

General Topics :: Think and Grow Rich part 2

Think and Grow Rich part 2 - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/18 15:50

I just finished posting the following on the first thread, but it occurred to me that it might be missed as that thread is a little old. I thought it important enough that I began a new thread.

I dropped the ball on this and never finished explaining the reason behind bringing this up. Earlier I mentioned that this is an exposé about the methods our adversary is using today to deceive people and/or keep people from coming to Jesus Christ. Within the church these same methods are designed to prevent the body, as much as possible, from becoming effective witnesses to the gospel.

I began this discussion by talking about Hill's book (Think and Grow Rich) in order to show how big business is actively pursuing demonic influences for their success.

I followed up on this by discussing the use in advertising of a technique called subliminal advertising. I made mention of an urban legend having to do with popcorn spliced into a movie. Another brother on this thread debunked that legend. What cannot be debunked is the use of the word sex in the print media. I have seen this thousands of times with my own eyes.

The statement was made in the debunking post that this subliminal stuff doesn't work. It doesn't matter whether it works to sell any particular product, it is still there. The devil could care less about selling a product. What he is after is infecting an entire society with a preoccupation with sex. It seems to me that he has been extremely successful in this endeavor. Today's world is obsessed with sexuality, and this includes the majority of Christians.

The next step in understanding this subversive attack on the underpinnings of our collective societal mentality is to observe that the technique used in advertising has changed. The campaign to alter society to become obsessed with sex has been so successful that the subliminal is no longer needed. Now, the subliminal images in place today are human faces. This feeds two things in the subconscious mind. The first is pride. It gets into our heads that we are constantly being observed. One aspect of pride is the desire to be envied. In the context of advertising we begin to believe that we will be envied if we have a lot of really nice stuff. 'Hot' cars, fancy houses, the latest styles, whatever. The net result of this method is that we have become exceedingly materialistic and narcissistic. A study was recently done that concluded that today's college kids are the most narcissistic in history. The devil's methods are succeeding once again.

The second way this subliminal onslaught impacts society at large is in the area of insecurity. The inner processes of the mind translate being watched into a sense of being judged. This in turn becomes a fear of not living up to others' expectations. AKA a deep inner insecurity. In turn, insecurity within drives us to become more and more shallow in our interpersonal relationships. It is at this level that this stratagem has the greatest impact on the church. On the one hand, our own insecurity becomes a blockade to fully trusting God. Secondly, we fear the judgement of man and are afraid to witness lest our own lives are examined and found lacking. Lastly, relationships within the body don't flourish because of these self same fears of judgement and rejection.

In closing, one of the main things we need to be aware of is that a great many people who walk into our churches have a very high degree of this insecurity in their life. This creates a great deal of struggle in trying to draw near to God. When these people continue to struggle for longer than we think they should, our response is often to judge them and subtly reject them. This is counterproductive!

Jesus Christ is full of grace. We all know the second half of the verse- truth, but in today's world it is imperative that we become Christ like by not only being full of truth, but full of grace.

In His Love,

Doug

Re: Think and Grow Rich part 2 - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/18 18:03

I've decided to copy the relevant posts from the first thread as it is a bit lengthy and contains many posts that got off topic.

My first post:

WARNING! There is a real danger to your walk with God in reading this book. It is very easy to get off track in our walk with the Lord. I am posting this for the purpose of information only.

This book, written by Napoleon Hill, is probably one of the most significant pieces of literature affecting our society in the 20th century. It has flown under the radar of the Church in large part because we as Christians recognize that we cannot serve God and mammon. The book is however, required reading for management in most fortune 500 companies.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Think_and_Grow_Rich

In this book, Hill describes his 7 imaginary spirit guides. He trusts these imaginary friends implicitly. They give him advice and inspiration. The secrets to success that Hill espouses were given to him by these "friends".

It is no great stretch to recognize that these friends are nothing less than demons. Understand then, that the world of big business has been taking advice from demons for years and years. Is it any wonder we see such ungodliness on TV, in advertising (more on this later) and in movies?

The ramifications of this are extensive. In the coming days and weeks I will be posting more about the far reaching affect this has had on our world and on the Church.

In His Love,

Doug

My second post:

While there may be a correlation between Hill's book and the heresy of word of faith teaching, the impact goes much MUCH deeper.

Picture if you will, a board room. At the head of this table sits our chief adversary. Around the table sit his demonic princes. They are having a brainstorming session...

