

Disciplining Yourself for the Purpose of Godliness

Saturday, Dec 16, 2023 08:00 AM CT 08:00

Host: David Wheaton 00:08

Disciplining Yourself for the Purpose of Godliness. That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a listener supported radio ministry. You can connect with us by visiting our website, TheChristianWorldview.org, calling toll free 1-888-646-2233 or by writing to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Christmas is a season when Christians remember, rejoice and praise God for sending His Son Jesus Christ into our world to offer Himself as the atonement for sin. The details of Christ's birth and life were prophesied in the Old Testament and then fulfilled hundreds of years later in the New Testament. Christmas is also the end of the calendar year, and as we look to the New Year, Christians often consider how to know and love God and His Word in a deeper way. Bible reading plans are hatched, sinful tendencies resolved to overcome, and godliness purposed in our hearts. These are good desires. Paul told Timothy, and by extension all Christians, to "*discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.*" That's from 1 Timothy 4:7. Godliness-or becoming like Christ-is the goal of the Christian life. But how do we "discipline" or "train" ourselves to pursue godliness?

Abner Chou, the president of The Masters' University and head translator of the Legacy Standard Bible, which is a New English translation of the Bible that many considered to be the most accurate and one that The Christian Worldview is carrying in our store, will join us to discuss that. Abner will also explain how Christ was fully God and fully man during His time on earth and why that is so critical. This is our final new program of the year. Next week, a couple of days before Christmas, is going to be a special Christmas program that we aired last year, The Christ of Christmas. If you haven't heard that, I hope you'll tune in next week as well.

But here at the end of the year, I thought it would be good to give a brief update on The Christian Worldview Radio Ministry. 2023 was a challenging and sanctifying year for The Christian Worldview and for my family personally. We've been adjusting to the new normal, having lost my dad in February of this year and now caring for my mom after she's gone through several trials of her own this year. That in the midst of leading my own family and

being engaged in our local church and other things we're involved in, and here I stand at the end of the year to say that God has been faithful through the trials, and He is the strength of our lives.

As far as The Christian Worldview, we've gone through a major software upgrade and transition this year. Months and months of training and integration has been going on behind the scenes for Brodie, my wife, who oversees the administration of the ministry. We hope it's going to be a much improved user experience on our website and in our store. Just be a little patient as we work through some of the bumps of this transition.

All the while, weekly radio production is a fast moving treadmill. Finding topics, contacting and scheduling guests, the preparation, the interviews, the editing the resources, maintaining and expanding our station affiliates. Then there are listener calls and resource orders and shipping and financial decisions in fundraising and in-person events like speaker series and our golf event. There always seems to be so much going on. But it's also a joy to serve the Lord in this way.

If the Lord allows us to make it to the spring of 2024, that will be our 20th anniversary of The Christian Worldview Radio Program. It's a good thing to ask after that many years, why do we continue in this radio ministry? What motivates us to keep going? Well, for me, I sense a call to be faithful to God with the stewardship He's given us here at The Christian Worldview. To accurately apply God's Word to current issues and to proclaim the gospel. What we do is examine subjects that sound churches typically don't have the time to fully address. On the radio, we're able to reach people that a church may not reach. Both Christians who aren't in sound local churches and non Christians who aren't in churches at all.

This is a sobering and meaningful endeavor to be speaking about the most important things of life. Who God is, what His Word says, what the gospel, the good news is. This radio ministry isn't about entertaining you. It's about addressing each topic each week and looking at it through the lens of God's Word. The Bible is our basis, our foundation.

One thing I'm learning and being reminded of more lately is that a love for Christ needs to be the believers motivation in life. It is not just about knowledge and knowing facts. It's not just about generating some emotion, but it's about having a love for God and His Son that starts with knowing who He is. He's the creator and sustainer of life. What He has done for us in giving us life and breath. That he has provided a way for us to be reconciled to Him through

what His Son did for us on the cross, what God is doing right now, and what He will do in the future, and having all of that transform our hearts to love Him for being the great God and Savior and sanctifier that He is. 2 Corinthians 5 says, *For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and Christ died for all, so that they who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him, who died and rose again on their behalf.* A love for Christ and a love for fellow believers is the mark of a true believer. You can read about that in 1 John.

