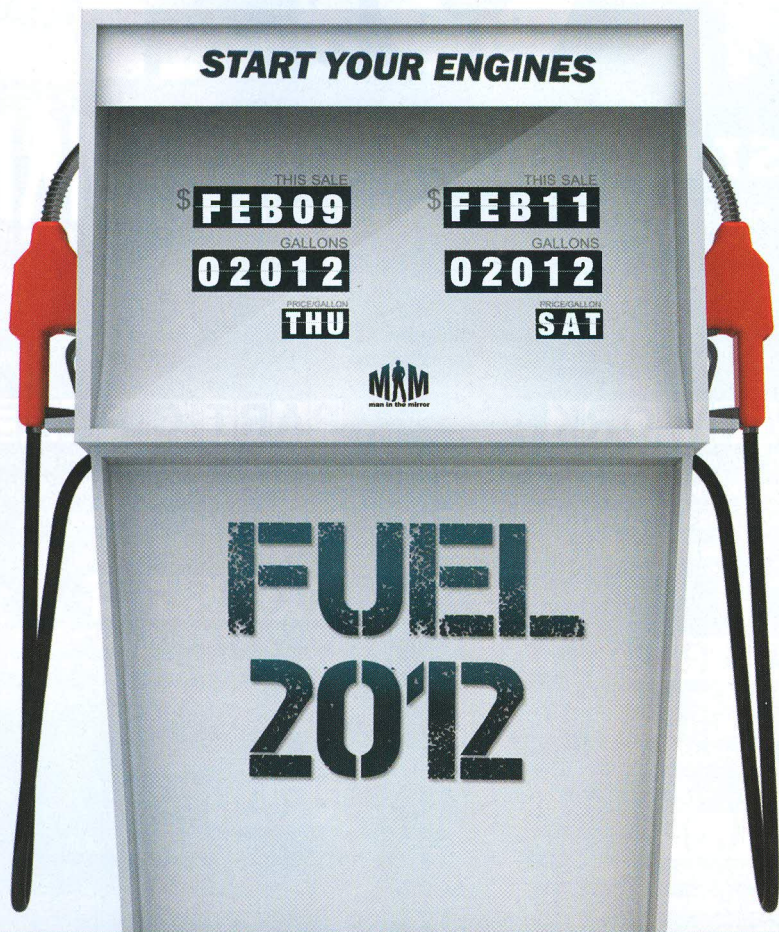


equipping the man in the mirror

daily devotions, helpful articles and more

GOD'S WORD

Fuel for Your Soul p. 4



ALSO INSIDE ➤

- First Things First (p. 3)
- All-Stars at **FUEL** (p. 7)
- New! *Man Alive* Excerpt (p. 58)

Devotions on page 14



Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:1-2

God loves you just as you are. He sent His Son to die for you and pay the price for your sins. You cannot earn God's love through good works. God couldn't love you more if you were Billy Graham, the Pope, or Mother Theresa. And He wouldn't love you any less if you were a serial killer or had committed some other heinous crime. The dichotomy is that God loves you just as you are, but He certainly doesn't want you to stay the way you are. God wants you to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Is this possible?

The Word of God declares that He is in the business of life transformation. I grew up in a Jewish home and really did not

know God. For more than 30 years I've seen His principles working in my own life, and have witnessed hundreds of men have their lives transformed through their obedience and dependence on God. Your history does not need to dictate your destiny. You can change. You can be transformed. Will you let Him? —*Dave Wertheim*

Do you believe that God is able to transform your mind and life? What areas would you like to see Him transform? Take some time right now and ask Him.

Daily Reading: Numbers 4:1-5:31, Mark 12:18-37, Psalm 48:1-14, Proverbs 10:26



Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.

Ephesians 5:25-26 (NASB)

Our relationship with our wives is one of the most critical relationships we will ever have. Developing the best possible relationship takes time, energy, focus, and positive, godly habits. Paul compares this relationship to the way Christ loved the church sacrificially. This may seem like an unattainable goal. With the Holy Spirit guiding us we have the ability to love, cherish, and adore our wives and transform our marriages.

