

# POINTS TO PONDER

by Charles W. Wages



**Grace Bible Church**

*Speaking the Truth in Love*

1450 Oak Hill Road  
Fort Worth, Texas 76112-3017  
(817) 451-0937

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This booklet is dedicated to encouraging Bible study. As the various “points” or thoughts expressed are pondered, it is hoped that some will come to know the Lord Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

Remember, the Bible says,

*“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)*

*“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth.” (John 17:17)*

May the booklet be used as a devotional book:

- In the home for family members to discuss together
- In church and home Bible study
- To give to friends, mail out, place in nursing homes and places of business.

And above all, may it bring honor to our Lord and blessings to those who read.

— Charles W. Wages

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## BEWARE AND BEHOLD

**I**t is interesting and enlightening to see that the Word of God is full of warnings, especially in reference to false religions and teachers. The most pointed and descriptive words that Jesus spoke, while here on earth, were directed to the religious leaders of His time, namely the Pharisees and Sadducees. However, what He said of those people at that time is still appropriate in principle today.

In Matthew 16:6, Jesus said of His disciples:

*“Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”*

The reasoning of the disciples concerning this statement was typically human. Because He used the word “leaven” they said, “It is because we have taken no bread!” After explanation and illustration they understood that He was warning them to beware of the “doctrine (teachings) of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

Not only should Scripture be interpreted in light of Scripture, but the false teachings of man must also be understood in light of Scripture. If we are mildly amused at the ignorance or material-mindedness of the disciples, we could excuse them by thinking that maybe they were hungry. If so, they naturally and normally thought of physical bread. However, we are all too prone to make excuses for our lack of spiritual understanding and, therefore, are easily led astray by “every wind of doctrine (teaching), by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. 4:14).

The apostle Paul, in Philippians 3:2, warned those joyous believers to:

*“Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.”*

In the same manner that the disciples thought Jesus was talking about literal bread, some could reason that Paul was talking

about the animal that is called “man’s best friend.” This human error becomes extremely serious in view of Psalms 22 and 59, and in the real meaning as used by Paul.

In Psalm 22, we have that most providentially prophetic account of our Lord Jesus in His rejection and death. In the 22nd Psalm are the words, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Later, it is recorded, “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and feet” (Psalm 22:16). When David, the king of Israel, wanted to describe his enemies that were chasing him around the country, he said, “They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city” (Psalm 59:6).

Paul, in his reference to dogs, was speaking of the Judaizers of his day who were preaching that Jesus was the Saviour of the Jews only, and all converts must be circumcised in order to enter the kingdom. His reference to “evil workers” went beyond just sinners caught up in the world system, but workers of the evil one.

Second Corinthians 11:13 gives us a true picture of whom Paul was speaking and warning against.

*“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan, himself, is transformed into an angel of light.”*

Paul also warned against “the concision.” This was not a reference to any medical operation, but to those who would “mutilate” the truth of God’s Word as to salvation and sanctification. The teaching that a person must go through some religious rite or ceremony in order to be saved and serve God is contrary to the teaching of the Word and must be warned against.

*“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not.” (1 John 3:1)*

The word *behold* means for all of us to open our eyes and really see, not only that God loves us, but “what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us.” He wants us to see and understand the quality of that great love wherewith He loved us. This expression refers to both the Person and the love shown by God. Is there a person to compare with the Person of the Lord Jesus? Is there a love to compare with God’s love to us and for us? It was Paul that prayed:

*“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:17-19)*

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)*

*“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts.” (Jeremiah 15:16)*

## WATCH YE

*“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity (love).” (1 Cor. 16:13-14)*

The apostle Paul was used by the Lord many times to encourage the saints to be courageous and to fight the good fight of faith. The people of Corinth needed this exhortation and instruction. The people of God need it today. We are in a battle whether we like it or not, though the battle is primarily a spiritual one. In 2 Corinthians 10:4, we are told:

*“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds.”*

Paul exhorted the people to “watch.” This is a military term that carries much more meaning than just to look or watch for pleasure or information, like bird watching. A person who wants to really battle for the Lord must be “vigilant” and wide awake. For what or whom are we to watch? Certainly, believers are to watch and be awake for the coming of the Lord. However, this is not the intent of this particular Scripture. The arch enemy of our souls is the devil. Surely, the devil works through false teachers, apostles, and the religious works of men. The apostle Peter sounds a companion warning to our Scripture text when he writes:

*“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Peter 5:8)*

We also need to watch ourselves especially concerning our desires and motives. If we are not watchful, our motives will not always be pure. Isn't it interesting and indicative of human life that we have to purify the water we drink? We have to filter our air, inspect our food for health or sanitation purposes, and even in

a murder case, the motive is carefully sought out. Psalms 10:3 says:

*“The wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.”*

The Bible also teaches us to watch our speech or talk. We often reveal our thoughts and desires by what we say as well as do. Psalms 141:3-4 addresses this very problem, and David recognized this weakness in his flesh. He cried to the Lord for help and said:

*“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. Incline not my heart to any evil works with men that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties.”*

We need to be on constant guard or lookout for every move of the enemy. He has all kinds of thoughts and plans (devices) to wage his constant warfare against the Lord and the Lord’s people. Paul in writing to these same Corinthian believers said for them to be forgiving and understanding of one another:

*“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.” (2 Corinthians 2:11)*

In conclusion, we should be watchful and awake in and to everything. If not careful, we might be our own worst enemy. Paul wrote to his son in the faith, Timothy, and said:

*“But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” (2 Timothy 4:5)*

## UNKNOWABLES

*“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” (Ephesians 3:17-19)*

A leading psychologist once stated that “if any thing existed it was measurable.” Since he was primarily interested in testing, his statement could be accepted, except that it was entirely too broad, and the person and work of God could not have been included. When a human being measures something he is attempting to arrive at a figure, extent, or certain amount. Measuring things is a part of everyday life, and is important. However, to assume that everything is measurable is, at the very least, presumptuous. No one will ever really know or ascertain the extent or amount of God’s love!