So what do we have planned for 2024? We want to continue to strive to faithfully produce programs each week that exalt the truth of God's Word and the gospel. That's the core of what we do. We're also going to be doing some events this year. We're planning another speaker series event in April and something new in the summer of 2024 that we've been thinking about doing and praying about for many years. That's our Christian Worldview training courses for 16 to 18 year olds, so students, and also for young adults. Those, let's say, from age 18 to 24. These will be two or three day courses held at a farm just outside the Minneapolis metro area. We're going to cover things like, What is a biblical worldview? Why is that important? How does that apply to your life? What is the foundation for truth? What is the gospel? What is your calling in life with regards to sanctification, evangelism, discipleship, the local church, service to others? How to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, and live for God's glory. How do you handle the Word? How do you have discernment and manage friendships and relationships? How do you know when it is the right person for marriage?

These will be intentionally small courses, maybe 20 per course. It's not going to be so much preaching from a podium, but more sit down purposeful discussions with those who attend. There'll be some outdoor activities, but this is not going to be a recreational camp. It's going to be a Christian worldview training course. Details will be more set by the end of January, but please get in touch if you are interested or know someone who might be interested in attending one of these.

We have one more exciting announcement for this coming new year. It is that the Overcomer Foundation Cup, the Overcomer Foundation is the actual name of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that directs The Christian Worldview. This was formerly called The Christian Worldview Golf Event, but it's being renamed, The Overcomer Foundation Cup, because the foundation does more than just The Christian Worldview Radio Program. So the venue for our annual golf event is moving to Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minnesota in 2024.

The exact date is Monday, September 16, 2024. The previous course where we held the event for so many years is undergoing renovations next year. A door was opened for us at Hazeltine, which is a course known around the world in the golf community as a course that hosts major golf events such as the Ryder Cup.

We look forward to this because we're going to be inviting non golfers and out of town guests for the dinner event following the Golf. We may even do a listener event the night before, so stay tuned. We have plans to be made for that, so we're looking forward to the new year, praying that the Lord gives us much desire and energy to honor Him with this ministry.

Now, you should be receiving The Christian Worldview Annual print letter and resource catalog in the mail this week, which will have lots of the information that I just mentioned. If you aren't on our mailing list for that you can get in contact with us to be on the mailing list. Or you can go to our website, TheChristianWorldview.org, where the annual print letter is posted right now.

I want to be sure to thank The Christian Worldview team starting with my wife, Brodie, and all the administrative work she does with the ministry. Kelly, who is an administrative assistant. Rosie who you know answers all our phones. Alicia, who does all the shipping of orders. Rich, who does audio editing every week, and Ben, who does the final audio production on the program. This is a dedicated team who works very hard on The Christian Worldview every week. I'm very grateful to them, as I am to our board of directors, and the volunteers who do an incredible job at our events.

I also want to thank all the networks and stations that air The Christian Worldview. We are grateful for their partnership in radio ministry and for airing this program.

Thank you for listening to this program and supporting us. You support us by praying for us, that we would remain faithful week after week, and do programs that honor the Lord and proclaim the gospel. You support us when you encourage us, even if it's constructive criticism. When you write emails to us and send us letters through the mail, we read those and always consider what you have to say. And you support us by sending us financial donations.

The Christian Worldview airs on radio stations and networks like American Family, Radio, Salem Media, and many others online streaming sites like OnePlace.com, Sermon Audio and many podcast platforms. On nearly all these stations and outlets that air the program, we pay

for the cost of airtime, so when you give to us, you can designate that you're giving to reach listeners with the biblical worldview and the gospel on a particular station, or you can give to a general fund to use where funding is most needed.

Perhaps you want to become a Christian Worldview Partner. These are the backbone supporters of our ministry. They give \$25 or more per month, or \$300 or more annually. Christian Worldview Partners automatically receive all our featured resources that we offer throughout the year, including our latest one that will be coming soon, One Day Nearer, the devotional by Steve Miller. I'm not going to blather on here. I know you came to hear the program today on, Disciplining Yourself for the Purpose of Godliness, but we would appreciate your prayer and consideration to support The Christian Worldview Radio Ministry going forward.

You can get in contact with us if you'd like to do that through our website, by phone, or by writing to us. We'll take a short break and then come back and hear from Abner Chou, President of The Master's University and head translator of the Legacy Standard Bible as we discuss this topic, Disciplining Yourself for the Purpose of Godliness. I hope you stay tuned. You're listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program. I'm David Wheaton.

Featured Resource: The War on Men 13:08

We've largely lost the honor and the nobility and the glory of biblical manhood. And so many young men are not trained to be a leader, a protector and a provider in a Christ like way. That then, creates the actual end product of young men who don't know how to be a man. So we've largely lost the script for what being a biblical man is.

