

Elder Bobby Willis



December 2014

...12/31/14

Ecclesiastes 1:9, **“The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.”**

It has often been said that “I made this” or “I made that”. True, we take various ingredients and mold them, or shape them, or put them together, to “make” a new toy, a different cake, a dish, or whatever. However, that which “makes up” the item (which has never been put together in that manner before), are not new. The basic ingredients (atoms and molecules) have been here since God created the earth. All things that were made were made by Him, including the atoms themselves. Man has only been able to take that which has already been, to “make” (put together) things which we have been able to use over the years. God is the **ONLY ONE** that can make something out of nothing and He did that at Creation. We are about to enter a new year; one that will be filled with a certain amount of joys and also of sorrows. We have all the basics we need to make it as joyous as possible. There has been and always will be a certain amount of bad elements to contend with during the year. The bottom line is that God has blessed us so much over the years, that we now have a blessed hope that He will bless us continually in the New Year to come. Philippians 4:13 reminds us of His promise to be with us and help us in all things we lay our hands to do. Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

Will I make any New Year resolutions? **NO!** Why Not? Because I know me and that I come short more than I care to. Let me leave you with Something To Think About. Take that which God has blessed you to use and make something out of it that is to the Praise, Honor, and Glory to God. Then turn to II Timothy 1:12, “...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which

I have committed unto him against that day.” Now... Happy New Year and be sure to... Think About IT!

...12/30/2014

Proverbs 10:19, **“In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.”**

The wise man Solomon spoke often of the contrast between the wise and the foolish. You cannot compare God to Satan as God has no equal, neither can you compare the wise to the foolish in this context. However, you can declare the contrast between the two. For example: God is sinless - Satan is sin. A wise man cares for the things of God - A foolish man cares not. In Proverbs 10:19, Solomon draws a contrast between a foolish man who talks just to hear himself talk, also known as **“profane and vain babblings”** (II Timothy 2:16), and a wise man who chooses his words cautiously (wisely). Solomon refers to this again in Proverbs 16:23 when he said, **“The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.”**

The Apostle Paul teaches a similar lesson to the church at Corinth when he told them, **“Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue”** (I Corinthians 14:19). To speak with understanding is to speak wisely. One cannot speak wisely if they are mad, upset, vengeful, or any number of other conditions which would prohibit them from thinking straight. Have you ever noticed how someone who is really mad can string out a long line of bad words and sentences which make no sense? However, consider Jesus when He, in the midst of a feast, went up into the temple and taught the doctrine which God had sent Him to teach. Jesus taught those nearby with ultimate wisdom. So much so that the officers which came answered the Pharisees concerning Christ, **“Never man spake like this man”** (John 7:46). Paul, remember, spake the same way in I Corinthians 2:4, **“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words”** (vain or in multiplicity) **“of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”** Let us speak as Solomon spoke (by the leadership of the Spirit) and as Christ speaks to us in Matthew 5:37, **“But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”** Now we are truly reminded where Solomon got his words of wisdom. Think About IT!

... 12-29-14

Matthew 26:41, **“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”**

We often find ourselves in a weakened condition due to any number of reasons, as some are physical (work related, stress related, or due to things beyond our control) while others are of a spiritual weakness. The answer is simple though actually obtaining the answer is not - We All Need Rest! Our bodies tend to give out after awhile due to any number of contributing factors.

Spiritually, our bodies give out as well, and like our natural bodies, we need rest to refresh ourselves. In the text found in Matthew 26:41, it is speaking of the spiritual condition we find ourselves in at any given time. The flesh (desire, zeal, want to, etc.) grows weak at times and thus our spiritual welfare suffers. We all need our family and friends to help us bear through these weakened times as we also should help others when we see them facing the same condition. Paul alludes to this in Romans 15:1 as he says, **“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”** We can help our loved ones (natural and church families) by watching out and praying for them. Even then, it is difficult to solve all of the issues or problems they suffer, not counting what we individually face. There is good news coming for all of God’s children when we consider His promises. We are told by Paul, concerning our natural bodies, that **“it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:...”** (I Corinthians 15:43). So, regardless if your body is weak in natural strength, or weak in spiritual vitality, or both; there will come a time when the Lord will cure all of our ills. He (Christ) is coming back for His children to take us to a place where there will be no more weakness of any kind! What a wonderful promise we have. And, what confidence it gives us in knowing what Paul knew and shared with Timothy, **“for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day”** (II Timothy 1:12). “Watch and pray” everyday and see the Lord come in His power as He strengthens the weak and gives rest to our weary souls while we live on this earth, with the promise also of His rest eternally. Think About IT!

... 12-24-14

The story of the birth of Jesus Christ our Saviour, begins in Matthew 1:1 and proceeds through Matthew 2:23. It is a story of the Son of God being born on this earth of a virgin named Mary and that He would **“save His people from their sins”** (Matt. 1:21). No one but God knows the exact date that He was born. It doesn’t really matter for me to know the date, only that He was born, lived a

sinless, perfect life, and accomplished the work which the Father sent Him to do, **“save His people from their sins”**. It is a shame that some who profess to be “christians” do not believe that Jesus did exactly what He was sent here to do, **“save His people from their sins”**. When Christ hung upon the Cross of Calvary and declared **“It is finished” (John 19:30)**, He was declaring that He had saved **“His people from their sins”** exactly as God the Father in Heaven had willed. There are many in past history of which we could not rely on them doing what they said they would do. Jesus was NOT one of them. He did exactly what He was sent to do, **“save His people from their sins.”** Notice the words of Christ in John 6:37-39, **“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”** By now you get the idea. You can believe what Jesus says because if you have seen Him, you have seen the Father. If He has born you again of His Spirit and taken up His abode in your heart, then by an eye of faith you have seen Him who has saved **“His people from their sins.”** May we be as Simon Peter when he answered the Lord whether they too would go away due to what some considered as a hard saying. **“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the word of eternal life” (John 6:68)**. I pray you will draw comfort from these words every day of your life. As for now, may your Christmas season be merry and bright. Think About IT!

... 12-23-14

Proverbs 22:24, **“Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.”**

Society has changed since I was a boy raised up in the country. There was a church key which not only would fit the doors of our home, but probably over half in the community where we lived. There was an old saying that went like this, *“Locked doors are to keep the honest man out.”* I always had a problem with that saying because I was raised to believe that an honest man would not go into your home (for the wrong reason) anyway unless they were invited.

Consider your home as being yourself. When we invite someone to be our friend, or when we spend time with them, it’s inviting them into our lives. If you invite a thief into your home, most of us would agree, you are asking for trouble. The same goes for those with whom we make friendships. Today it is dangerous enough, but to go out of our way to invite trouble is not wise. There is no telling what an angry man will do. But, a furious man is worse. Proverbs 22:24 has Solomon warning us

not to be around the angry, nor go anywhere with those that cannot control themselves and are furious for any reason. The end result will not be good. Solomon said, **“Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.”** A snare binds up whatever it has entrapped. Born again children of God have been **“...made free from sin”** (Romans 6:18, 22) and do not need to go back under any kind of bondage again. The Lord has given us the knowledge we need to rightfully discern between which people we should be around lest we learn their ways (get caught up) and suffer the consequences. Our bodies are **“...the temple of the living God”** (II Corinthians 6:16), therefore the Lord and His children are to be the ones we dwell and walk with. They are the ones we should invite into our house (presence), not the angry and furious of this world who can not or will not control their actions. Why not purchase (without money) the best security system there is (the presence of the Lord), for He has promised to take care of us. Christ Jesus has released us from the snare of **“the law of sin and death”** (Romans 8:2) and is our **KEY** to protect us. Open your house (your self) to the environment of righteousness, not to that which ensnares. Think About IT!

