

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## Alphabet Soup

By Joe R. Price

You need a manual these days to decipher all the social acronyms in use. Then there are the new designations of gender that are totally confusing and beyond reason. Facebook offers over 55 custom gender options for its U.S. users, and 71 choices in the U.K. (When I was growing up we only had two genders. Somehow, I do not think biology has changed that much in the past sixty years!)

Occasionally we meet those who are unfamiliar with the more frequent acronyms of self-designation currently in use. Here are some along with their meanings:

LGBT: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender

LGBTQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer or Questioning

LGBTQI: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, and Intersex

LGBTQIA: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, and Allies

1. No matter how one self-identifies, God knows who you really are. The character of one's heart drives one's conduct. (See in Romans 1:20-32 how unthankful, proud hearts led to denying God, to idolatry and to all manner of immoral conduct.)

2. It is prideful for humans (the created ones) to subjectively assign their gender and proclivities instead of acknowledging their Creator's objective decision. ***“But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why have you made me like this’”*** (Rom. 9:20)? God created ***“male and female”*** (Gen. 1:27). We will not presume to be otherwise.

3. Sin remains a choice, not an inherited trait. You do not choose your gender, but you do choose whether you will honor God according to your gender. You choose whether to glorify God with your body or to defile it with sinful actions (1 Cor. 6:16-20; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; Eph. 5:3-7). – ***The Spirit's Sword***, August 26, 2018. ■

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## “There Must Be Heresies”

By Greg Gwin

It is so discouraging. When it happens the hurt and disappointment can be devastating. The work and progress of the church can be set back for years. Friends and brethren are often alienated irreparably. Why must it be so? Why does it seem like church trouble is so common? How is it that these divisions are reported, again and again? Is it inevitable? Are we destined to simply split, and split, and split again.

The Corinthian church had suffered through a good bit of trouble. In fact, Paul's first letter to them dealt primarily with internal problems in that congregation. If you had been a member there, surely you would have been discouraged by the divisiveness that characterized their history. Paul addressed these issues. He indicated that their problems were widely reported and he urged them that ***“that there be no divisions among you; but***

*that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*" (1 Cor. 1:10, 11). He blamed the situation on their *"carnal"* outlook and rebuked them for their failure to grow spiritually (1 Cor. 3:1-4).

While rebuking the Corinthians and stressing their need to grow past these issues which indicated their spiritual immaturity, Paul also revealed that such problems served a necessary role. Note: *"...I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you"* (1 Cor. 11:18, 19). Do you see it? The divisiveness, the arguing, the forming of sects and parties within the church, the disputes, etc., all served to demonstrate which ones were *"approved"* among the Corinthians. In other words, those who were faithfully committed to God, who were determined to live by His truth, who would not compromise with error – these would rise to the occasion. They would *"be made manifest,"* that is, their faith and loyalty would become obvious to all that objectively considered the situation.

So, what about our "issues" today? Must we be content with the problems? Should we not worry about the divisions and the "church splits?" Of course, we must be concerned – such cannot be commended (1 Cor. 11:22). Unfortunately, these things have always happened and will continue to happen as weak, carnal Christians do what they have always done. But, when these terrible problems arise, let us be committed to do the right thing. In the end, error will be exposed and those who do right will stand *"approved"* before God. – *Colleevue church of Christ Bulletin*, February 26, 2017. ■

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## Serving Your Purpose

By Greg Gwin

All of us have had the experience of buying a new gadget, only to find that it doesn't work nearly as well in reality as it did on that TV infomercial or in that magazine ad. It's a frustrating thing when an item doesn't serve the purpose for which you bought it. Oh well, just one more thing to be added to the pile of things that are destined for the next garage sale!

Have you ever stopped to consider that God may have these same feelings of disappointment over ineffectual "products." Paul wrote: *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"* (Eph. 2:10). Do you see it? The Father created us to accomplish *"good works."* Those of us who are His children are supposed to fulfill His plan and accomplish these things in His service.

How disappointed God must be when we don't serve the purpose for which we were created. Can you imagine how He feels when Christians live immorally, dress immodestly, talk indiscreetly, and act indecently? How it must disgust Him when His own children won't worship faithfully, fail to study regularly, seldom engage in effective prayer, almost never share the gospel with a lost soul, and neglect to show love and concern for their brothers and sisters in Christ. He bought us with the precious blood of His Son, but we don't do what we're supposed to do.

Just as we finally give up on useless products and throw them away or put them in the garage sale pile, God will ultimately give up on those who won't serve Him faithfully. Jesus said: *"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away...he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned"* (Jn. 15:2, 6).

Christian, are you serving the purpose for which you were created? Think! – *Colleevue church of Christ Bulletin*, September 30, 2018. ■

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

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