

# Positive Christian Living

I'm bringing a lesson on Positive Christian Living from... J.J. Turner in his book entitled: *Positive Christian Living*,

## Chapter Six — Power for Mastering Life

### Consider These Facts:

- Man has mastered the atom.
- Man has been able to transplant hearts.
- Man has been able to synthesize the gene.
- Man has been able to alter the weather.
- Man has mastered travel and distance.
- Man has mastered the art of instant data through computers.
- Man has tamed animals.
- Man has harnessed the energy of the sun.
- Man has brought the world together via TV.

Yet, for the most part, man has not been able to master his own personal life. It seems he can master about everything but himself. This is the most difficult area of all. The challenge of self-mastery has been with man since the very beginning of his existence. Since Eve failed to master her life when she was confronted by the [serpent], man has been on a downhill course.

### How Some Try to Master Life

Man's attempts to master life have been varied and unusual. In fact, as a general rule..., it is difficult to convince a person that he, by himself, cannot master his life. He thinks he can. This is why he's on a constant treadmill trying to keep up with himself and all the others around him.

Some of the ways man has tried to get the upper hand on life are through some of the following:

1. Strong drink, some think strong drink will give them the courage they need to win the battles of life. This has produced (as of the 1979 publication date of PCL), 9 million alcoholics in our country.
2. Drug abuse is another route people take to control their lives. A pill to get high, to calm down, to sleep, to stay awake... Millions are controlled by pills.
3. Changing jobs, changing schools, moving, and a host of other pseudo social changes have been viewed as the route to mastery over life.

These are only a few, JJ listed more, plus he alluded that there are many other ways people try to master their lives.

# Results of Not Mastering Life

There is a Tom Hanks movie called, "Sully: Miracle on the Hudson" about the real life events of the pilot of US Airways flight 1549, who performed an emergency landing on the Hudson river in New York successfully with no casualties. This occurred on January (that's winter time), January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009. As you see from the title it was referenced (in the news) as the "miracle on the Hudson." The cause of the event was, that shortly after takeoff, a flock of birds flew into the path of the plane. Many of the birds were sucked into the engines and the plane lost power in both engines.

Many plane accidents have occurred because of a loss of power. Without sufficient power the pilot does not have control of the plane.

The loss of power is not limited to planes, cars, boats, etc. Man also needs power to properly control his everyday life. Without proper power he is on a disaster course. A crash is just ahead for the person who doesn't have power to master his life. Everywhere you look there are crash sites, the results of lives not being properly mastered.

Some obvious signs are:

1. Suicide is a major cause of death among college age persons. "Life is a bum trip" is how one teenager expressed it in his suicide note.
2. Unhappiness is another common symptom of an unmastered life. Ulcers, heartburn, and a host of other aches and pains are produced through unhappy minds.
3. A life of sin and rebellion against God.

## James 1:13-17 (ESV)

*Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. <sup>14</sup> But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup> Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

*<sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

# Power for Mastering Life

Man through his own power, try as he may, can't handle the burdens and pressures of life. He needs a power stronger than himself. He needs a power outside of himself (not within himself). And there is such a power.

To a world wrecked by sin, Jesus announced, "I have come that [you] may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10). The apostle Peter wrote, "*His divine power has given us everything **we need** for life and godliness (and he even tells us how), through our knowledge of Him who called us...*" (2 Peter 1:3).

Since God grants us real life through His Son, it must also be true that He gives us power to maintain this life.

The power doesn't come easy after conversion to Christ. The apostle Paul said,

### **Romans 7:19-25 (ESV)**

*For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing...<sup>21</sup> So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand...<sup>24</sup> Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?<sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!...*

A person must work therefore on developing self-control.

### **2 Peter 1:5-8 (ESV)**

*For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge,<sup>6</sup> and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,<sup>7</sup> and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.<sup>8</sup> For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**...[S]ome of the following things are essential to controlling one's life.**

1. A person **MUST WANT** to master their life. This is the [basis] of all positive actions.
2. Your life **MUST BE RIGHT** with God.

### **1 John 4:4 (ESV)**

*Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*

3. We **MUST HAVE** faith in Jesus, He is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). We must believe that He is able to do what he promised (Romans 4:20-22). And not only that but, that He "is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according **to the power at work within us** (Ephesians 3:20).
4. Daily **RENEW** your mind. This is the result of a definite resolution, say: "I now renew my mind." Utter it in your prayers.
5. Renew your mind with the word of God.

### **Excerpts from Psalm 119:97-104**

<sup>97</sup> Oh how I love your law!

It is my meditation all the day.

<sup>98</sup> Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,  
for it is ever with me.

<sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my teachers,  
for your testimonies are my meditation.

<sup>100</sup> I understand more than the aged,  
for I keep your precepts.

<sup>101</sup> I hold back my feet from every evil way,  
in order to keep your word.

<sup>102</sup> I do not turn aside from your rules,  
for you have taught me.

<sup>104</sup> Through your precepts I get understanding;  
therefore I hate every false way.

- God's word **MUST** become the basis for ALL our decisions.
- Pray for wisdom daily, James 1:5
- Deny yourself daily, Matthew 16:24, trust in Jesus as the Master of your life.
- Be led by the Spirit, Romans 8:14
- Believe that you can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens you, Philippians 4:13

## End note

Christ is MORE than our "life support."

Paul said in:

### Colossians 3:3,4 (ESV)

*For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When **Christ WHO IS YOUR LIFE** appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

### Christ is our life!

And as long as we stay in Him (Eph 1:3; 1 John 1:7), we have power, **His power**, to master life.

Have you yielded to Him today?

## Invitation

We are extending the invitation, now, to anyone who is subject to it. Come,... while we stand and sing.