Perhaps this means serving her and meeting her needs even when we don't really feel like it. Maybe she needs words of affirmation, non-sexual touch, or a compassionate, listening ear. It might mean apologizing for something we've done or forgiving

her for something she's done (forgiving like Christ forgives us). There are numerous ways that we can demonstrate love for our wives. When we love with the right attitude we bring glory to God. Will you invest sufficient time to assess and understand her needs and love her as Christ loved the church and transform our marriages?

—*Dave Wertheim*

What would your wife say is the *one* thing you could do that would most clearly demonstrate your love for her? Are you willing to do it? Share this with some brothers and commit to pray for and check in with each other.

Daily Reading: Numbers 6:1-7:89, Mark 12:38-13:13, Psalm 49:1-20, Proverbs 10:27-28

These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

When our sons were in elementary school, my wife, Rose and I were junior high directors at our church. We participated in many fun events with the group. One day one of our sons asked, “Do you love the junior high kids at church more than us?” It was like a stab to our hearts. Surprised, we replied “Of course not, why would you ever say that?” He explained, “You always do fun things with them and never do those same things with us!” We were shocked.

What would you do in our situation? We were committed to serving God and felt called to lead that ministry. However our kids felt the ministry got our firstfruits and they got the leftovers. It was quite a dilemma. We prayed, sought godly counsel and came up with a solution that was satisfactory to all. We began taking our sons with us on some of the appropriate events,

and when they couldn't come with us they got equal or greater time at a family event *of their choosing*. We found solutions that everyone felt good about which transformed our parenting. —Dave Wertheim



What areas in your parenting do you feel you can improve on? Do you need to invest more time with your children? What plan or actionable step are you willing to take to accomplish this?

Daily Reading: Numbers 8:1-9:23, Mark 13:14-37, Psalm 50:1-23, Proverbs 10:29-30

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Colossians 3:2

The church might be one of the most challenging places to demonstrate a transformed life! Why is that? Each of us has our own unique giftedness, personality, preferences, and wiring as we come together to worship. Unfortunately, our uniqueness can also create friction. The music is too loud or soft, fast or slow, appealing or unappealing to our tastes. The leadership isn't leading the way “we would lead” if we were in charge. The people—well the people that attend can just rub us the wrong way.

Many of these concerns arise because our focus is on us—our comfort, preferences, or likes. What if we changed our focus and truly set our minds on things above? What if we made it our life goal to

help transform the church we attend into the absolute best place to worship, grow, serve, and minister? What if we prayed for God to receive the glory in all things and became active and supportive of our church? We could become the kind of servant that leaders love to lead. We could become the kind of leader that servants love to follow. —Dave Wertheim

With some brothers, talk about things you set your mind on. Make a list of things from above and earthly things. What would it take to focus more on things above?

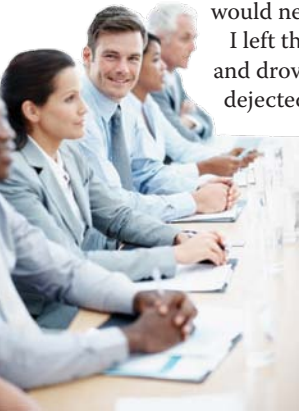
Daily Reading: Numbers 10:1-11:23, Mark 14:1-21, Psalm 51:1-19, Proverbs 10:31-32

You are the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14

When I became a Christian, I was a computer performance expert. I worked in a benchmark testing center calibrating new products for a hardware manufacturer. We were releasing a new product and I was invited into a meeting with the senior leaders. They asked me to review an announcement script for a videoconference broadcast to our worldwide sales teams.

Reading the script I politely explained that I could not broadcast this information. "Why not?" they asked. Reluctantly, I shared, "Because the performance information is NOT TRUE." The most senior manager jumped up and shouted, "Get him out of here. I told you he would never work out."



I left the conference room and drove home—scared, dejected, and unsure of

my future. I had a house payment and a young family. How would I explain this to my wife? I felt the Lord assure me that if I stood firm for Him He would protect me. He

didn't say I'd keep my job, only that He would support me through the process.