That was Owen Strachan, author of the excellent book, The War on Men. This is a book for the entire family to read, understand, and then pursue what biblical manhood is. The War on Men is hardcover, 256 pages and retails for \$29.99. For a limited time, you can get a copy for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. To order, go to The ChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Children's Resources: 14:10

Scripture commands that children ought to be brought up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Offering Biblically sound resources for children is one of our top ministry priorities. At our store at the ChristianWorldview.org, you will find carefully selected children's Bibles

and books along with video and audio resources. Check out the Bible Infographics for Kids books, Little Pilgrims Progress, and the popular Adam Raccoon set. Theo is a 15 episode video series addressing key doctrines of the faith that is a must see for children and adults. Satan and the world are bent on capturing the heart and mind of your child. Instead, get sound resources that will train them up in the way they should go. Browse and order at TheChristianWorldview.org or give us a call for recommendations at 1-888-646-2233. That's 1-888-646-2233 or TheChristianWorldview.org.

Host: David Wheaton 15:18

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, TheChristianWorldview.org, where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry. Our guest today is Abner Chou, the President of The Master's University in Southern California, and also the head translator of the Legacy Standard Bible.

Abner, thank you for coming on The Christian Worldview Radio Program today as we talk about disciplining yourself for the purpose of godliness. We want to get to that in a minute. But I want to talk about an exciting project that you have been a part of with this new translation of the Bible called, The Legacy Standard Bible. I'm going read a quote from the Bible, talking about where it came from and so forth. It says, "The Legacy Standard Bible is a translation that seeks to be a window into the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. By translating individual words as consistently as possible within their various nuances, it allows the reader to discern the author's intent. In this way, the refinements in the Legacy Standard Bible or LSB, also preserve the legacy of the New American Standard Bible." So the question is, Abner, What was the motivation to create a new English translation of the Bible, and then, how is it related to the New American Standard Bible which has been out for many decades, and has been a very popular translation with teachers like John MacArthur, Albert Mohler, Charles Stanley, and Kay Arthur?

Guest: Abner Chou 16:59

The real reason behind the Legacy Standard Bible was to preserve the New American Standard legacy and to refine that legacy. The New American Standard Bible is so well known for being a word for word translation, for emphasizing transparency into the original languages. It was designed to be for the expositional preacher. It was designed to be for the serious Bible student who wanted to make sure that what they were studying matched as closely as possible to the original languages. It was based upon the convictions of the

inerrancy, the inspiration, the infallibility of the Word of God, that it was the Word of God down to every single word. Verbal, plenary, inspiration.

Host: David Wheaton 17:48

Abner Chou is with us today here on The Christian Worldview. He is the head translator for both the Old Testament and the New Testament for a Bible we're discussing. A new translation called the Legacy Standard Bible. Now, Abner, just two distinctions that you said. What's the difference from this Bible than the NASB? Well, two of the key ones and there's more than this, but two of the ones I pulled out that I think were notable, and that people will notice when they read it, again quoting from the Bible's website, "While the Legacy Standard Bible sought to uphold the NASB, [the 1995 edition that you just mentioned] it has several key distinctions.

The recovery of God's name Yaweh in the Old Testament and the term for slave, for the Greek term *doulos*, in the New Testament. Exodus 3:14-15. *And God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent Me to you. This is My name forever. And this is My memorial name, from generation to generation."* So let's address that use of God's name, Yahweh, first. Why is it better to translate the name of God as Yahweh, which the Legacy Standard Bible does in the Old Testament, instead of the more familiar term in English, LORD, with capital letters?

Guest: Abner Chou 19:19

Often in our English translations we have either the term God or the term Lord translating the covenant name of God, which is Yahweh. Then why did we want to recover God's covenant name? It's the same reason but elevated, but it's the same reason why I call you David and you call me Abner, and we call people by their names. It is because there is a personal element to that. It is because there's meaning in that and it both elevates the way and the intimacy and the degree of fidelity that God has toward His people. He gave them His personal name. You can call Him by His name.

God and Lord are titles for God. They are not his actual name, but He gave us His personal name, Yahweh, which communicates I am who I am, that God is eternal, that God is independent, that God is transcendent, that God is immutable, and that God cannot be defined by anything or anyone except Himself. I am, who I am. All of that is tucked into the name Yahweh. It is the juxtaposition of the absolute holiness, the absolute transcendence, the

absolute otherness of God with yet Him giving that to us as a personal expression of His love and loyalty to us.

