

Hebrews 7.4-5

Considering Well...

We are told to consider, to think deeply and clearly. It is one of four times here in this letter we are told this. The idea here is used to urge us “diligently to behold,” “contemplate on,” or “to look into” the things proposed... The writer is returning to his original theme, the superiority of Christ over all else; but I want to pause today to think about thinking. To consider consideration. For deep and disciplined thought has become foreign to our age, when parroting the rote arguments of the elite suffices for most, and any argument or even discourse will get you cancelled. Scripture calls us to approach knowledge differently. God invites us to think, to reason

Isaiah 1:18 urges us:

¹⁸ “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.”

It is extremely difficult to divest people of their religious assumptions, habits or pretensions. Truth alone can do it, but we are often unprepared for the violence with which truth assaults our castles.

In *Matthew 11:12* Jesus said :

"the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."

There is a holy wrestling, an obligation to fight FOR truth, which sometimes means having a fight WITH truth itself in order to understand it and its implications. It is not easy and further, it is absolutely NOT comfortable. But it is both necessary and commanded. All the knowledge that shapes our world is impressive but on the day of judgement it will all mean less than nothing.

Jeremiah 9:23–24 (NKJV)

²³ Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; ²⁴ But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness,

judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the Lord.

This also means that there are fundamental truths that **MUST** be understood and obeyed or everything else will mean nothing... God tells us that knowing Him is the **ONE** thing that matters most, that knowing Him **AS HE ACTUALLY IS**, is the one thing that matters... Proverbs goes so far as to tell us that this alone is the beginning of wisdom...

Proverbs 9:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

So this morning we will think about thinking and how it impacts our lives, and I pray that God will bless and guide our consideration so that we are hearing Him and not me!

I. THE OBLIGATION TO THINK

- A. Be deeply concerned with the truth of God's word

B. Understand that God's truth is FOR YOU

1. The fact of your hearing it means that this moment is given for you to find truth, to find life...
2. If you think that it is for someone else, you will miss this moment
3. That misapprehension will leave you spiritually stunted

C. It is not enough to be moral, the scripture is not given merely for the sake of moral living

1. Resist all efforts to make the Bible a collection of moral stories
2. Be clear that it is the very truth of God unto salvation

2 Timothy 3:14–17 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in

Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

D. Be equally clear that God tells us that His Word and will should alter our lives... consider the message of Jeremiah

➤ *Jeremiah 5:7–9 (NKJV)*

⁷ “How shall I pardon you for this? Your children have forsaken Me And sworn by those that are not gods. When I had fed them to the full, Then they committed adultery And assembled themselves by troops in the harlots’ houses. ⁸ They were like well-fed lusty stallions; Every one neighed after his neighbor’s wife. ⁹ Shall I not punish them for these things?” says the Lord. “And shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?

➤ *Jeremiah 5:11–13 (NKJV)*

¹¹ For the house of Israel and the house of Judah Have dealt very treacherously with Me,” says the Lord. ¹² They have lied about the Lord, And said, “It is not He. Neither will evil come upon us, Nor shall we see sword or famine. ¹³ And the prophets become wind, For the word is not in them. Thus shall it be done to them.”

➤ *Jeremiah 5:26–29 (NKJV)*

²⁶ ‘For among My people are found wicked men; They lie in wait as one who sets snares; They set a trap; They catch men. ²⁷ As a cage is full of birds, So their houses are full of deceit. Therefore they have become great and grown rich. ²⁸ They have grown fat, they are sleek; Yes, they surpass the deeds of the wicked; They do not plead the cause, The cause of the fatherless; Yet they prosper, And the right of the needy they do not defend. ²⁹ Shall I not punish them for these things?’ says the Lord. ‘Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?’

➤ *Jeremiah 9:8–9 (NKJV)*

⁸ Their tongue is an arrow shot out; It speaks deceit; One speaks peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, But in his heart he lies in wait. ⁹ Shall I not punish them for these things?" says the Lord. "Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?"