When I arrived the next day, my general manager asked to see me. "This is it," I thought as I slowly walked into his office. He explained, "Yesterday you may have gotten the impression that we wanted you to misrepresent the performance of our new product." I replied, "That's exactly what I thought." His response: "We want you to market it and put the best possible spin *without* misrepresenting it. Can you do that?" I replied, "Yes, but I need to have creative license over the performance statements." He agreed!

Jesus was glorified because I stood firm for Him. My company acknowledged that my approach was better and they were protected from slipping down the slope of misrepresentation. You may be the only Jesus some people you work with will ever see. —*Dave Wertheim*

Have you had your integrity or ethics challenged at work? Did you handle it in a God-honoring way? Pray that God would give you strength as you stand for Him in your workplace.

Daily Reading: *Numbers 11:24-16:40, Mark 14:22-15:47, Psalm 52:1-54:7, Proverbs 11:1-6*



For Your Small Group

☐ **For March 5-11: Reread the devotional "A Transformed Life" on page 46. Discuss what this sentence means, "Your history does not need to dictate your destiny."**

- Between marriage, parenting, the church and work, which area is the most challenging to living a transformed life?
- What are the challenges you face in this area?
- What are some adjustments you would like to make, and how can you support each other?

I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman.

Job 31:1

Satan wants to have his way with us, and will use our worldly, sinful desires to tempt us and trip us up. Will you let him? Will you walk naively into his traps and clutches? Sexual temptation is powerful. Satan masterfully uses our own bent and desires against us—if we let him.

Jesus knows what we need in order to stand fast against Satan's wiles. Since God is for us, who can be against us? There are techniques that can help, habits that can be developed, and victory can be yours. Are you up for the challenge? Are you ready to take captive sinful habits that have kept you in bondage for far too long? Here's one habit to get you started: Make a covenant



with God not to allow lust to have a foothold in your life any longer. As Job did, make a “covenant with your eyes.” Honor Christ—and women, His creation—by looking a woman in the face, and nowhere else! Ask Christ to transform your thought life, and do your part by willfully avoiding sin. —Dave Wertheim

What are the greatest challenges to maintaining your sexual purity? What are some habits you could develop to safeguard your heart and mind? What commitments are you willing to make for further victory?

Daily Reading: Numbers 16:41-18:32, Mark 16:1-20, Psalm 55:1-23, Proverbs 11:7

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

Ephesians 4:29

I grew up in the New York City housing projects. I learned and used the language of the “hood” to survive. When I surrendered my life to Christ, over time I became sensitized to profanity around me. We have seen an incredible downward spiral regarding our tolerance of unacceptable language. It's difficult to find a decent movie without profanity. You hear language on TV now that would have been censored just a few years ago. Profanity has become commonplace in business meetings, sporting events, restaurants, and public transportation.

What is a godly man to do? First, commit yourself to using language that glorifies God. Then,

invest your life in people. This can earn you a platform to speak truth into their lives. One friend commented that my talk with him about his use of profanity had a significant impact on him. That discussion started a process that culminated in him accepting Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior! May the Holy Spirit transform your tongue!

—Dave Wertheim

Do you have an issue with profanity? Are there specific situations where you are more vulnerable? How can your tongue be used to bring glory to God?

Daily Reading: Numbers 19:1-20:29, Luke 1:1-25, Psalm 56:1-13, Proverbs 11:8



☐ Wednesday—March 14 • Transforming Your Response to Conflict

If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

Romans 12:18 (NASB)

No challenge will stretch a man more than adversity that comes through conflict. Typically, men retaliate or retreat; it's either fight or flight. We are wired for competition and when anyone challenges us, it's "Game on, baby!" How we handle conflict can often be seen in the way we drive: merging onto the highway, finding a parking spot, or racing to beat someone to a light or lane. We see it in business, fraternal organizations, neighborhoods, friendships, and even families.

