

Cruise Control

Resetting Our Heading

May 2, 2021

Welcome to where we're turning our ears to truth so Dad can turn us around, and keep us on the narrow straight by simply and gently tugging at our heart.

Did you sense the bumping of a tugboat this week?



Did you allow yourself to *be turned*? Remember, we not only have to give “the Captain of our salvation” (Heb 2:10 NKJ) permission to come aboard, we must surrender command, turn over control, and then resist the urge to grab the wheel when His tugboat-like Spirit goes to work turning us tankers around with a gentle bump, bump, bump. **Our Captain is loud and clear to those who turn their ears to truth.** But, as Paul warned Timothy:

They will gather around *them* a great number of teachers to say what their *itching ears want* to hear. [And] They will *turn* their ears *away* from the truth – 2 Timothy 4:3-4 NIV

And then whether we know it or not, **we've turned on our own tugboat, and pushed it away.**

Therefore, [Paul writes to the “tankers” in Rome] I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, [wherein Christ offered His body as a sacrifice for our sin] to offer *your* bodies as *living sacrifices, holy* [i.e. set apart and dedicated] 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* [allow that bump, bump, bump to turn you around] by the *renewing* of your *mind*. [By turning *your ears toward* truth] Then *you* will be able to *test* and *approve* what God’s *will* is—His *good, pleasing* and *perfect will*. – Romans 12:1-2 NIV

Paul is *not* talking about **God’s supreme will of authority**, which Paul says is “beyond tracing out” (Rom 11:33) (and which we discussed in The LPG: His Will Will be Done). No, he’s referring to **God’s collaborative will of command. His laws. His instructions** to worship Him above all else; to grow in Godly habits; to serve and support others; and to share His salvation. *These* are the *rules of godliness* that the Apostle Paul was talking about *last* Sunday, when he said that an athlete isn’t *crowned* unless they compete *according* to the *rules*. (2 Tim 2:5) “Rules. Yuck. We *hate* rules.”

But ‘rules’ is just another way of saying God’s ‘law’. “Law. Yuck. We *hate* law.” *No, not* yuck. Not when applied *correctly*. The Pharisees and their ilk really did a number on the reputation of the law. But Proverbs 31 describes the *noble* wife who speaks ...

... with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness. – Proverbs 31:26 NKJ

That’s the law the Lord is determined to put in our mind to work into our heart. And that’s why:

One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, [of true kindness] even his *prayer* is an abomination. [Because it's based on something other than truth] – Proverbs 28:9 NKJ



To know God's supreme will of authority, we'd need a divine crystal ball. But to know His rules of true kindness, we just need in His divine Word. Because, **when we open His Word, He opens His mouth**, if our ears are turned toward truth. But **we seem to prefer the crystal ball approach! Because divination doesn't require transformation. Just a strong sensation.** So we turn our ears, and tell ourselves that we can surely divine *His* will through *our* feelings and impressions, unfiltered by His Word. And *that's* why we're told to test our subjective impressions and those who claim to speak on His behalf. (1 John 4:1) Because **God's will will never contradict God's Word.** But we sure will! So:

See to it that *no* one takes you *captive* through *hollow* and *deceptive philosophy*, which depends on *human tradition* and the *basic principles of this world* ... – Colossians 2:8 NIV

I've heard so many speak with great conviction regarding what they felt God had told them, even though I could show them that it was clearly out of step with Scripture. So **don't confuse a sensation for revelation without solid Scriptural confirmation.** Because that's one of the ways He renews our mind. Testing our thoughts according to His Word. And that's also a big reason so many believers are confused about His will; they're not familiar with His Word. But this is how He sets us up to "test and approve" that *His will is* "good and pleasing and perfect".

Un-conforming to the ways of this world by the power of God's Word is our truest act of worship, because it requires a daily "living sacrifice" of trust and love and responding to His calling. **But it can't be mere mechanical compliance.** No. *Our* outside behavior *must* be an *authentic* reflection of the light of the new covenant that's made its way deep inside our heart.

[Because] "This is the covenant I will make ..." declares the Lord, "I will put My *law* [of true kindness] *in* their *minds* and [then] write it *on* their *hearts*." – Jeremiah 31:33 NIV

[To which Paul adds] ... written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. – 2 Corinthians 3:3 NIV

This is how He renews us: by getting *His* Word into *our* mind, **we can test it by putting it into action**; and by experiencing Truth firsthand, **we can approve it and move it into our heart.** But if we turn our ears *away* from truth, we'll end up with a heart of stone and abominable prayers.



There's a very good, big reason we have to be told: "Do not conform" or *un-conform*. **We are conformers by nature.** From childhood on we play and work and learn and grow and change by conforming to what we see and want to be. And there's really only *two* choices. And *since* we're conformers, **we must consciously un-conform from our self-serving culture.**

The secret for believers is to **never settle for whatever current level of renewal we have**. And then to deliberately choose to become what I like to call **a genuine imitation**.