The topic at hand, how can we poison the minds of the human race against God and His Son. Too many people are getting saved and we must do something to stop the flow!

One of the demons pipes up. "I saw some of my own doing a study, they took a single frame of one of their movies and replaced it with a picture of ice cold cola and a box of candy. At intermission the concession sales nearly doubled. It got me to thinking. What if we began to bombard the human race with subconscious images that will cause them to desire sin even more than they do now?"

Brilliant...

They succeeded. The reality of today's world is that nearly every single piece of advertising that your eye takes in contains a subliminal message. At first the message consisted of a single word written as many places as possible on printed (magazines etc) advertising. That word was sex. This will be very uncomfortable to face. Many of you won't believe this. Some may even want to lash out at me in anger. This word is even printed across the forehead of Keith and Melody Green as they smile for the camera with their fingers forming a cross. Please note!! I am NOT accusing the Greens of any sin or evil. Keith Green was a brother whose heart was after God. NO QUESTION! His music has ministered to me for years. Never the less, the printed covers of his albums still had this subliminal text implanted on it. This is just an example. It wouldn't matter which gospel artist's album you look at. This stuff was there in most if not all.

It is important here to get back to the book by Mr Hill. This subliminal advertising did not make its way into our world via mankind's brilliant notions. It got here because money is the root of all (much?) evil. Men who desired wealth read this book and began seeking demonic advice on how to increase their sales. The subliminal ads that followed are one result.

So, Does this affect the church? You bet it does. Is there anyone out there who has not watched television or read magazines or looked at the cover of a Keith Green album? If the answer is no, then every single one of us has had some level of subliminal brain washing impact how we think.

This is a difficult subject. Maybe you begin to understand why I have been unwilling to this point to say anything. But I am compelled to begin to say what is in my understanding.

As I close this, I am reminded of my sign off "In His Love". There is nothing here that shows the tenderness and care I feel for you all. Please know that I am sincere when I say...

In His Love,

Doug

My third post:

The following is a copy of a post from the "Pastoral Feedback" thread. After posting it I realized that it makes a good next chapter in this thread.

One of the main points that I want to find a way to communicate has to do with the believers worldview. The reason I began talking about the devil's use of subliminal messaging has to do with one of his main objectives. He understands that much of our effectiveness as Christians is derived from our level of intimacy with the Father. When Jesus died the scripture tells us that the veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom. Through Jesus sacrifice we now have access to the very Holy of Holies! Yet so many of today's Christians do not consistently enter into that holy place. Why? It is my assertion that one causal factor in this is the effectiveness of this subliminal brain washing of man. One of his purposes is to create a deep inner dis-ease. An inner voice that tells us that we do not measure up. We can only measure up if we are successful, or beautiful, or own nice things such as a new car or the latest fashions etc. he has had great success in his endeavors. We as a society are deeply dis-eased. Even those of us who were redeemed early in life have been exposed to his subterranean mental destruction. We read the word of God that says we have been made acceptable through Christ, yet our inner man doesn't really believe it.

Enough said for now. Thoughts and reactions anyone?

In His Love,

Doug

The original thread then wandered off topic to wof doctrine, probably because the thread refers to growing rich, as well as a back and forth discussion about the Hill book itself. The book is meant only as a starting point. Both are off center to the discussion at hand.

At this point I dropped the ball until two more recent posts.

SDE wrote:

Quote:

One of the demons pipes up. "I saw some of my own doing a study, they took a single frame of one of their movies and replaced it with a picture of ice cold cola and a box of candy. At intermission the concession sales nearly doubled. It got me to thinking. What if we began to bombard the human race with subconscious images that will cause them to desire sin even more than they do now?"

<http://www.snopes.com/business/hidden/popcorn.asp>

I am in full agreement that Christians need to use discernment though. I am thinking about getting rid of my TV and Internet connection. The devil doesn't need subliminal messages. There is plenty of filth in plain view!

Then sonsigns wrote:

Amen Brother, I had just finished reading this book less than a month ago. The methods Mr. Hill, use's is the same as NLP, (Neuro linguistics programming) Pardon my spelling if it is wrong.

or more commonly known as if you can dream it, you can achieve it.

I was first introduced to this kind of thinking when my wife Helen and I was in Amway, back in the late 80's.

Now I see this same teaching in the word of faith movement especially with Kenneth Copeland ministries and those ministries that are associated with them. A lot of this teaching is starting to pop up in local assemblies (Churches) in my area.