... 12-19-14

Nehemiah 8:10, **“Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto the LORD: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”**

It never fails! When any holiday comes, our strength seems to go. Preparations are to be made, cooking to be done, extra house fixings, and all that goes with having your loved ones join you for the Holidays. School is about to be out for a couple of weeks, traffic is picking up at a rapid pace, and there are extra cars, big trucks, and people driving them that are being manufactured somewhere in triple overtime. These are the days when we all need extra strength. Back in the day of Nehemiah, He told the people to **“Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet.”** They were to have a feast, much like many will have during the Christmas Holidays. He reminded them however, to not forget those who had nothing. Why? **“For this day is holy unto the LORD.”** The people had been listening to the words of the law being read unto them and it had caused them to mourn and to weep (Nehemiah 8:9). The reading of the law and its requirements had brought strong emotions on them which they seemingly were not able to bear. Nehemiah admonished them to not be sorry of what they had heard, but dwell on

the fact that the Lord was their strength and would be with them in the days to come. We need this assurance today, in our lives. We need to be reminded that no matter how hectic our lives become at any time of the year, the Lord is the one to turn to for strength and where we will find joy. Keep that in mind as you fight the traffic and while you entertain family. The Lord is our strength, and with His help, we can enjoy our families and the holidays without undo stress. Bring it on, we are so looking forward to being with those we love during the next several weeks. And, that goes for our church family as well. May the joy of the Lord be with you and strengthen you is our prayer. Think About It!

... 12-18-14

Ecclesiastes 9:18, **“Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.”**

Hopefully, no one reading this will argue with the first part of this statement. As the wise man Solomon sought wisdom, so should we. However, we need to do a better job with what wisdom we possess. **“One sinner destroyeth much good”** is a profound statement we all can readily understand and have seen it’s effects many times. Statements like *“one rotten apple will spoil the hold barrel”* come to mind as it doesn’t take very much evilness, unkind words, sharp tongues, or knives in the back, to destroy friendships, families, and even churches. Freedom of speech does not give anyone the right to speak their mind at the expense of others. Stop before you speak and consider the consequences by using a little wisdom in your words and actions. David spoke of this in Psalm 52:2, **“The tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.”** The individual who just speaks without considering the consequences is foolish in their actions. How do we combat this from happening to us? How do we make sure we use wisdom before hurting others with our words and actions? Consider James 1:5 for the answer, **“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him.”** Don’t be one that **“destroyeth much good”**, but rather be one that asks God for wisdom and then uses it liberally. Think About It!

... 12-17-14

Proverbs 28:13, **“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”**

As a child, many of us may have sought out others to blame for our wrong doings in order to hide (cover up) our mischievous acts (sins). Solomon said that it would not benefit us to hide our evil doings or those things we may classify as just mistakes. Such things are embarrassing to children of God who have to battle the two natures which are within us, that of the natural (fleshly) nature and that of the spiritual nature. The opposite of “covereth” is “uncovereth”, or to not hide and be open about our mistakes and sins. Then, once we have changed our thinking, we need to confess our faults (sins) to God. But, the Lord did not stop there. Solomon’s teaching goes further as led by the Spirit of God to speak of our need to forsake our past ways and the Lord **“shall have mercy”** on us. Paul admonishes the brethren by saying **“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord”** (Acts 3:19). Conversion is not being born again. Conversion is a changing **“forsaking”** of our ways. Therefore, we need to repent (confess and forsake) as oft as need be and a **“refreshing”** time will come with us being able to once again feel **“the presence of the Lord”** strongly in our lives. This is indeed what we all need to seek diligently for; and that is the pleasing of the Lord. Why not go to the Lord today and confess your sins, knowing that **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”** (I John 1:9). Think About It!

... 12-16-14

Proverbs 26:4, **“Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.”**

Proverbs 26:5, **“Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.”**

The wise man Solomon spoke of not answering and then of answering the folly of a foolish man (or woman). These two verses are neat (really good) in what they teach of how we are to deal with the foolish. At first glance, Solomon would appear to be contradicting himself - **“Answer not”** then **“Answer”**. However, that is not the case. The underlying meaning is of how we are to respond. We can fall into the same ditch with him if we answer him according to the same manner of which he has foolishly spoken, or we can answer him with godly wisdom and it will be a snare unto him. Peter alludes to how our conversation should be in I Peter 1:15, **“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;...”** And as Paul said, **“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.”** The words coming forth from our mouth should always be tempered with kindness,

thoughtfulness, truthfulness, and godliness. Not only should this be true when we are around the Saints of God, but also when we are around the foolish. It is so easy to be *'caught up'* with like speech when we are surrounded by those who do not think and act godly on a regular basis. It is at these times when we need to lean on the Lord for His help. In II Peter 3:3, Peter speaks of the coming **“in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.”** More than likely these **“scoffers”** will have vain questions and foolish words because they themselves are fools. Peter goes on to say further down in verse 11 how **“ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.”** Be not foolish yourself, keep your conversation godly and thus answer a fool in a manner that it will dissolve the situation, and at most, that you not displease the Lord. Think About It!

... 12-15-14

Romans 12:19, “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”

Paul breaks from his usual beginnings of admonition found in chapter 12 of Romans by saying “Dearly beloved” before he mentions anything else. Now that he has their attention, Paul lays forth an important “proverb like” sentence on not taking revenge on others for wrongs they have done unto you. The first point is to “avenge not yourselves”. It is our fleshly nature to want and seek revenge on those who “despitefully use” us. In Matthew 5:44, the Lord instructs us to “pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;...” Luke adds the words “Bless them that curse you” in Luke 6:28. We all know how hard this is for any of us to do, so, Paul began this admonition by reminding them that he loved them “Dearly”.

Notice now the next part of this statement which says “rather give place unto wrath:...” Don’t think for a moment that this means the Lord would be pleased for you to discharge wrath upon the wrongdoers when Paul had just said we were not to avenge ourselves. The answer is found in the ending of this sentence - “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” The Apostle is telling us that by not avenging ourselves, that it gives place for the wrath of God to come upon the wrongdoers as He (God) executes judgment (vengeance) upon them. Speaking of the Lord, Moses said, “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deuteronomy 32:4). You see, we would only mess it up! God knows what, where and when it is best to issue His wrath upon the wicked. It is far better that ye “avenge not yourselves”. Think About It!

... 12-12-14

The following is a quote from our friend, Elder Jeff Moseley, who lives near Bay Town, TX. on his FB page.

