

// / In Respect of Want

Philippians 4:8 – 13

////////

~ If we do not eat properly, then our bodies become weak, do not function correctly, and we become completely susceptible to all sorts of problems very quickly. Many Christians are spiritually malnourished because they rarely, if ever, eat of the Bread of Life, or drink from the Living Water – the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, they wonder why they have no strength, and why constant problems plague their spiritual walk. What they lack most significantly is *joy*; which can only be grown by the Holy Spirit as the result of prayer. We exist in an involved, intricate spiritual ecology; but it isn't overly-complicated to incomprehension – anyone can, ultimately, understand all of this – but the desire to love Christ Jesus first and foremost, and to do His commandments, is a strict, rigid, and non-negotiable prerequisite....

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

~ Verse eight has been called the briefest biography of the Lord Jesus Christ ever written. Christ is true. Christ is honest. Christ is everything mentioned here – and those are all the things we are to think on! We're talking about virtues and nobility of honor that are, in my estimation, non-existent anymore. These things seem to have gone out of style at some point in history. Well, even so, Jesus hasn't gone out of style; I can assure you of that. What really happened is that mankind has thoroughly exhausted his pretense of moral capabilities; and his declaration of independence from God has left him as desolate as desolate can become. That's what's real — and that's what is happening right now in this dirty, filthy, lost and dying, present evil world, my beloved.

As we go through our day in the world, we get dirty. Our feet get dirty, our hands get dirty, our eyes get dirty, and our hearts and minds get dirty. Man

never seems to get tired of the dirt and filth. Many people take two or three showers every day in an effort to stay clean. Very few wash with the Living Water every day. The television and internet pollute, decay and, actually, destroy spirituality; as they cause neglect of the Word of God. It's easier not to study the Bible than it is to study. The "*information*" being "*shared*" today is polluted water, stagnant and outdated, outmoded *MIS*information; it cannot wash us — it will do more harm than good. This forum on which I teach can best be described as a garbage dump landfill of human thought and emotion.

If you fill your life with the world's lusts, greed and covetousness, then your Christian life isn't going to have any power whatsoever — period. You can talk about Jesus all day long, but He isn't working through you under those circumstances. Today, we have so many uneducated, weak and mediocre Christians who fill their belly and mind to an uncomfortable level of gluttony with the things of this world — while espousing it spiritual — that, quite frankly, they wreck the cause of Christ. Their hearts are wrapped up in the pleasures of the world; so, they secretly wonder why none of the supernatural powers they incessantly claim manifest themselves in their lives ever happen. I'm not sure who they think they are kidding.

How much time each day do you spend in a sincere, educated, systematic, daily, Spirit-led, Spirit-filled, proper, correct and complete study of the Bible? How much time each week do you spend contemplating Christ and His laws and precepts? The Word of God is a mirror, and we can behold the glory of the Lord *only* in that mirror! The *only* way we can behold the Lord Jesus Christ is in the Word of God. When we begin to understand these truths, liberties and freedoms are given us to facilitate and nurture genuine spiritual growth. We cannot come to a realization of all of these things outside of the Word of God, friends. I am very much disturbed how easily most Christians are so easily taken in by every wind of distorted doctrine breaking through in the moment. There is so little discernment of truth and error — and no value whatsoever placed on truth — that it alarms me to no end. Almost any heresy meets the applauding acceptance of myriad self-proclaimed "*Bible scholars*" today; while sound doctrine is disregarded as hateful on all levels. The man teaching sound doctrine is attacked ferociously, relentlessly, and is generally all alone, except for the constant

dogging of those who hate them. I'm not going to lie to you – because I never lie to you dear readers – this is a big, big, problem for me in my life as I write this report.

All weakness and breakdown of thinking by the body of Christ in the mind of Christ is the result of a total and complete ignorance of the Word of God – period. An unwillingness to learn the Bible properly, correctly and completely leads to a puerile and inconsequential religion and resulting frigidity towards God in the lives of self-professing believers that is sickening. Handing out tracts and reciting the salvation plan are good and fine – *IF – IF – IF* you have a life that actually backs it up! That means having power from the Spirit of God that only comes from contemplating the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Word of God! We all know most Christians only go to church for entertainment today. Going to church can also be a platform to stage our self-righteousness; people go to church for all sorts of convoluted reasons and unworthy motives. The one thing people are not going to church for is to hear the teaching of the Word of God in sound doctrine – that's not happening today, friends. Others go and sit in some sort of daze for an hour just to feel religious and pious. I'm not trying to be a hyper-critic, but someone needs to say these things; and I don't mind be chosen to do so.

Only the Word of God can bring strength to us. Only the Word of God can produce joy in our lives. Scripture is our food and drink for our spiritual strength, and we must be nourished each and every day. I don't know about you, but I like to laugh every day, too. No one has an excuse for the neglect of an educated Bible study. Many people are going to be totally ashamed at how utterly unlearned and unknowing they truly are about the Bible when they go into the presence of the Lord. There are going to be many things God is going to tell us — again — that He told us many times — but we simply would not listen. God's children hear His voice, and they know it; but they don't always obey it. The contemplation of the Lord Jesus Christ is the sanctuary of power. Many of us need to brush off the dirt and rot of this world and get cleaned up. That means being cleansed by the Blood of Christ and washed in His Word! Many people are following afar off from Him today. My prayer is that God will bring us all in closer in His Word now....

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

~ So, our Spiritual Safari ends this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God remaining in Christ — and He in us. The church at Philippi had lost contact with Paul for two years, until they discovered he was in prison in Rome, and then they immediately sent things to him. Paul is so gracious in his love for these people. These writings reflect the thoughts of a wrongfully imprisoned, yet totally content, man! Frankly, Paul had killed so many Christians, I'm not sure he may have thought he somehow deserved to be in that prison. The faces of many murdered men, women and children likely reappeared from time to time. I see this section of Scripture shamelessly verse-grabbed and horribly abused to no end today — and I seriously doubt those doing the abusing have ever considered the prison cell or other conditions under which Paul wrote these truths from. In fact, I know they haven't. Our next report will be our final report in Philippians, and we'll see exactly what it means to "*do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth me*" ~

////////