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Grace-Energized Women are Discreet: Grace Energized Minds



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Jesus loves absolutes. He always used them in His teachings, through contrasts: Light vs. Darkness, Heaven vs. Hell, Life vs. Death, Broad way vs. Narrow Gate, and so on.

Those absolutes continue into the church that bears Christ's Name. We have to choose go His way or ignore His way. The clearest choice of all involves our minds.

Either we choose to have a God-controlled mind or a World-controlled mind. Either we give in to a Media-saturated mind or pursue a Word-saturated mind. That was the challenge that the Lord directed Paul to lay before the church at Crete and to all of us since.

God-Controlled Minds

"To be discreet" in [Titus 2:5](#) in my Bible is a translation of one Greek word *sophron*, but actually this word is virtually untranslatable by any one English word. It is variously translated *of sound mind, discreet, prudent, self-controlled, chaste, having complete control over sensual desires*. The Greeks derived it from two words which mean *to keep one's mind safe and sound*.

In [Titus 2:5](#) This word describes a woman with a mind surrendered to God's control. Her mind is surrendered to God's gracious sanctifying power; and she learns to govern every instinct and passion until each has its proper place and no more.

As we delve into this verse, God's Word makes one thing perfectly clear: God wants your mind under His control.

More than anything else God wants to saturate, influence, fill, direct, dominate and control your mind.

If God has your mind - He has your body,
If God has your mind - He has your emotions,
If God has your mind - He has your appetites,
If God has your mind - He has your time,
If God has your mind - He has your money . . .

Do you see the point? The one who gets your mind gets it all. Your mind is the prize! Everything else is just the scraps.

The battle is for our minds. Satan is seeking to steal the minds of God's children. Your mind is the key to knowing God. Only a mind stayed on the Lord can have perfect peace. A mind devoted to Christ is the road to God's plan for your life!

God wants your mind given to the pursuit of His Kingdom, His Word, and His Christ!

The grace-energized life of Titus 2 is a roadmap for all who want their life to count. It is God's pathway of disciplines to choose each day in the power of the Spirit of grace.

We have come to the eighth element of a godly woman's life—as described and prescribed by God—and that is a God-controlled mind, a Word-saturated mind, a Christ-seeking mind.

Grace-Energized Women Have God-Controlled Minds

The Holy Spirit of the Infinite and Unchanging God of the Universe breathed out through Paul a list of life-choices, godly character traits, grace-energized actions that please God and are useful to Him.

God's plan to work in the world is His church^{[1][1]}. Christ's church may be described as a group of people, energized by grace, doing the impossible for the glory of God.

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Part: 8 Communion: Our Pledge to the Lamb

Part: 7 Biblical Convictions Of Citizen Of Heaven -- On Earth

Part: 6 The Power of Our Shared Life

Part: 5 What Do We Lose When We FAKE IT by JUST Playing Church?

Part: 4 Have You Opened the Greatest Gift of All?

Part: 3 Salvation: Redemption

Part: 2 Salvation: Regeneration

Part: 1 Salvation--The Only Gift Everyone Really Needs

In this next grace-energized trait we see Paul point to the godly woman's mind. This word is our entry into one of the most vital areas of our life as believers—the realm of our minds.

This is the only universal character quality of this list. In the space of just six verses in Titus Paul declares this quality God desires is stated as part of the life of godly older women (2:4), godly younger women (2:5), godly older men (2:2), godly younger men (2:5), Biblical elders (1:8), and—to every Spirit-filled and Spirit-led believer (Titus 2:12; c.f. Romans 12:3).

So as we look at this word from God it is first of all in context to be the personal life-choice for younger women; and secondly, it is to be the curriculum on the mind of godly older women as they spend time nurturing younger women; and thirdly it is for every man in the church whether in a leadership role or not—because it is universally applied to every believer in Christ's church.