“Good health is something that when you are young, you don't think about. Now, as we get older, it seems like its all we think about. But likewise, with your spiritual life, the older you get the more precious it gets. Enjoy today as much as you can. The key is "LOVE".

Love ya, Elder Jeff Moseley

Pastor: Spring Grove PBC, Tomball, TX.”

The words of Brother Jeff are so true. We don't normally think about our natural health or spiritual health, or lack thereof, until we get older. Surely there are a number of exceptions of which I am thankful. It is so encouraging to see the young, teenagers and the like, having a zeal of God and exercising it in their efforts to come to church, help lead singing, showing kindness and respectfulness to their elders, and their godly countenance. Encourage the young of your church and family. Remind them that their blessings come from Jesus Christ our Lord. One time, there were some who **“brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them”** (Mark 10:13). There is nothing better in this vain world than to be lovingly touched by the very hand of God himself; the same hand which had blessed and healed the lame and the blind and even had raised the dead. And yet, **“His disciples rebuked those that brought them.”** Jesus himself was **“much displeased”** by their actions and told them, **“Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God”** (Mark 10:14). We are all as **“little children”** in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and have need of His loving touch and healing hand. Many of us may have failed to teach our children about the importance of good natural health and also of good Spiritual Health when they were young. Life (both natural and spiritual) is indeed precious. Hold on to it and embrace it, knowing there are better days coming for all of God's children. Think About It!

... 12-9-14

Romans 12:17, *“Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.”*

It is so very easy to want to retaliate against those who would or do bad things to us. Grudges can become common place in our character if we allow the evil spirit of revenge to cling to our daily attitude. Paul says, “Recompense to no man evil for evil.” This is so very hard to do according to our fleshly nature. It

creeps into our society, our families, and even our churches if we are not careful. Only by the strengthening of our spiritual nature by constant contact with the encouraging words of our Lord, are we able to, as found in Romans 8:13, “mortify the deeds of the body (flesh).” When a child of God is born of the Spirit of God, they then have two natures; one they already have of the flesh, and then their new nature of God’s Spirit which takes up its abode within us at the new birth. These two natures constantly battle against each other. Paul even said it was a law, “When I would do good, evil is present with me” (Romans 7:21). So, what we find is one of our natures wants to “Recompense” (retaliate) with evil given for evil received, which is reverse from what we call the Golden Rule (Luke 6:31 - “And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise”). We all need to work on this retaliation attitude. Recent news broadcast bears out an ever increasing number of people who have this evil attitude about them. God’s people should never allow their fleshly nature to over-rule their spiritual nature. Paul finishes Romans 12:17 by telling them to “Provide things honest in the sight of all men.” Lying is another bad aspect of our fleshly nature which should never be allowed to raise its ugly head. To “Provide things honest” is to not only tell the truth at all times, but to suppress anything which is against the truth. This is not only in our daily lives, but we are to live the truth of God’s word. Just believing it is not enough! We are to “be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22) of the truths of the gospel. Some people seem to want to live by one standard (do what brings only immediate pleasure) and yet die by another standard (by the grace and mercy of God). Be willing to stand up for the truth of God’s word and also be able to defend it, not by recompensing evil for evil, but by sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and Him crucified and a resurrected Saviour. This is providing “things honest.” Think About It!

... 12-8-14

Romans 12:16, “**Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.**”

“Be of the same mind” is about as plain a language that can be stated. To the Philippian brethren, Paul in 2:2 said, “**Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.**” There are other references which could be quoted, but the question is “*What mind are we to be likeminded about?*” Simply put, we are to have the mind of Christ. Next question is “*how do we have this mind of Christ.*” I Corinthians 2:16 tells us, “**For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? but we have the**

mind of Christ.” Paul is telling these brethren that he and the other disciples of Christ possessed this **“mind of Christ”** because of their faith in His truths. They had the **“mind of Christ”** because the Lord had born them again of His Spirit. The “New Birth” instills within us the ability to know and learn more about our Lord. Once we have this “new nature” given by God’s Spirit, then we are to **“put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof”** (Romans 13:14). God’s people are to be **“like minded”** toward one another concerning the truths of God’s word, giving Him all the praise, honor and glory which He alone is due.

Paul then says, **“Mind not high things”**. There are those going about who profess to have all the answers. Their “vain babblings”, accord to II Timothy 2:26, will only **“increase unto more ungodliness.”** To **“condescend to men of low estate”** means to be as the publican who, **“standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner”** (Luke 18:13). Then, we read why we are to **“mind not high things”**. Luke 18:14 says, **“...for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”**

So, let us strive to not be wise in our own conceits, but rather **“put on the Lord Jesus Christ”** and be of one accord with those who are **“likeminded”**. Think About It!

... 12-5-14

Romans 12:15, **“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.”**

What comes to your mind when you see the word **“rejoice”**? As a christian, your mind should be centered on rejoicing in the blessings and promises of God. However, this is not true for everyone in the world around us. Many think of *“going out on the town for a high old time”* when they see the word **“rejoice”**. The biblical usage for disciples of Christ is far removed from the sinful, fleshly usage of those whose minds are centered on satisfying the sins of the flesh.

When Paul used it in Romans 12:15, he was referring to God fearing followers of Christ rejoicing when others (specially the establishment of new churches) heard the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ and became believers. It was a time to rejoice when those who had embraced the teachings of the old law were converted to the truth concerning Jesus being the Son of God and being the Messiah (saviour). In addition, there was much rejoicing when those who had been regarded as **“unclean”** were found to be **“clean”** when Jesus announced their inclusion in the preaching and receiving of the gospel. They now had much to rejoice about.

To **“weep with them that weep”** is a profound statement concerning compassion, caring, and kindness on the part of a child of God who professes to be a follower of Christ. Jesus proclaimed **“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted”** in Matthew 5:4. To weep with those who are weeping doesn't mean just to stand near by and join them in crying. It is far more reaching than that. It embraces the thought of sharing with them comforting words of God's mercy and grace so they may receive strength and encouragement. Then the weeping becomes more than just crying, it is a heart felt compassion which is a godly attribute we all are to possess. The Lord said **“for they shall be comforted”**. What better news can you share as you **“weep with them that weep”**. May God bless us to learn “deeper meanings” found in God's word. **“And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people”** (Romans 15:10). Think About It!

... 12-4-14

Romans 12:14, **“Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not.”**

Many of the verses in chapter 12 of the book of Romans deal with instructions from the Apostle Paul on how they were to live their lives and how to treat others, even those who were not saints. One of the hardest things for any of us to do is to pray for our enemies. Notice what the Lord said in Luke 6:28, **“Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.”** Oh, Goodness! We must all admit how difficult this is if we are in the flesh. Only by the aid of God's spiritual presence can we pray for those who speak or do harmful actions against us. The rendering in Matthew 5:44 goes even further, **“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;...”** Here we find instruction to not only **“do good to them”** but to also **“Love”** them. Rightly dividing the Word of God, this **“Love”** is not to be thought of as the same way we love our companion, our children, or our love for God. But rather this **“Love”** means to not seek their harm, not wish bad things upon them, or attempt revenge or retaliation of any kind. It is always better to leave such things to God (not easy for us to do though). He can and will fight your battles for you. Just a few verses further down in Romans 12 Paul states, **“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.”**

Notice again the usage of “bless” two times in Romans 12:14. Why? Would not the first “Bless them” have been enough? The inspired Word of God never words any thing without a reason. To “bless” someone is to do the same as is spoken of in Matthew 5:44 and Luke 6:28, which also includes giving food and drink to them as

shown in Romans 12:20. Look how Paul finishes chapter 12 in verse 21, “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” Maybe it would be good for us to do as one song says, *“Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.”* **Think About It!**

... 12-2-14

Romans 12:12, “Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;...”

