

THINK SOBERLY

Psalm 85:1-13; Romans 12:1-21 / Psalm 103:1-22

Dr. Edwin P. Elliott, Jr.

I. God Calls for Continual Self-Examination

A. Learn to see what God sees. “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to ***think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.***” (ROMANS 12:3)

B. The unexamined life is dangerous. “***Watch*** ye and ***pray***, lest ye enter into temptation. ***The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.***” (MARK 14:38)

C. People have a powerful enemy seeking their harm. “***Be sober, be vigilant,*** because ***your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion,*** walketh about, ***seeking whom he may devour.***” (1 PETER 5:8)

D. SOBER is the state of being temperate, dispassionate, circumspect, calm, and collected in spirit. “Wherefore ***gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope*** to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;” (1 PETER 1:13)

II. Genuine Sobriety Is Active

A. Paul encouraged a detailed and intentional approach to life; consider not only how life is developing but how it looks to others. “Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. ***Abstain from all appearance of evil.***” (1 THESSALONIANS 5:17-22)

B. Every area of disobedience and failure of caution becomes a platform for new and intentional obedience. “***Let him that stole steal no more:*** but rather let him labour, ***working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.***” (EPHESIANS 4:28)

C. Christians first acknowledge the context of redemption and then learn from it. “***Nor thieves,*** nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, ***shall inherit*** the kingdom of God. And ***such were some of you: but ye are washed,*** but ye are sanctified, but ***ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus,*** and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 CORINTHIANS 6:10-11)

D. Avoid trouble. “Dearly beloved, I beseech ***you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts,*** which war against the soul;” (1 PETER 2:11)

E. The intentional life will not let opportunities slip. “***I beseech you*** therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye ***present your bodies a living sacrifice,*** holy, ***acceptable unto God,*** which is your reasonable service.” (ROMANS 12:1)

F. Cultivate patience. “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, ***let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,*** and ***let us run with patience*** the race that is set before us,” (HEBREWS 12:1)

III. Do Not Delay

A. When conducting a moral inventory, do not wait till you are finished but instead rely on God for help; sin's hangover will fade. "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. **As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. LIKE AS A FATHER PITIETH HIS CHILDREN, SO THE LORD PITIETH THEM THAT FEAR HIM.** For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. **As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field,** so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. **But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting** to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." (PSALM 103:8-18)

B. Eventually a believer must stop listening to fear and start paying attention to the Savior. "I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly. Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land." (PSALM 85:8-9)

C. Some people focus so compulsively on the past that they cannot hear the call to the future. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:" (HEBREWS 12:25)

D. Do not attempt to do the Lord's work for Him. "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him." (ISAIAH 57:19)