Twelve Characteristics of Grace-Energized Women and Mothers

We are studying the eighth of 12 characteristics for grace-energized women, found at the start of verse 5. As a review please follow along as we look at the entire scope of what God wants trained, and then examine this eighth characteristic.

v. 4 that they admonish the [grace-energized] young women

1. to love their husbands,
2. to love their children, v. 5
3. to be discreet **sophron** (KJV/NKJV); "self-controlled" (NIV); "sensible" (NAS),
4. chaste,
5. homemakers,
6. good,
7. obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. (NKJV)

The Greek word God inspires Paul to write is **sophron** translated in the New Testament as "discreet, sensible, or self-controlled". The meaning of this word is vital to our spiritual lives. God is asking for believers to desire and seek by His grace to be:

"serious about spiritual things; not being known as a clown; living a disciplined life: self-controlled and not addicted to anything; in control of your choices, knowing your priorities; serious about life; temperate and avoiding excesses; a clarity of thought that leads to an orderly life." [2][2][2]

A further application of this word would be: to be seen as thinking about life through God's filter, the **Philippians 4:8** grid.

Sadly it seems that Satan has caught many believers off guard. While they carefully avoid many obvious doctrinal dangers, perhaps the most powerful mind-robber has been overlooked. Satan is neutralizing the power of so many godly minds, little-by-little every day through the onslaught of the media that overflows us like a raging flooded river.

Beware of Mind-Neutralizers

Your godly mind can get neutralized by modern [3][3][3] media that has reset the Moral Acceptability Threshold.

Here is the test: "Do the things that once offended you now entertain you? Are you able to enjoy the company of television programs, videos, and movies that have values diametrically opposed to yours? This moral drift is important to understand, for it continues unabated. Extrapolate ten or twenty years into the future and it is frightening to imagine what media content awaits us." [4][4][4]

Your godly mind can get neutralized by modern media that has reset the Shock Threshold.

In the past, if we saw blood, killing, or tragedies on the evening news, it would disturb us for weeks. Today, however, the rule of the newsroom is, "If it bleeds it leads." Movies are worse. Beginning about thirty years ago, succeeding waves of movies relied on more and more violence to attract crowds. Audiences became numbed to the repulsiveness of each level of violence, so directors had to enhance the horror to maintain interest. Such common fare no longer elicits anguish from society, and more troubling is that believers who regularly watch these images seem to have no shock over the sin.

Is your godly mind troubled that God defines spiritual adultery in Ezekiel as the sin when His people followed the advice, customs, and practices of the pagans instead of Him?

The idols Israel followed had to do with pagan practices about their health, their business, their safety, their future security, and so on. They had abandoned God as their source of truth for life, and they spent and invested more time getting help, counsel, direction, and advice from everyone but Him.

Ezekiel 20:31 "For when you offer your gifts and make your sons pass through the fire, you defile yourselves with all your idols, even to this day. So shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live," says the Lord God, "I will not be inquired of by you. NKJV

Our world spends most of their time seeing the world through the world's eyes which is our media world. Today more and more believers are finding their world view, values, and guidance for life from TV, secular books, unsaved professionals, magazines, commercials, and the internet. Sadly, they follow that secular and ungodly direction more than God and His Word.

Is your godly mind troubled yet that today's teens (the 31 million 12-19 year olds, some of them may be living in your house) have a world that has been defined for them **more by** computer games, TV, social networking sites like MySpace and FaceBook, movies, advertisements for Apple, Nike, Sony, Gap, Old Navy and the web -- **than by God's Word?**

Half of all teens are from a broken home, and 63% have both parents working. All of them, down deep, need adult guidance. In ***A Tribe Apart***, author Patricia Hersch said, "Every kid wished they had more adults in their life, especially that their parents would invade their lives".

Is your godly mind troubled yet that video's, movie's and television's effects are so well known to be disastrous to the life of any child or adult?

Statistics by secular research has concluded what undisciplined media saturation causes.

- A shortened attention span: *that means a media saturated person can't think about God very well.*
- Reduced linguistic powers: *that means a media saturated person can't talk about God very well.*

Is your godly mind troubled yet that to attract and hold its audience, the entertainment industry feels it has to parade the taboos of culture: adultery, promiscuity, homosexuality, incest, violence, and sadism?