How conflict starts isn't important; it's what you *do* about the conflict that matters. Your attitude often determines everything. That's why the apostle Paul states, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace

with all men." You can make the first move towards reaching a resolution or defusing a conflict. Even if the other person makes no effort to reconcile, that still doesn't release you from the responsibility to demonstrate Christlikeness. Try responding in love, no matter what. You will both be blessed in the process! —Dave Wertheim

What is your typical response when you are challenged? Are you a peacemaker or do you tend to magnify conflicts? Is there a specific conflict that you need to work towards resolving? What should your first step be?

Daily Reading: Numbers 21:1-22:20, Luke 1:26-56, Psalm 57:1-11, Proverbs 11:9-11

☐ Thursday—March 15 • Transforming Your Devotional Life

In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.

Mark 1:35 (NASB)

Most men struggle to find daily time alone with God. Why? It takes time, it takes consistency, and it takes discipline. How much time do you invest with God? Don't include going to church or serving God in a ministry, but rather just *being* with Him: praying, reading His Word, meditating on His attributes, praising Him, memorizing Scripture, or listening to His voice. Often we are so caught up in making a living we don't have time to make a life. Many men are so busy working, running their kids around, or playing, that God gets the leftovers.

I'm a big believer in not trying harder, but rather *training better*. Identify what works best for *you*. Find time you're already investing and include devotional time with it. Examples include: reading while exercising, praying while walking/jogging, listening to inspiring music/messages while commuting or exercising, capitalizing on waiting time, worshipping while working in



the house/garden, or meditating on God's creation and majesty when outdoors. The God of the universe is waiting for you, will you meet with Him? —Dave Wertheim

How would you describe your devotional time? What are you doing when you feel closest with God? Are there opportunities to commune with Him that you have been missing?

Daily Reading: Numbers 22:21-23:30, Luke 1:57-80, Psalm 58:1-11, Proverbs 11:12-13



Friday, Saturday, Sunday—March 16, 17, 18 The Gift of a Transformed Life

Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

John 4:35b (NKJV)

My blood pressure (BP) has typically averaged 130/78—decent for a man in his mid-50s. Recently my BP had been rising, averaging 145/87 and peaking at 174/87. I wasn't alarmed due to stress and a hectic schedule—but I monitored it.

Then chest pains started during exercise. Almost daily I rode a bike for 30 minutes and walked for 60. Towards the end of these workouts my chest tightened with shortness of breath. Nothing severe—I gave it a 2 on the pain scale and the discomfort subsided when my workout concluded. I thought I had a chest muscle pull from lifting weights. After all, I was in relatively good shape, not significantly overweight, ate healthily, and worked out 5-7 days a week.

When the symptoms began increasing in intensity and frequency I consulted a doctor. My cardiologist performed an EKG (with normal results) and scheduled a nuclear stress test. After the stress test I was instructed to immediately report to the hospital for an angioplasty and stent insertion. During the procedure they discovered that two heart arteries were 99% blocked and I was one step away from a heart attack! I was a walking time bomb and didn't know it.

Fortunately, the Lord spared my life. But even if He hadn't, I know where I would

have been going—to heaven to spend eternity with Him. But it got me thinking: How many people around me are ticking time bombs, but don't even know it? Have they heard about Christ yet? Could God use me to speak His truth into their lives?

Jesus proclaims that the fields are ready for harvest. We are His workers. Best of all, the harvest is *white for harvest*. In other words, people are just waiting to hear the good news! Don't miss the opportunity to share the Gospel. Life is too short for missed opportunities. —Dave Wertheim



If you were to die today do you know where you would be spending eternity? What about the people you know and care about—are you assured of their salvation? Who do you know that needs to hear the life-saving gospel message?

Daily Reading: Numbers 24:1-28:15, Luke 2:1-3:22, Psalm 59:1-61:8, Proverbs 11:14-17



For Your Small Group

□ For March 12-18: What attributes characterize a believer or a Christian?

- How would the people who spend the most time with you characterize you? Would "Christian" be near the top of the list?
- Each guy, make a list of 3 people in your life who don't know Christ. Share the names, and commit to praying for each other and these people, that God would present opportunities for them to hear and accept the Gospel.