

- A. A powerful organization called the World Economic Forum has called for an intentional transformation of society. They call it the *Great Reset*. They are calling for powerful global stakeholders to reshape the whole world. They say, "To improve the state of the world, the World Economic Forum is starting The Great Reset initiative."
- B. We do not ignore this great sweep of history in which we find ourselves. But we must set it in a greater and far more consequential context. Because the only way to fix this world is the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ in splendor and might to destroy evil, and to usher in his millennium, which is the kingdom of God.
 - 1. And the second best only ways to fix this world is a large-scale return of both the church and the world to a reverence for God and all of us getting ourselves Back to the Gospel and Back to the Bible. We need the Lord like never before.
- C. And because we need the Lord like never before, I would like to propose something different today.
- D. Because as well intentioned as a Great Reset might be, it is still going to be nothing but secular humanism on parade, infected by post-modernism, and devoid of anything close to biblical morality. So I have a different proposal, a different idea of what the crying need of our royally messed up culture. So today our topic is: The Grace Reset
- E. The exact meaning of the word grace ought to be crystal clear to every child of God.
 - 1. What grace is. What grace isn't. What grace implies. What grace denies.
- F. We should know these things well. It is the urgent need of the church, and it is the most urgent need of the world.
- G. So welcome to The Grace Reset.
 - 1. Last weekend we thought together about the theological building blocks of grace. What is grace as a concept?
 - 2. Today I'd like to think with you about how grace actually gets installed as the operating system of your soul.
- H. In other words, let's think about how a *theology of grace* is amplified into your life into a *psychology of grace*.

II. Grace Reset of the Heart

- A. Let's start with a really important truth: *Good theology heals broken psychology*.
 - 1. Yes, there are a lot of cases with pop-psychology takes over a pulpit or a church. That's not what I'm advocating. On the flip side, there are a lot of cases where theology is taught as this cold, calculating, heartless kind of truth, take it or leave it. You may be surprised that the Bible actually has a lot to say about psychology. But sometimes it can be tricky to spot. That's because the Bible uses words that we are not used to when it talks about psychology. What kind of words you ask? Here we go:
- B. How the Bible Talks about Psychology/Emotions
 - 1. *Kidneys (reins, Gr. nephros): And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. (Revelation 2:23, KJV).*
 - 2. *Bowels (guts, Gr. sphlanchnon): Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; (Colossians 3:12, KJV).*
 - 3. *Belly (Gr. Koilia): whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things. (Philippians 3:19)*
 - 4. *Heart (Gk. kardia): And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. (Revelation 2:23, KJV).*
- C. As weird as this might seem, we still use this kind of language today. Strong emotion is something you feel in your gut. You have a knot in your stomach. Your heart is pounding out of your chest. All of these are physiological terms we use to describe psychological states.
- D. And that is exactly what the writers of the Bible did too. This is the kind of language the Bible uses for your emotions. These are your instincts. Your gut reaction to a situation. This is where grace comes in. I am saying that the miraculous power we call grace starts as a theological construct, but it doesn't stop there.
 - 1. *Grace is the power of God to restructure your fragmented thinking, heal your broken psychology, and transform your human-viewpoint/worldly life into Christlikeness, abundance, and transcendence.*

III. The Grace Reset in the Human Psyche

- A. *The Process: The Renewing of Your Mind (Romans 12:1,2)*
 - 1. *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. 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. (Romans 12:1, 2)*
 - 2. When it comes to your own personal Grace Reset, the most important part of you is your mind. Your thought life. Opinions. Beliefs. Values. Tightly held ideas. The mental scripts that run through your brain run your life. God stands ready to renew those mental scripts. But don't miss the main thing here. You don't heal your emotions directly.
 - 3. You heal your emotions indirectly by renewing your mind. When you bring grace into your thought life, you lay the tracks that bring grace into your emotional life too. Your thought life and your emotional go together.