The apostle Paul uses terms of measurement to describe God’s love; however, he is careful to state this love “passeth knowledge” (vs. 19). A mere casual reading of the text (Ephesians 3:17-19) would lead the reader to think Paul was teaching that we could “comprehend” the love of Christ. The word “comprehend” does not mean to fully understand, but really to apprehend or grasp for, such as Paul uses in Philippians 3:12, 13. We can “know” the love of Christ through experience, but mere human knowledge can never be able to fully understand, describe, or measure this wonderful love.

There are four terms of measurement used in these Scriptures to picture the love of Christ. They are *breadth*, *length*, *depth*, and *height*.

The *breadth* of His love is as broad as humanity, yet as narrow as one person. Humanity, in general, has many common characteristics. For example, we all suffer, sin, hunger, hope and aspire, and die. It is easy to see, therefore, that when Christ died on the Cross, He died for all, because “all have sinned, and come

short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). In view of this, it becomes very clear that, He loves all, therefore He loves you, and because He loves you, therefore He loves all. His love is not shallow because it is broad!

The *length* of His love, no doubt refers to time. God is timeless. Who knows the age of God? In the beginning, God loved. Man measures time by ages, years, hours, minutes, and seconds, however, His love out-measures all time. God has always loved. He has loved sinners of all ages. He loved Adam. He loves you. In the 136th Psalm, which consists of 26 verses, every verse ends with, “for his mercy endureth forever.” He is merciful because He loves.

The *depth* of His love could be described by the truth that it extends from His throne (heaven) to earth (where we live). It is always more than just interesting that when Christ died on the Cross the “veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom” (Matthew 27:51). The Lord Jesus went to the depths of sin for us. He went to the depths of despair for us.

The *height* of His love can be illustrated by the truth that His love reaches from the Cross to the Throne, from earth to heaven. There is beautiful teaching in Philippians 2:5-11. Verses 5-8 show how “He humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.” Verses 9-11 teach us that “God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name.” No wonder Paul instructs believers to, “Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth” (Colossians 3:2). Seeing then, that God’s love is from top to bottom (depth) and from bottom to top (height), we can rejoice that Christ came from heaven to earth to die for our sins, and that He ascended back to heaven, there to be the head of the Church for believers today.

Would it be possible to “know” or measure love so wonderful? The answer is “no.” However, the most miserable sinner can have this love by experience when they trust Him as Saviour and Lord. And then how wonderful to “know” that He keeps on loving us still!

*Treasures in heaven are laid up only as  
treasures on earth are laid down.*

## THE SURPRISING SECRET

Our Lord clearly and consistently told His hearers, including the disciples, that He would come again. He would remind them that His suffering (death of cross) would precede His coming again in great glory. A lengthy discourse and description is given of His second coming to earth in Matthew 24. All of that passage will not be quoted here for lack of space, but every reader is urged to read it for himself—The Lord admonished His hearers to be ready or prepared so as not to be caught unawares. This readiness has to do with being prepared in heart, head, and the life lived.

It must be understood that the believer's hope in this dispensation is not necessarily the return of Christ to earth, but rather His coming for His church and to appear with Him in the glory. However, many things can be learned from the truth of this great discourse in Matthew.

It is said by our Lord in Matthew 24:29:

*“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour the Lord doth come”*

Then in Matthew 24:44, He says:

*“Therefore be ye ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.”*

These two expressions, “ye know not” and “ye think not,” characterize men of all ages in regard to all the great events of Scripture. It is especially noteworthy, though, in regards to His coming again. Men today often speak of “the body of knowledge.” The emphasis is upon the intellectual accomplishments and achievements of man. The lack of knowledge of God's Word is vastly more overwhelming than man's knowledge of worldly or secular things.

The first and foremost truth man should know is the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. But if he refuses to acknowledge

that he is a sinner and that he needs the sacrifice of Christ for his sin, he can never become a child of God. Also, man, even the saved ones, often have very little desire to know that their Saviour should be the Lord of their lives. To acknowledge Him as Lord means He is to be in charge of their affairs, and they are to seek His will in all matters (Romans 12:1-2).

Then, we should know and acknowledge that He is the Head of the church, the body of Christ. Men seem to know and learn about the “heads of state,” the “heads of religious organizations,” etc., but fail to grasp the truth that He is our Head (Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 1:15-19).

The Lord Jesus said, “Ye think not” in reference to His coming. Why this expression? It showed a lack of interest and diligence on men’s part. People think about things they are interested in. We often show a great deal of interest in world affairs, but little interest in the affairs of the Word. If we think about the Lord, we will be aware of His presence. If we know and think about His coming, we are more likely to be ready or prepared for His coming. A companion passage of Scripture is found in Luke 12:45-48 and should be studied in the light of dispensational theology.