So this is a recovery of making sure that we have the relationship and the connection with God that He always intended us to have. That's partly why we wanted to recover that translation because we've lost calling God by His name, even though He's encouraged us to do so. On the other hand, it also sharpens other terms. I think we use the word Lord and God pretty freely. What I mean by that is, we've lost the sharpness of definition of the use of the word Lord.

Now when you have phrases like Lord Yaweh, you start to realize wait, Lord isn't just his name. It isn't just a short phrase for God. It isn't just a substitute synonym for the term deity. He is the Lord. He is the master. He is the sovereign One. Even as he is Yahweh, and even as he is God Elohim, what we have done by recovering the translation is elevated the personal nature of God, but also His Lordship and His divinity because we have made clarity by contrast with the correct translation of terms.

Host: David Wheaton 22:15

Abner Chou is with us today here on The Christian Worldview. He's president of The Master's University. By the way, The Christian Worldview is carrying several styles of the Legacy Standard Bible if you'd like to order one. We'll tell you more about it during today's program.

Let's go to the other term that's clearly different in the Legacy Standard Bible than many other English translations. This is the word doulos. For example, Romans 1:1 is typically, Paul, a bond servant of Christ Jesus, they'll say, whereas in LSB it'll say, Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus. Same thing in Philippians 1. Paul and Timothy, not bondservants of Christ Jesus, but Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ. Tell us about that, Abner, how the inconsistent translation of the word doulos has been woven in many English translations and why the LSB wanted to get back to what the word really means, slave.

Guest: Abner Chou 23:14

What we are looking at is not who did it wrong, who did it right, but rather, how can we do things better? Why do we do things a certain way? We translate the word doulos consistently as slave, because we want to make sure people understand the full weight of that. I understand, especially in American culture, which has had in its history, an atrocious record of slavery, why people are sensitive to translating the term doulos as slave. They would say, Hey,

it could mean bondservant. And yes, you can even have people who are slaves who are considered as part of the family, who make money, who are in professional working relationships. That's documented in the time of the New Testament. That is absolutely true. Nevertheless, the word *doulos*, out of all of the terms that are used for servitude, it emphasizes that your will is bound to somebody else, that you are not your own, that you are owned by someone else. It does not necessitate that you are of a lesser degree or inferior because of that. It just demonstrates your economic and social status, and that's hard, I think, for us to swallow sometimes. 1.) Because of our history. 2.) Because in our culture, we want to be independent. We want to have our own authority. We want our freedom. We believe we make our own choices. In a way, and definitely in our culture, we believe in a sense that we don't answer to anybody.

But Paul reminds us with the term *slave*, No, that's our real attitude. That's who we are. You're a slave of someone. You're either as Paul puts it in Romans 6, a slave to sin, or a slave to righteous. You're bound to something and someone one way or another, and what translating the term *doulos* consistently does, is it reminds us of what Christ has done for us.

There is a slavery that is wicked. You see that from the Old Testament to the New Testament. The slavery in Egypt was wicked. That's why God delivered Israel from it. There's a wickedness of slavery to sin. That's why God delivers us from it in the New Testament in salvation. Amen and amen. There is a slavery that is wicked. But just like in the Old Testament, God told Israel, I delivered you out from slavery, so that you would serve me. That word *serve* there is actually the word *slave*. That Israel would have to be transferred from one slavery to another slavery. In the same way, we are transferred in salvation from one slavery to another slavery. We are not freed so that we can do whatever we want and please whoever we want and to live for ourselves. No. We exist to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, to be his slave, to be subjected to Him. That needs to be the mentality of our lives. If we just live like practical atheists, ignoring Christ, we spit on the very purpose of salvation. Christ saved us and delivered us so that we would belong to Him. And there is no better master than Him.

So we delight to serve Him because that's the best kind of slavery there is. That's what all the benefits of protection and adoption and the like that Christ affords us because of what He purchased for us on the cross and by virtue of His resurrection. So the term *slave* puts us back in our proper place because it reminds us, our life is not our own. We were bought with a cost. We must be the slaves of the Lord Jesus Christ, and serve Him with all our heart.

Host: David Wheaton 26:48

Very well explained, Abner. Even the term for Christ, Lord has the idea that that's Master. So it's a master slave relationship, but it's not the evil kind that we see practiced by human beings. It's a beautiful relationship where we want to be slaves of this benevolent Lord. So I think that's a really great change for the Legacy Standard Bible translation. Abner Chou is our guest today. He is the head translator for both the Old and New Testaments of the Legacy Standard Bible and also the president of The Master's University.

