

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

“The Other”

By Bobby K. Thompson

There is a tendency and weakness that all of us confront. It constitutes doing some things that are spiritually right and then leaving other valuable things undone. Jesus saw this failure in the life of the scribes and Pharisees. ***“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone”*** (Matt. 23:23).

Under the law that existed at this time, it was proper and right for the Jews to tithe. Here were some that observed the tithing command to the degree of paying tithes of garden herbs such as mint, anise and cummin. Jesus did not appear to condemn their practice of tithing, but he did condemn them in leaving undone or omitting ***“the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith.”*** He classified them as hypocrites in that they were doing some things, while leaving others undone. Judgment, mercy and faith are very important!

In whatever we do and whatever commands we obey, we should not be guilty of overlooking judgment, mercy and faith. In comparison to tithing of garden herbs, these factors were the weightier matters of the law that they were omitting.

It is so easy for brethren to do some things in obeying the will of the Lord and leave undone other things. We seem to have adopted the philosophy of life that justifies us in doing some things and leaving others undone. ***“If ye love me, keep my commandments”*** (John 14:15). ***“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous”*** (1 John 5:3). ***“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city”*** (Rev. 22:14). These passages and many others, speak of commandments! Which can we neglect or leave undone and still classify ourselves as being faithful servants of the Lord? ***“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all”*** (James 2:10). We have no right to think that His commandments can be segregated by our choosing to obey some while omitting others. Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites for practicing such in their lifestyle. They did some things that were in keeping with the law of the Lord, but that did not justify their leaving undone other things that were commandments of the Lord. ***“These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”*** We cannot neglect ***“the other”*** and be pleasing in the sight of the Lord. ***“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin”*** (James 4:17).

This matter of leaving undone certainly applies in determining faithful preachers of God’s word. We are aware of those who preach lessons that are truthful. They seldom preach subjects that conflict with the truth of God’s word. So often, their manner of preaching will deal with the sovereignty of God or God’s love and concern for us. What they say is the truth. This is not their failure. Their failure lies in what they are not preaching. They are leaving ***“the other undone.”*** Is it right and proper to preach about God’s sovereignty and His great love for mankind? Certainly so! But there are many other subjects that men and brethren need to hear preached. I have always thought that a preacher should strive to have a good diet of subjects of which the congregation should be informed. To the Ephesians elders, Paul said: ***“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God”*** (Acts 20:26-27). His being free from the blood of all men was due to the fact that he had not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God. He did not preach some things and leave others undone! Cornelius told Peter ***“Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God”*** (Acts 10:33). Peter related such things as true preachers of God’s word are called upon to do and will do.

We need to hear sermons that dwell upon the basic principles of the gospel. We need to hear about the establishment of the church; the mission and work of the church and what is wrong with institutionalism and all “isms” that challenge the pattern of truth. There are generations that are coming along that need to be established in the truth of these matters. Sins need to be condemned and the horror of sin needs to be instilled in the hearts of all men. After preaching about the sin of using mechanical instruments of music in worship, a brother remarked that it had been years since he had heard it mentioned from the pulpit. The same might be said of fornication and many other sins. *“The other”* is being ignored and this omission is certainly condemned by the scriptures. We need to hear the whole counsel of God and we need it now! ■

Confidently Walking by Faith

By Joe R. Price

In 2 Corinthians 5:1-11, the apostle of Christ speaks with firm assurance as he urges Christians to *“walk by faith, not by sight.”* Consider the firm knowledge and assurance he describes that abides in the heart of one who lives by faith. Then, ask yourself, “Am I confidently walking by faith?”

(1) We know we have an eternal home. *“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens”* (2 Cor. 5:1). Christ and the Holy Spirit assure us that despite present pains and physical suffering, a heavenly habitation awaits those who live by faith (2 Cor. 5:2-5; John 14:1-3).

(2) We know that while we are in the flesh, we are absent from the Lord, so we walk by faith and not by sight. *“So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord”* (2 Cor. 5:6-8). We do not yet see Jesus, but when we do, we will be like Him (1 John 3:2). As we await that day of glory, we walk by faith, trusting that His truth will lead us home.

(3) We make it our aim to please the Lord. *“Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him”* (2 Cor. 5:9). Christians do not live for themselves, but for Him who died for us and rose again (2 Cor. 5:14-15).

(4) We must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad”* (2 Cor. 5:10). Our lives will be judged by God. It is better to live by faith than in unbelief. All unbelievers will *“have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death”* (Rev. 20:8). Following judgment, those who did not live by faith will be eternally lost in hell.

(5) We know the terror of the Lord. *“Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men”* (2 Cor. 5:11). God will punish sin. It is a fearful thing to come under God’s judgment being unprepared (Heb. 11:31). Be persuaded by the gospel to repent and be baptized to be saved by Jesus (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38). Then, confidently walk by faith, hearing, believing, and obeying the word of Christ (Rom. 10:17; Matt. 7:24-27). ■

“Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:16-21 NKJV).

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

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