



Ponder This

PONDER

To reflect or consider with
thoroughness and care.



*This work is dedicated to my loving wife,
Marie,
my constant companion since July 1954,
who encouraged me to put these thoughts into print.*

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Three Common But Worthless Activities

Fretful Over Yesterday's Failures

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13

If I should say, "My foot has slipped," Thy lovingkindness, O Lord, will hold me up. When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Thy consolations delight my soul.

Psalms 94:18-19

* * *

Worry Over Today's Problems

Anxiety in the heart of a man weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad.

Proverbs 12:25

Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.

1 Peter 5:7

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Philippians 4:6

* * *

Anxious Over Tomorrow's Uncertainty

"Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Matthew 6:34

~~~~~  
**Learn from the past, live in the present, and  
prepare for the future.**  
~~~~~



Flee

To run away, as from trouble or danger.

When destructive storms threaten, people are told to evacuate (flee from the ravages of the storm). Good advice. Come to think about it, there is good advice to be found in the Bible when destructive situations arise.

* * *

When immorality (sexual sins) loom on the horizon: Flee!

Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

1 Corinthians 6:18

* * *

When unrestrained passion tempts one to sin: Flee!

Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

2 Timothy 2:22

* * *

When the desire to be rich tempts one to compromise principle and ethics: Flee!

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

1 Timothy 6:9-11

* * *

Ignoring such admonitions puts one at risk of experiencing serious consequences.

Heed the warnings to flee.

~~~~~  
**To hesitate in uncertainty leaves one vulnerable.**  
~~~~~



Calling It like It Is

Euphemisms are used to soften harsh realities. “Passed away” is softer than “died.” “Miscue” is softer than “wrongdoing.” In a society that does not like to think in terms of good and evil, they are often employed to make something acceptable and alleviate feelings of guilt. Here are a few heard almost every day.

An affair

is more appealing to the ears than committing adultery.

Sexually active

makes fornication seem like normal teen activity.

A woman’s choice

makes taking of a human life simply a matter of preference.

Gay

has an upbeat connotation that makes homosexuality (a deviant lifestyle) seem normal.

Living together

is easier on the ears than living in sin.

Doing your own thing

makes anarchy sound downright appealing.

*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;
Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness;
Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!
Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes
and clever in their own sight!*

Isaiah 5:20-21

~~~~~  
**Changing what it’s called doesn’t change  
what it is.**  
~~~~~



In the Short Run

By lying one can avoid punishment that it due.
By stealing one can acquire without working.
By being dishonest one can gain the advantage.

But the gain is only temporary. In the long run one has to live with his conscience bearing witness and accusing (not a pleasant experience). Also, one lives in fear of being found out. Later, if not sooner, the consequences will have to be dealt with. Maybe not in this life, but certainly at the judgment.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:10

When one is honest, truthful, and hard-working his conscience voices approval.

There is no fear of being found out.
There is no fear of being punished.
There is no fear of the judgment.

**Telling the truth may be hard to bear,
but telling lies is harder!**

**The short run may be tempting,
but it's the long run that matters most!**

~~~~~  
**Being truthful may cost you something,  
but lying can bankrupt you.**  
~~~~~



Three Failed Opportunities

A Kind Thought Not Expressed

Others are not mind-readers. The only way they will know that you have a kind thought is for you to say it. How sad it is that we let kind thoughts go unspoken.

*For who among men knows the thoughts of a man
except the spirit of the man, which is in him?*

1 Corinthians 2:11a

A Kind Touch Not Given

A hug, a pat on the back, a firm handshake what wonders they produce. Our actions speak volumes. Such expressions of friendship, praise, and acceptance should never be withheld.

*And they began to weep aloud and embraced Paul, and repeatedly
kissed him, grieving especially over the word which he had spoken,
that they should see his face no more. And they were accompanying
him to the ship.*

Acts 20:37-38

A Kind Deed Not Done

Passing up an opportunity to do a kind deed is detrimental to the one who would benefit from it and the one who could have done it. Never let an opportunity to do good pass by. Chances are there will not be a second opportunity.

*Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to
share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future,
so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.*

1 Timothy 6:18-19



**It costs so little, I wonder why
We give it so little thought;
A smile, kind words, a glance, a touch—
What magic by them is wrought.**

—Anonymous





On Closer Observation

The better acquainted we become with others, the more we are able to see their imperfections. This is true in all close associations, especially in the local congregation. Herein lies the test of one's character. It takes little effort to focus on the faults, failures, and irritations of others and to comment on them.

However, it takes conscious effort to see and comment on the qualities we admire. The result of expressing the qualities we admire in others can produce dramatic results in them and in us.

We need to look for the good in others (the "bad" is obvious), just as we want them to look for the good in us! Is this not what brotherly love is all about?

“. . . walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love.”

Ephesians 4:1-2

Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart.

1 Peter 1:22

Wisdom From Proverbs

*Oil and perfume make the heart glad,
So a man's counsel is sweet to his friend.*

27:9

*A friend loves at all times,
And a brother is born for adversity.*

17:17

*Faithful are the wounds of a friend,
But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.*

27:6

~~~~~  
**Friends are people who love us  
in spite of our faults.**  
~~~~~




PONDER THIS



Lame* Excuses

The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Genesis 3:12-13

Man:

She gave it to me and I ate.

Woman:

Serpent deceived me and I ate.

God:

You are responsible for your own actions.

Lame Excuses Today

He/she made me do it.

I couldn't help it.

I was told it was okay.

I wasn't the only one.

It sounded good to me.

Others have done worse things.

It's not a big deal.

That's just the way I am.

ACCOUNTABILITY

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:10

—
* Weak and ineffectual; unsatisfactory.

~~~~~  
**Just because an excuse is offered doesn't guarantee  
it being accepted.**  
~~~~~



PONDER THIS



Do It!

KNOWLEDGE

knowing what to do

WISDOM

knowing how to do it

SKILL

being able to do it

VIRTUE

doing it

Knowing what to do is of little value,
unless one knows how to do it.

Knowing how to do it is of little value,
unless one is able to do it.

Being able to do it is of little value,
unless one does it.

"If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."

John 13:17

*"Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do,
and does not do it, to him it is sin."*

James 4:17

~~~~~

**What to do . . . how to do . . . able to do  
are worthless without  
doing it!**

~~~~~



Communication

Most of us have experienced a problem with connections on the phone. Sometimes it may be that we can hear the other person but they can't hear us, or maybe we can't hear them. Unless there is a speaker and a listener there is no communication.

Communication is important in relationships such as marriage, family, with brethren, and with God. Each person needs to be a good listener as well as good communicator. Both are necessary. (Experience seems to indicate that being a good listener is the harder of the two.)

Communication is important in our relationship with God. We speak to God through prayer. He speaks to us through His Word. These avenues of communication need to be kept open and used frequently.

SPEAKING TO HIM

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

1 John 5:14-15

Pray without ceasing.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

LISTENING TO HIM

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Matthew 11:15

"This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!"

Mark 9:7

Be a good listener as well as a good speaker. God has promised to hear our prayers and we need to be willing to hear Him. We expect Him to answer our prayers; He expects us to heed His words. We need to be doers, not just listeners.

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Matthew 7:24

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

James 1:22

Be a good communicator with others, with brethren, and with God!

~~~~~  
**Communication is the life blood of every relationship.**  
~~~~~



Testing . . .

“For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.”
Job 34:3

I came across this verse the other day, and it struck me, that just as we taste food to see if it is palatable we need to test the words we hear. A number of Biblical passages speak of being careful what we say. But this verse teaches us to test what we hear.

Here is a handy check list to use to filter out what is not fit to hear.

Test Words Before Hearing

- Is it true?
- Is it hearsay?
- Is it gossip?
- Should I hear it?
- Why am I being told this?
- Will hearing it benefit me?

Is this not what we teach our children in the song: “O Be Careful”?

O be careful little ears what you hear,
 O be careful little ears what you hear,
 There’s a Father up above
 And He’s looking down in love.
 So, be careful little ears what you hear.

~~~~~  
**When someone asks, “Have you heard...?”**  
**It may be best to respond, “Should I?”**  
 ~~~~~



Fault is the easiest thing in the world to find.

