

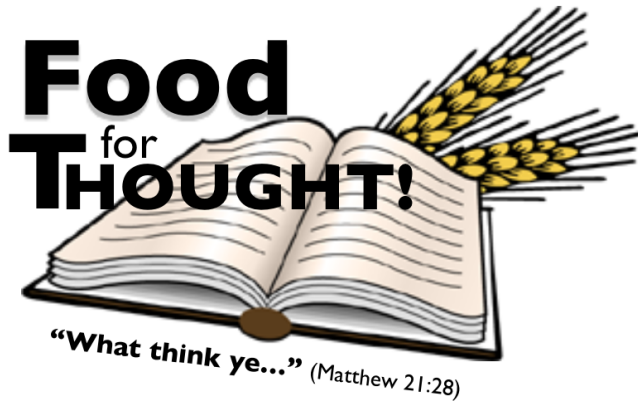
Lifting Up The

STANDARD



"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19).

None So Blind As Those Who Will Not Think!



“What Think Ye?”

One of the greatest needs we have in this day of apostasy is to do some serious thinking about what is going on around us.

As a result of thinking, we arrive at what we believe about something and what we believe about people.

What we believe, we accept as true. What we accept as true determines our course of action concerning life's situations.



The Process of Thinking

We all think; however, our thinking might possibly be distorted, and self-serving. It would be a good idea to stop and think about what we believe and why we believe it. Is it the truth because I believe it or because the particular group I associate with holds to that particular view? Is it true because I want to believe it? Do I refuse to give something some serious study because I might have to admit what I believe is wrong? Have I considered the extent to which my beliefs are justified Scripturally?

Proverbs 4:26 says, *"Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."* The dictionary says the word "ponder" means *"to think about something carefully, especially before making a decision or reaching a conclusion."*

We should *"ponder the path of our feet"* and *"ponder"* the things we do as we travel those paths. This verse says, by pondering, or thinking, *"let all thy ways be established."* If we are going to take the right course in life, we will first need to seriously *think* concerning *"the path of our feet"* and the things we do while traveling the paths we choose. The Word of God says, *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths"* (Proverbs 3:5,6).

Bible Based Or An Opinion?

The dictionary says an opinion is, *"a view or judgment formed about someone or something not necessarily based on knowledge."* Hosea 4:6 says, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."* The verse goes on to say the reason God's people had a *"lack of knowledge"* was because they had *"rejected knowledge."*

Knowledge Alone Is Not Enough

Knowledge is important; however, knowledge without discernment is simply an accumulation of information that may or may not be correct. Concerning those who are spiritual leaders the Bible commands, *"They shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean"* (Ezekiel 44:23).

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1. **"They Shall Teach"** - Teaching is a very time consuming responsibility given to those in a position of spiritual leadership. (i.e. Fathers or Pastors). **Deuteronomy 6:7** commands the father saying, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." **Ephesians 4:6** commands, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." **Hebrews 5:12** says, "ye ought to be teachers."
2. **"Teach My People"** - It will be a great day for the cause of Christ when parents acknowledge the fact that what we refer to as our children are His children and what we, as pastors, refer to as our congregations belong to the Lord. Jesus said, "feed my lambs" (John 21:15), and He said, "feed my sheep" (John 21:16).
3. **"Teaching The Difference"** - A parent or a pastor cannot teach the difference between things they know nothing about. For example, how can we teach the difference between music that honours God, and music that dishonours God, if we have not studied to show ourselves approved unto God in the area of music? Remember, an opinion is "a view or judgment (conclusion) formed about something not necessarily based on knowledge." Teaching the difference is teaching the facts; not teaching our opinions or the opinion of a friend in the ministry.
4. **"The Difference Between The Holy And The Profane"** - First, we must consider what *holy* means. Holiness finds its foundation in the Holy Spirit in-dwelling us and allowing Him to change us to be like Christ. Second, we must consider what is meant by "*profane*." In the Book of Ezekiel, we find the problem originated with carnal, leadership that "put no difference between the holy and profane" (Ezekiel 22:26). We read, "they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it" (Ezekiel 23:39). The Hebrew word profane is *chol*. and has been translated "common" twice and "unholy" in Leviticus 10:10. Anything that is not holy is profane. We like to come up with our grey area; however, there is no grey area with God. It is "acceptable unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:10) or it is unholy.
5. **"Cause Them To Discern"** - What is discernment? The Hebrew word here is *yada*. It has been translated "perceive" nineteen times. We are without excuse. The Holy Spirit will guide us "into all truth" (John 16:13), if we are teachable and willing to let Him guide us. Knowledge is not enough. As previously mentioned, knowledge is simply the accumulation of information. We need discernment in order to determine the truth about the information we have accumulated.
6. **"The Unclean And The Clean"** - Again, in Ezekiel 22:26, God places the blame for the people not being able to discern the clean or the unclean at the feet of those in the God-given position of spiritual leadership. (i.e. Fathers or Pastors).

What Do You Think?

Jesus asked, "**What think ye...**" (Matthew 21:28). There are many issues facing us as we begin another new year. Let us determine the truth of Scripture, rather than our opinions or the opinion of a friend that may, or may not, be based on fact.

"As A Man Thinketh...so is he."