Abner, just a quick question on this. We often get our favored translations of the Bible. We tend to stick with and memorize in a particular translation, we don't want to switch. But is it beneficial to read different translations of the Bible? You know, for instance, this year with my son, I've been reading the Bible in the New Living Translation. It is more of a contemporary English, very understandable for a young boy. Is there a benefit to reading the Bible in different translations?

Guest: Abner Chou 27:51

When we talk about Bible translation, often we can get into a competition, or we often have this notion of trying to slam one to support the other. And that's not the way I would like to go about it. The Lord has really blessed us. He's left us truly without excuse to read our Bible and to love our Bible and to understand His Word. Reading the Bible, particularly in a translation, and in multiple translations is very useful. For one, it can cause certain grammatical constructions such to catch your attention, so that a certain nuance is brought out. Two, if you're thinking about, What does this word mean? Well, translators use between translations, different words. Through looking at the synonyms, different nuances, and different nuances of the translation, you can get a better feel for what a word means.

Translations have different purposes, such as the LSB, it is meant to tell you, this is what the Greek and Hebrew says. This is what was written down in Greek and Hebrew. If you're looking at a Greek and Hebrew Bible, like I do at times, this is what you would see in English, if you have the English equivalent of that.

That is the design of the LSB from a grammatical and also word study perspective. There are other translations that want to emphasize, this is the sense, the idiomatic idea of what the text says, and there's room for that as long as you know the right purposes and you don't get the purposes mixed up. Just like it's very ineffective to use a screwdriver for the sake of a hammer and a hammer for the sake of a task of a screwdriver. In the same way, we don't want to get

the purposes of translation and different versions of translation mixed up. They all are tools within the toolbox, and we need to use the right tool for the right task. But using them collectively can be very helpful.

Host: David Wheaton 29:57

Abner Chou is with us today here on the Christian Worldview. I was very interested, Abner, to read something in your bio. Here it says were the head translator for the LSB version of this new version of the Bible. In your bio it says, before coming to The Master's University as a student, Dr. Abner Chou believed the Bible was shallow and boring. Upon studying it deeply, however, he realized that the Word of God is the most profound truth, and that the God of the Word is absolutely almighty, sovereign, transcendent and unsearchable.

From then on, he has dedicated his life to ensuring that no one entrusted to his care would ever again view scripture as dull, but rather behold what it truly is. The most compelling revelation of the true and glorious God.

This is really an encouraging paragraph in your bio, Abner, because you can go from thinking the Bible is shallow and boring, to just realizing the incredible supernatural message that God has revealed in His Word. So getting a Bible is one thing. We hope listeners today, as we head into the new year, will get a copy of the LSB as a new translation to read and pull some things out as you've been describing already. Getting a bible is one thing, but cherishing it and obeying it and loving it is another as was described in the transition that went on in your life. How can someone listening today, Abner, go from, it's a good idea to read the Bible in the coming year to actually go to, I love God and His Word and I can't get enough of it?

Guest: Abner Chou 31:40

The key, maybe there's two, and the first one is to really treasure the Word of God. You have to read it, you have to jump in. I remember when growing up, I struggled to practice violin and piano. I played it for a little bit of time. My mom would say, Hey, the hardest thing to do is to get started. Once you get started, once you're in it, and you're investigating it, you're practicing, you're going over the music, then you're in it, and you'll love it, but the hardest thing is to get started. I think the same thing, by analogy is true with a Bible study. We buy a Bible, we want to love it. But how do you actually have affection toward the Lord and toward his Word? While there's no substitute than just actually jumping in. Opening the Bible and sitting down and putting your eyes on the page and reading and thinking about it, there is no substitute for doing that. There's a discipline to that. At the same time, of course, we need to

read it the right way. And fundamental to that, often our opening question when we read the Bible is, What's in it for me?

That's the question that we often asked in our culture all the time. But what we really need to ask is, What does this tell me about God? What does this tell me about His glory? What does this tell me about the God that saved me? Let me see how majestic and amazing He is. When you're on a search for that, in the Word of God, you've asked the right question of God's revelation of Himself. Because you've asked the right question, a question that He prolifically answers in His Word, you'll never come away disappointed, both from getting an answer to that question, and also increasing in your love, affection and hunger for God and His Word.