It is good to be “thinking “ and “knowing” believers. Paul says, “Think on these things” (Philippians 4:8), and how wonderful to “know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:19).

## ON READY

**A**lmost every nation under the sun believes in military preparedness. They are armed to the teeth and the arms race continues to move at a rapid pace. It reminds us of that expressive verse found in Psalms 7:32:

*“If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.”*

The bow is already bent, the guns are loaded, the computers are on ready! We hope and pray for peace in the face of war. What a dilemma!

One great lesson can be learned out of it all. We had better be ready. Ready to think and act for our Lord while we have the opportunity. Are we on ready? Let’s consider a few ways we should be ready.

We should have a readiness (forwardness) of mind to study the Scriptures. In Acts 17:11, Paul made a comparison of two groups of saints and said:

*“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”*

Two things are emphasized. They received the word and they searched the word. However, it must not be overlooked that they didn’t have to be coerced, pushed, or admonished to get into the word. They were on ready.

When there is a readiness to receive and search the good Word, there will follow a readiness to do the good work of the Lord. Paul, in writing to Titus, asked him to put the believers in mind to “be ready to every good work” (Titus 3:1).

This is emphasized in Titus. In Titus 2:7, young men are urged to be “patterns of good works”, and in Titus 3:14, we are urged to “maintain good works for necessary uses.” Yet, we had

better be on ready or the opportunities to work will be gone forever.

It is surprising but disheartening to see how many of God's saints are not ready to give to the Lord's work. It seems as if there is a total lack of understanding as to the support of God's work. Many give of their substance to cults, crooks, charlatans, but forget Christ. Maybe, they are unprepared, not ready. The people at Corinth were instructed by the apostle Paul:

*“Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance out of that which ye have.” (2 Corinthians 8:11)*

The mind and heart must first be willing and ready. Paul also wrote to Timothy and said:

*“That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.” (1 Timothy 6:18)*

The word “distribute” means willing to impart or give away in spiritual sharing.

Last, but not least, we should always be ready to preach the gospel. This shouldn't refer to “preachers” only. Everyone should be on ready to announce the glad tidings of God's love and grace through Christ. We should share our wonderful salvation with others. Paul told the Romans:

*“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.” (Romans 1:15)*

Paul wasn't ashamed of the gospel. He knew it was the greatest power known or unknown. More powerful than man's weapons which are so ready to destroy mankind. This “power of God” is ready to save completely and eternally.

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begot-*

*ten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)*

*“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

*“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” (Colossians 3:1)*

## GIVING HIM THANKS

*(Read Luke 17:11-19)*

*“And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God. And fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks; and he was a Samaritan.” (Luke 17:15-16)*

**T**his account of the ten lepers is a picture of misery and suffering, yet it is transformed into the beauty of people made whole by the compassion and power of our Lord. In the center of the view is the one cleansed leper who returned to give Him thanks.

These ten lepers “stood afar off” as they were pronounced unclean by their society. The Scripture tells us, they “lifted up their voices.” Leprosy often made the affected person’s voice hoarse and sometimes they could hardly speak above a whisper. We are told that Jesus “saw” them and spoke to them, instructing them to go to the priests. It is noteworthy that they were cleansed or made whole before they came to the priest. It is remarkable, yet characteristic of human beings, that only one returned to thank Him! In ordinary mathematics, only 10 percent! However this one is an example and inspiration to all that have been helped by the Saviour. As has been said, “One sorrow hides many joys” and “some of us can see no blue in our sky if one small cloud is there.” Conversely, we are often hindered from seeing a great blessing because of our many problems. This one leper stands out from all lepers. Nothing more is recorded of the other nine. In fact, Jesus said, “Where are the nine?”

It is interesting and enlightening to read that this thankful one, “with a loud voice glorified God.” His voice, that once was a whisper, could now in full force and resonance, speak glory to God. In fact, that is what it really amounted to, giving glory to God. Jesus said in verse 18:

*“There are not found that returned to give glory to God,*

*save this stranger.”*

In the latter end of this wonderful passage we find our Lord performing the greatest of all miracles when He said:

*“Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.”*

He has now received something far greater than the cure from leprosy. He has been “made whole.” He had “heard” God’s Word, and his life immediately took on a new dimension. He no longer was an outcast. He no longer was afflicted and separated by leprosy. He was now “free” to move about using his new voice and life for the One who loved him, cleansed him, and saved him! Was he ever thankful!

How thankful are we who have been made whole by the completed work of Christ on Calvary? We should return to Him every hour and give Him thanks.

*Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul,  
Thank you, Lord, for making me whole;  
Thank you, Lord, for giving to me,  
Thy great salvation so rich and free.*

## PECULIAR PEOPLE

**I**t takes a rare or unique combination of characteristics to be a servant of the Lord. These traits are not always what the world would expect a faithful servant to be. The Lord Jesus, in speaking to his disciples, made an unusual statement in describing the disciples as He sent them forth to serve.