The Apostle Paul, in his instruction and admonition to the Roman brethren, continues in verse 12 with three vitally important statements which every child of God needs to take to heart. First, he reminds them to rejoice; and not only rejoice, but do so in hope. He told them in Romans 5:5 that, **“hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”** When we stop and realize that our hope is based on nothing less than Jesus Christ and His righteousness, then we have much to rejoice about. It is His imputed righteousness which makes us worthy of abiding one day in Paradise with our Lord and Saviour. Knowing what Christ has done for us in saving us from our sins by the shedding of His blood upon the cross of Calvary is the reason that our Hope is so strong.

Once we realize the deliverance of God’s children, and have that assurance in our hearts that He died for us, then we can face any trial, tribulation, heartache, pain, or suffering which comes our way. Paul told the Romans in chapter 5, verse 3, that **“...we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience;...”** We have a blessed promise that Christ will be with us in every tribulation, even to the point we are made able **“to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God”** (II Corinthians 1:4). We all know it hurts to lose a loved one. However, with a strong Hope in Jesus Christ our redeemer, we can rejoice knowing our loved one is singing praises in the portals of Heaven.

Though our hope is made strong by an active faith in the mercy and grace of a loving Lord which causes us to rejoice and to be able to withstand in the evil day, we still need the strength, peace and comfort that can only come through pouring out our souls to the Lord in regular, sincere prayer. Paul knew this and admonishes the Roman church to **“pray”**. He told them in Romans 1:9 that **“without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers:”** He cared enough about them to pray for them. That is the highest gift anyone of us is able to give, the gift of our prayers. Then, in Romans 15:30, Paul expressed his need for their prayers - **“Now**

I beseech you, brethren for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;..."

To tell them that he desires their prayers is the ultimate compliment and the giving of respect.

Here in Romans 12:12, Paul was again instructing them to stay firm in their faith which would give them solid ground for their hope, causing them to rejoice, and then realize the necessity to pray for themselves and also for him and the cause of Christ. The Psalmist David, in a like time of being cast down due to tribulations said, *"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."* (Psalm 42:11). Remember, because we have a hope which is based on a Saviour who was able to finish the work which God sent Him to do, we can pray fervently with the knowledge that He hears our petitions which causes us to rejoice greatly. Think About It!

November 2014

... 11-3-14

Romans 14:16, **"Let not your good be evil spoken of:..."**

Context (God's intended meaning) of any scripture is highly important. In this verse it is no different. We find the Apostle Paul speaking the following in I Corinthians 10:30, **"For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that which I give thanks?"** Paul is referring to the blessings of the gospel of which he was made a partaker of and yet found himself being evil spoken of because he adhered to its teachings. He goes further and proclaims the gospel worthy of our being thankful for it. If someone speaks evil of your service to God, are you willing to endure it for Jesus' sake? Are you ready to spend and be spent for the cause of Christ? Or, are you willing to deny Him in order to avoid public ridicule? In the evil days we are living in, some are facing these hard questions concerning morality, faithfulness, discipline, and other issues which question our willingness to stand for the truths of God. In addition, consider how we react when someone questions our beliefs. If our reactions are not with longsuffering and gentleness, then our good can easily be evil spoken of and bring reproach to the cause of Christ.

In Romans 14, Paul is calling to mind the issue of eating those meats which many still believed to be unclean. We know that the Lord had already taught Peter in Acts 10:15 that **"what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common"**

(spiritually meaning the Gentiles). The religious leaders of the Jewish nation still held to certain meats as being unclean and by eating those meats they could be accused of being unclean. Reminds me of Paul saying, **“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend”** (I Corinthians 8:13). May God grant us the wisdom to know how to **“do good unto all men”** (Galatians 6:10) so there is no question or mistaking that our purposes are good and are indeed, godly. **Think about it!**

... 11-4-14

Romans 13:10, **“Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”**

No one who is a follower of Christ would deny that **“God is love”** (I John 4:8)! If we are to be true followers of Jesus Christ, we then must exercise that love which has been put in our hearts by our Saviour. When the Spirit takes up its abode in the heart of a born again Child of God, godly love comes with it. We then have the ability to love as God instructs us to do. I John 4:7 illustrates clearly this principle, **“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.”** How then, can some admonish others to just “love God” and “be born again” when we cannot love God until we are born again of His Spirit. Notice the wording, **“every one that loveth is born of God...”** The word **“is”** means exactly what it says (already born before loving). If you love God, that is evidence that you have already been born of the Spirit. Now, put that love into action by not doing any ill toward your neighbour. Since we are now under the Law of Grace, we then can see how the law is fulfilled by the works of Jesus Christ which we could not do for ourselves **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God”** (Ephesians 2:8). What is it we are to do with the love which God has instilled within us? Are we to just let it sit idle and not be used? But rather, are we to put it into action by doing righteously (doing good) unto those around us (our neighbours)? John said in 13:34, **“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”** If you truly love someone for the cause of Christ, you will seek to do them NO HARM! **Think about it!**

... 11-5-14

Romans 13:11, **“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”**

The word “sleep” can mean several things as used in scripture. It can mean: 1- taking a good rest when the body is tired and needs renewing (Mark 14:37-41), 2- a state of death as when Jesus referred to Lazarus as being asleep (to Christ it was as if he was just asleep in John 11:11 and vs.14, also read Luke 8:51-53), or 3- the condition of a child of God when they are not being profitable in the cause of Christ. It is this last meaning of which Paul refers to in Romans 13:11. He was admonishing the Christians at Rome to wake up from their condition of idleness and be up and about the business of righteous living and standing up for the truth. The time was that of the gospel age, when the gospel of Jesus Christ was to be proclaimed and its truths taught and defended. We are still living in that time today and it is high time, maybe even past time in some cases, for Christians to arise and speak the words of peace, comfort, righteousness, and godly living and their importance to God’s people. Paul referred again to this type of sleep in I Thessalonians 5:6 when he admonished the church at Thessalonica by saying, **“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”** Certainly Paul is not telling them to leave off natural sleep, but rather to be diligent in following Christ as in Hebrews 11:6, **“...for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”** Let us do as Isaiah commanded the Israelites when he told them to, **“Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem:...”** Don’t be one that has fallen asleep in your responsibility in serving God, even to the point that dust has collected upon you. At the end of verse 11, Paul reminds them that **“our salvation is nearer than when we believed.”** As we get older, this becomes more of a reality than ever before. The very thought that we are nearer now to our Eternal Salvation and being at rest in Paradise brings us much peace and comfort. Certainly, we should **Think about it!**

... 11-6-14

Romans 13:12, **“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”**

In this 12th. verse, the Apostle Paul continues his admonition to the church at Rome. He has told them in verse 11 to wake up and realize that it is high time to serve the Lord for all the wonderful things concerning Salvation which he has done for us. Now, he tells them that **“the night is far spent, the day is at hand:...”** Night refers to darkness, or sinfulness, or anything time in our lives in which we

were not enjoying a close relationship with the Lord. The time under the law and all of its trappings is over and the day of Salvation **“is at hand”** (close by or near). The works of darkness under consideration embraces both the thought of one’s own works would win them a home in heaven and any unrighteousness we embrace which causes us to walk contrary to the will of God. Both of these concepts will lead one to darkness, away from the felt presence of God. To **“cast off the works of darkness”** takes some serious help, that of putting on the **“armour of light.”** Paul told the Ephesian church to **“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”** Then, in Ephesians 6:13, he adds **“that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”** Think about it!

