



Spirit of Grace Herald

THE MINISTRY OF DENNIS
& BENEDICTA POLLOCK

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Spirit of Grace Ministries
P.O. Box 2068
McKinney, TX 75070
(530) 712-4253
Email: grace@spiritofgrace.org
Website: www.spiritofgrace.org

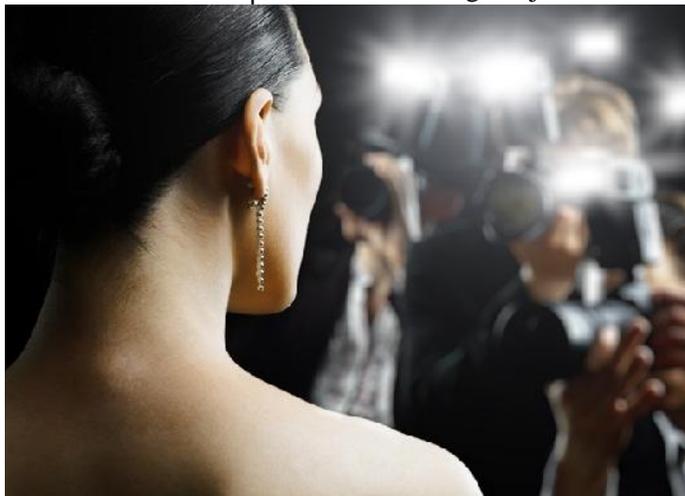
Celebrity-worship or God-worship

Celebrities are a huge influence on people. Because of their fame, looks, and skill we tend to admire them, and where there is admiration, conformity will typically follow. When they give interviews and freely spout their opinions, their likes and their loathings, their priorities and those things or people they find disgusting, viewers, who may have never previously given these things much thought, now find themselves nodding their heads in agreement. And they find themselves unconsciously being drawn into alignment with the current standards and values of what the Bible refers to as "this world." It is a gradual, silent, and often unconscious process, but it is tremendously powerful and to some extent, nearly irresistible if one has not found a stronger influence still, which anchors the soul.

In Psalm 15 we find the Holy Spirit's description of the man or woman who is given the privilege of experiencing the presence of God, or to use the exact words, "abiding in God's tabernacle and dwelling in His holy hill." This entire short psalm is a description of such a person. Some of the characteristics are predictable. This man or woman walks uprightly, speaks the truth, and does no evil to his

neighbor. But one aspect of this psalm would probably come as a bit of a surprise when first read. It says that this godly individual "**despises a vile person.**" He looks at the ungodly and says, "Yuk – how horrible." He does not hate the individual. After all we are commanded to love even our enemies. But still, he looks at the lifestyle of the ungodly and shudders. Regardless of how famous, how popular or how skilled they may be, there is no admiration; there is only disgust over the ungodly life and values he sees in this person.

In America today we so love our celebrities. We tune in eagerly to the constantly growing number of awards programs to watch them preen and gush as they accept and give each other various awards for singing, acting, directing, television work, and other achievements. We watch beautiful women dressed to the hilt in sequined dresses that reveal over half their bosoms. We drink in their rambling, disjointed, and irreverent acceptance speeches



as though hearing great philosophers sharing truths that will liberate us forever. The result of this celebrity-worship and the exaltation of Hollywood culture has been essentially a total makeover of American attitudes and values. Divorce used to be considered a shame but now it is something to joke about. Sex before marriage was once considered immoral but now it is routine and healthy. Homosexuality was once called perversion

but to criticize it today is to incur the wrath of nearly every celebrity, virtually all the media, and much of the nation.

We have changed and are still changing. Millions of young people are growing up and being stamped, cookie-cutter fashion, into an image that is far from God. What is the answer? The inspired apostle gives us the solution to this, when after telling us not to be conformed to this world, goes on to say that we should be transformed "by the renewing of our minds."

God has three major ways by which this is accomplished. **First is His inspired word.** While groups, cultures, and celebrities have the power to influence, the word of God has more. The Scriptures have the power to enable us to think like our Creator, to value what He values, despise what He despises, love what He loves, and live as He desires us to live.

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Another means by which God conforms His people is through the church. Just as gang members tend to think and act like other gang members, and Hollywood starlets tend to think like, talk like and dress like all the other Hollywood types, when new believers begin attending church and mingling with other believers, there is a strong influence and power which begins to work. The baby Christian is suddenly engulfed in a world of new people and new attitudes and values that he may never have experienced in his life. In a sense the church becomes his “gang” and he finds himself conforming to the rules, practices, and standards of those who surround him. **We are also conformed to Jesus Christ is through fellowship directly with Him and with our Heavenly Father.** There is no substitute for time in the presence of God in that amazing practice we call *prayer*. Just as Moses’ face shone after spending time with God, our lives will shine with the glory of God when spending time with Him becomes more than a brief duty to be performed before our meals.

God is the ultimate celebrity. He is the one we should admire, respect, and desire to emulate. And as we make Him our best friend, we find ourselves being drawn toward His way of thinking, talking, and behaving. The disciples spent over three years living with Jesus, which was in effect living with God. By the time their training was accomplished they were not the same. Even the world noticed that “they had been with Jesus.” May it be so in our lives, and may divine conformity be accomplished in all who name the name of Jesus.



ONE NEW AND ONE EXPANDED YOUTUBE CHANNEL!

Until recently we have primarily used YouTube to host our African video reports. During the last year we have grown in both our video equipment and skills. We are ready to launch out into more and a greater variety of videos hosted on YouTube this year.

We now have two YouTube channels—our regular one that hosts the major content produced through Spirit of Grace Ministries and a special diabetes video channel. On this channel we intend to minister to both the saved and the lost through helping people with blood sugar issues find answers. We intend to make this a means of “slipping Jesus” into the conversation about health. In doing this we are following the approach of the apostle Paul who became “all things to all men that he might by all means save some.”

[In our first video of 2017 \(on our regular channel\) Dennis interviews his daughter, Joy Whorton, as she shares how she found Jesus at five years of age.](#)

[To view our regular channel:](#) Type “Dennis and Benedicta Pollock” in the search box at the top of the home page at Youtube.com. [To view the diabetes channel:](#) Type: “Dennis Pollock, Beat Diabetes” in the Youtube search box. Once you get to any of our videos, click on the words “Dennis Pollock” or “Beat Diabetes” which appear to the right of Dennis’ picture just below the video screen. This will take you to our channel page where you can see thumbnails for all our videos. To subscribe, (so that you will be notified of future videos when posted) click on the red box which says “subscribe” under any video.

BECOME A FRIEND IN 2017

As we approach the start of a new year, would you consider becoming a regular friend and supporter of Spirit of Grace Ministries? Our ministry can only be sustained as God moves on the hearts of tender-hearted Christians to stand with us. Please pray about joining hands with us to help us feed Christ’s sheep, equip His servants, and call sinners unto Him. [Friends of Grace are our supporters who contribute a minimum of \\$25 per month.](#) When you give any gift of \$300 or more you are automatically placed on our “Friends” list for one year. Not only will you be blessed by the audio teachings on CD we will send you monthly, but you will be helping us spread the word of the Lord to the nations! If this teaching ministry has been a blessing to you, please pray about regularly supporting SOGM as a Friend of Grace. With your first donation, let us know you wish to become a friend.



Next Mission Planned: Nigeria this March! Please help us prepare for this mission through your prayers and generous donations.