*“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men.” (Matthew 10:16-17)*

The first thing to ponder about our Lord’s description is that He did not say the disciples were serpents and doves, neither did He say they were to be like the Serpent (Devil). In view of these exceptions, why would He tell them to be as serpents and doves? There are literally hundreds of species of snakes. Most of them are not only harmless, but actually are helpful to the balance of nature and the environment. Some people believe that the curse of the garden can really be seen in the looks and movements of a serpent. This, no doubt, is true, but we must keep in mind that nowhere is that awful curse of sin seen more than in man! Some traits of the snake are: prudent, cunning, clever, wise, and avoids danger.

We should ponder each of these to see how they apply to those who would serve God. Taking one of these, that of being wise, will show that our Lord knew how to instruct His servants. Paul, in writing to the Romans, stated:

*“For your obedience is come abroad to all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf; but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.” (Romans 16:19)*

The Lord would have His children be careful for their own safety. This was and is necessary because of the wolves that are around us everywhere. Someone has aptly said, “we should imi-

tate the serpent's wariness, but not his wiliness." In Philippians 2:15, we read:

*"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."*

In regard to being "as doves," it should be noted that this creation of God is a clean creature used sacrificially in God's plan and purpose. Also, it shows the traits of simplicity, trusting nature, cleanliness, and escapes danger.

It might also be noted that it is the only bird that doesn't have a gall-bladder. This beautiful bird takes one mate for life! The servant of God should be without falsity, manifesting honesty and integrity before God and man.

It is no accident, but shows that Jesus purposely followed the description of serpents and doves with the statement:

*"Beware of men."*

He didn't want them to go forth in the natural, fleshly, characteristics of men. Why? Man has some universal traits that are not conducive to serving the Lord. There are many traits of man, but suffice it to say the Lord called them "wolves." Wolves are generally cruel (vs. 17), unnatural (vs. 21), hate goodness (vs. 22), and prey upon the unwary.

The Bible describes just how low man can fall and that often he exhibits the traits of "natural brute beasts" (2 Peter 2:12). Men often act like "animals" without reason. The news is full of gruesome, weird, and filthy crimes of men against all humanity. However, he is at his worst when raving and rebelling against God and His workers. Men might put on "sheep's clothing" but inwardly they are "ravening wolves." Paul warns against this in Acts 20:28-31.

In spite of danger and rejection, it is wonderful to be sent forth to serve by and for the Lord. If we act in a manner that pleases Him, we can fully depend on Him to protect us and care

for us. Regardless of the danger, let's continue to love, live and serve for our Wonderful Lord.

*“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” (Ephesians 4:29)*

## GOD'S HELPERS

*“Therefore we were comforted in your comfort; yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.” (2 Corinthians 7:13)*

**T**hose who love the Lord and love His children should realize that all ministry, that is true to the Word, is important. However, there has always been a tendency to limit the work of the Lord to preaching and teaching. No doubt that preaching (heralding the good news of salvation) and teaching (edifying or establishing the saints) is of utmost importance, but there is more.

There are so many discouraging things in this life, a ministry that is so needed is

### **Encouragement.**

In our text, the great benefits derived from “comfort” are clearly shown. Paul wrote this verse to the believers as they had gone through a great problem and he was joyed that they had been comforted by the Scriptures. The word “comfort” is similar to a description given to the Holy Spirit, that is “one called alongside to help.” God is our Comforter. However, He delights in using Spirit-filled believers to bring encouragement and hope to the discouraged and hopeless.

Comfort and encouragement have a tendency to go both ways. Paul not only noted the comfort that had come to the Corinthians, but said that he had been “comforted in your comfort.”

Encouragement is akin to kindness. It is interesting to see that the world observes a “Be Kind to Animals Week,” but forgets to be kind to human beings. A little boy was quick to respond when asked to give an example of his being kind to an animal. He said excitedly, “I kicked a boy for kicking his dog!”

*“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven*

you.” (Ephesians 4:32)

The Bible teaches us that the world is in darkness. It also teaches that we all were at one time in darkness as to God’s plan of redemption and His purpose for our lives (Eph. 5:8, Col. 1:13). In view of this there is a great need for the ministry of

### **Enlightenment.**

Enlightenment is a far greater ministry than just listening to someone sing, “You are the Light of My Life.” Paul, under inspiration, prayed for the saints of God:

*“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” (Ephesians 1:18)*

The rest of this great truth in Ephesians 1:15-23 should be read and studied carefully in order to be enlightened as to our real position in Christ and that He is “the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” It is one thing to know about Him, and quite another thing to know Him in His fullness.

It is tragic how many people who have been saved by God’s grace are not really prepared to serve the Lord. Life has often been described as a journey. There are classes to teach us how to pack our clothes for a trip. Much attention is given to preparing ourselves for any excursion such as, having enough funds, clothes, food (if it is a camping trip), and even “shots” (if it is an overseas trip). Some first grade children went on a field trip. They noticed that the birds seemed excited as they chirped in the trees and bushes. The little children conjectured as to what the birds were saying. One of the little girls had the answer, “The mother birds are telling their children they had better go to the bathroom before they start the trip.” Well, at least some know that preparation is needed for a trip in this life. How much more is needed to

live, love, and learn about our service for Him! Enlightenment is a needed ministry, but must be more than giving of information, it must be sharing by word and deed (1 John 3:18).