4. Emotions respond to thoughts. Emotions respond to mental scripts and to interpretations of events in your life. The devil loves to mess with your thought life because he is committed to erasing every trace of grace from your life.
5. So he messes with three main areas of thinking for you: Labels. Lies. Legalisms.
6. The devil is a lawyer. He is always accusing you (Rev 12:10).
 - a) He's always labeling you as a failure, God as a monster, and your sins as unforgivable.
 - b) The devil whispers lies about your past, your present, your future. He lies about the world. Lies about your hopes. Lies about God. Lies to blur the line between good and evil. He loves legalism. He loves to burden you with rules. He loves to fill you with self-righteous arrogance. The devil breeds narcissism and self-pity. The devil tramples the Cross and disrespects Christ, and sucks you into his insanity. And all the while, he blinds you. You don't know he's doing it. The devil is lawyering you to a graceless existence.
7. So you need to renew your mind so you can out-lawyer him, call him out for the liar he is, plant every aspect of your life firmly on the grace of God, and send the devil on a permanent vacation!
8. The first part of your Grace Reset is to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. How to do that?

B. *The Material: The Word of Grace (Bible, Acts 20:32)*

1. *"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. (Acts 20:32)*
2. These words were said by a man named Paul. He was one of the most important leaders of the early Christians. When he said these words, he was on his way to Rome to stand trial, and then be executed. Here, Paul was saying goodbye to some very good friends who were also church leaders. These are his last words and testament to dear friends who led the church in Ephesus. What does he say? He says I'm committing you to God and to the Bible.
3. The Bible is the Word of His Grace. You cannot be committed to God without being committed to the Bible. That's because the Bible is the mind of Christ, and the heart of Christ is grace. The whole Bible is the book of God's grace.
4. The Bible is a storehouse of wisdom. It contains promises, commandments, teachings, doctrines, principles, laws, revelation, theology, and all the truth you need. When you structure the Bible into your soul, you structure the mind of Christ into your thinking and the heart of Christ into your psychology.
5. There never is and never will be a substitute for the Bible.
 - a) The Bible is a sword that pierces (Hebrews 4:12). A mirror that reveals (James 1:23). A seed that multiplies (1 Peter 1:23). A lamp that shines (Psalm 119:105). A fire that consumes (Jeremiah 23:29). A hammer that shatters (Jeremiah 23:29)
6. Every day is a battle, says St. Paul. So "Take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).
7. Every single Christian has the Holy Spirit but not every Christian has taken up the Word of God. And this is our tragedy, and this is why grace is so confusing and seems so weak in their lives.
8. For 19 years I have stood in this pulpit and taught the Word of God. I have encouraged you, fed you, motivated you, warned you, rebuked you, begged you to be a person of the Book. Study it. Learn it. Go deep.
9. I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace, this Word has the power to build you up. This Word has the power to build into your soul a palace of grace. A refuge from storms and a headquarters for battle.
10. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, by letting the spirit of God build grace into your soul through the Word of God. There is no other way.

C. *The Enemy/Distractor: The Worship of Emotion (Philippians 3:19)*

1. *They are the enemies of the Cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things. (Philippians 3:19)*
2. *Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. (2 Corinthians 6:12, KJV).*
3. Remember, we are talking about psychology and how God integrates truth and grace into the deepest parts of your soul. So two truths, and I'll explain them.
 - a) Grace doesn't function where emotions run amok.
 - b) Grace doesn't function where emotions are buried and cold.
4. Emotions are a gift from God. Your emotions are there to evoke motion.
5. In other words, emotions are motivators.
 - a) Anger motivates you to combat evil. Fear motivates you shield yourself and others from danger.
 - b) Happiness motivates you to share goodness and love.
 - c) Sadness motivates you to pull away and find time to heal and be sympathetic with others.
6. Emotions motivate. That's the plan.
 - a) When emotions are biblically healthy, they motivate constructive actions.
 - b) When emotions are biblically unhealthy, they motivate destructive actions.
7. The problem is that when sin gets hold of your emotions.