Dear friend, do not *imitate* what is *evil* but what is *good*. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God. – 3 John 11 NIV

Be *imitators of God*, therefore, as *dearly loved children* – Ephesians 5:1 NIV

In *this way*, love is made *complete* among us so that *we* will have *confidence* on the day of judgment, because in *this world* we are like *Him*. – 1 John 4:17 NIV

The Lord wants to give us, bit by bit and bump by bump, a mind that sees and thinks and feels like *His*. When Jesus prayed for His disciples, the night before the cross, He said:

My prayer is *not* that you take them *out* of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are *not of* the world, even as *I* am *not of* it. Sanctify them by the truth; [adding] Your Word is Truth. [God's Word must become my *foremost counsel* for making my *decisions*, and the *highest benchmark* for evaluating the *results*; because the *Spirit of God* uses the *Word of God* to make us *like the Son of God*] As You sent Me *into* the world, I have sent *them* into the world. ... I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message, that all of them may be one, – John 17:15-21 NIV

It's crucial that we incrementally un-conform from the pattern of *this* self-serving world with its putrid and fetid me-first philosophies that, according to Revelation 18:5, *stinks to high-heaven*.

For *we* are to God the fragrance of *Christ* among those who are being *saved and* among those who are *perishing*. To the *one* we are the aroma of *death* leading to *death*, and to the *other* the aroma of *life* leading to *life*. – 2 Corinthians 2:15-16 NKJ

[Like the former] You *were* dead in *your* transgressions and sins, in which you *used* to live when you *followed* the *ways of this world* ... gratifying the cravings of our *sinful* nature and following *its* desires and thoughts. ... [But] God, who is rich in mercy, made us *alive* with *Christ* even when *we* were *dead* in transgressions – Ephesians 2:1-5 NIV



The term Paul uses for “**transformed**” is a Greek word that gives us our word for metamorphosis. **Like how a caterpillar becomes a butterfly**. The creature that goes in is the same that comes out, but the change is so *transformative* that it's hard to think of it as the former self that it once was. **God wants us to undergo *mind* metamorphosis**. This renewal reaches far deeper than Christian behaviorism, which can be achieved on the surface through mental effort. **So how does a *mind* metamorphosis happen? By resetting our cruise control**.

Every tanker is equipped with a cruise control system – an autopilot. So if we want to change direction midcourse, which is what our Father's *all* about, **we can force the wheel against the autopilot, or reset it and let go for good**. In a wrestling match with that relentless autopilot, guess who'll wear out first, and fall back to the old heading.

Our mindsets and viewpoints, demeanors and bearings, attitudes and habits and false beliefs forcefully work to prevent our transformation. But, **God's Word resets our autopilot** as we surrender more and more control, as we more and more get to know His heart. Picture yourself resetting the controls whenever you read, hear, discuss, or meditate on the narrow straight of Dad's Word. And you *should* start to feel restless if it's been too long since you reset 'em. Because, **reset minds quickly acclimate and return to those old neuro paths.**



If Shar's out, and I have to cook for myself, I like to microwave vegetables, like broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts. But when she walks in she's hit by a wall of stink. Talk about the smell of death! Five minutes in, it doesn't bother her. Why? **Our sensitivity acclimates to our surroundings.** However, if we step outside for a breath of fresh air, **it renews and resets our sensitivity.**

And when we return we immediately realize just how much we acclimated to the stink. Maybe it's because we acclimate so quickly to this world that the Lord said, regarding His new covenant:

I will give them an *undivided* heart and put a *new spirit* [lit. *fresh breath*] in them; I will *remove* from them their heart of *stone* and give them a heart of *flesh*. Then they will follow *My* decrees and be *careful* to keep *My laws*. – Ezekiel 11:19-20 NIV



By His Spirit through His Word our Spiritual senses are refreshed and restored and bit by bit, bump by bump, renewed. Ever use Renuzit? Remember their old slogan: "Renuzit do's it!" Well we need to 'renew' it daily with God's breath of fresh air in our stale hull. **Renuzit do's it! So use it or lose it.** Remember what Paul wrote to Timothy (the Lystrian):

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for *teaching*, [bump] *rebuking*, [bump] *correcting* [bump] and *training in righteousness*, – 2 Timothy 3:16 NIV

And to those believers whose minds are set on un-conforming from this decaying world's self-indulgent pattern, by daily renewing their heading on the narrow straight to more and more think and see and feel the way our Savior thinks and sees and feels, Paul adds that promise:

Then you will be able to *test* and *approve* [i.e. *analyze and appreciate*] what God's will is [His law of true kindness] — His *good, pleasing, and perfect* will. – Romans 12:2 NIV

Which we'll grow to know more and more, with more and more *hindsight*.



You're hiking alone, lost on a treacherous trail. You're hungry. Don't know what to do. But then you find provisions around a bend. **This happens again and again, until you won't leave the path because of the unseen joy set before you.** Eventually *even* your *hunger* pains will trigger *hope* for what you've *come* to *trust* is *just* around the *corner*.

So stay the course. Set your heading. And steady as you go.