... 11-10-14

Romans 13:13, **“Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.”**

To walk honestly means to be able to walk with full disclosure; laying open our inner selves to the point that we declare our depravity while we acknowledge that our righteousness is imputed by Christ. We are to do this before others **“as in the day”**, meaning in the presence of godly people and while we walk godly before all men (and women). To walk in the night refers to walking in ungodly ways and among those who are walking contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ. For example: if we are found in places where sin abounds, then they would be termed as “places of darkness” (void of the felt presence of God). Paul alludes to this in I Thessalonians 5:5 when he said, **“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”** Notice the next part of Romans 13:13, **“not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness...”** He explains this so well that it becomes plain as day and night what he means. We are to stay away from ungodly places and from being around ungodly people and their acts of rioting, drunkenness, chambering, and wantonness. If you don’t know what these four things mean, then its homework time with your dictionary. Paul then concludes this 13th verse by saying we are not to walk **“in strife and envying.”** We should be seeking to walk together in peace and harmony, not in strife and turmoil. It is good to seek common ground, but not at the expense of the truth. Then, we see the word **“envying”**. Envy causes everyone trouble at sometime in their life. Envy is one of the chief devices of satan to cause the children of God trouble in this world. We see others with a

bigger house, a nicer car, a larger bank account, and find ourselves envying what they have. Not a good thing! Let us then walk as **“children of the day”** in godliness before the Lord and all men. Think about it!

... 11-11-14

Romans 13:14, **“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”**

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person...” (Hebrews 1:3). Paul declares the oneness of Christ and God the Father by using the expression **“express image of his person.”** By nature, we have the image of our parents to a certain degree. It is amazing how some children are almost carbon copies while others bear very little resemblance or none at all. Even children of the same parents are very different in appearance, personalities, and the general way they act. While everyone that Jesus died for will live with Him in Paradise and are His children by adoption, it was **“the will of him that sent me...”** (Christ), **“...that ever one which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day”** (John 6:40). Therefore, we should put on the Lord Jesus Christ so that our actions, our personalities, and even our appearance can be likened unto Christ. In chapter six of the Ephesian letter, the Apostle Paul speaks of putting on the whole armour of God. If we would do so, and keep it on, it would help tremendously in how we reflect the image of our heavenly Father. Notice the second part of this 14th verse, as it is so expressive in revealing the true nature of our problem when we don't take on the appearance of Christ outwardly. It says, **“...make not provision for the flesh...”** If you have on the proper clothing (armour), it will cover up or hide the natural flesh, both literally and figuratively. Our bodies of flesh bear the fleshly nature of sin, and by nature wants and desires **“to fulfil the lust”** housed in it. This is our own personal warfare which we must fight if we are to overcome the flesh and reflect the image of our Lord like we should. David knew the natural armour of King Saul would not be what he needed, but rather chose to cover himself with the godly armour (already proven by David slaying a lion and a bear) which only the Lord can provide (see I Samuel ch. 17). Likewise, we are to have our **“... loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith...”** Then we are to **“...take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”** (Ephesians 6:13-17). When we are born again of the Spirit of God, we bear the

image of Christ inwardly. Isn't it high time we did a better job of bearing His image outwardly by **“letting our light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”**? (Matthew 5:16). Think about it!

... 11-12-14

Romans 12:1, **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”**

We do not use some of the same language today that was used in the “Kings English” as it was translated from the original text. The word “beseech” is not in my daily vocabulary. It relates to all those who read it, a sense of urgency in which Paul desires for the Roman brethren to pay close attention. If he wanted this sense of urgency, then why and what was it that he wanted such an immediate response in their actions? Beginning with chapter 12 of Romans, Paul expresses what has been termed as “practical godliness”, or, walking uprightly, honestly, and righteously before God in keeping His commandments. These “righteous works” were not to get them to heaven, but were to be done because of the righteous works which Jesus did for us which we could not do for ourselves. This is indicated by the next statement in this verse, **“by the mercies of God”**. If we are to be doers of the word and not just hearers (James 1:22), then we need to know what to do. Paul says, in answering the “What”, is to **“present your bodies a living sacrifice.”** This declaration is in direct opposition to what the Jewish law had been teaching concerning the sacrifices being offered in the temple worship. Now, Christ has come and has been offered as the ultimate sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary to God in our stead, therefore, in answering “Why”, the New Testament followers of Christ are to learn that presenting our bodies as the sacrifice in service to God (works) are not for obtaining heaven, but are to be done to give praise, honor, and glory to His great name. Paul is writing this letter to the **“brethren”** at Rome that had already been born of the Spirit of God, had heard the gospel preached, and needed strong admonition to stand against the unbelievers among them. What peace and comfort it must have been to these “Roman Brethren” to hear this news from Paul that their efforts in serving the Lord would be seen as **“holy, acceptable unto God”** if done in the proper way and for the right reason. How I wish that more brethren and sisters today could see that the importance is not to be acceptable to man, but acceptable unto God (pleasing). When I was able to please my mother in something I did, it made me at rest with my soul. Even more so is the

peacefulness my soul feels in knowing our heavenly Father is pleased with our meager service to His great name. Jeremiah (10:6), concerning His name, **“O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might.”** When we are blessed to feel His presence among us, we can know that He is pleased and merciful to us sinners. All that we do in the service of God is but our **“reasonable service”**. We are not to be exalted, nor receive any accolades. All the praise, honor, and glory is to go to God as David said, **“I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies”** (Psalm 18:3). I beseech you brothers and sisters to Think about it!