An Easy Job

I was given the following advice by an elderly brother years ago: “Look for the good in others.” It’s advice that is full of wisdom.

On occasion I have held up a white sheet of paper with one small black spot on it. I then would asked the class, “What do you see?” Some would say, “A black spot.” They focused only on the spot and overlooked the white paper.

AN IMPORTANT LESSON

We must see more than the faults in others.

~~~~~

### Fault Finding

JESUS

**(Fault: From Nazareth)**

*Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”* John 1:45-46

### THE TWELVE APOSTLES

**(Fault: Galileans)**

*They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? “And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? ... And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others were mocking and saying, “They are full of sweet wine.”* Acts 2:7-8, 12-13

### PAUL THE APOSTLE

**(Fault: Personal presence)**

*For they say, “His letters are weighty and strong, but his personal presence is unimpressive and his speech contemptible.”*

2 Corinthians 10:10



## Characteristics of a Christian

The features that identify, tell apart, or describe a Christian.

One who:

- Is slow to lose patience, enduring any inconvenience.
- Is quick to be gracious and kind.
- Looks for a way to be helpful.
- Refrains from trying to impress others with his own importance.
- Thinks the best, not the worst, of others.
- Is wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove in dealing with others.
- Is not easily provoked or irritated.
- Does not gloat over the wickedness of other people.
- Exhibits the love of Christ in his heart and life.

### **These characteristics can be summed up as “LOVE.”**

LOVE OF THE LORD AND LOVE OF OTHERS.

*And He said to him, “‘you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”* Matthew 22-37-39



**To love and labor is the essence of living as a Christian.**

**ACTIVE GOODWILL.**





## Modern Sayings With Biblical Roots

### AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?

*Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"*

Genesis 4:9

**An unwillingness to assume responsibility for the what one does to another.**

### EYE FOR AN EYE

*"But if there is any further injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise."*

Exodus 21:23-25

#### **A demand for revenge.**

(However, it originally was a statement of justice: that the punishment should fit the crime. The avenging was not to be an act of overkill.)

### FLY IN THE OINTMENT

*Dead flies make a perfumer's oil stink, so a little foolishness is weightier than wisdom and honor.*

Ecclesiastes 10:1

**Anything that hinders or prevents success.**

### PROPHET IS WITHOUT HONOR IN HIS OWN COUNTRY

*And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household."*

Matthew 13:57

**Those who are personally acquainted often fail to recognize one's abilities or accomplishments.**

### WALKING ON WATER

*And in the fourth watch of the night He [Jesus] came to them, walking on the sea.*

Matthew 14:25

**High regard for one who performs particularly difficult tasks.**



## Am I the Only One?

*No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.*

1 Corinthians 10:13

\* \* \*

### Three Things We Learn

#### **My temptations are not unique.**

I am not to think – “I’ve been singled out. Woe is me.”

\* \* \*

#### **I am able to resist.**

I am not to consider myself powerless – “I couldn’t avoid it.”

\* \* \*

#### **I have a way out.**

I am not to regard myself as helpless – “I can’t help it.”

**Yield not to temptation. Rather, use it as an opportunity to strengthen your faith.**

~~~~~  
**Temptations are attractive only to those who have
a desire within.**
~~~~~





# Return of the Wayward Son

**Parable: Luke 15:11-32**

Things the father did not say when the prodigal son returned:

What are you doing back here?

What do you want now?

What happened to your inheritance?

I can't forgive you for what you have done.

You owe me big time.

Do you realize just how much you hurt me?

You have no idea just how many sleepless nights you caused me.

Do you realize how hard it has been explaining what happened to you?

You made your bed, so lie in it.

## **A Personal Question**

When a penitent, erring child (or brother or sister in Christ) returns what should you say?

### **Luke 15:20-24**

*So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found." And they began to celebrate."*

~~~~~  
"Burnt bridges" are difficult to rebuild.