The prime reason I believe, this teaching is being accepted by churches and pastors teachers ect. is that we do not study our bibles anymore.

We listen to the preachers and teachers and believe what they are teaching at face value, instead of exploring the scripture and what they say in regards to their teaching.

Every one wants to hear what will tickle their ears, instead of what our message should be and that is the Cross of Christ and him crucified.

PRAYER: May God help us witness to those that are deceived. anoint our words 'oh Lord of hosts, and lift the veil from those whom do not believe that the light of glorious gospel of Christ will be revealed to those that are lost.

This last post was again somewhat off topic, but I included it here as the connection between Wof and Hill never occurred to me but I believe there is some validity to the observation.

This finally led to post number one of this thread. While this topic is not directly related to scripture, I firmly believe we must know who our enemy is and what he's doing if we hope to combat his devices. It is my sincere hope that you find it helpful and not throw it out as some kind of off the wall sensationalism, as was suggested in the first thread.

In Christ,

Doug

Re: Think and Grow Rich part 2 - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/19 9:44

Up to right now, I see that this thread has been opened 73 times, and as yet no one has commented. This is probably because I asked no question which might lead to a discussion.

Questions. Did you find any value in reading this? Do you believe this will help you to understand your brothers and sisters' struggles better? Will you have more compassion and grace in your personal relationships as a result, or is this type of thing pointless?

The reason I ask is a desire to ascertain whether or not to continue bringing this subject up, including other strategems I may be aware of, to the body at all. This is not teaching The Word of God, which must be our focal point in our quest for growth etc. I can't imagine doing a teaching like this from the pulpit. Do you agree that understanding the tactics of the enemy has value? Certainly in warfare, it would be a foolish general indeed who made no effort to discover what weapons were aimed his way, or where the enemy army was positioning itself to attack. In sports, American football being a good example, a coach who does not study film of his next opponent won't win too many games.

So what say ye? Is there value to the body in this? If so, when and where would be an appropriate setting to disseminate such information?

Thanks for your thoughts,

Doug

Re: Think and Grow Rich part 2 - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/19 17:41

Just bumping, I really hope to get some type of feedback, if not about the topic itself, something regarding the nature of the topic.

Anyone?

Thanks,

Doug

Re: Think & Grow Rich - posted by Lampstand77, on: 2007/3/20 9:50

I am by no means an expert but, I thought I would share some of my thoughts and experiences.

As a teenager I was obsessed with being successful. Someone told me about think and grow rich and by the time I was 21 I practically had it memorized. I had no idea, at that time, that some of the ideas discussed in the book were demonic.

The point I wanted to make about the book's message is that once I began seeking after God and began to believe, I made a shocking discovery...most of today's 'popular' Christianity preach the same message. To further prove this point, one day I switched channels back and forth between PBS and TBN. On PBS some guy was discussing the 'source' and talking about how our words and thoughts attract what we think about most. On TBN a preacher had the same message except he was quoting scripture and he called this source 'Jesus'. My pastor, at that time, told me that when non-Christians apply Christian principles they get the same result. I was confused but, trusted that my pastor knew more than I did and so I trusted him.

Thankfully, God continued to grow me and one day led me to the Living Waters website where I heard 'Hell's Best Kept Secret'. That night I could see my church for what it was...a great big show! I was angry at my former pastor for so long. He had been to seminary, had a masters degree and I tithed, served and did my best, yet, I was still in danger or hell. Why did he not preach THIS message? He never told me how to be forgiven...he told me I WAS forgiven! How could he not have known?

Anyway, my point is this. I went to church and began seeking God because I had ruined my life, I wanted help and eventually (after realizing he does exist)... forgiveness. How many people, like me, have gone to a seeker sensitive church and found an answer no different than the one the world gave them? I spent my time at that church fearing that if my suspicions were right, I would be so disappointed that I would lose my faith in God.

Anyway, that is just what I noticed. I hurt my hand so typing is painful...please excuse my lack of editing.

Tracy

P.S... I finally did find a church that preached a more Biblical message. I am heartbroken because they have now revealed our new 'purpose driven church model'. Will we soon have to move to the foothills of Peru to find a Biblical church?... I am packing just in case...lol!

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/20 16:20

Tracy,

Welcome to SI! Thanks for sharing some of your testimony. I had no idea how far this book's *teachings* have made inroads into our culture, much less the 'body'! I never felt lead to read more than the first one or two chapters, and that was years ago. Your encounter with this on a personal level certainly gives you insight most of us lack.