An arm that is put in a sling and never used will atrophy. That is, it will shrivel up and waste away because of inactivity. All saints need to be active and useful for the Lord in scriptural and meaningful endeavors. This takes

### **Involvement.**

Those who want to participate in the Lord's work need to experience the joys and sorrows of other people. We never know how to sympathize with a person who has a toothache until we have had a toothache. It is amazing how often we are ignorant of the needs of others. A wealthy little girl wrote an essay on "The Poor." She started off by saying, "Once upon a time there was a poor family. The mother was poor, the daddy was poor, the children were poor, the chauffeur was poor, the maid was poor, the cook was poor, the gardener was poor, they were all poor!"

In Ephesians 4:12, there are three things enumerated in which we all could be involved in doing or helping:

- Perfecting the saints
- Work of the ministry
- Edifying of the body of Christ.

Of course, these things are vast and all encompassing, but they do show us that we need to be involved. There is plenty of work for every child of God to exercise his or her talents and time. However, none of us will ever really believe it until we become a part of this great ministry!

Yes, we can all encourage, enlighten, and be involved in helping others along the way as we faithfully serve our wonderful Lord. Ponder on these points and remember,

*"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmove-*

*able, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)*

## WISDOM IN PERSON

*“For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”*

*“But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks (Gentiles), Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. “ (1 Corinthians 1:19, 24)*

**W**e must keep in mind that wisdom is not just words. Paul was careful to let us know in 1 Corinthians 1:17 that his preaching of the gospel was “not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.” One of the main distinguishing differences between man and beast is man’s ability to speak or verbalize. It is totally comprehensible and would overwhelm our minds to imagine the amount of “words” that have been spoken, written, or sung in one generation. Most of them have been frivolous, superfluous, and meaningless. This is true even in “religious” circles. We need to be more interested and mindful of the words of the Word than the words of men. Wisdom is not just “words.”

Wisdom is not of the world. In 1 Corinthians 1:20, the question is asked “where is the disputer of this world (age, dispensation)?” Vincent, in his *Word Studies in the New Testament*, remarks that the disputers were Grecian sophistical reasoners, while the scribes refers to rabbinical hair splitters.

Two words are used for *world* in 1 Corinthians 1:20. The first refers to this age while the latter refers to the world system at large. Whatever “age” is considered, there have been “the wise,” “the scribes,” and “the disputers.” They have propounded and loudly proclaimed their philosophy, vain deceit, traditions, and the principles of the world (Colossians 2:8). Too many people believe that wisdom is just mental excellence, but believers should realize that:

*“Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”*

Wisdom is a person. That person is the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:30 states:

*“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”*

In view of this truth we can see why Paul earnestly prayed in Colossians 1:9, “that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” We should desire to be “filled” with the person of Christ, therefore “filled with wisdom.”

We are encouraged in Colossians 2:6:

*“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.”*

There is much in the Word about believers walking for the Lord. A believer’s walk is the attitude and activity of a daily life for and with God. This makes the truth found in Colossians 4:5 of utmost importance.

*“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.”*

Walking in the Lord and walking in wisdom all become one and the same in light of the Word.

In conclusion, it should be added that there is a great need for people to speak or talk for the Lord, by using His Word. Walking and talking are activities that should be used by every believer for the glory of the Lord.

*“Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Colossians 4:6)*

Wisdom is not mere words of men, it isn’t just mental excel-

lence, it isn't the philosophy and knowledge of this age, or world system, but wisdom is a person, the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you know Him? Is He your Saviour?

*“For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves: It is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

## GOD'S DIVINE WILL AND WORKS

*“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28)*

**W**e must believe that God has a will and a purpose for all things, although we cannot always fully understand how it works out for our good.

Our verse to ponder is one that is used quite frequently and sometimes misused or misunderstood. We must notice that verse 27 ends with “according to the will of God,” and verse 28 ends with “according to His purpose.” In other words, we should never try to understand “all things” apart from God’s will and purpose.

First, we must see the overall will and purpose of God in His divine plan for the ages. In the context of Romans 8 we span from “no condemnation (judgment)” in 8:1 to “no separation” in 8:39. In between we are instructed concerning prayer, predestination, foreknowledge, calling, justification, and glorification. Also, we must acknowledge that God, as the Creator of the universe, makes everything work together perfectly for good. All life and growth is sustained because what God created “in the beginning” works together for good. In fact, the expression “works together” tells us that various compounds, when in right proportion, fulfill the purpose intended. This is true in medicine and the physical laws that control all things.

Oftentimes “things” that occur in our lives are the result of a combination of events. In the physical universe, everything has to come together just right in order for it to snow. It just doesn’t happen. Something that occurred earlier in our life may join with later events in our life to work out perfectly for God’s glory and for our good. For example, a mother may pray for her child’s salvation, later on someone else will witness to him, later a passage from God’s Word will be used. Finally, all of this will work together in his salvation. This verse of Scripture in 1 Corinthians 3:6 is appropriate:

*“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”*

A caution must be noted in our thoughts and considerations of Romans 8:28. This truth is directed “to them that love God,” “to them who are the called according to His purpose.” An atheist cannot receive benefits from the truth of this verse. He or she might receive something from God’s creation even though they deny Him, yet when God’s love and understanding is needed in events that occur, they have no hope. In fact, unless they trust the Lord of glory, things are working together for their destruction. God doesn’t promise that our sins will work out for good. We must yield to God’s Word and plan for our lives. Then He will put it all together and much good will result. Yes, all things are working together and fitting into a plan for good to those that love God and are called according to His purpose. What wonderful assurance and comfort to know that our lives are in His hand and under His control.

