

## **Spiritual Renewal: The Use of Daily Biblical Affirmations for Spiritual Growth** **By Bob Young**

Affirmation—what are we talking about? The use of affirmation is a concept familiar to many Christians. Because the word is applied in various ways, let's begin by defining what we mean. Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* was an early effort focused on the value of **mental affirmations**. Such affirmations often deal with positive thinking, self-worth, self-confidence, and dealing the negative messages of life, and are popular outside of Christianity. Mental affirmations can be valuable, but they are not our focus here. A second meaning of the word is reflected in the use of **relational or social affirmations** with reference to how we support and encourage others. When we make a practice of affirming others when we interact with them, we bless them but that is not the kind of affirmation we are addressing here. Third, some self-help and self-development websites refer to **spiritual affirmations** that encourage spiritual growth and take one nearer to one's 'god.' Such affirmations are not necessarily biblically based and generally assume that one is responsible for one's own spirituality. While we are seeking a stronger spiritual life, our goal is different. The Christian is empowered, grows, and is renewed through the use of **biblical affirmations**. Positive scriptural truths not only encourage us, they also provide orientation in a midst of a disorienting life. Our goal is to learn how to think spiritually with Christian affirmations. Paul urged the Roman Christians to separation from the world and transformed living through renewed thinking (Romans 12:1-2). Thus, reading and understanding the will of God revealed in the Bible becomes our Renewal Handbook.

Many affirmations are found in Scripture—affirmations about (1) God's attributes and nature, (2) God's works and word, (3) the identity of God's people, (4) the value of relationship with God, (5) the rewards of character development, and (6) the beauty of relationship with others. You can easily find other categories of biblical affirmations. I encourage you, as you read the word of God, to identify a daily (or weekly) affirmation, memorize it, and meditate on it as part of your daily walk with God. It is rewarding to develop a series of affirmations to provide a weekly focus for life. This will help you develop the "affirmation habit."

Developing your own affirmations is easier than it may seem, although for many people it involves reading the Bible through fresh eyes: "What does this text say to me? How can I apply it today? How should this change my life?" I like to develop my affirmations for the week (often thematically linked), and have them available on something I use every day—bathroom mirror, calendar, planner, computer, phone, etc. Some like to think of the affirmation several times during the day, others like to use them in prayer and meditation. My preference is to use a different affirmation every day, although some people use the same affirmation every day for a week, using it in prayer and meditating on it thoroughly. Regardless, you will be blessed by developing the "affirmation habit."

Reading (or recalling) a daily Biblical affirmation does not require much time, and using such affirmations will help you develop a habit that will bring spiritual growth and renewal.