I recently went to a seminar for real estate that reeked of that notion of 'fixing your eyes on a goal' mindset. I didn't recognize its source but did recognize how contrary to scripture it is. These people are actually bold enough to claim to be Christian.

One of the main taglines in this is "You get by giving." It almost sounds like scripture as it has some similarity to the Golden Rule (Luke 6:31) as well as Matthew 20:26-28 Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave-- just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but

t to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

The real problem in this is that we are not told to go about trying to 'get' anything. God provides as we walk in obedience to *His* ways. When we are blessed we are content and when we are in need, we can remain content when we are trusting in Him. Grasping after these goals is nothing short of love for the world and the things of the world. Praise God He called you out and set you free.

In His Everlasting Care,

Doug

Re:, on: 2007/3/20 19:02

Quote:

John173 wrote:

Up to right now, I see that this thread has been opened 73 times, and as yet no one has commented. This is probably because I asked no question which might lead to a discussion.

Questions. Did you find any value in reading this? Do you believe this will help you to understand your brothers and sisters struggles better? Will you have more compassion and grace in your personal relationships as a result, or is this type of thing pointless?

The reason I ask is a desire to ascertain whether or not to continue bringing this subject up, including other strategems I may be aware of, to the body at all. This is not teaching The Word of God, which must be our focal point in our quest for growth etc. I can't imagine doing a teaching like this from the pulpit. Do you agree that understanding the tactics of the enemy has value? Certainly in warfare, it would be a foolish general indeed who made no effort to discover what weapons were aimed his way, or where the enemy army was positioning itself to attack. In sports, American football being a good example, a coach who does not study film of his next opponent won't win too many games.

So what say ye? Is there value to the body in this? If so, when and where would be an appropriate setting to disseminate such information?

Thanks for your thoughts,

Doug

Hi again Doug

I only seem to have time to open a few threads these days, and less to reply, but pondering this I begin to realise its importance.

I think it is much bigger than subliminal advertising (of which I had nothing to comment so didn't!)

The subtle insinuation of the world's attitudes and ways, through some form of unconscious mass brainwashing, has been going on for a very long time.

In Old Testament times it involved (for example) Israelites intermarrying with pagans and condoning, and eventually joining in, their practices. In the early Church it was mostly the influence of Greek culture. The Church not only compromised with pagan worship, (Revelation 2:14, 20) but also with the Greek intellectual approach. Especially the Platonic method of reasoning in studying the Scriptures. Which has been the method to this day, and often hinders a spiritual grasp of Truth, in favour of the purely intellectual. (Not that its wrong to use our God-given intellect, just that the manner of its use often isn't as God intended His Word to be understood)

Hopefully only the more naive and ignorant are likely to be taken in by the extreme versions of "wof" and "purpose-driven". Although these teachings are becoming more and more acceptable and "mainstream".

However, when leaders are seduced by this kind of teaching they bring something of their own spirit to it when they pass it on. In my experience, if the leader is basically a good and Godly person he will probably - in all innocence - bring a good and Godly veneer to even a false doctrine. His life, and the fact that he is obviously not a charlatan, will make the error even more convincing than it would otherwise be.

So he will bring damage upon not only his own soul but on those who hear him.

This doesn't excuse such a one, (he has been "led away by his own desires, and enticed" - as (?)James puts it). But the error is thus made more acceptable even to "the elect".

I have seen this happening in the church I attend. The leaders are good men, and present this error in a very convincing way. For example, there has been a series on the life of Joseph and how God fulfilled his dreams in the end. So must we follow the dreams God has given us and seek the fulfilment of His purpose for our lives.

Except that isn't quite it. Nearly, but not quite. The whole thing ends up being man-centred not God centred, but in such a way that it *sounds* God-centred. After all, we are following the dream HE has shown us; we want HIS purposes, not ours, don't we, so what's wrong with that?

It is so very subtle, and so dangerous...

Jeannette

Re: - posted by awakenwithin (), on: 2007/3/21 1:58

I agree it is very dangerous...
in his love
charlene

Re: Think and Grow Rich part 2 - posted by UniqueWebRev (), on: 2007/3/21 7:52

Doug,

Recently a friend of mine, a Christian, but one who resents her poverty when she will not work more than enough to survive, and won't train for something better, got all excited about a new DVD that recently came out called, enticingly, 'The Secret'.