Host: David Wheaton 33:40

That was very helpful, he said. I'm so glad that you emphasized the need to not read the Bible for, What can I get out of it, but, how can I know and love the God of the Bible better? That's why we read the Word. To know the author. When we know Him better, we're going to love Him more for all who He is and what He has done.

Abner Chou with us here today on The Christian Worldview. We are carrying this new Legacy Standard Bible in The Christian Worldview online store. We have several options. Large print, handy size, children's Bibles, different kinds of covers, leather and faux leather, single column. Go to TheChristianWorldview.org and check out all the different options and get one for yourself to start reading it in the new year. We have much more coming up with Abner Chou.

Next we'll talk about how to discipline or train yourself for the purpose of godliness. You are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program. I'm David Wheaton.

Become a Worldview Partner

What is The Christian Worldview Radio Program really about? Fundamentally it's about impacting people, families, churches, with the life and eternity changing truth of God's Word. We know the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only message that saves us from God's wrath by God's grace for God's glory. We know the Bible is the inspired Word of God, providing the only way to think and live to the glory of God. We are a nonprofit listener supported ministry. If you'd like to help us impact listeners with a biblical worldview and the Gospel, consider becoming a Christian Worldview Partner who regularly gives a specified amount to the ministry. As a thank you, Christian Worldview Partners automatically receive many of the

resources featured on the program throughout the year. To become a Christian worldview partner, call us toll free 1-888-646-2233 or visit TheChristianWorldview.org.

Featured Resource: Knowing the Spirit 35:44

When Jesus is laying out the Holy Spirit's job description in John 16 and He says, "*it's to your advantage that I go,*" think about that for just a second. Jesus, the Christ, tells His disciples, it's actually advantageous that I go. They are thinking, What? We don't want you to go. Who could be better for us? What does He then explain?

That was pastor Costi Hinn who was raised in and then saved from the distortions of the Holy Spirit that are so prevalent today. Costi's new book, *Knowing the Spirit: Who He Is, What He Does, and How He Can Transform Your Christian Life*, graciously clarifies truth from error and is available for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. To order this 261 page, softcover book that retails for \$19.99, go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233, or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Host: David Wheaton 36:51

Welcome back to the Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, TheChristianWorldview.org where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry. Our topic today is, *Disciplining Yourself for the Purpose of Godliness*. Our guest is Abner Chou, the president of The Master's University and also the head translator for the Legacy Standard Bible.

Abner, this has been a long way of getting to our actual topic for the day, but I think it's been important building one block after another to talk about a word you mentioned in your last answer. The idea of discipline. It takes discipline to read the Bible. I'm going to read this passage from 1 Timothy chapter 4, which is probably familiar to our audience. It says, or Paul writes to Timothy, he says, *train or discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline, or bodily training is only of little profit, godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.*

Now again, at this time of year, people are thinking about, What do I want to do in the new year? Maybe some resolutions I want to make. I want to join a gym. I want to get in physical shape. I want to do physical bodily training. And that's important. That's good. We should do that. But how much more important is to train or discipline ourselves for the purpose of

godliness, spiritual training? What does this mean, Abner, to train or discipline ourselves for the purpose of godliness? And how do we do it?

Guest: Abner Chou 38:30

David, this is such a great question, because it ties in everything we've been talking about from translation, to studying the Bible, to this very passage. You can hear even in the translation, train yourself for godliness, because bodily training. Notice the consistency of those words train and training. Why are they consistent in a translation like the Legacy Standard Bible? Because they're the same Greek word, they're the same Greek root in the original languages in the text that Paul wrote of 1 Timothy chapter 4. There's a wordplay there. What does it mean to train? Why is Paul even talking about bodily exercise profits little and all kinds of that kind of stuff? It's because Paul is reminding us, You want to know what it means to train yourself for godliness? Imagine an athlete training. Imagine all that that takes. It's not just a matter of self control. Paul could have said, use self control. There's a Greek word for that, but that's not the term. It isn't just, deny some things of your body. There's a word for deny that's included in this but it's bigger than that. An athlete has to do all of those things plus actively engage. Not just restrain things from himself, not just have a certain amount of willpower, but also the ability to execute, the ability to exercise, the ability to implement all of that into achievable physical goals in whatever athletic activity or sport that they are involved in.