*Faith in God’s good leading is the best-known antidote for fear!*

## HATH BEGUN—WILL PERFORM

*“Being confident of this very thing that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6)*

**T**his assuring Scripture is especially clear in view of the fact that the world is full of incomplete works of men. Man has a difficult time ever starting a work especially for the Lord, and then, due to a multitude of circumstances, he seems to never really finish.

We remember that it was God that began everything. “In the beginning, God”, is that grand statement made in Genesis 1. God began and completed the work of creation (Genesis 2:1).

*“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.”*

We know that when the Lord Jesus died on the cross, He finished the great plan of salvation for all people! Not only did He save mankind from sin, but He satisfied God’s righteousness and holiness, fulfilled every demand of the Law, and redeemed all of creation for ever!

God has completed the work of revelation. In His infinite wisdom, God progressively began to reveal His will through the Word. This work of revealing Himself to mankind has been completed. The revelation of the mystery through the apostle Paul “fulfills” God’s plan for the ages.

*“Whereof I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill (complete) the word of God. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.” (Colossians 1:25-26)*

It behooves every believer to put absolute confidence in God’s Word. Sometimes, it may seem to us an impossibility for

God to keep His promises, yet we must ever remember that He is not a man, He never lies, He is all powerful and wise, and is completely faithful. A great example of this is found in the life of Abraham. God promised Abraham and Sarah a son, even after they were past the years of bearing children. Romans 4:16-21 gives a summary of this great event in God's plan and purpose. It states of Abraham:

*“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was also able to perform.”*

Seeing so clearly, and believing so emphatically, that God will finish what He begins, what manner of persons ought we to be? Paul wrote to the Corinthians about their giving. He encouraged them by reminding them that they were rich through Christ (2 Corinthians 8:9). And then admonished them:

*“Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.” (2 Corinthians 8:11)*

Ponder the tremendous truth that God has always finished what He began and rejoice that we are told:

*“And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power.” (Colossians 2:10)*

## SHAME FOR HIS NAME

As we read through the book of Acts in our Bible, we cannot help but be impressed with the acute suffering and persecution endured by the followers of Jesus. Apart from dispensational distinctions, it is seen that a common thread or theme runs throughout the book, that theme is:

*“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Timothy 3:12)*

In the fifth chapter of Acts, we have the account of Peter and the other disciples being brought before the religious council and the high priest. After Peter gave a courageous and clear message concerning the crucified Messiah (5:29-32), the religious leaders “were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them” (vs. 33). After Gamaliel restrained them with wise counsel, the leaders beat the disciples and commanded them that they should not speak in the name of Jesus. After this happened, a remarkable statement is made concerning the disciples:

*“And they departed from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.” (Acts 5:41)*

What a paradox! The disciples actually rejoiced that God would honor them by allowing them to be dishonored. They were dignified by indignity! They suffered “shame for His name.”

The cross of the Lord Jesus saves and separates, but it also brings shame. It is recorded of our Lord Jesus Christ:

*“Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:2)*

The book of Romans, chapter 6, along with Galatians 2:20, teaches us that all believers have been crucified with Christ, bur-

ied, and raised into a newness of life. We should all exclaim with the apostle Paul:

*“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” (Galatians 6:14)*

The most honorable, respectable, and dignified position to have is that of a child of God; however, there should be no false expectation that the world system will heap its favors on believers. The words of Peter are appropriate here:

*“If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf.” (1 Peter 4:14-16)*

God has promised to take care of our needs (Philippians 4:19) and to bring us through every trial stronger and happier for His glory. It has been aptly remarked that:

*“The diamond cannot be polished without friction, no man perfected without trials.”*

Also, “Trying times are times for trying” (not crying). The real, spiritual truth of the matter, however, is found in 1 Corinthians 10:13:

*“There hath no temptation (trial) taken you, but such as is common to man; But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it.”*

It is wonderful to be saved, settled and sure, by and in the Word of God. We should rejoice in the privilege to sacrificially serve in these perilously trying times. Ponder on these points and

**Keep Looking Up!**

## EMPTY AND BROKEN

*“And he divided the three hundred men into three companies and he put a trumpet in every man’s hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and broke the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal; and they cried, ‘The sword of the Lord and Gideon.’” (Judges 7:16, 20)*

This wonderful and familiar portion of God’s word is always a blessing. To see God work to bring victory in such a miraculous manner is really heartwarming. This experience of Gideon and his chosen men is full of applications to every believer. Of course, God is not going to actually and literally repeat this miracle to people today, however, there are still battles to be fought and victories to be won in our every day life.

There were certain simple instructions and requirements that God required of Gideon and his men. The ones we have considered for us to ponder is that the vessels were to be empty, except for the lamp or light on the inside. Also, later on they were to be broken and the lights to be held in their left hands.

Oftentimes a vessel must be emptied before it can be used for God’s purpose. What is it that fills a life to keep it from being used for the Lord? In Romans, chapter one, the natural man is described as:

*“Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.” (Romans 1:29-31)*

In general, we must be emptied of self and all that pertains to the old selfish, sinful nature, and that which precludes our being

used by the Lord. Man must also be willing to empty himself of all “religious” philosophies and ceremonies that get in the way of service for the Lord. The apostle Paul said that he once had plenty of religion and described his position in the “Jews religion.” Then he exclaimed, “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ” (Philippians 3:4-7). When we are emptied of ourselves then the light of God can take its rightful place in the center of our lives.