I watched it, and was horrified to find in it all the get rich quick stragems that I studied in my first years of selling Real Estate loans.

If there was ever a book printed on 'How to be a Millionaire', or the like, the summation that was in that book was in that DVD.

They didn't quite use any Christian wording, staying with the more common metaphysics - 'visualize', 'see it and be it', and so forth. But it's what's shown on most Rhema ministries. Give to Get. Nauseating!

Yes, advertising leads me to adore my digital recorder that came with my Dish Network - I refuse to watch commercials. Now, I mostly refuse to watch the religious channels, although there are a few gems here and there, that just teach.

And the local churches gag me with their insincerity. One I attended for a time had dancers and a rock group (with really terrible songs and singers). Everyone dressed for success. I did not fit in.

The next one I tried was so soft on teaching that there was nothing to learn, except that they didn't want to talk about anything serious.

The pity of it all was when they dragged in one of the major Rhema evangelists - but they forgot to say that revival was about the church digging back into God. For them, it was a weeklong outreach for which they paid a fortune, and found a scant 13 souls for their trouble. Not that I regret the new souls, but what will they learn?

Just as Christian principles do not go over very well in the boardroom these days, they don't go over very well in the churches either.

I think you could say that we are definately in the Laodicean portion of prophecy, as to the Church, and dancing with the devil everywhere else.

I hate watching the end times coming closer, even as I long for Christ's coming.

And frankly, I just want to go 'Home'.

In sadness,

Re: - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2007/3/21 11:50

Quote:

After all, we are following the dream HE has shown us; we want HIS purposes, not ours, don't we, so what's wrong with that?

Hi Jean,

I was talking to a friend once about this very thing and the scripture in proverbs about delighting yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart, came up. It added interesting angle on the whole thing.

My own musing on this topic has bought me to the conclusion that if you do not read the NT you will more than likely get stuck into this mode of thinking. The OT is full of blessings (and curses) that come with applying his word. If we do not read the NT you will never understand what GODs will for you in Christ Jesus is.

It is about Jesus, his church and serving his body withing the models/parameters of NT scripture. Without Pauls epistles we can easily just live for ourselves and use Gods blessings as a means to personal gain, when our gain in Christ only has its meaning in the church to which we belong. These things can make us selfish, because it encourages so much developed of the self that the development of his body takes second place.

It really is so subtle as you say, wanting to have nice things and live a peaceful life is not bad, but it must be put in context of what you have those things for, in Gods eyes. I am reminded of a story of William Booth, this is third hand info so I do not know the validity of the statement. Apparently while he is lying on his death bed his followers send word for one last thing that he would have them know. After all the years of serving he left them with the word 'others'. He could have said so much, but that is all he said. Jesus christ's life and the life which we now have finds its meaning in the depth to which we serve his creation.

Coming back to what was mentioned earlier in this thread about subliminal messages, it affects our lives in the banks we use, the insurances we have, the school we choose for our children everything. Most of it is based upon an underlying fear that we are going to suffer immeasurably without having these things.

I now certainly in my life, fear is the motivating factor in most things that come from the world.

p.s. John, regarding the spirit guides, who are the seven spirits in the golden lampstand of revelation? :-)

Re: - posted by John173 (), on: 2007/3/22 0:50

Thanks Jeannette, Charlene, Forrest and Zeke!

It's been interesting to see where you each went as a response to this.

Jeannette,

I agree that culture has always been contrary to God's ways. Any given culture at any given time will 'brainwash' those growing up in it. Men love darkness, it's as simple as that. But the one thing about today's world verses any time in the past is the level of bombardment our minds are taking with music, TV, movies, etc, etc. As a result and in the broadest terms, we live in a world full of emotionally tweaked screwed up mental cases like never before.

For me, one thing the Lord has placed on my heart is the need for understanding, compassion and grace towards each other. On this forum there is a great zeal for holiness, and I praise God for that. Yet I am keenly aware that too often this zeal for holiness can cause a certain judgemental spirit to creep in to our hearts. We absolutely must not allow this to happen.

One of the reasons this can occur is our recognition that today's churches have turned the grace of God into a license for

r sin. God forbid that I should defend such a thing. Still, our God and Father is longsuffering. He has a forbearance that we just can't quite wrap our heads around. When someone truly gets saved, He seals that person with the Holy Spirit and *never lets go!* This is true even when they don't seem to measure up to our standards of acceptable growth rates or perceived holiness.

