

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

“Let It Not Be Once Named Among You, As Becometh Saints”

By Nicolas Edwards

These are the words Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:3. Paul is writing to *“the faithful in Christ Jesus”* (1:1). He tells them to be *“followers of God”* and *“walk in love...but fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God”* (Eph. 5:1-5). This is an important text as it deals with a person’s inheritance in the kingdom!

FORNICATION. Fornication is often condemned in Scripture (Rom. 1:29; 1 Cor. 6:18; 10:8; Gal. 5:19; Col. 3:5; 1 Th. 4:3). This is “illicit sexual intercourse.” This would include homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, or any sex outside of Scriptural marriage (Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 7:2).

ALL UNCLEANNESS. Uncleanness has always been forbidden as the Lord’s people are to be holy (1 Thess. 4:7). All uncleanness is suggestive of anything or all that is unclean, impure, that defiles. It is used in a moral sense of “Lustful, luxurious, profligate living.” This would condemn wildly reckless behavior, wasteful living, licentious activity, and a lack of restraint. Especially the indulgence in things that are immoral, such as drinking or sensuality.

COVETOUSNESS. Verse 5 shows a covetous man is an idolater. *“Covetousness, which is idolatry”* is among the things to be mortified (Col. 3:5). It is defined as “greedy desire to have more.” *“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”* (Heb. 13:5).

FILTHINESS. Filthiness is to be cleansed (2 Cor. 7:1) and laid apart (James 1:21). This is used of anything that is contrary to purity. If it isn’t pure, it is filthy. Defined as “Obscenity, shameful, disgraceful”, this would condemn any behavior, speech, thought, dress, etc. that is indecent, immoral, lewd, impure, shameful, or obscene.

FOOLISH TALKING. According to Vine’s this “denotes more than mere idle talk but is talk which is foolishness and sin together.” It is “silly talk, talk that is ridiculous but amusing, foolish and senseless talk.”

JESTING. *“Jesting”* or “course jesting” has to do with jokes and joking. It is crude joking. This would include attempts to elicit laughs through the use of baser, inappropriate, lewd means. This would condemn jokes, making light of, or trying to get a laugh out of things that are sexual or sensual, foul language, jokes that are rude or demeaning to others, obscene, dirty, or inappropriate.

Let these things not be once named among us! No saint has any business taking part in, enjoying, or tolerating anything that would fall under any of these principles. ■

Things To Lay Aside

By John Edwards

The Scriptures teach that there are some things to be laid aside in order to run the race that is set before us. *“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every*

weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). These are things to be put off from oneself (1 Pet. 2:1):

ALL MALICE. Malice is malignity, ill-will, desire to injure. Such is *"unrighteousness"* and *"they which commit such things are worthy of death"* (Rom. 1:29, 32). Paul wrote the Ephesians, *"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice"* (Eph. 4:31). This is contrary to being the *"kind...tenderhearted, forgiving"* person God would have us to be (Eph. 4:32). The Colossians were instructed to put off malice in Colossians 3:8. Living in malice is associated with being *"foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures...envy, hateful, and hating one another"* (Titus 3:3). Have you put off all malice?

ALL GUILE. Guile is craft, subtilty or deceit. This is among that which comes from within, out of the heart of men, and defile the man (Mark 7:20-23). Jesus said of Nathanael, *"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"* (John 1:47). Would the Lord have said this of you? To be full of such is to be a *"child of the devil"* and *"enemy of all righteousness"* (Acts 13:10). It is mentioned next to *"malignity"* or malice in Romans 1:29 as *"unrighteousness"* and *"worthy of death"* (vv. 29-32). Paul said of his work among the Thessalonians, *"For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile"* (1 Thess. 2:3). Christ is the perfect example: *"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth"* (1 Pet. 2:22). Can guile be found in your mouth? Peter penned, *"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile"* (1 Pet. 3:10).

HYPOCRISIES. This is dissimulation; acting under a feigned part. Jesus said to the Pharisees, *"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity"* (Matt. 23:28). You can't fool the Lord; He knows your hypocrisy (Mark 12:15)! This is a leaven to beware of (Luke 12:1). We can be carried away with dissimulation (Gal. 2:13). Some speak lies in hypocrisy (1 Tim. 4:2).

ENVIES. Another word is *"jealousy"* or *"spite."* This is among the sins that crucified Christ (Mt. 27:18). *"Envyings"* is among *"the works of the flesh"* and *"they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God"* (Gal. 5:19-21).

ALL EVIL SPEAKINGS. Evil speaking is *"backbitings"* (2 Cor. 12:20) and such occurs when one speaks against another. Since *"charity"* or love *"thinketh no evil"* (1 Cor. 13:5), evil speaking will not come from the mouth of a loving Christian! Think no evil, speak no evil. Have you laid aside these? How about putting these off and away from yourself today? ■

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"Depart From Me ..."

By Bob Craig

The Bible says in Matthew 7:22-23, *"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*

Many, many, today fall into the category mentioned. They are making all kinds of claims of doing "worthy works" and always, *"in the name of the Lord."* Just to make a declaration that a thing is *"in the name of the Lord"* or by his authority, doesn't make it so. Some of these have been exposed as religious frauds. The word *"iniquity"* as is used in the quoted verse is translated by the word *"lawlessness"* in several other translations. That is, these people the Lord was talking about were spiritual "outlaws." They were doing their *"wonderful"* works outside the realm of Bible authority.

But hear what the Lord says their end will be: *"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity [or lawlessness]."* ■

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

Tommy Glendol McClure, Editor and Evangelist - 925-759-4357

Web Site: www.lodicachurchofchrist.com — Email: lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com — Phone: 209-365-9250