... 11-14-14

Romans 12:2, **“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”**

Paul is giving some good admonition to the Roman brethren in chapter 12. When something is “conformed” it is likened unto an image of something the maker is trying to have it look like. When we are conformed to an image, it means we take on its appearance, its actions, its likes and dislikes and etc. If there is anything a child of God does NOT need to be conformed to (look like) it is this evil, sin cursed world we live in. We are not talking about the beauty of nature here, but rather our personalities, our actions, and our mindset taking on the sinfulness of this world. Paul said not to! He goes from the negative (be not conformed) to the positive (but be ye transformed) by our minds being renewed with the righteousness of Christ. Plainly stated, our minds are to be Christ centered, not worldly centered. How do we renew our mind? By the reading and study of God’s written word, by listening intently to the preached gospel, by praying often to our Lord, and by meditating on godly things daily. By doing these four things we then can prove (come to know of a truth) “what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”. Isn’t that what we are to be doing because of all that He has done for us? We are forever in debt to our Saviour of which we will never be able to repay. The Lord shed His blood for His children without putting a charge on it that He knew we could not repay, but we sure should try. Our sin debt was so high that all the ticker tape in the world would not be able to list the charges of sin. We should be so thankful that it was within the perfect will of God to send His Son to do that which we could not do for ourselves. Thank you Lord! Think about it!

... 11-17-14

Romans 12:3, **“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”**

The Apostle Paul began verse three of Romans 12 by declaring his authority to speak that which he is about to say; **“through the grace given unto me”**. Way too often I have heard folks who thought way to highly of themselves, get on their soapbox and try to tell everyone their opinion of how things ought to be. We used to call such ones *“know it alls”* back in the dark ages of the fifties and sixties. There are, I am sad to say, a few people like that even today.

No man or woman should allow pride to creep into their being and cause them to **“think of himself more highly than he ought to think.”** When a man or woman thinks this way, they are always ready to express their opinion on a variety of subjects. If you have a question, just ask them as they have the answer, from politics to religion. I remember such a man one time who attempted to tell me what Primitive Baptist believe concerning Predestination. His concept wasn't even close to what the bible teaches and yet he considered himself an authority on the subject. Paul told the Corinthian brethren in I Corinthians 4:6 for them to **“...learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.”** It is not a godly trait for someone to be **“puffed up”** thinking they know more than others. Paul goes on to say in I Corinthians 8:2, **“And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.”** In the latter part of Romans 12:3, we find some very good admonition our proper and godly attitude of ourselves. We are to **“think soberly”** which means to think clearly, calling upon the Spirit of God to aid us. Our Lord said it all when He said, **“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls”** (Matthew 11:29). So, let us by the grace of God, understand our dependence on our Saviour in all things we set our hands to do. *Think about it!*

... 11-18-14

Romans 12:4-5, **“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”**

Our natural bodies have many parts; the head, arms, legs, liver, eyes, and so forth. Couldn't name them all anyway as I wasn't that good at Biology. It doesn't take a degree from any University to know that each body part has its own usage and purpose as determined by our creator, God. Paul is not speaking of the natural body, though he uses it to form an analogy. He is alluding to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and its makeup. A number of people make up a local church assembly of believers but they don't all have the same calling (the same purpose or office to fill in the church). It saddens me when some older members begin to feel their usage to the church is no longer needed. Right the contrary! Their collective wisdom is very important to the younger ones coming on. We must all remember that each member has an office to fill. It may be as a minister, as a deacon, offering public prayer, leading the singing, or sitting on the pew and praying for a blessed service.

Our non-members are also important to the church body as their rejoicing in the truth and the prayers offered up help so much in a feeling of warmth and joy within the church. Whatever our situation, we all should be like minded in praying for the blessing of God's Spirit to be among us as we worship the one true and living God. How **"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"** (Amos 3:3). This was surely the case on the day of Pentecost. In Acts 2:1 we find **"...when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."** Many of the saints of God were gathered in one place and were all like-minded in bringing glory to the Lord. They **"continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart"** (Acts 2:46). We should never compromise the true principles of scripture just to "get along". Rather, as in Romans 12, where Paul was teaching them to come together as many members, they were to be one body of believers. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit brought them all together as one for the purpose of giving glory to God. In Acts 4:21 to vs. 24 we find Peter and John being threatened for speaking the things which God had given them of the gospel. A devoted body of believers were waiting for them when they heard that they had been released and **"...they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:..."**

There are many people in the world today that do not believe in Christ, or God, or the Holy Spirit. Some claim some sort of deity but not of Christian belief. Let us as believers of our Saviour Jesus Christ, all find common ground among us to stand against the attacks being made on Christianity and that which is just and right. Let us adhere to the teaching of Paul and walk together in true understanding of this

verse, **“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another”** (Romans 12:5). *Think about it!*

Romans 12:6, **“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us...”**

God is so good to us human kind. Not only does He love His children to the extent that He sent His Son to die for us and thus save us from our sins, but He also gives us gifts which, on our own merit, we do not deserve. Here in the 12th chapter of Romans, we find a number of different gifts which God so graciously gives to His children. We do not have or will be given the same gifts as it is according to His grace that they are given at all. There are gifts of prophecy, the ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, as rulers, in showing mercy, and in brotherly love.

1 - While there are no more prophets as there were in old testament times. In the times of the apostles, they were to prophesy in bringing together the prophesy of the Old Testament with its fulfillment by Christ. The only prophecy we can do is to tell the truths of God’s promises. One such promise is that He (Jesus) is coming back for us at the time of the Resurrection (hooray). These truths are alluded to in Acts 1 when two men in white apparel said, **“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”** You see, true prophecy (biblical truths) come to pass while false prophecy only gives false hope.

2 - Those men who have been called as Aaron was called, have a high calling of God to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to comfort God’s people. Jesus told Peter to feed his lambs, to feed his sheep, and to feed his sheep. Good gospel food will satisfy the soul of a hungry child of God. The Lord told Jeremiah in 3:15, **“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”** The gift to pastor was given unto those God ordained and these men are then given to God’s children as a gift to lead and instruct in the ways of righteousness.

3 - Every preacher should be able to teach and should teach by means of the gospel and by their walk. What is it they are to teach? - The good news of Jesus Christ and Him crucified - a resurrected Saviour. Aged men and aged women are to teach the younger ones by their experience and wisdom. In Titus 2:2-5 we find the aged men were to teach by being **“sober, grave temperate, sound in faith, in charity, and in patience”** (vs 2). Then the aged women were to teach likewise, **“that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;”** (vs. 3-4) which included being sober, loving their

husbands, loving their children, being “...discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands...” (vs 5).

4 - Some may have the gift of exhortation (admonishing and encouraging) the children of God. Godly exhorting can be done one-on-one, or can be done in a church setting. Aquila and Priscilla exhorted Apollos. “...**They took him unto them, and expounded**” (taught) “**unto him the way of God more perfectly**” (Acts 18:26).

5 - As God has blessed you, then you are to freely give - give of your time, your energy, your heart felt prayers and your substance as the Lord has blessed you. The widow, remember, gave her mite. Paul spoke of the churches of Macedonia, “**How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality**” (II Corinthians 8:2). They gave (supported) the work of the apostles even when they themselves were in deep poverty.

6 - If we have been given a gift to rule or lead others, we should exercise it with all humility and God honoring discretion, ever looking to the Lord to grant us wisdom to rule according to the Lord’s will (what is pleasing to Him). “**The God of Israel said, the rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God**” (II Samuel 23:3). The gift of being a ruler is not to be taken lightly, but “**in the fear of God**”.

