

“Trust & Obey”

The Ministry of the Spirit

August 16, 2026

F₁ - The World

Creation → Fall → Broken People → Broken Ideas and Information

Romans 1:18-25 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Cain killing Abel + Everyone on the planet was evil → the great flood...and we've only made it to Genesis 6!

...God preserving Noah and his family didn't rid the Romans 1 problem...Next chapter is Genesis 11...

We've gone from 8 people to 8.3 billion people who have accumulated lots of ideas that are not from God... 1 **John 2:16** For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

Those following God, from the beginning of creation to now, have had to navigate living in the scene that's been set.

The approaches to handling this reality are unique to say the least!

- Avoid the world (Utopia)

Matthew 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

- One foot in, one foot out

1 **John 2:15** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Romans 12:1-2 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world,

The is a real dilemma! One of which the Bible has no shortage of interacting and addressing THIS moment!

A Need to be Sanctified

Matthew 13:22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

Eventually (for the process is slow, often unnoticed, but inexorable) the breath is sucked out of the voice of God's Word in our hearts—and any spiritual vitality we formerly knew dies. The 'world', in the sense of the present age and all that belongs to it, with its values and time-bound perspectives, must never be allowed to be a dominant factor in this way. That means, inevitably, that as Christians we must be constantly battling against the disorders in our own affections. Sinclair Ferguson "The Christian Life" pg. 136

John 17:15-17 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

Sanctification against the 'force of the world' has 2 parts:

1) Sanctified by the Spirit

- God doesn't operate on a "set it and forget it" world (Deism)
 - God cares
 - He's not asking you to fight this battle solo

John 16:7,13 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

- The fight against the world creates a dependance on Him
 - We NEED Him
 - He wants us

Colossians 3:1-2 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

Psalms 121:1-2,7 I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? 2 My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. 7 The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

- God's will is in play
 - The Spirit uses our sanctification for His glory

Ezekiel 36:26-27 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

John 16:8-9; 20:31 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The Philippians are to work at this growth in sanctification and to do it solemnly and with reverence ("with fear and trembling"), for they are doing it in the presence of God himself. But there is more: the reason why they are to work and to expect that their work will yield positive results is that "God is at work in you"-the prior and foundational work of God in sanctification means that their own work is empowered by God; therefore it will be worthwhile and will bear positive results.
Wayne Grudem "Systematic Theology" pg. 933-934

*It is important that we continue to grow both in our passive trust in God to sanctify us and in our active striving for holiness greater obedience in our lives. If we neglect active striving to obey God, we become passive, lazy Christians. If we neglect the passive role of trusting God and yielding to him, we become proud and overly confident in ourselves. In either case, our sanctification will be greatly deficient. We must maintain faith and diligence to obey at the same time. The old hymn wisely says, "Trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey." **Wayne Grudem** "Systematic Theology" pg. 934*

2) Sanctified by Fighting

*We don't always know why we're inclined to make certain choices, because our view of life isn't something we consider all the time. We don't wake up every morning wondering about the meaning of life, or our deepest source of identity, or what our purpose is. We get up, eat some breakfast, brush our teeth, and get dressed for school or work or whatever we've got going on that day. Your life is formed as much by what you unconsciously assume is the purpose of life as it is by any book you've read or talk you've listened to on the matter. That's why, in order to rethink yourself, you've first got to think about yourself. **Trevin Wax** "Rethink Yourself" pg. 10*

- The world wants to set your priorities and schedule
 - Step 1 in the battle → Give it some thought!

*'With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.' Here are all the essential elements of a life of devoted loyalty to Christ. But perhaps the most astonishing thing is the plea these words contain: Christians, use your minds! Give your bodies to the Lord 'as an act of intelligent worship'. Let 'God re-mould your minds from within. **Sinclair Ferguson** "The Christian Life" pg. 4-5*

- ACTIVE verbs
 - Rom. 12:1 "Present", v.2 "Test", Phil. 2:12 "Work out" → Greek = *katergázomai* – to produce, to bring about, to work intensively...down to the end point.
Piper calls this, "Ongoing continuous exertion"
 - How are we to do **↑** if we neglect physical intellectual use of our mind?

- It's not that we don't have the tools for success
 - "Spirit of truth" "Your word is truth"God takes this part seriously!

*God has shown us how his providence will keep us to the end. And it does not include our neglect of his commands. **John Piper** "Providence" pg. 579*

The more we know God, and love God, and love the things about God, and see our need for God, the more the world sticks out like sore thumb!

*The New Testament does not suggest any short-cuts by which we can grow in sanctification; it simply encourages us repeatedly to give ourselves to the old-fashioned, time-honored means of Bible reading and meditation (Ps. 1:2; Matt. 4:4; John 17:17), prayer (Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6), worship (Eph. 5:18-20), witnessing (Matt. 28:19-20), Christian fellowship (Heb. 10:24-25), and self-discipline or self-control (Gal. 5:23; Titus 1:8). **Wayne Grudem** "Systematic Theology" pg. 934*

There's nothing extremely exciting, or different, or unique, or jaw-dropping about this list of personal battling for our sanctification...but it's life changing stuff!

Nowhere in any of these passages do any of the authors claim any of this is easy either!

No one is getting ripped off in life by fighting for something that's worth fighting for.

The world pulls, because the world is broken and sinful. We need undivided hearts to persevere to the end.

*We need to ask God to stimulate this growth within us. We can pray with David, "Give me an undivided heart." An undivided heart denotes singleness of purpose, aim, and affections. This is what David prayed for. He recognized the tendency of his heart to be divided, to seek to serve two master— himself and God. A lot of people in various pursuits— business and professional people, athletes, farmers—have a singleness of heart and purpose, some to a fault. We sometimes call them "workaholics." But it's rare to find a Christian with an undivided heart. We're constantly pulled by the subtleties of the world and the desires of our sinful nature. God the Holy Spirit is the energizer of all spiritual motion in our lives. Without His work in our hearts we cannot work. **Sinclair Ferguson** "The Christian Life" pg. 120-121*