E. Delight in the truth and the beauty of God's word and will

1. If you find the things of God boring, you will never attend to them earnestly
2. If you find the things of God off-putting you will avoid them
3. If you find the things of God contrary to your desire, you will only come close enough to God to have some false assurance of your soul then run back to your sin like a dog to its vomit.
4. Mere intellectual investigation does not suffice either, for idle curiosity will warp truth into monstrous fantasies and deplorable nonsense

5. Delight yourself in the things of God and find Him sustaining your mind and heart through the difficulties, and know that He is changing your character even as He changes your mind

F. Study, meditation and prayer along with every other God appointed means is necessary for us to grow.

1. Memorization
2. Fellowship
3. Correction
4. Obedience - It is not enough to simply hear the truth, it will not do alone. It cannot carry us to perfection and sanctification without the application it demands.
5. Exercise of known truth - practice what you know, understand that God's truth weaves throughout all of life. Everything that He gives us will find application in sundry places. Look for places to apply and exercise what you know.

II. CHALLENGING ASSUMPTIONS

A. Dangerous ground

1. What we just "know"
2. What "everybody knows"
3. What "we have always done"
4. What we do without reason
5. What we do without thought

B. Be careful of the things that spring from your own mind and ideas.

C. Weigh everything against the scripture and let the word of God speak unhindered

D. All the carefully constructed logical edifices in the world do not outweigh the plain statements of scripture.

E. Hard truth can be a difficult thing to grapple with, especially when it challenges our dearly held assumptions or inherited beliefs...

1. Someone being converted out of a family history of Catholicism for instance grapples not only with their own soul, but also with the

knowledge of mom and dad, grandparents and other beloved relatives living and dying deceived...

2. None of us **likes** being told that we are wrong, or have been foolish or that we have been deceived...

F. The work of changing your mind on these things is often slow, usually painful and almost always opposed on many fronts.

III. TRUTH IS SINGULAR

A. There are not your truths and my truths

B. Truth is not defined by the hearer

C. Truth is an absolute in the whole of the universe.

D. Truth is NOT defined by us, but rather by the God who made us and everything else.

E. Truth is that which is consistent with God –

1. His nature
2. His creation
3. His character

4. His will
5. His purpose
6. His Word (which is the revelation of all those things)

F. Therefore, Truth is not negotiable and will not be changed. It is eternal, just like the God who defines it

IV. OUR UNDERSTANDING CAN CHANGE

- A. Those changes demonstrate that we did not fully understand
- B. When our knowledge is confronted by the communication of Scripture, our position **MUST** be altered;
 1. It is not acceptable to God for us to say, "yes, I see the scripture says that but I will stay with what I have always believed."
 2. It is not acceptable for us to deny the plain truth of scripture for the sake of comfort
 3. It is not acceptable for us to deny the plain truth of scripture

- C. While we must be willing to consider that we have been wrong, to investigate and challenge fundamentally held beliefs, we must also fight FOR those same things when the challenges are merely trends or arrogance that says we must change for the sake of change.
- D. Intellectual honesty is absolutely required, we have to be earnest in this

V. CHALLENGED READERS

- A. The writer has returned to His theme.
 - 1. Christ is greater than the traditions of the fathers and the priesthood that has been given through the law
 - 2. Christ IS the greater priesthood.
 - 3. The old must be re-evaluated and subsequently jettisoned.
- B. He has been on a side trail for a while now, but in returning to his original theme, the challenge is real. His Jewish readers must wrestle with

uncomfortable truth. Their beloved traditions will not suffice.

C. Here is the essence of the conflict - Christ is superior

They must accept His greater priesthood and the conclusion of the lesser or Christ will be of NO value to them.

D. This is the chief of those fundamental truths we alluded to earlier, Christ ALONE is the heart and soul of the scripture.

1. It is fruitless to declare the gospel to those who will not engage their minds and think
2. To those who will only hold fast to the things they already know...

E. Grace is secondary to truth

1. These need the law to break them open... the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul

2. So we are warned to be diligent and active in thinking about the things of God - to not give ourselves over to sloth in regards to truth.
3. God will never accept our sincerity in the face of His truth and say, "well I guess that's good enough".
4. Sincerely believing in a lie just makes you sincerely wrong, and unchanged will leave you sincerely damned.

F. Be sure that what you cling to is truth and nothing else. God's word is worth the effort and the hope of Jesus Christ is worth the loss of all things, even your cherished falsehoods!