Gideon was instructed to have the men “break” the pitchers. Why? There is a beautiful and appropriate verse of Scripture in Psalms 51:17 which reads:

*“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”*

We must be “broken” or gotten out of the way, so the Lord’s light can shine unhindered. Oftentimes we view every heartache, every reverse, every hard time, as necessary evils. However, as long as we put self first, pamper the flesh, and try to be entirely self-sufficient, God will have to break our habits, worldly wills, and general stubbornness before He can shine brightly into a dark world. In concise terms we have to become

*Empty to serve — Broken to shine.*

## ONCE UPON A TIME

This theme has a very familiar ring. Most everyone has heard this beginning to a story, but taken from a spiritual point of view, it is very meaningful. For instance, the Bible tells us that

### **Christ Died Once.**

*“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” (Hebrews 9:27-28)*

It is wonderful to know and believe that the Lord’s death on the cross was entirely sufficient for the forgiveness of sin. In order to accomplish this tremendous work that God had ordained, Jesus died for all men and all sin in one sacrificial, substitutionary offering on the cross of Calvary! Romans 6:10 tells us:

*“For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.”*

In view of the above tremendous truth, it is proper to see and believe that we

### **Have Been Saved Once.**

The book of Colossians states in chapter 1, verse 13:

*“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”*

This verse, among others, teaches us of our position in Christ. In connection with this we are told:

*“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus*

*unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)*

Not only does this “once for all” salvation transfer our position, it also transfers or changes our occupation. In 1 Thessalonians 1:9, we read,

*“For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.”*

A thorough study of Romans 6:14-23 shows us that though we once served Satan. Now being set free, we should serve the Lord with gladness.

To top it all off, how amazing, but true, that one day we will be transformed into the Lord’s presence. Philippians 3:20 says:

*“For our conversation (manner of life) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”*

This speaks of our perfection. Oh, how imperfect these old bodies of clay are today. However, by God’s dynamic power, we will one day have bodies of glory! In order for God to save and place us in the church, the body of Christ,

### **He Needed to Baptize Us Once.**

In Ephesians 4:4-6, we are shown seven wonderful “ones.” One of these “ones” is, “one baptism.” There is no room for two or more baptisms in God’s plan and purpose for this dispensation. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 we are instructed:

*“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*

*whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”*

This baptism which places us in the body of Christ is a complete, final act of God. Paul describes it as, “the operation of God” (Colossians 2:12).

### **He Places Us in the Church Once for All.**

A careful study, especially of the books of Ephesians and Colossians, will teach us that the church that God is building is the body of Christ.

*“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” (Ephesians 1:22-23)*

We are told in Ephesians 4:4 that there is “one body” and in 1 Corinthians 12:13, we are instructed that:

*“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body ...”*

These and other Scriptures let us know that we have been placed once for all in God’s church. No man can put us out, excommunicate us, or vote us out. We are there to stay!

These wonderful “once for all” acts of God in saving, transferring, changing, baptizing, and placing us in the church, will never be experienced again, but the results in our lives will continue on forever and forever.

*When Christ fills the home,  
Heaven floods the heart!*

## HONESTY WITH HONOR

A wise American statesman once said, “Honesty is the best policy.” It would be wonderful if every elected or appointed official would take that statement to heart. However, we know that the statement was not original with this person, but has been taught in God’s Word from ancient times. Paul wrote to the Romans:

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

It is not easy to be honest. It is only by the grace and power of God that anyone could really be honest in all things and in all ways. In order to “provide” things honest, a lot of planning, thinking, and preparing needs to take place. In fact, “providing things honest” shows preparation and purposeful thinking in order to be honest.

Preparation is not only needed, but prayer is necessary to be and do honestly. In 1 Timothy 2:1-2, we read:

*“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.”*

Another very important verse bearing on this subject is found in Hebrews 13:18:

*“Pray for us; for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.”*

Sometimes we are prone to just give up trying to be honest because it seems as if the whole world is dishonest. We not only see dishonesty in government circles, but in every area of human endeavor. The child of God must not be tricked by Satan in giv-

ing up or becoming entirely discouraged. The answer to the problem lies in our yielding to the new nature and allowing the Lord to control our desires and attitudes. The apostle Paul spoke to this problem in teaching that we should strive to be honest in all things, even if others do not.

*“Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.” (2 Corinthians 13:7)*

In conclusion, we know we have the means of being honest as we study and believe the Word. Things we can do are, think on honest things (Philippians 4:8); pray for honest things; practice honest things (even if others do not); and “provide” or think and prepare beforehand so as not to be caught off-guard.

## BE-ATTITUDES

The human life can mainly be divided into two areas, our attitude and our actions. It is surprising how much our thinking and feeling concerning life controls our actions in life. If we love someone we are more likely to do good things for them. If we love the Lord, we are more likely to serve Him. If we love the Word, we are more likely to read, study, and live it.

At different ages and stages of our life, we have different degrees of attitude toward certain people and things. It was the apostle Paul who wrote of himself and said:

*“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.” (1 Corinthians 13:11)*

This development is very important and very well needed in everyone’s life, but especially in spiritual development. How does this relate to Be-Attitudes? Let’s consider 1 Corinthians 14:20 very carefully.