In the same way, that's what we are to do with godliness. We are to not only be those who deny ourselves of sin and the pleasures of this world. Amen! Not only to have self discipline, to have self control, to have willpower and desire. All of those things are true. But to really train means this. You must follow through every single day, like an athlete does. That's why Paul's even saying bodily training, bodily exercise profits a little bit. Yeah, it's helpful. But the real training you want is to apply all of that to something higher. And that is the spiritual realm and our spiritual disciplines. Our mind needs to be, hey, it's not just good enough to restrain or have a little bit of self control. Our mind has to be, if I'm going to make a resolution, it's to go all the way. It is not just the hope to exercise physically and spiritually, it is to actually execute that and here's what it's going to look like. That's the kind of resolution that Paul is looking for in this passage.

Host: David Wheaton 41:10

Just a quick follow up to that then. So as we look forward to the new year, people are thinking, I want to get a copy of the LSB. I want to start in a good Bible reading program, they

really want to do it. How do they go from having the desire to going into the training or the disciplining themselves for the purpose of godliness? What are some attainable ways to approach the reading and studying of the Bible? Also, we want to hear the Bible preached. God meant it to be preached, so you want to be a part of a sound local church. But just specifically focusing on the personal reading of it, what's an attainable way for someone who's listening today to jump in and start training themselves for the purpose of godliness?

Guest: Abner Chou 41:51

I think it's a couple of things. One is this. People should set aside time every single day to read the Word of God. That's part of the self discipline part. It helps to establish on a practical level, the execution. And you say, Well, how much time? Well, here's something interesting that I learned in Bible translation. These are just things behind the scenes that I never knew before. But man, the translators that went before us, they were so thoughtful.

Most translations are designed and the New American Standard is specifically designed that a person reading at an average speed, if they read the Bible every day for 15 minutes, they will read through the Bible in a year because of the amount of words on the page and everything.

That's how this translation is set up. They watch the word counts and everything, so that if you on average are reading along with somebody, let's say somebody's reading out loud the Bible on audio, if you set it for 15 minutes, and you do it every single day, you will read through the Bible in a year without a problem:

- 1.) Set aside a time for that to happen.
- 2.) It's often helpful if people read along with somebody reading out loud, because you're listening, you're looking, you're totally engaged.
- 3.) After you do that for about 15 minutes, for the rest of your day you want to think about one or two things that you gleaned from reading.

Something you never knew about God before. Something you thought, Oh, that's so neat that He did that. That's so amazing that He is this way or that He accomplished this reality, and you think about that the whole day. If I came up to you randomly, at three o'clock PM, and you had read this morning and I said, Hey, what caught your attention as you were reading this morning? You would say, Oh, it's this one thing. That's what we want to be ready

to do. In doing so, you might have said, Well, I only read my Bible for 15 minutes. That's true, but you meditated on it the whole day, just like the Psalms and the Scriptures tell us to do so. So those three steps would be really practical for anybody who desires to grow and to exercise themselves in godliness.

Host: David Wheaton 44:07

Abner Chou is our guest today here on The Christian Worldview. We're talking about training or disciplining yourself for the purpose of godliness. He is the head translator for the Legacy Standard Bible, a new translation, which is considered to be the most accurate translation of the English Bible. Very similar to the NASB. We have it available in The Christian Worldview store in many different styles. Large print, handy size, children's Bibles of the LSB. Different kinds of covers and so forth. You can go to TheChristianWorldview.org and find one that suits you and read it in this new incoming year.

Now, we're coming up to the end of the year. And that means Christmas and a new year. So we're heading into that time of year when we think about and meditate on the fact that God sent His Son as a baby to grow up and live a perfect life and be the Son of God and Savior of mankind. In one amazing theological, hard to understand but glorious truth about Christ is that he was 100% God, and 100% man. Philippians chapter 2 says, *Have this way of thinking in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.* This passage talks about the fact that Christ is God, and yet He's man. You think in our human minds, how can that be? How would you explain this truth that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man? Why that was important? How is that even possible?

Guest: Abner Chou 46:00

People wonder, How could Christ empty Himself? How could He become God and man? There's a lot of mystery wrapped up into this and sometimes people get confused. Yet the way that Philippians 2 is worded is so precise and so compelling. For one, notice that the text and the Legacy Standard Bible has this right, it explains exactly what it means that Christ emptied Himself. It says, by taking the form of a slave. By being made in the likeness of men. How did emptying happen? Was it that he lost something? Is it that he surrendered something? Is it that He became less God? No, no, no! Paul tells you exactly how that happened and it is specified by taking the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of

men. So Paul is absolutely clear on what he means by empty Himself. Look at the phrase, by taking the form. Last time I checked, the word take is not the word give. When I take food from the table, I'm not going on a diet. The word take, means to add on.