7 - The last two mentioned are mercy and brotherly love. These too, are gifts of God which we must learn to use wisely. Without brotherly love it is impossible for one to show mercy unto others. If we cannot have mercy and forgive others, then why would we think that God would show mercy unto us. He shows us mercy because of the love He has for His children, but NOT because He is under any obligation to do so. As our elder brother, He loves us with an everlasting love. Paul said, “**And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you**” (Ephesians 4:32). We are to remember that the greatest of the commands was charity (I Corinthians 13:13). The Lord has given these gifts and others unto His children. We surely should endeavor with every fibre of our being to exercise (use) whatever gift or gifts He has given unto us. Our prayer unto the Lord is that He will show mercy in helping us to use our God-given gifts (talents) to His praise, honor, and glory. “**Think About It**”

April 2014

...04/30/14

2 Timothy 3:13, **“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”**

Paul was expressing to Timothy the persecutions he had been able to endure was only because the LORD had delivered him from them. We need God’s help to endure and overcome evil men and seducers who are pushing immoral values and scriptural untruths. It would do us all good to make sure we adhere, not to some mans teachings, but to the Word of God only as it is **“given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”** (II Tim. 3:16-17). That about says it all. **“Think about it”**

...04/29/14

2 Thessalonians 3:5, **“And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.”**

Paul has just told the Thessalonian brethren that not only was the Lord faithful, but that he (Paul) had confidence they would remain faithful in doing the things which had been commanded of them. There are two points here in verse five to notice: 1) The Lord would do the directing (We have trouble without the guidance of God’s spirit). 2) Their hearts (minds) were to be INTO the love of God and INTO patient waiting for Christ. Notice: not pointed toward, not in the direction of, but, INTO. That means an intimate relationship of rejoicing in the love of God, then an intimate time of peace while we wait for Christ. Pray today, pray now for God’s spirit to direct us in all things pleasing to the Lord. **“Think about it”**

..04/25/14

One of the old songs we were raised up singing was *“Jesus, Lover of My Soul.”* Reflecting for a moment on the words of truth found in this song, we find we can to *“Thy bosom fly”* as Jesus is our **“hiding place”** (Ps. 32:7). We need no other refuge as **“God is our refuge and strength”** (Ps. 46:1). In addition, Christ is all I want and all I need because we have **“...the fulness of him that filleth all in all”** (Eph. 1:23). And, we all know that He has *“Plenteous Grace”*, even **“He giveth more grace”** (James 4:5). Re-read the lyrics of this song soon. Why, just

call it out this Sunday and feel the blessed truths that are supported by the Word of Truth, the Bible itself. Sing **“psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord”** (Col. 3:16). See if it doesn't help bring peace to your weary soul. *“Think about it”*

...04/24/14

2 Timothy 4:17, **“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentile might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.”**

There is so much in this one verse: Assurance, Strength, Boldness, Mercy, and Deliverance; all bundled up by Paul as he finishes his admonition to Timothy. Paul had been doubted and feared, yet his preaching was powerfully heard and believed as he had been delivered from the jaws of untruths and unbelief. Preach on, Apostle Paul, Preach on! Your testimony brings glory to the Lamb of God whom you once persecuted but died loving with all your soul, body, and spirit. *“Think about it”*

...04/21/14

Hebrews 2:1, **“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let the slip.”**

The usage of the term **“we ought”** means just what it says: **“We Ought”**. What is it that we *“ought”* to do? Simple! Pay **“more earnest heed to the things which we have heard.”** The truths of the gospel of Christ which Paul is speaking of, instructs us of Eternal blessings and timely guidance for the child of God. Paul then gives a good reason why we should give heed. If we don't pay more earnest heed to the truths of His Gospel we are vulnerable to falling to **“the wiles of the devil”** (Eph. 6:11). Perhaps we need to stand on solid ground wearing **“the whole armour of God”** lest we slip and fall into the sink holes of satan and dishonor God. There is No Comparison: The Rock (Christ) is far better than sinking sand. *“Think about it”*

...04/18/14

Philemon 1:4, **“I thank my God making mention of thee always in my prayers.”**

Following the example of the Apostle Paul would not be a bad idea. Paul is writing a letter to a dearly beloved brother and fellowlabourer and others who are following the teachings of Christ. This letter concerns Paul’s son, Onesimus. Onesimus was not his natural son, but was one which learned from Paul to the extent that Paul was like a Father in the Ministry to him. Paul tells Philemon and others that he makes mention of them always in his prayers. What a testimony! The love of Christ abounds in the heart of Paul as he comes to plead the case of Onesimus to those Paul has been praying for. Onesimus surely was humbled by this. We should be too! Christ pleads our case, seated on the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us. How humbling this is, and, how does it affect you as you THINK about it; or, does it? **“Think About It”**

...04/17/14

Psalms 4:5, **“Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.”**

There was, during the life of the Israelites in Old Testament times, many sacrifices of bulls, goats, lambs, doves and such. I am thankful we do not have to do those sacrifices any longer as they were all fulfilled by Christ. However, are to present ourselves as “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1). Let us do so with all humility and reverence unto our Lord. There is nothing unreasonable about that. It is our duty to do so. **“Think About It”**

...04/16/14

Hebrews 7:24, **“But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.”**

There is no changing in Christ, neither does He change as our High Priest. James tells us of every good and perfect gift which comes from the “Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 2:17). Paul speaks of Jesus Christ in Hebrews 13:8 as “the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” These declarations should bring comfort to every child of God. Even Malachi shouted forth “For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of

Jacob are not consumed.” Now, that is something to shout about. ***“Think About It”***

...04/15/14

Hebrews 8:6, **“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.”**

The old covenant was filled with sacrifices and offerings and requirements of obedience of which man did a poor job of keeping. However, we now have a better covenant, one which extends mercy and is filled with grace, sufficient to keep us until the end while being enough also to deliver us to the portals of heaven itself. The mediator of this *“better covenant of grace”* is there, and where He is, we shall be also (Jn. 14:3). ***“Think About It”***

...04/14/14

Aren't baptizings wonderful! Being baptized doesn't save anyone to Heaven, but it is for just what the Bible says it's for... **“the answer of a good conscience toward God”** (1st. Peter 3:21). Notice that it did not say an answer **“TO”** a good conscience. When one is born again of the Spirit of God, **“... it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure”** (Phil. 2:13). So, when God works in you by giving you a good conscience (understanding you have been made righteous by the blood of the Lamb), your acknowledgement of His death, burial and resurrection by being baptized gives praise, honor and glory to Christ. The answer (response) brings peace to your soul. ***“Think About It”***

...04/12/14

One of the worse things that can happen to an individual is to have "Nothing To Think About." We are blessed with such a High Priest, such an Almighty God, such a wonderful Saviour, and such a blessed opportunity to dwell with God's children while we live here. We have three homes to be thankful for: our natural

home and family which gives us much to be thankful for; our church home which provides us with wonderful fellowship and Christian love; and our Heavenly Home, eternal in Paradise where we will praise His Holy Name forever. My goodness, we have so much to Think About. I need to be about my daily thinking. Won't you join me? ***“Think About It”***