If God is giving grace so must we. Again, this does not mean we ignore sin or give it license. But the truth must be spoken with real agape love. The *goodness* of God leads to repentance. A struggling brother or sister needs encouragement and understanding, not condemnation.

Wow, talk about a spring board! I can't believe I wrote all that in response to your one comment about the subliminal effects of culture through the ages! :-(

Dear, Dear Forrest

I can so relate to your desire to just go home. It truly grieves our hearts to see all this deception, both in and out of the church. I want to share with you the word the Lord gave me this morning. Isaiah 38- short form. Hezekiah is sick. The prophet tells him he will die for his rebellion against God. Hezekiah cries out for mercy and God grants him 15 more years of life.

After reading this my initial reaction was 'what?' ER Lord? What are You saying? Then..., I must have heard wrong, this is probably just me. I randomly flipped open my bible four times. Every time the passage was about someone dieing. At this point I thought this is crazy, I'm going to be sure to go to the N.T. this time. When I did the following leaped off the page.

2 Timothy 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, *fulfill your ministry.*

I suddenly got it. Redeem the time, life is short. Count each moment as precious. Oh my dear sister, Rejoice! Rejoice that your days are not yet completed. Rejoice that He still has a purpose for your presence here. Rejoice and again I say Rejoice!

Only a God like ours could take four or five verses about death and one verse about ministry and breath life into it.

Take heart dear sister. You are a real blessing here at SI. If you are this much of a blessing to us who can only read your words, I can only imagine how valued you are by at least some of those you encounter out there in the 'real' world.

Zeke,
Very interesting post, much appreciated. As to the seven Spirits...best guess is they represent the seven attributes of the Holy Spirit. Aren't there seven names of God in the form of (for example) Jehovah Raphah, Jehovah Tsidkenu etc?

One thing I'm sure of, if you encounter them they will be anything but imaginary and you won't call them by nicknames like Einstien!

Rejoicing in Him

Doug

Re:, on: 2007/3/22 13:14

Quote:

ZekeO wrote:

Quote:

After all, we are following the dream HE has shown us; we want HIS purposes, not ours, don't we, so what's wrong with that?

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p.s. John, regarding the spirit guides, who are the seven spirits in the golden lampstand of revelation? :-)

Hi Zeke

I did go through a very long phase of wanting to know what my ministry and gifting was, in order, as I thought, to fulfill Gods purposes for my life. There was a time when I would have lapped up this teaching on Joseph (as I said it was very well done) in the church I attend. It wasn't about success, or prosperity preaching, and there was some really good stuff in a couple of the talks.

But it was all about us finding *our* role and purpose and calling, and working with the Lord to bring it to pass. The idea seems to be that if you have no God-given dream to aim for then you won't be able to fulfill it. Is this what "Purpose-Drive" is all about as well? I still can't bring myself to get a copy of the book, let alone read it!

The Lord seems to have taken me past that now, to where all that matters is to do what He wants day by day. Not that I always *do* :oops: , but that's all that matters, whether I do it or not! The problem in my case (as mentioned elsewhere) was as the "needing to be needed", rather than being comfortable and prosperous (though that's nice too!) I was desperate for a purpose, a calling, to be used by God, to not feel such a useless failure...

We all no doubt have different expressions of these kinds of human weaknesses, and it is there that Satan insinuates his temptations.

Come to think of it, JESUS was purpose-driven, but not in a way that most Christians want to be! His aim and goal on earth was the *Cross*! Of course, He healed some people and did some miracles on the way, and the teaching of the disciples was vital, but the Cross was the final goal.

Isaiah 50:5 The Lord God has opened My ear;
And I was not rebellious,
Nor did I turn away.

6 I gave My back to those who struck Me,
And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard;
I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

7 "For the Lord God will help Me;
Therefore I will not be disgraced;
Therefore *I have set My face like a flint*,
And I know that I will not be ashamed.

Compare Luke 9:51-52

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that *He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem*, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a

village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.

Mmmm...

Re: the Seven spirits of God I always thought it meant the same as Isaiah 11:1-2

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

The Spirit of counsel and might,

The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Count the number of attributes and you come up with 7.

The Spirit of the Lord

The Spirit of wisdom

The Spirit of understanding

The Spirit of counsel

The Spirit of might

The Spirit of knowledge

The Spirit of fear of the Lord

Blessings

Jeannette