

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

“Positive Preaching”

Have you ever replaced the batteries in a flashlight, then flipped the switch on to find that it still doesn't work? Upon further examination you discover that you have placed the batteries in the wrong way (backwards). The positive pole of the battery is where the negative pole ought to be and a correction of your error is necessary before the flashlight will work.

Many brethren have their spiritual batteries in back-wards, as far as God's word is concerned. They have swapped the poles around, or you might say, “they have their wires crossed.” Many have even let their batteries completely run down and die.

Today, it is common to hear “positive” brethren cry for more “positive preaching” to the exclusion of mentioning anything negative, the desire being to have their ears tickled. Question: Have you ever tried to run something that is powered by a battery by only connecting the positive end of the battery? If you disconnect the negative lead from your battery terminal on your automobile, do you think it would start? Both terminals must be correctly connected for proper operation!

Isaiah spoke of those who swapped things around and pronounced a “*woe*” to them when he said, “*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter*” (Isa. 5:20). The prophet also describes this attitude in Isaiah 30:10 where he wrote, “*Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.*” Brethren with this type of attitude are fellowshiping darkness and “*do not the truth,*” while professing to be in the light (1 Jn. 1:5-7).

Preachers who boldly preach and proclaim the truth are often criticized for being “*too negative, too boring, too judgmental,*” and not being “positive” in their preaching. Their critics demand more “positives” and usually have a great distaste for lessons of reproof and rebuke (2 Tim. 2:2-4).

To coin a phrase similar to the Yellow Pages advertising phrase which went like this...“let your fingers do the walking,” we will let God's Word do the talking! Please consider just a few of the many positive texts of God's Word, since there is such a desire for “positive preaching.”

Matthew 28:19-20 — “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*”

Romans 16:17 — “*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*”

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 — “*Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*”

Ephesians 5:22-23, 25 — “*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ...Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.*”

Colossians 3:1-2, 5 — ***“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth...Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”***

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 — ***“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.”***

1 Timothy 6:12 — ***“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”***

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

2 Timothy 2:19 — ***“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”***

Titus 2:11-12 — ***“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”***

Hebrews 5:9 — ***“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”***

James 1:22 — ***“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”***

James 4:8 — ***“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”***

1 Peter 1:13-16 — ***“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”***

1 Peter 2:21 — ***“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”***

1 John 2:3 — ***“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”***

1 Corinthians 15:58 — ***“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”***

There have been and will continue to be countless sermons preached by faithful preachers using these and other *positive* passages for their sermon text. As we have already noted, these are but a few of the many *positive* texts of the Bible.

Will brethren who desire “positive preaching” tolerate lessons based on the truths of these texts? Or will they seek to have their ears tickled and turn away from the truth unto fables (2 Tim. 4:3-4)? Will these brethren heed the admonition given by Jeremiah who said, ***“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls”***? Or will they make the same reply that Jeremiah heard by saying, ***“We will not walk therein”*** (Jer. 6:16)?

Let us place our trust in ***“all the counsel of God”*** (Acts 20:27) and remember the proclamation of Jesus who said, ***“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth”*** (John 17:17). There is no substitute! — ***tgmc*** ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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