*“Brethren, be not children in understanding; how be it in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.”*

It is interesting and informative that this statement was made by the apostle in correcting the Corinthians on their wrong emphasis in trying to “speak in tongues.” However, the principle can be used of all understanding from Scripture and our attitudes about many things.

In one instance we are to have the attitudes of children, in another respect that of men. We are to be like babes in disposition and desires as to malice, mischief, guile, hypocrisy, etc. Little children are more apt to be open, honest, and trusting. The older and more sophisticated we become, the more likely we are to be deceitful and secretive about our desires and demands. On the other hand we need to grow up in our knowledge and understanding of God and His Word. This will enable us in better under-

standing and serving mankind in our deeds and actions.

In Colossians 3:15, we are admonished:

*“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”*

Paul is not talking about being thankful for material things (though we should be), but spiritual realities. We should be thankful for “the peace of God” and let it rule in our hearts. As the peace of God rules in our hearts, we will think peacefully and act peacefully. In another wonderful verse, we are told to:

*“Be careful for nothing (don’t be unduly anxious) ... And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)*

We should be thankful for peace and that we “are called in one body (the church).”

In conclusion of this brief “points to ponder,” we should have an attitude of kindness.

*“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” (Ephesians 4:32)*

It has aptly been said, “there is more power in the open hand than in the clenched fist.” Spurgeon once said it in another way, “Forgive and forget. When you bury a mad dog, don’t leave his tail above ground.” We have announcements and pronouncements urging us to be kind to animals, and we should. But how much more important and divine to be kind to all human beings, and especially fellow Christians. In all of our attitudes and actions we should “be doers” (James 1:22), “be examples” (1 Timothy 4:12), “be kind” (Eph. 4:32), and “be thankful” (Col. 3:15) Many more could be mentioned, but these are sufficient to ponder for a lifetime.

## GOD'S POWER

**D**oes power create energy or does energy create power? It is similar to asking, does the event make the man or does man make the event. The first question is harder or more complex because the words “power” and “energy” are closely connected, even in the Scriptures. Let’s leave the answers to God; however, it must be recognized and acknowledged that all power or energy comes from God.

The world speaks of various powers, such as “white power,” “black power,” “brown power,” “political power,” “nuclear power,” or “horsepower.” Our deepest consideration should be given to God’s power.

The divine power of God is used mainly in two ways.

### Inherent Power

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16)*

The gospel is inherently powerful, saving to the uttermost all of those who believe. No doubt, it is a powerful tool in God’s hands. Also, as He entrusts man with preaching the gospel, powerful results are seen. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:18:

*“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.”*

The reason the gospel is so powerful is that in itself it is a divine energy or power. Sometimes we hear someone say of a man, “he is a powerful preacher.” Maybe, they mistakenly think that if he uses beautiful language or if he pounds on the pulpit, or uses loud speech, he is a powerful speaker.

This divine and inherent power was clearly manifest in the

Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 1:4 says of Him:

*“And declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”*

Inherent power is the right or ability to reproduce itself. God has instilled this power in His creation. Mankind can reproduce itself naturally, but not spiritually.

### **Delegated Power**

There is a delegated power or authority that God allows man to use. Man can use it for good or bad. Will-power is an example of the ability of man to choose in any given situation. Governments have power to make and enforce laws, but it would be good if every political leader would read Romans 13:1:

*“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God.”*

God turns loose His mighty power in the saving of a lost soul. It has to be tremendous spiritual power to rescue that person who is in Satan's control. Colossians 1:13 reads:

*“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”*

Everyone who yields to God's divine, inherent power can be a child of God. Then God will delegate power to live and serve Him.

## HE KNOWS OUR NEED

*“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:31-33)*

**A** wonderful, comforting truth is that the Lord knows our needs. In fact, He knows about them before we tell Him (Matthew 6:8). It is amazing how we all limit the knowledge and wisdom of God! We should acknowledge and rest in the fact that God knows and cares about our physical needs. Why? Well, after all, He made us! God placed men upon the earth; and instilled the need for food, shelter, and clothing. Having instilled that need, He provided for us abundantly in plant life, fish, fowls, animals and all the by-products necessary to sustain life. True, man has wasted and abused the provisions God made, but He still has not forgotten our needs. At the very least, we all have the opportunity to freely enjoy the things given of the Lord. We have to trust Him and do our part. “God helps those who help themselves, and the government those who didn’t.”

It must be realized, however, that man is a very complex work of God. The question is asked in Matthew 6:25:

*“Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?”*

Yes, we know from Scripture and life itself that life is more than physical needs of the body.

### **Man needs to be saved**

*“This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.” (Psalms 34:6)*

The Bible clearly shows and teaches that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”, and, that “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 3:23; 6:23). In view of this, man is in great need of salvation. He needs to be saved from the penalty of sin (death); the power of sin (guilt, misery); and finally, the presence of sin (absent from the body, present with the Lord).

### **Man needs spiritual food energy**

It was Job who said:

*“I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.” (Job 23:12)*

*No tender voice like Thine,  
Can peace afford,  
I need Thee, O, I need Thee;  
Every hour I need Thee.  
O bless me now, my Saviour,  
I come to Thee.*