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Think on these things...

Philippians 4:8-9

WHAT IS RIGHT?

Over the past five years, the president of the United States has given numerous speeches and news conferences to inform the public about his perspectives, plans, and policies. I have heard him often say that our nation should follow his policy, decision, or action plan because “it’s just the right thing to do.” Citizens nationwide and Congress debate and disagree about the right things to do for our nation and its security. In Philippians 4:8, Paul directs Christians to think about whatever is **right**. But just what is right? Who is the authority on what is right? Is it the president, politicians, the people, or my parents? Is it me, and what I personally think is right?

The Bible says twice in Proverbs 14:12 and repeated exactly in chapter 16 verse 25, “There is a way that seems **right** to a man, but in the end it leads to death.” In addition, Proverbs 12:15 says, “The way of a fool is **right** in his own eyes; But he that is wise hearkeneth unto counsel.” (NAS) From these passages, it appears that one could be mistaken about what is right. If a man or woman can be wrong about what is right, to what standard shall we hold? Solomon reveals in Proverbs 21:2, “All a man’s ways seem **right** to him, but the Lord weighs the heart. To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.” This passage makes clear that God is the judge and determiner of what is right. It is also clear that God places great value on doing what is right. He even ranks it higher than sacrifices made to Him.

Further evidence in Psalm 19:8 tells us “the precepts of the Lord are **right**, giving joy to the heart.” Psalm 119:137 reiterates, “**Righteous** are you, O Lord, and your laws are **right**. The statutes you have laid down are **righteous**; they are fully trustworthy.” To think on what is right means to think about God and to act according to His laws, precepts, and statutes. To come to know God, His will, and His commands is right.

When my husband and I had children, we felt a great responsibility to teach them about God and righteousness. Fathers, in particular, are directed in Ephesians 6:4 “do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” In order to accomplish this goal, we had to know the training and instructions of the Lord from God’s word.

We began with the very first command with a promise found in Ephesians 6:1-2. It says, “Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is **right**. Honor your father and mother - which is the first commandment with a promise - that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on earth.” In this verse, we see that obeying one’s parents is right, and not only that, it provides the obedient child a reward of things going well for them and a long life.

When my children were small, it became apparent that they would disobey my husband and I. They just would not act right at times. We taught them what was right, but they deliberately chose to disobey. As a result of their choices, we disciplined (taught) them by showing them the ways in which they should rightly go. We believed it essential to teach children by word and deed the right attitudes and behaviors before expecting them to act it out. (i.e. Tell them the rules before you expect them to play the game.) Next, when our children disobeyed, as all children do, we would discuss what they had done to find out if they knew the difference between the right and wrong behavior. Once we confirmed that they knew right from wrong, we would ask them to tell us what the Bible said children were to do as far as behaving rightly. From the time they could talk and choose to disobey, we taught our children how to recite and understand the meaning of Ephesians 6:1-3. They knew from God’s word that a child’s obligation was to obey their parents in the Lord. They learned that to “obey your parents” was right. As a result, they also knew when their behavior or an action they had chosen was not right and disobedient.

Once the children acknowledged their disobedience, it was important for them to learn and to remember not to disobey again. Discipling is training. Discipline is training, as well. As parents, our job was to “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6. In Proverbs 13:24 it says, “He who spares the rod hates his son, but **he who loves him is careful to discipline him.**” All discipline should be fit or appropriate for the child and the situation. Whether the discipline and consequences result in them saying they are sorry and repenting, time out, extra chores, serving the one they hurt or offended, restitution, writing lines, or a spanking, the goal of all discipline should be to help the child to learn and to remember to be obedient in righteousness found in God’s word. We were training them in righteousness. Proverbs 20:11 says, “Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and **right.**” With this passage in mind, how much more will we, as adults, be known by our actions -”by whether our conduct is pure and right”?