Don't be the one who destroyed it.
~~~~~



## Grace and Knowledge

*“... grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

2 Peter 3:18

To **grow in grace (favor)** of Jesus one must be diligent to show his love for Him by keeping His commandments. This is done by daily living as a true disciple, not being conformed to the world, but being transformed by the renewing of the mind.

To **grow in knowledge** of Jesus one must be diligent to learn all about Him and His teachings. This is done by immersing oneself in a life-long quest to know Him: the prophecies about Him in the Old Testament, His life as recorded in the Gospels, His salvation as recorded in the book of Acts, His church as recorded in the Epistles.

### SUMMED UP

*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

Titus 2:11-14

~~~~~  
**Growth is never accidental. It's always the
result of personal effort.**
~~~~~



## Humble, Humility

Marked by meekness or modesty in behavior, attitude, or spirit; not arrogant or prideful. Showing deferential or submissive respect.

**Sincere humility attracts. Self-praise detracts.**

*Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger,  
and not your own lips.*

Proverbs 27:2

**Others have wishes, wants, and needs that are as important  
to them as mine are to me.**

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard  
one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your  
own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

Philippians 2:3-4

**Be friendly to all, especially those who are most  
in need of a friend.**

*Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but  
associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.*

Romans 12:16

### SUMMED UP

*To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly,  
kindhearted, and humble in spirit.*

1 Peter 3:8

~~~~~  
**It's impossible to look down on other
people if one is humble.**
~~~~~



## Slow to Anger

*...But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.*

James 1:19-20

Anger can build up within us. That's not wrong within itself. However, the Scriptures tell us that we are to be "slow to anger." When you are able to maintain control of your anger, you demonstrate great inner strength. The one who "flies off the handle" at the least provocation has little inner strength and is at the mercy of others.

### **SOME GEMS FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS**

*He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,  
And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.*

Proverbs 16:32

*He who is slow to anger has great understanding,  
But he who is quick-tempered exalts folly.*

Proverbs 14:29

*A hot-tempered man stirs up strife,  
But the slow to anger  
pacifies contention.*

Proverbs 15:18

*A man's discretion makes him slow to anger,  
And it is his glory to overlook a transgression.*

Proverbs 19:11

~~~~~  
**You must control your anger or it will
control you.**
~~~~~



## How to Have a Better Day

**Sometimes it is the things that we don't do  
that makes for a better day:**

not procrastinating

not becoming impatient

not being possessive

not being anxious to impress others

not cherishing an inflated opinion of yourself

not taking advantage of others

not keeping a record of hurts done to you

not worrying about tomorrow.

*Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

1 Corinthians 13:4