- a) You don't even know it's happening.
- 8. Here's God's plan for your soul. Truth sits on the throne.
 - a) Your mind sits beneath that throne. Your emotions sit beneath that throne.
- 9. When your mind is responding to God's truth, and when your emotions are responding to God's truth, life is good. Nothing can defeat you.
- 10. But when your mind or emotions respond to a lie, watch out. You will turn from a nice person into someone ruled by cruelty, hatred, deception, self-pity, self-justification, self-absorption, slander, cursing, malice, implacability (can't be pleased), look out. That's when anger, and violence, and bitterness take root and everybody gets splattered with defilement.
 - a) *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; (Hebrews 12:15)*
- 11. Your emotions have staged a palace coup. Truth should be on the throne, but emotional knock off truth and take offer. You become a very hard, self-righteous, angry, self-pitying, impossible person.
 - a) Their god is their belly... emotions rule the roost.
 - b) They are straightened in their bowels... limited by their emotions.
- 12. And they fall short of the grace of God in their psychology because they have long since abandoned the ongoing intake of Scriptural truths into their minds.
- 13. You need a Grace Reset, back to the Bible, back to the truth on the throne and a mind and heart that pay attention.
- D. *The Accelerator: Trials and Troubles (Romans 5:3,4)*
 - 1. *And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. (Romans 5:3,4)*
 - 2. We glory in tribulations: What does this mean?
 - a) That when life is beating you up, you slap on a happy face? Does it mean that good Christians should always be happy during their trials? Does it mean you shouldn't weep, you shouldn't get frustrated, you shouldn't get sad?
 - b) No. It means that no matter how many times life knocks you down, you get back up. It means you recover fast your faith in God.
 - c) You can be a good Christian, faithful to God, and everything can still fall apart. The doctor's report is bad. The financing doesn't work out. The contract falls through. The relationship explodes. The dreams turn into nightmares. The virus takes hold.
 - d) You live in a fallen world. In this world, you will have tribulations -- you have troubles, heartbreaks, losses, agonizing pains too difficult for words.
 - e) Human suffering is the inevitable consequence of living outside of heaven's pearly gates. And as sweet as this world can be, and beautiful, and blessed as our lives can be, being a Christian never gives you a hall pass out of tough times.
 - 3. But when your Psychology has undergone a Grace Reset... here is one of the most life-changing truths you can know:
 - a) *Adversity accelerates spiritual growth... when you mix it with grace and truth.*
 - (1) You grow faster in times of trouble than in times of ease, as long as you meet your troubles with faith in God.
 - (2) Anyone can trust God in good times... but it's the tough times that test you.
 - (a) God is searching your heart and emotions. God is seeing what you're made of. Your eternal reward depends on it.
 - b) When you meet your troubles with bitterness, when you turn away from God, you begin to backslide. You lash out. Your reactions are far from godly. You blame, you scapegoat, you slander. It's like the disciples at sea, when a storm came, and they freaked out, and said, "Jesus, don't you care that we are perishing?"
 - c) Jesus said, "Why are you so fearful [such sissies]? How is it you have no faith?" (Mark 4:40). They failed the test.
 - d) You will either meet your struggles with a) mature faith or b) needless drama.
 - (1) Just look at social media. We have a whole nation, and sadly large parts of the church, who fail the test of adversity, lose their testimony, and worst of all, God can't trust them with a greater mission.
 - e) Hebrews 13:9 says it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, stabilized by grace.
 - f) When you mix faith with your troubles, you grow faster. You increase in wisdom. You respond with grace. You maintain your dignity and a level of poise. You feel your feelings, but you don't lash out. You express gratitude. You express confidence. There's an undeniable depth, even in pain or loss, because you have made the Lord your hiding place, and his grace is sufficient for you.
 - 4. *Grace is the power of God to restructure your fragmented thinking, heal your broken psychology, and transform your human-viewpoint/worldly life into Christlikeness, abundance, and transcendence.*
- E. *The Result: A Triumphant Spirit (Romans 5:5)*