As parents, we had an obligation and responsibility before God to bring our children up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (see Ephesians 6:4) We taught our children that our standards of right and wrong were not arbitrary, capricious, or something we made up to make their life difficult. We wanted them to know that we, too, were obligated to be obedient and righteous before God. This meant apologizing and repentance for things we did wrong. Yes, we apologized to our children too. It meant making amends when we could, and accepting the consequences of our wrong and disobedient behaviors before man and God. Not perfect at all, we sought to walk the talk, and put God’s will at the forefront of decisions and actions we took. Because the father in a family is a type of the Heavenly Father, children will learn righteousness and develop trust and confidence in God when their parents do what is right.

Whether a parent or not, God calls us all to righteousness. Matthew 6:33 says, “But seek first His kingdom and His **righteousness**, and all these things (health, food, clothing, etc.) will be given to you as well.” With proper priorities established, we will want for nothing. Matthew 5:6 reinforces, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for **righteousness**, for they will be filled.”

What is right and righteous? II Timothy 3:16 tells us that “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in **righteousness**, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” God’s word is right and righteous, not man’s.

It is not always easy to do what is right, but Paul encourages in II Thessalonians 3:13 “And as for you, brothers (and sisters in Christ), never tire of doing what is **right.**” If you have strayed from the righteousness of God, take note of what King David said after Nathan the

prophet confronted him about his sin of adultery with Bathsheba. King David said, “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a **right** spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10 Renewal, and redemption from sin await those who repent and seek to walk in the Lord’s righteousness.

Our nation will continue to discuss and debate what’s right and the right things to do for our country. Unique among all nations, the United States of America set up a government, of, by, and for the people. We the people and those we elect will chose to do what is right according to God or not. David and Bathsheba’s second son, Solomon, said, “**Righteousness** exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.” Proverbs 14:34.

As individuals, we will personally chose to do right or wrong. Great blessings and rewards await those who think about and do what is right. Psalm 21:21 promises, “He who pursues **righteousness** and love finds life, prosperity and honor.” I hope that this study encourages and spurs you on toward righteousness. I only scratched the surface of the many passages on this subject. At the end of this piece, I included additional scriptures I didn’t have time or space to discuss. I hope you will look these up as well, and may God bless you as you think on these things...

Robin Robbins House

Additional Scripture Study Verses

Romans 1:17, Romans 12:17, II Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 6:14, II Peter 2:2, I John 3:7, in the Old Testament see Exodus 15:26, Deuteronomy 13:18, and Judges 17:6

Quotations - from the NIV and NAS Bible Translations



DID YOU KNOW?

1. What fruit did Eve eat that she was not supposed to eat?
2. How many sons did Israel have?
3. How many daughters did Israel have?
4. What disciple was first to the tomb of Jesus after he arose?
5. What disciple first went in the tomb of Jesus after he arose?
6. Who first reported that Jesus' tomb was open?
7. What time and day did Jesus first appear to the disciples?
8. Why did the disciples have the doors locked in John 20:19?
9. What were Jesus' first words to the disciples after his resurrection?

RECIPES

CHICKEN CHILI

Prep time 20" Serves 20

170 calories/serving without cheese topping

- 2 cups great norther beans, dried
- 2 pounds of boneless, skinless chicken breasts cut into 1" pieces
- 4 10 oz. cans Ro'Tel Diced Tomatoes and Green Chilies
- 1 15 oz. can tomato paste
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 15.25 oz. can of whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 Tbsp minced garlic (optional)
- 1 cup green bell pepper, diced
- 3 Tbsp chili seasoning (Tone's or Williams)
- garnish with fresh herbs or top with grated cheese



Put beans in a large pot with enough cold water to cover them by 4".

Let them stand overnight.

Coat a large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Brown chicken over medium-high heat in hot skillet. Drain off fat and discard.

In a 4 quart slow cooker, combine chicken with remaining ingredients above.

Cover and cook on high setting for 2-3 hours or slow cook on low setting 5-6 hours.

Please feel free to submit recipes, positive quotes, comments, etc. to
The Good News Gazette at thegoodnewsgazette1@gmail.com

*“Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are on the **righteous** and his ears are attentive to their cry; the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.”*

Psalm 34:14-16