Christ never lost anything of His deity. Paul was very clear about that. Rather, He took something on. He took on the form of a slave. He already was existing, as it says in verse 6 of Philippians 2, in the form of God. Now He also has the form of a slave. Its form upon form. Truly man. Truly God. Why did He do this? He did this because what He takes on He redeems. That's why it says, He came in the likeness of men. Notice that it's plural there. Not a likeness of a man just in human physical likeness, although that is true, it is in the likeness of men, plural, because He took on the totality of human experience. All that it truly means to be a human being, a man, to be men. That is what He took on and that's what we needed for redemption. We don't just need a redemption in part, we need a redemption in full. And He became not just the servant, but a slave as the LSB rightly translates, because his submission was the highest submission of all. He obeyed in everything, even unto death. His will was bound.

These things are mind boggling yet absolutely necessary, because we don't obey, we don't submit to God at all. So to the one who has to take our place, has to submit perfectly where we could not submit and did not submit. He has to submit completely, to the very end, so that He is our perfect, substitutionary, atoning sacrifice. That's what has to happen.

So yes, it is a mystery. The incarnation is a mystery. And how can one be fully God and fully man, truly God and truly man, as a more refined articulation goes? How does that all work? We don't know. It's a one time occurrence, which makes Christmas so special, because it's never happened in all history, and will never happen again. It is that unique, but it is absolutely essential, because that is the way salvation happens so that we are redeemed from all of our sins, and all of us in our entire being can be and will be redeemed and glorified one day.

Host: David Wheaton 49:24

So well answered. Abner, thank you for that. Abner Chou is our guest today here on The Christian Worldview, talking about disciplining yourself for the purpose of godliness. Just a last quick question here. In all you've said today, Abner, about the Legacy Standard Bible and reading it and disciplining ourselves for the purpose of godliness and how Christ can be truly man and truly God, heading here into Christmas, what would be your exhortation to listeners

to keep Jesus Christ at the center of Christmas and keep all the distractions that surround on Christmas, and there are many of them, to a minimum?

Guest: Abner Chou 50:03

I think the key is that we need to take the time to be in the Word, to meditate on the nuances of Christmas, and, whenever the details of the events of Christmas are brought to our attention, we need to leverage how special we understand those things are, to magnify how unique and special Christ is. All of the wonder of Christmas, from the shepherds to the angels, to Gabriel moving around, to the reconfiguration of government, even in Luke 2, all of that is God pulling out the stops to welcome His Son. We need to view it as that. This is the Father's welcome of His Son into the world. In doing so then, that gives us the right perspective as a lot of different Carols are being sung and events are being discussed, that we keep thinking about them the right way.

Host: David Wheaton 51:02

Abner, I so appreciate your coming on The Christian Worldview today. I appreciate your hard work in translating this Legacy Standard Bible, you and the team who did this, and for all your work going on at The Master's University. All of God's best and grace to you and your family. Now and at Christmas as well.

Guest: Abner Chou 51:21

Hey, thank you, brother. Likewise. So grateful for you. So grateful for all the listeners. Lord bless.

Host: David Wheaton 51:28

The Bible says in 1 John 4:9, *In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world so that we might live through Him.* That is what Christmas is all about. God loves us. He sent his own Son into the world to live a sinless life, so that he could offer Himself on the cross as the perfect substitutionary sacrifice for your and my sin. Then God raised Christ from the grave to prove that God's wrath and Justice had been satisfied by Christ's atoning sacrifice. Jesus said, "Repent and believe in his good news." So make this Christmas, the Christmas you trust in Christ alone for your salvation.

Give us a call if you'd like to discuss more or go to our website, TheChristianWorldview.org and click on the page, "What must I do to be saved?" We are completely out of time. But just a reminder, you can get the Legacy Standard Bible on our website.

Next week's program is the Christmas special program. Also, thank you for considering The Christian Worldview in your year end giving. We hope that you have a Christ centered Christmas because Jesus Christ and His Word are the same yesterday, and today and forever. So until next time, "Think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm!"

The mission of The Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript or find out, "What must I do to be saved?" Go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener supported nonprofit radio ministry furnished by the Overcomer Foundation. To make a donation, become a Christian Worldview Partner, order resources, subscribe to our free newsletter or contact us, visit TheChristianWorldview.org, call 1-888-646-2233, or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. That's Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. Thanks for listening to The Christian Worldview.