

Faith Requires Obedience, Discipline and Self-Control

Rev. Betty Thomas



2 Timothy 1: 7(NKJV) For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Here, Paul mentions 3 characteristics that are effective for Christians. These are specially needed for leaders to have. Power, Love and a Sound mind, which refers to wisdom. Power does not refer to having a dynamic personality, but the boldness that comes from confidence in the Gospel. Love is care and concern with tender-hearted treatment of those who serve. Having a cool head and keeping a **tight** hold on selfish desires.

These are available to us, because the Holy Spirit lives in us. We overcome by following His leading each day, so that our life more fully reveals these characteristics. All of this requires discipline and obedience. It is important to have discipline in our thoughts, words, and emotions. God has equipped us with a sound mind, a mind that stays calm and not emotional. This comes with relationship. When we find ourselves so comfortable that we do not and cannot make time for God; we need to reevaluate who we serve. Nothing should take higher priority than God. We can be well-balanced, disciplined, and have self-control. We must choose to use our sound minds.

I read, we can make ourselves accountable, or we can eventually be held accountable for our circumstances. If we are not disciplined in the things that we do and say the outcome will be destruction. For example: "If we are not disciplined in our spending, we will eventually be made accountable for the debt, that we have accrued along with the pressure and the problems that it causes. If we are not disciplined in our eating, we will be made accountable for being unhealthy, which leads to sickness and disease. We are living sacrifices to God.

Romans 12: 1 - 2(KJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.* ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

We must have discipline and self-control in and with our bodies. That is being single and in marriage. We cannot give ourselves to somebody who is not our husband or wife, when we are single. We cannot maintain a good marriage if we are not disciplined in our actions. We must be mindful of what goes in our ear and eye gates. There are consequences. The end result only leads to pain. We end up hurting a lot of people and getting hurt in the process. We have to get serious about the things of God and stop living to serve our flesh.

We are not our own and we cannot do anything we please with these vessels without consequences. These are the terms and we cannot change them. Presenting our bodies as living sacrifice, pleasing to God; means complete and total surrender and obedience. True worship comes with total surrendering. It requires sacrifice, self-control, and discipline. We go to certain places, sometimes there's a security check, and so you cannot pass unless you are cleared. We need to do that with our thoughts and actions. We should not allow any old thoughts to our lips pass through without thinking it over and getting the okay from God. The warnings God is giving us are not optional. We need to respond and stop sinning and being rebellious against the Will and Word of God!

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Everyone wants to live a happy life... well align your desires with the will of God. Be bold in the truth of God's Word and suffer well. We suffer well when we are in His will and Word. God has put into our hearts, the Holy Spirit who is our teacher and He leads and guides us to all paths that are right. He leads us to the right things to do and say in every situation. He gives us ways of escape in temptation, but if we choose not to take these precious leadings, then God will allow our circumstances to be our teacher. This is when the heartache, the pain, the disappointment and the shame comes into play, because, we have chosen to be rebellious against God and the wisdom that He has placed within us.

We have to be determined to do the will of God. When we ignore the Holy Spirit's leadings, we are opening up the door to destruction in our lives. We have to use the boldness and authority that the Lord has given us to walk in a way that is pleasing unto the Lord. We cannot walk, trying to please others or trying to gain the world's attention, by conforming to worldly standards. Compromise is not an option. Are you in or are you out? Is your mind truly made up for God. For me, Its for God that I live and for God that I die? We can lie to ourselves and others, but we cannot lie to God. Self-checks are important. Who's side are you really on? Our actions, emotions and thoughts should be pleasing to God. God has given us a Savior who has given us the opportunity to repent, be forgiven, be made whole and walk in the way of the Lord. Grace is for us to change, not stay the same. There is a standard to keep. Righteous and Holiness, God requires us to endure and stick to it.

We have to focus and learn to stay alert, be watchful, while transforming and growing deeper in the knowledge of God. Stop giving up on God and letting our guard down. The spirit of "I want it and am going to get it", should only apply to being free in Jesus. Learn to be content in every season that the Lord gives us whether it's a season of drought or a season of plenty. We have to be obedient and disciplined in our actions, words and thoughts; stop compromising to fit in. Stop trying to and make people feel good or comfortable in their sin. Lead them to the Rock, that is higher than we. Give them the true, unadulterated Word of God. The Word is alive and active. It does not need our help or our side notes. All we have to do is give it straight to them and nothing more. Our sacrifice and obedience is to stay true to our faith and true to the Word of God, while loving the Lord God, with all of our heart, mind, body and loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. Keep your eyes on Jesus or your will be swept up by the false doctrines of this world and meet the wrath and anger of God.

Fully committed!



Betty J Thomas (Advocate for Christ)