As a result the lowest of activities become commonplace, and even morally cachet.

Ephesians 5:12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. NKJV

Is your godly mind troubled yet that what you choose for your mind today will shape your eternal future?

- If you choose to be entertained by godlessness--it will callous you;
- If you choose to be entertained by sensuality--it will defile you;
- If you choose to be entertained by violence--it will desensitize you;
- If you choose to be entertained by evil--it will distance you;
- If you choose to be entertained by worldliness--it will discourage you;
- If you choose to be entertained by Satan's mind--you will forfeit the blessings of having the mind of Christ.

Let's be blunt: don't say you are committed to Christ unless you are disciplining your mind for the active pursuit of godliness!

Words that God Chose for Us

That brings us back to the plan of God for your mind. When the Lord set out the description of the godly New Testament woman of grace He chose a word that deeply communicates His desire. That word is the Greek word **sophron**.

There are many ways to study the Bible: book studies, chapter studies, verse studies, subject and topic studies, background studies—but perhaps the most fascinating aspect of Bible studies are those that examine closely the individual words that God chose to use in His Book. That is what we will be doing this morning.

Because God's Word is the best commentary on God's Word join me for a study of this very uniquely Christian word. God used this word only to describe believers, and makes it a quality He wants to see in all believers.

The basic meaning of this word **sophron** in the New Testament (a Greek word here as an adjective) is being serious about spiritual things; living a disciplined life: which means self-controlled and not addicted to anything.

Sophron is part of a family of New Testament words that use the noun, verb, adverb, and adjective form of the very same word. Let's look at these words in the order they appear in the Greek vocabulary of the New Testament.

1. God Wants You Serious About Spiritual Things

This word (Strong's number 4998 **sophron**: of a sound mind, sane, in one's senses; curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate) is an adjective that occurs 4x in the New Testament:

1. **Titus 2:5** [younger women] **to be discreet**, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. NKJV
2. **Titus 2:2** that the older men be sober, reverent, **temperate**, sound in faith, in love, in patience; NKJV
3. **Titus 1:8** [an elder] but hospitable, a lover of what is good, **sober-minded**, just, holy, self-controlled, NKJV
4. **I Timothy 3:2** A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, **sober-minded**, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; NKJV

2. God Wants You Restoring Others to Serious Spiritual Living

We find this same word as an action verb (4994 **sophronidzo** verb 1x) describing the need for the older, godly grace-energized women to exhort earnestly the younger women by "restoring them to their senses, so they moderate, control, curb their minds". That is the sense of this word in--

Titus 2:4 that they **admonish** the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, NKJV

This same word is found as an adverb (4996 *sophronos* adverb 1x: 'with sound mind, soberly, temperately, discreetly') further down in this chapter.

Titus 2:12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should **live soberly**, righteously, and godly in the present age, NKJV

- God says that His grace-energizes us into being serious about spiritual things;
- His grace teaches us how to live a disciplined life: which means self-controlled and not addicted to anything;
- Believers energized by God's grace are in control of their choices, seeking out God's priorities;
- God wants us serious about life, temperate, and avoiding excesses;
- God's grace gives us a clarity of thought that leads to an orderly life;
- His grace leads us to thinking through the **Philippians 4:8** grid.

3. God Wants You Regaining a Confident Mind

Again we find this word in a noun form with another shade of meaning (4995 *sophonismos* noun/masc. 1x: 'an admonishing or calling to soundness of mind, to moderation and self-control; self-control, moderation') as Paul encourages Timothy his son in the faith. Timothy exhibited a problem many believers struggle with, he was timid and fearful. This verse was Paul's strong encouragement to him in his struggle.

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

Even a casual reading of **II Timothy 1:4-8** leads us to see that Timothy was fearful, timid, felt worthless even to the point of tears, and even struggled with being 'ashamed' of his ministry for the Lord.

