

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of August 4, 2019

THEME: "Time Alone" PERSONAL THOUGHT LIFE

Sunday Read Proverbs 16:1-9

"Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." Making the decision to follow the Lord and do His will brings a focus to our thoughts. It is the thought life that defines a person. That is the teaching of Proverbs 23:7: *"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."* Notice that a function of the heart as used in the Bible is that it is the generator of our thoughts; our hearts determine our thinking, and that is who we really are! God has given us the Bible to help us in those thoughts that are established in our hearts. We read of that being a function of our hearts in Hebrews 4:12: *"The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* Not to have a focused thought life is to be a wishy, washy person: a person who goes the way the wind blows. That leaves a person wide open to being led astray as mentioned in Ephesians 4:14: *"That henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."* The Bible warns of evil thoughts. As a matter of fact, they were the cause mentioned for the flood in Noah's day. We read this in Genesis 6:5: *"God said that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."* We are told in II Corinthians 10:5 to *"bring into captivity our thoughts to the obedience of Christ."*

COMMUNICATION

Monday Read Psalm 5:1-4

"My voice shall thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning I shall direct my prayer unto thee, and I will look up." There is no better way to start a day than to communicate with God! What a privilege! To do so means to get a good start to every day! That is the highest privilege of any human being: to spend time with our Creator! That was made possible by God's love; that He would make Himself available to us. He is a holy and righteous God who hates sin, and we are all sinners. So determined was He to have fellowship with us that He made a way for that to be possible without compromising with sin. He sent His Son to pay the penalty of sin for us by having Him shed His blood to satisfy the demands of the law to punish sin. Because Jesus became the Lamb of God as a sinless human being, His blood cleanses sin as mentioned in I John 1:7: *"The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin."* Personal faith in Christ gives us access to God's throne, any day and every day. Not only is that a huge benefit and high privilege for all believers, our prayers bring delight to God. We read that in Proverbs 15:8: *"The prayer of the upright is His delight."* The reading of God's word is allowing God to speak to us. The Bible is God's Word to us; it is the Holy Spirit who inspired writers to place God's Word in print for our instruction and edification. It is spiritual food for our souls which need nourishment as much as our bodies need food for growth and strength. Going into a day without spiritual food is leaving ourselves subjected to weakness and malnutrition, not to mention that entering into a day without God's direction leaves a person wide open to the deceptions of the devil.

GOD'S WILL

Tuesday Read Matthew 6:9-13

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The best way to live our lives is to know and to do the will of God! That is how Jesus taught us to pray, as mentioned in today's Bible reading. The Bible in Jeremiah 1:5 teaches us that God has a plan for every life, that He has something in mind for us from the time He formed us in the womb of our mothers. That is the instruction in Jeremiah 1:5: *"Before I formed you in your mother's belly, I knew you, and before you came out of her womb, I ordained you to be a prophet unto the nations."* We can personalize that thought because of what we read in II Timothy 3:16 and Acts 10:34: *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for instruction...God is no respecter of persons."* God gave to each of us the personality and talents and abilities to do what He has brought us into the world to accomplish. The question is whether we seek to find out the will of God for us and then to do it. Obviously there is no better way to live, and no more exciting way to live. What could be better than to be living in the exact way that God

had planned? The devil will try to get people off that track. That is a battle for every believer; to stay in tune with God and to ward off the deceptions of the devil. Praise God that when we received Christ as Savior in what the Bible calls a spiritual birth, believers have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit to strengthen them and to guide them in this journey through life. Communicating with God in those times alone with Him enables us to stay in tune with God to do His will in our lives. Now it can't get any better than that!

MEDITATION

Wednesday **Read Psalm 1:1-6**

"But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night." The person who delights in the Word of God is indeed a person who is living a very meaningful life as intended by our Creator. Not only does this give people a sense of fulfillment for their earthly journey, it prepares them for the coming judgment. That is an incentive to meditate on God's Word. It is a tragedy for a person to go through life having denied himself the joy of reading and meditating on what God has told us. It prevents us from being led astray by the whims and fancies of human thinking. Now the minds of man are amazing, and man has done wonderful things, but only because God has created all of us in His image and after His likeness, something he said only about humans. Little wonder that the devil has tried to do all he can to take man out of fellowship with God. Any writings of humans that are inconsistent or contradictory to what God has said in His Word are wrong. The devil has succeeded in misleading some very intelligent people to author things that are ignorant, making them very dangerous. The protection against deception is delighting in God's Word and meditating on truth. That shield of faith protects against falsehood.

PERSONAL JOURNAL

Thursday **Read Malachi 3:16-18**

"...a book of remembrance was written." I find it very valuable to keep a personal journal of thoughts while reading the Bible. It is great simply to read God's Word and having the joy of knowing His truth; but to keep a record of some of the thoughts the Spirit gives while reading makes it far more likely that the truth of Scripture is entrenched in our minds. Writing something down seems to have a lot to do with fixing what we read into our memories. It is amazing how much the Bible encourages the keeping of written material. Our Bible reading mentions about *"a book of remembrance."* All of us are familiar with family albums that help us recall some of the details of memorable events in our past lives. Reviewing those good times is a benefit not only for us personally, but they come in handy when we are trying to recall and to relate those experiences with others. What could be better than to go back over something that had rich meaning in the past, particularly when it was a special truth that God had impressed upon us. By jotting it down, a far better recall is established, not to mention the possibility of checking back when memory fails.

MEMORIZATION

Friday **Read Psalm 119:9-16**

"Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee." The psalmist points out that one of our defenses against the adversary's efforts to lure us into an attractive sin is a truth of God that the Spirit has impressed upon us. Every moment we spend memorizing Scriptures is worth the time and effort and will serve us well when we face temptation. Knowing what God calls right and wrong may prevent a lot of misfortune when faced with things that would have the effect of diluting our Christian lives. Not only is the memorization of Scriptures a huge benefit in keeping our lives in sync with God, it enables us to be prepared to do what we are told by our Lord to do in being His witnesses. If we have a good knowledge of God's word hidden in our hearts, we have a lot more to draw upon in our discussions with other people. I like when I can share God's truth with a seeking heart because I know it is good and proper in trying to help others. Anything the Bible says about proper living is accurate. It is important to use it properly, and not to misuse what God has said. To take isolated portions of Scripture in such a way that it would contradict other Scriptures is a terrible mistake and an injustice to those to whom such misinformation is presented. All Scripture should be used in such a way that it is in harmony with all other Scripture. Memorization makes that more likely. The psalmist had a good idea: hide God's Word in our hearts!

APPLICATION

Saturday Read Proverbs 23:7-12

"Apply thine heart unto wisdom, and thine ears to the word of knowledge." The only way for the Bible and its eternal truth to do us any good is to apply what we read to the conduct of our lives. Reading is wonderful, but applying it to our living is sensible. As a matter of fact, God makes a strong point of that in James 1:22, where He says this: *"Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only."* It is one thing to know the truth of God; it is still another to do as it says. It is sad and even tragic, to know God's truth and then ignore it. As a matter of fact, it is hypocrisy. Reading and memorizing God's truth and God's instruction for living are counterproductive if not practiced in real life. God even says that there will be those who boast in their knowledge of God's Word as if that were the end in itself. We read of that in I Corinthians 8:1: *"Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."* There is the warning in I Corinthians 13:2: *"Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."* So important to practice what we preach!