1. *Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Romans 5:5)*
2. Hope does not disappoint. Why would hope disappoint? Why does Paul say that?
 - a) It's because of what hope is. In biblical language hope is confidence.
 - b) Hope is a confident expectation of a future good.
3. But hope is also something else. Hope means you have a desire and your desire is *unfulfilled*. You don't hope for stuff you already have. You only hope for what you don't yet have.
 - a) What have you prayed for, what have you asked for, what have you longed for that you have not gotten? What are the desires of your heart that have not been met?
 - b) Here is the biggest test of all. It is one of the biggest temptations of our lives.
 - c) Can you live with unanswered prayer and not be chronically disappointed with God?
 - (1) Can you live with unfulfilled longings, and not grow bitter toward God?
4. So, your life is not what you hoped it would be. Your money is not what you hoped it would be. Your health, your children, your car, your body shape, your house, your whatever is not what you really wanted.
5. That gap between what you want and what you have...
 - a) In your mind and in your psychology, do you interpret that gap? Do you interpret it as God letting you down?
 - (1) Are you chronically disappointed with God? Because that is the end of a grace reset for you. That disappointment, and it's totally understandable, but if you stay in that place, that disappointment will turn toxic and dismantle the grace construction project in your soul.
6. It is only when you grow in grace, that the gap does not disappoint. That hope does not disappoint. Why not?
7. Because the love of God has been shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit. That's just saying that the Grace Reset has happened so powerful in your heart that you are utterly and always convinced of the love of God, answered prayer or no answered prayer, fulfilled longing or unfulfilled longing.
8. Hope is fine with you. You are not disappointed that you have to settle.
 - a) You are so convinced of the love of God that...
 - (1) The devil can't make you doubt him. Your trials can't make you resent him. Your unanswered prayers can't make you disappointed in him...
 - (a) ...because you trust your uncertain future into the hands of a gracious and loving God.
9. All life long, God has been working to install grace as your operating system. A Grace reset all life long... because that's the only thing that will produce the triumphant spirit that will see you through.
 - a) This is what made the early Christians so invincible.
 - b) When the authorities arrested the early apostles and told them to quit preaching Jesus....
 - (1) The authorities said, "We'll exile you from your homes and land."
 - (a) Christ's followers said, "You can't. Our home is heaven, and we're going to that promised land."
 - (2) The authorities said, "We'll take away your treasures and wealth."
 - (a) Christ's followers said, "You can't. We have laid up our treasures in heaven where no thief can break in and steal."
 - (3) The authorities said, "We'll take family and loved ones."
 - (a) Christ's followers said, "You can't. We are brothers and sisters of a heavenly family and one day soon, we'll gather around the table of our Father's house."
 - (4) The authorities said, "We'll take your life."
 - (a) Christ's followers said, "You can't. Our lives are hidden in the hand of God, and no one can take us from our Father's hands."
 - c) That is a triumphant spirit. The love and grace of God were so structured into their psychology, not even the devil could lawyer them out of it.
10. And that is the great potential of every child of God. You can be that person. Do you know what made Superman weak? Kryptonite. Do you know what makes Christians weak? Doubts about the love of God. It's spiritual kryptonite.
 - (a) So what does God do? He pours out the love of God in our hearts.... By the Spirit of God using the Word of God to remodel your soul.
 - (2) *Do you believe in the grace of God?*
 - (3) Don't answer that question at church — of course we believe the grace of God... when we're at church.
 - (a) Answer the question at the doctor's office. At the lawyer's office. At the principal's office. At the accountant's office. At the undertaker's office. Do you believe in the grace of God then?
 - (b) I hope so, and I pray so. May God do a most amazing grace reset in all of our hearts.