Note that Paul does not harshly rebuke him, but gently reminds him of many things. He tells Timothy he has nothing to be ashamed of. He had a great upbringing though his father didn't help, his mother and grandmother were godly (**II Timothy 1:5**; 3:14-15). Paul reminds Timothy of his special position as a choice servant of the Lord, personally trained (**Acts 16:3**) with a special gifting (**II Timothy 1:6**). In short Paul says there is no reason that Timothy should be timid and fearful—yet he was!

Timothy appears to have a life-long need for encouragement to be bold and go on serving the Lord. It is very possible that the stomach problems he struggled with (**I Timothy 5:23**) were directly tied to his emotional problems of a fearful and timid personality.

If you are a person that feels uncomfortable around people, if you draw back from people who reach out to you, if you feel inferior to others, and you are afraid of always saying the wrong thing so that people dislike you—then welcome to the club.

One of the greatest pastors and servants of the Lord of all time was so much like you. Timothy, son-in-the-faith to Paul, servant-of-the-Lord to the largest church of the New Testament world was just like you. Paul does not chastise him, scold him, rebuke him harshly, or say that he was unspiritual. Rather, Paul says give your mind back to Christ's control each time you start to fear.

The fear, the discomfort, the feelings of inferiority and shame that Timothy felt were just part of living inside a fallen body, with flesh-influenced minds and emotions. The solution was to make a conscious choice by faith to keep surrendering his mind back under Christ's control. Paul way saying--

- Timothy, God's grace can energize your mind to understand who you are in Christ;
- Timothy, His grace teaches your mind to live a disciplined life: which means self-controlled and not addicted to anything including fear and timidity.
- Timothy, believers energized by God's grace are in control of their choices, seeking out God's priorities which include fearing not;

Do you see the point? The one who gets your mind gets it all. Your mind is the prize! Everything else is just the scraps.

The battle is for our minds. Satan is seeking to steal the minds of God's children.

Renewing a God-Controlled Mind

Your mind is the key to knowing God. Only a mind stayed on the Lord can have perfect peace. A mind devoted to Christ is the road to God's plan for your life!

God has a will for your mind and that is for your mind to be given to the pursuit of God, His Kingdom, His Word, and His Christ!

- How do we bring our minds into captivity?
- How do we fix our eyes on Jesus?
- How do we discipline our minds for godliness?

Probably the first and most powerful way to do all that is to put on tight, our helmet of salvation.

Paul told Timothy to stir up the gift given to him. We aren't sure what exactly it was, it might have been faith, or the teaching gifts of a pastor. But it was miraculous and came by the laying on of Paul's hands, from God.

But this evening we will learn about a miraculous gift we must stir. That gift also came the instant that God laid His Hands upon us. And that gift is our salvation.

The best way to get your mind back under God's control is to think the truth. The helmet that we are to wear as believers is the helmet of what? Salvation. Pull on the straps and fasten tight your helmet of salvation. Surrender again your mind to God's control. Energized by grace, allow God's truth to saturate your mind and see what He can do with you.

[1][1][1] Christ's church has **a mission** that Paul summarized as pleasing God (I [Thessalonians 4:1](#)). This mission is accomplished by the proclamation of **a message** Paul summarized as the gospel of grace ([Acts 20:24](#)). The message of grace—that God did everything possible to be done and anyone can come to Him merely by faith seems impossible. But the most amazing part of all that the Lord is doing is His plan to do all this by **a method** is spelled out in [Titus 2:11-14](#)—Paul summarized as energized by God's grace to live in a way that is otherwise impossible.

[2][2][2] These definitions are from MacArthur, *Shepherdology: A Master Plan for Church Leadership*, Panorama City, CA: Masters Fellowship, 1989.

[3][3][3] Adapted and quoted from Swenson, *Overload*, p. 137-160.

[4][4][4] Al Menconi, "Our Collective Soul Is Dying" *Minnesota Christian Chronicle*, 16 February 1995, p.6.

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