centered behavior** is the most destructive influence upon interpersonal relationships imaginable. It eliminates concern for the other person's welfare and sucks the life out of any meaningful communication. It is the first sin of the universe, when Adam and Eve chose themselves over God, and it tops the list of sins that God hates ("pride"—Prov. 6:16). Self-love is the cesspool out of which oozes every other perversion of the human heart, for ultimately everyone and everything else becomes expendable in the pursuit of its insatiable lust.

Yet the thing that is most exalted in our society is the "self." Self-fulfillment, self-determinism, and self-image are highly regarded as the essence of life by our hedonistic culture. The breakdown of our society is usually blamed on other things (too much drugs, too many guns, right wing fundamentalists, etc.), but those who can see beyond their animal instincts recognize that the real culprit is the self-centered, egomaniacal, prideful condition of the human heart left unchecked by the moral laws of God. Relax the moral restraints on the depraved nature of man and it will seek its own narcissistic level—every time!

Paul warned Timothy that the "last days" culture would be characterized by peril due to the loss of moral integrity (2 Tim. 3). The list of eighteen sordid dehumanizing attributes of this culture begins with "for men shall be lovers of their own selves" (2 Tim. 3:2). Actually, "lovers of their own selves" is one word in the Greek text—**philautos**. This compound word is built around the intensive pronoun **autos** which means "self," and is translated variously—himself, herself, ourselves, themselves.

This word has invaded our English vocabulary in a multitude of compound words—**autograph**, **autobiography**, **automobile**, **autocratic**, **automatic**, etc. In all of these words, the idea of "self" or "by itself" is dominant. For instance, "**autobiography**" is the biography of oneself—and, "**automobile**" is the idea of being mobile by itself.

Now in the Greek word **philautos**, the additional word **philos** is added to the notion of oneself (**autos**). **Philos** is the common Greek word for love and signifies the kind of love that comes from the emotions of the heart. When we are attracted to something or feel emotionally drawn to someone, we are experiencing **philos**. Basically, **philos** is what turns us on. Therefore, when added to the word **autos**, this compound word indicates that the thing which turns us on is ourselves—**philautos**. This, the Apostle Paul says, will be the most defining element of the last days culture—people will be "lovers of their own selves" (**philautos**). More than anything else, this is the reason we are seeing a major decline in goodness and a drastic increase in badness. People are acting selfishly. They are putting their own interests ahead of the needs and concerns of others.

When a young man pulls the trigger and kills his school mates, that person is acting in a **philautos** manner. When someone steals from someone else, that is a **philautos** act. Likewise, when a man leaves his wife and family for other interests, he demonstrates that he is a **philautos** individual. Even little things that we do every day in putting our own interests ahead of others, or in contrast to God's desire for our lives, indicates that there is a large measure of **philautos** in all of us.

According to the Bible, self-love is the most degrading thing about us—and the only antidote is to confess our sin to God, claim forgiveness through faith in Christ as our Savior, and pray that the Holy Spirit will put within us a giving, sacrificial spirit.

There is another Greek word for "self" in the Bible. It is the word **idios**—which means "one's own, peculiar to oneself." We see it in our English word **idiosyncrasy** and **idiomatic**—and it is where we get the word "idiot," or a person who is consumed with himself. So in the final analysis, I guess we can say that the person who is characterized by **philautos** (lover of self) is really the ultimate IDIOT.

# Truth in Grace

## Bits & Pieces

...If you are interested in further information on our literature and audio tape ministry, you can find us on the internet at [www.truthingrace.org](http://www.truthingrace.org) or contact us at Truth in Grace, P.O. Box 1000, Grand Haven, MI 49417, 1-800-844-9930. Our newest booklet highlights Dan's Bible memory program entitled *Mindful of the Truth*.

...Sandy Ksycki, our office manager, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in February and, after undergoing surgery in March, is now nearing the end of her chemotherapy treatments. It has been a long, arduous process, but she is doing amazingly well. We are all thanking the Lord for His goodness in her life. As you think of her, we know she would appreciate your prayers.

...Summer itinerary for Dan includes: *June 23-25*, Dedication ceremonies for Hampton Court (ministry center), Hereford, England; *July 2-7*, Family Camp speaker, Fort Wilderness Camp, Rhinelander, WI; *July 14-15*, Board meeting, Zion's Hope, Orlando, FL; *August 26-30*, Family Camp speaker, Camp Forest Springs, Westboro, WI.

...Dan continues to write for *Zion's Fire* magazine and to speak at Zion's Hope Conferences. This is an excellent ministry and, with their new Holy Land Experience project in Orlando, is becoming one of the premier ministries in America. We would encourage you to write or call for a free one-year subscription to *Zion's Fire* magazine—Zion's Hope, P.O. Box 690909, Orlando, FL 32869, (747) 872-2272.

...Rob and Rhinda Hayden (son of Dan and Karilee) and their four children have finally arrived as missionaries in Bratislava, Slovakia with ABWE mission. They are settling into their rented home and are beginning their immersive language acquisition. We are thanking the Lord for His watchful care over them as they make this transition in their lives.

## Encouragement

### Mothers Alone

Sometimes mothers don't have the help of fathers in raising their children. Either there is no father, as in a single parent home, or the father is too busy or disinterested to help. How does a mother cope when she has to raise her children alone? We will look at how God enabled Eunice, the mother of Timothy, to raise a godly son—alone.

**1 Audio Tape  
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of \$4**

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