...04/09/14

Hebrews 5:2, **“Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.”**

The Apostle Paul speaks of the calling of God's ministers in the first four verses of Hebrews, chapter five. Heard the following of some preachers when I was a child, "A few are called, A few are sent, and A few just got up and went." Unless a man is called "as was Aaron" he will not be profitable to the cause of Christ. These called men must be compassionate and also face infirmities themselves in order to properly minister to God's people. I pity the man that takes it upon himself for he is a hireling. ***“Think About It”***

..04/08/14

Hebrews 12:28-29, **“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.”**

When a child of God is led of the Spirit to be baptized and becomes a part of the Lord's church here on this earth, he/she receives all of the benefits of being in the visible church kingdom which Jesus is the King. Under the law, Israel was on shaky ground, but now, according to Matthew 16:18, we are standing on that solid Rock which is Jesus Christ our Lord. With the church kingdom built on Christ, the **“gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”** Therefore, let us serve Him with reverence and godly fear; declaring the sovereignty of an Almighty God. ***“Think About It”***

...04/07/14

Hebrews 13:3, **“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.”**

It is difficult to face the trials and afflictions of this life. Much like a mountain road, there are twists and turns, hills and valleys, bumps and even gullies at times. Life is not easy to navigate. Look around and see if there is not someone who needs you to help bare their burden. Notice Galatians 6:2, **“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”** Bottom line? Have compassion and show mercy to those facing adversity. Jesus did! ***“Think About It”***

...04/04/14

James 5:13, **“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.”**

There are more than one way to be afflicted. If it be physical, mental, or spiritual affliction, why not go to the one who cares and has power to heal? We pray His will be done. The afflictions of this life will pass. Something better is on the horizon.

When I was a teacher, I would come down the hall in the early morning before students came in, whistling or singing. Teachers wanted to know how I could be so happy in the early morning hours. Why? Because we have much to rejoice about. Our Saviour is not going to be..., He IS Victorious. That’s good reason to be merry. ***“Think About It”***

...04/03/14

James 1:8, **“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”**

We are to “mortify the deeds of the flesh” (Romans 8:13). Our sinful nature prevents us from serving God as we ought. In Matthew 6:24, Jesus speaks of one who attempts to serve two masters; **“for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”** (material wealth-money). The term “double-minded” comes from the Greek word *dipsuchos* which means a person with two minds or souls. It is hard to believe and doubt; to love and hate; to be obedient and disobedient; or to have peace and be at turmoil; all at the same time. Only by abiding in the true vine

(Christ) will it afford us the courage and strength to be stable. **“...but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”** *“Think About It”*

...04/02/14

James 2:8. “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:”

James tells us in verse 9 that we commit sin if we have respect to persons. In the previous verses of this chapter, he deals with having respect of persons due to their worldly social and economic status. “Loving thy neighbour” is not always easy nor is it always popular. Bottom line; it is a sin if we don’t. Don’t be one of those who runs to be seen with those that have, but rather make haste to share compassion and godly love to those who do not have. Remember, Christ loved us when we were not lovable and **“hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:”** (Ephesians 2:6). *“Think About It”*

March 2014

...03/26/14

John 4:24, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

As we journey toward the weekend in our service unto our Lord, we must remember: He is no graven image, no conjured up action figure god, no figment of our imagination: but rather the one true and living God who is on His throne in Glory, worthy of our praise. We must worship Him in true Spirit and in Truth (Meaning,-There is No other God but Him). *“Think About It”*

...03/18/14

I John 2:9, “He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.”

He who hates his brother (a natural brother or a brother in Christ) is in darkness three ways: 1) by unrighteous walk 2) by not knowing the right way to go, and 3) by having his eyes blinded by his own hatred (see verse 11). Hatred consumes the hater! The problem in I John 2:9 is there are those who say they are

in the light and are not due to allowing themselves to hate while wondering why they remain in darkness so much. ***“Think About It”***

...03/17/14

1 John 1:8, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (KJV)

I have known a few people over the years that declared they were sinless after giving their life to Christ and being baptized. One man told me it had been two years and he had not sinned during that time. My response? You just did! Either that man was true, or John was true as he wrote the inspired Word of God. Guess which one! They both were sinners, yet John knew he was a sinner saved by Grace. ***“Think About It”***

...03/14/14

Psalm 2:10-11, “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.”

Verse 10 is wonderful instruction to the kings (rulers) who are on the earth. Would not it be truly wonderful if they followed God’s laws? How peaceful it would be if they served God with a reverential fear, acknowledging Him as the one true and living God. We then could all rejoice and tremble at His majesty. ***“...We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God”*** (John 6:69). Oh, that our leaders would. ***“Think About It”***

...03/13/13

Isaiah 62:11, “Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. vs 12.. and they shall call them The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.”

What a wonderful revelation to the children of God. The Lord Jesus is coming back for his children because He is our salvation. Do not misunderstand the reward that is with him. Our eternal life is an inheritance, not a reward. It says, ***“his reward”***. His reward is the completion of the work which God had given him to accomplish to God’s satisfaction. The work that is before him is a completed

work of Redemption. At the grand Resurrection, we will be changed to the image of the Son, and taken to Paradise to sing praises unto His name forevermore. The name “The holy people” which will be given unto us is due totally on the imputed righteousness of Christ. Paul said, *“I am what I am by the grace of God.”* ***“Think About It”***

...03/12/14

Proverbs 20:6, “Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?”

It seems a daunting task for mankind to not be boastful of our own deeds when they are good. Our fleshly nature wants credit for what we have accomplished, even to the point of telling others in order to receive praise. Solomon listed six things which the LORD hateth; **“A proud look”** was one of them (Prov. 6:16-17). **“A faithful man”** is one who desires the Lord Jesus to be esteemed and His name to be lifted up and not his own. **“Think About It”**

...03/11/14

Romans 12:19-21, 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Nothing is achieved by returning evil for evil. It just makes your day worse than what it was. When we treat those who would persecute us with kindness, it is in hope that the influence of good will rub off on them and while in their condemned state, they will repent and be better because of it. Proverbs 15:1 says, *“A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”* ***“Think About It”***

...03/10/14

Psalm 35:11-13, Vs11 “False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not. 12 They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul. 13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I

humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.”

We should not be surprised if there are those who speak evil of good things we attempt to do, yet it causes us to wonder when some would bear an ill report when we know nothing of what is being charged. It caused David much grief, as it did Christ, and so as it does each of us today. Come humbly before the Lord and He will fight your battle for you. He has been there. **“Think About It”**

...03/07/14

“... I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice” (Jonah 2:2)

At times, it is difficult for man to acknowledge having an affliction. It is even harder to humble ourselves and ask help from the Lord. However, when we find ourselves in the *“belly of hell”* in this life, it becomes easier to ask. What peace it is when we understand that He has heard our cry. **“Think About It.”**

...03/06/14

“Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high” (Job 21:22).

How can any man attempt to acquaint God with any thing? Yet, there are those around us daily who think they know all about all things when they know very little about much of nothing. Wisdom is greater to possess than knowledge, yet knowledge is a good thing when tempered with wisdom. We worship one who has all knowledge and is Wisdom personified. **“Think About It”**