

Trends

"Abortion is the greatest deception that has plagued the black church since Lucifer himself. Pro-Choice? This carefully devised phrase was contrived to provoke our inward zeal for freedom and the civil right to make choices freely. I am all for freedom of choice, except when it comes at the expense of innocent lives. Women who have been deceived into wrong choices and children who were never given any choice at all are victims of pro-choice America.

—via *Clenard H. Childress, Jr; BlackGenocide.org*

2 Kings 24:3-4: "3 Surely at the commandment of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, 4 and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon."

Sentence Sermons

"We cannot diminish the value of one category of human life - the unborn - without diminishing the value of all human life."

—Ronald Reagan

News & Notes

Please pray for the Wallace family. They continue to miss our services (Heb. 10:24-25). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please keep sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. She's an encouragement to all!

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!

Pray for the African appeal for funds to buy Bibles, songbooks and support faithful preachers' travel expense. Donate if you're able! 1 Jn. 3:17

Please pray for Marcia Wilson, Wilma's daughter. She recently had gall bladder surgery. Also, please pray for Lana May. She is struggling with kidney stones.

Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?!

Anyone need prayers? Let us know so we can announce it and post it.

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



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Thoughts on Psalm 42

Craig Thomas

Today's **Thought for the Day** comes from Psalm 42. This Psalm recapitulates another common theme in the Psalms. The author pours out his soul as he is oppressed by his enemies. At times he appears totally dejected and some may even interpret his dejection as putting him on the verge of leaving God. For example, in verse 3 he writes:

*"My tears have been my food day and night,
While they continually say to me,
'Where is your God?'"*

But such is not the reality of the situation. Despite his dire circumstances and his complaints, the Psalmist keeps summoning his resolve to serve God despite his sufferings (see vv. 5, 6, 8, 11). We should find great comfort in such Psalms. The trials and tribulations of life can be overwhelming at times. At times we are like this Psalmist wondering if our sorrows will ever end (v. 3) and if God even cares (v. 9). It may seem the harder we try to serve God the more we suffer. This is a natural phenomenon. Satan never sleeps! He never gives up! (cf. 1 Pet. 5:8) Satan does not have to work very hard on people who have given themselves totally over to sin. But he redoubles his effort on those determined to follow God. So, it is not wrong or a weakness of character on our part to pour out our heart with our complaints to God when we find ourselves "between a rock and a hard place."

However, when we find ourselves in such difficulties, we must remind ourselves that trials and tribulations are meant to strengthen our faith (cf. Rom. 5:3-4; 1 Pet. 1:6-9; Jas. 1:3-4). We must remind ourselves to compare the trials of life with what awaits the faithful in eternity. Paul put it this way in 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1:

"16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our

light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.^{5:1} 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.”

To make it through the furnace of afflictions this life constantly throws at us we must cultivate a deep, insatiable thirst for God and His righteousness (v. 1). That requires a dedication to the constant and diligent study of His word and an abiding dedication to prayer. As Paul said in Colossians 4:2: “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving.” If we will do these things and exercise great patience, He will lift us out of despair. Note how the Psalmist closes this Psalm (v. 11):

“Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my God.”

The question is not “Will the LORD help me?” But rather, “Do I have the faith and patience to wait for Him to help?” In that regard, we need to remember an earlier Psalm (27:14):

“Wait on the LORD;
Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart;
Wait, I say, on the LORD!”

Postscript: I wrote this *Thought for the Day* with my good friend Benjamin and my son Ryan in mind. Ryan and Benjamin, I am praying for both of you!

Cursing and the Civil War

Larry Ray Hafley

Filthy language is a breathed form of ear pollution. Worse, it is a symbol of the heart's corruption (Matt. 15:18, 19). Cursing has been a taint of the tongue through the ages (2 Sam. 16:5-7). It fouls the air, stains the soul, and mars the mind. It is invasive and pervasive. Rotting meat, manure, lice, and flies go together as do bitter, perverse hearts and coarse, crude cursing.

During the American civil war, “A number of leaders on both sides tried to do something about the language in the ranks, (but)....It was a pointless attempt. ‘Oaths, blasphemies, imprecations, obscenity, are hourly heard ringing in your ears until your mind is almost filled with

them,’ a Mississippi recruit complained, and a fellow Confederate chaplain lamented that in camp he ‘heard more cursing and swearing in twenty-four hours than in all my life before’” (Davis, *The Civil War*, 440).

Where cursing and swearing are accepted as part of the cultural fabric, purity and modesty are sure to be subject to ridicule. Filthy mouths will not praise pure minds. When a nation's language is depraved, its values will not be centered in virtue. Do you deem this judgment too harsh and severe? Perhaps the state of our country's conversation makes our conclusions fearful in their consequences. They ought to do so, for they are not our views. We borrowed them from one who said,

“Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matt. 12:34-37).

“Casting All Your Care Upon Him” SWORD TIPS #2059 (SEPTEMBER 17, 2020)

Joe R. Price

⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. (1 Peter 5:6-7, NKJV)

Every day has its share of cares and troubles (Matt. 6:34). How do we handle them? Do they discourage us unto despair? Do they weaken our faith in God? Do they immobilize our walk with Christ? Peter said to cast all our care (anxiety, distractions) on God because He cares for us. But how? How do Christians cast our cares upon a caring God? **(1)** By replacing our pride with humility (v. 6). God “resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet. 5:5). As long as we rebel against God's help, we will grope helplessly in the dark for relief that never satisfies our soul. **(2)** By patiently waiting on the Lord (v. 6). Humility prompts faithful endurance in the face of life's distractions and obstacles (1 Pet. 2:20; 4:12-13). God works on His timetable. It is good for us that He does (2 Pet. 3:9, 14-15). We cast our care on Him by obeying His will as our way of life. **(3)** By resisting the devil with sober vigilance (1 Pet. 5:8-9). Our adversary tempts us to make mountains out of molehills and forget the mighty hand of God that protects us. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psa. 46:1). We must flee to His refuge, rely on His strength, resist the devil, and remain “steadfast in the faith” (1 Pet. 5:9). **(4)** Pray without ceasing (Phil. 4:6-7). God's peace protects the heart and lives of those who trust Him and follow His way of truth. These are just some of the ways we throw all our care on Almighty God. “Have faith in God” (Mk. 11:22).