

*The things you're waiting
and hoping for, tend to arrive
at the most unexpected
moments.*

STAY POSITIVE.



Be Wise

Matthew 25:1-13

*“But while they were on their way to buy the oil,
the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready
went in with him to the wedding banquet.*

And the door was shut.

*“Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘
open the door for us!’ “But he replied, ‘Truly I tell
you, I don’t know you.’ “Therefore keep watch,
because you do not know the day or the hour.*

November 12, 2017

Thought for the Week

Scriptures – Psalm 71, Psalm 92

Growing old

Longevity is one of the greatest achievements of our modern era. The United Nations calls it one of the most significant social transformations of the 21st century. Advances in health care are a major factor in lengthening our lives. Over the past 20 years the number of people aged 100, or over, has quadrupled. There are now 2.7 million people aged over 80 and life expectancy continues to increase. But increasing length of life does not guarantee quality of life or make us more ready to face death and eternity.

The increase in life expectancy is bringing major challenges to our society, especially in caring for older people. A recent report highlighted a shortage of care home beds. In 5 years there will be 42,000 fewer care home beds than are needed. This raises big questions for those who are elderly, for their families and for our society. Our modern “progressive” society is changing. The influence of churches has significantly decreased and secular thinking is more common. An increasing number of families are reluctant to take on the care of their elderly parents.

The Bible encourages us all to consider how we live and how we prepare for our old age. We all need to lay down the essential foundations for our later years. In Psalm 71 the psalmist says to God, *“My life is an example to many, because you have been my strength and protection. That is why I can never stop praising you; I declare your glory all day long. And now, in my old age, don’t set me aside. Don’t abandon me when my strength is failing.”* Older people can be a great example to the younger generation. In Psalm 92 we read, *“The godly will flourish like palm trees and grow strong like the cedars of Lebanon. Even in old age they will still produce fruit; they will remain vital and green.”*

The early Christians lovingly cared for widows but also encouraged their families to care for them. “Take care of any widow who has no one else to care for her. But if she has children or grandchildren, their first responsibility is to show godliness at home and repay their parents by taking care of them. This is something that pleases God.” When we reach the end of our lives, as all of us must, it is a great blessing to be surrounded by our loved ones as we leave this world and pass into the presence of God.

When We Lose Everything

The Bible tells the story of a man called Job. He was a blameless and upright man who feared God. He had seven sons and three daughters, and owned thousands of sheep, camels, oxen and donkeys. He also had many servants. On the same day, all his animals were stolen or killed by lightning and all his sons and daughters died as the house in which they were enjoying a meal together was struck by a tornado and collapsed. He lost everything. When the news of these devastating events came to Job, he tore his robe and shaved his head and fell to the ground in worship saying, *"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised."*

Devastating loss is not a sign of God's displeasure or an indication that those who experience it are worse people than others. We can pray for those who are seeking to rebuild their lives that God will give them the strength they need and also that he will make us truly thankful for all the blessings he has graciously given us.

Why Seek Wisdom in All Things

In the book of Proverbs 4:7 ASV it says, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; Yea, with all thy getting get understanding."

It is interesting to note that the author of the book of Proverbs is the man Solomon himself! The invitation that he gives is for his children to come and receive instructions from him. [Proverbs 4:1-2

Solomon desired that his children would grow up to have wisdom and knowledge in the same proportion as he himself had been gifted by God. Wisdom is preeminent and we must desire to attain it in a very skillful and godly manner.

God gives it liberally when we ask of Him. The writer of James says, "If any man lacks wisdom, [to guide him through a decision or circumstance] let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally [freely] and upbraideth not [without rebuke or blame]; and it shall be given him." ~ James 1:5 KJV

Along with wisdom it is our duty to also get understanding – to actively seek spiritual discernment, mature comprehension and logical interpretation that can come to us only through the word of God. Here are 8 things that we all need wisdom for –

1. Wisdom to know and to love God first/foremost and have a relationship with Him (Genesis 1:26-27; Deuteronomy 6:5)
2. Wisdom to discern truth (John 8:32)
3. Wisdom to do God's will (Romans 12:2)
4. Wisdom is the key that unlocks the vault of God's treasures (Colossians 2:3)
5. Wisdom to know what to say and when to say it (James 1:5)
6. Wisdom to raise your children and keep them on the right path (Proverbs 22:6)
7. Wisdom to administer justice (2 Chronicles 1:10)
8. Wisdom to solve problems (Proverbs 3:5)
9. Wisdom to make the right choices and decisions (Proverbs 11:14)