~~~~~  
Choosing "not to" often is a wise choice indeed.
~~~~~



# But, But, But

On the contrary; indicating an exception.

No doubt you have heard someone stammer those words as they try to rebut something that was said. And you probably have heard the word used to indicate an exception to something said. It is a conjunction that sometimes needs to be replaced by a period (.). Consider the following examples where the sentence needs to end with a period where the word “but” appears.



I shouldn't be telling you this, **but** I just have to tell someone.

I know it's wrong to do it, **but** it shouldn't hurt to do it just this one time.

I realize I need to be more regular in attending church,  
**but** I have so much to do on the weekends.



Someone said to Jesus, “I will follow You wherever You go . . .  
**but** permit me first to go and bury my father.”

Another also said, “I will follow You, Lord;  
**but** first permit me to say good-bye to those at home.”

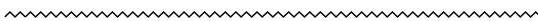
Jesus' reply was: “No one, after putting his hand to the plow and  
looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Luke 9:61-62



**I need to love God with all my heart, soul and mind; and  
love my neighbor as myself, no exceptions or “buts.”**

– **bold** emphasis mine



**Period: A punctuation mark indicating a  
full stop. Heed the warning. Stop before  
making an exception.**





## The Power of Words

### A Warning

*And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity.*

James 3:6

### A CONFESSION

I have been hurt, and have hurt others, more by words than by physical blows. And I dare say this is true for more than a few. The amount of hurt would be significantly reduced if all would listen to (and heed) the following:

### Listen More, Speak Less!

*This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger.*

James 1:19

### Heal Not Harm

*There is one who speaks rashly\* like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.*

Proverbs 12:18

[\*to babble; hence to holler angrily; speak unadvisedly.]

*Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.*

Colossians 4:6

### Careful Not Careless

*“But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”*

Matthew 12:36-37

***So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.***

James 2:12

***Resolve to make sure that your words heal, not harm!***



## The Slippery Slope

*How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!*

Psalms 1:1

### Note the Progression

**walk, stand, sit**

**listen, join, participate**

It's not one giant step from doing good to doing wrong.

It's three small steps.

What are the three steps to perdition (final ruin)?

### **STEP ONE: DABBLE IN WHAT'S QUESTIONABLE OR WRONG**

Become lax; ignore rules in a particular instance.

Violate conscience.

(One may only plan to dabble, but like the vortex of a whirlpool, one is drawn in more and more.)

### **STEP TWO: PARTICIPATE KNOWING IT'S WRONG**

Refuse admonitions of Scriptures and of brethren.

Stifle prodding of conscience.

Offer excuses.

### **STEP THREE: JUSTIFYING AND DEFENDING IT.**

Conscience seared so it can't prod.

Unable to see any wrong in doing it.

Oppose those who disagree.

### **STAGES OF THE THREE STEPS TO RUIN**

By dabbling, to doing, to defending.

By giving in, to giving over, to giving up.

### **WATCH THAT FIRST STEP!**

**Resist**

being drawn into sin by evil surroundings.

**Refrain**

from questionable and worldly activity.

**Remain**

steadfast.





## Circumstantial Evidence

Upon rising one morning a camper said to his friend, "There was a bear outside our tent last night."

The friend inquired, "What did it look like?"

"I didn't see it" came the reply.

"Oh, you heard it, right?"

"No" came the answer.

"Well, then, did you smell it?"

Once again the answer was "No."

"How can you say there was a bear in our camp last night?" asked the puzzled camper.

"Because of the fresh bear tracks on the ground!" was the reply.

*The heavens are telling of the glory of God;  
And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.*

Psalms 19:1

*For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes,  
His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen,  
being understood through what has been made.*

Romans 1:20

No one witnessed the creation of the world. How do we know God did it? The evidence contained in the universe: from the smallest particle of matter to the expanse of space; from the tiniest living things to man himself; from the precision of planet movement to the vibrations of atoms.

There are things too great to grasp; too wonderful to comprehend; too complex to be accidentally or incidentally caused. We didn't see Him do it, nor can we see Him working now.

His handiwork is powerful circumstantial evidence! John said God's workings is like the wind. You can't see it (Him), but you can see the evidence of its (His) existence.

~~~~~  
**By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by
 the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of
 things which are visible.** Hebrews 11:3
 ~~~~~



## Perish the Thought

Whenever one of the these thoughts enters our mind,  
it needs to be disposed of promptly.

~~~~~

“How could God . . .?”

Perish the thought that we can think on a level with God.

*“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,”
declares the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than the
earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and
My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

Isaiah 55:8-9

“It sounds reasonable to me that . . .”

Perish the thought that reason can be the basis for determining what is
acceptable to God. Reason is subjective, interpretive, and limited by
personal knowledge and bias.

*Then God said to Jonah, “Do you have good reason to be angry about the
plant?” And he said, “I have good reason to be angry, even to death.”*

Jonah 4:9

“I know what it says, but . . .”

Perish the thought that what is written can be rebutted. If we know what the
Bible says, that’s all that matters; attempting to rebut truth is vain.

“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

John 4:24

“Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.”

John 17:17

*“If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall
know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*

John 8:31-32



Honest Self-Appraisal

Haughtiness is not an attractive trait and it certainly is not in accord with the spirit of Christ. Thinking too highly of oneself makes one of little use to anyone. A haughty attitude should be avoided at all cost.

Also, self-deprecation is not an attractive trait. While seeking to avoid being haughty, one should not swing the pendulum to the opposite extreme. Considering oneself worthless and devoid of any value is equally useless. Unwittingly, a person may use self-abasement as a ploy to have others boost his or her self-image: "I'm no good," and "I'm worthless," beg for a response of, "No you're not!"

What is needed is a fair and balanced appraisal of self: a healthy self-appraisal. Looking at one's good qualities as well as one's faults. The scriptures do not forbid thinking highly of oneself (when justified), only "more highly than ought."

For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

Romans 12:3

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!

2 Corinthians 13:5

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**The most important person to be honest with  
is yourself.**  
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