

Twelve Facts for Christians

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And be not conformed to this world: but **be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind**,
that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:2

That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man,
which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; **And be renewed in the spirit of your mind**;

Ephesians 4:22-23

Introduction:

1. Life can be seen as a haphazard string of chance events, mostly negative, we cannot control, hopeless; God condemns boasting of tomorrow, for we cannot be sure of our next year, day, or hour (Prov 27:1).
2. Yet, God has guaranteed the future for each child of God believing Him and His word, so much so that we know our eternal destiny and total victory to boast against death and the grave (I Cor 15:51-57), which gives believers great motivation to be faithful in whatever God called them to do (I Cor 15:58).
3. Further certain facts take away the fear of chance events and allow us to exploit them various ways, for there is a God in total control, He is our Father by adoption, and He taught us wisdom for success.
4. This study is not exhaustive, but it will give you truth and wisdom for living boldly with knowledge to renew your mind to no longer have blind and ignorant thinking like the world but to know the best.
5. This study is not exhaustive, but with the more complete linked studies above it gets pretty close to it, so each hearer or reader has the option of taking these facts much further for a complete life philosophy.
6. Basic life axioms direct thoughts and actions to be right, true, wise, and hopeful before God and men, which is the opposite of this world as evidenced by nearly all Hollywood movies that end hopeless.
7. Part of the Christian life is relearning how to think right about all things (Rom 12:1-2; Eph 4:17-24), which is the reason for the whole Bible and specific books of the Bible like Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.
8. A child of God, learning Bible truth, can live confidently and enjoy a continual feast, for he grasps the present, knows the future, and knows Who rules all, both how and why (Heb 5:12-14; Eph 5:15-17).
9. It is certainly true that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Rom 10:15), but it is also true that wisdom cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, the power of right thinking.
10. The facts are not numbered; their order matters little, as long as you embrace them as truth and use them to direct your life wisely for God's glory, the profit of others, and God's best for your life.
11. How do you live? What rules govern and guide your thoughts, plans, actions, and responses. Let's go.
12. This is simple; what you and I need. We do not need complexity or an exhaustive study. Embrace it.
13. This is simple, what you and I need. We do not need complexity or an exhaustive study. Embrace it.

Nothing in Life is Certain

- A. From the introduction, return to Solomon's warning against boasting (Proverbs 27:1), and never forget this rule for life, especially in light of this study and what comes next.
- B. You are not in control of your life; many things can alter any plan, and a Christian should know this in advance so that disappointment is minimized and equilibrium maintained.
- C. You may not survive today. 616 will die today by accidents. 60 more will be murdered. Never forget that the average life expectancy of 73 includes deaths at 23, 53, and 93.
- D. Life will disappoint; it is not a straight line, not a smooth trajectory; what will you do? Do not be surprised. Do not be angry. Roll with the changes. Forewarned is forearmed.
- E. How true is the warning not to boast of tomorrow? Jesus told of a rich man with big building plans due to his continued successes, but he died that night (Luke 12:16-21).
- F. James confirmed Solomon's warning by his inspired rule about plans, where God's will must be applied to living, let alone next year's strategic business plans (James 4:13-16).
- G. Jesus taught to not worry about tomorrow, for it will take care of itself (Matthew 6:34), and the best way to handle worry is turn it over to God with thanksgiving (Phil 4:6-7).
- H. While this fact about uncertainty and the necessity to live one day at a time sounds hopeless, it does not have to be when the other facts are learned and applied, like prayer.
 - I. Do you know how much you can take with you? The calculation is important! Nothing! The knowledge of this certainty, the time of which is uncertain, can help (I Tim 6:6-10).
- J. Joab feared God in some way, but he still did not know a battle's result (II Sam 10:12), which means we only do our reasonable best and trust God for the rest (Ps 127:1-2).
- K. All kinds of bad things happen to stuff down here, so Christians invest in heaven, where there are no dangers or risks of loss (Matt 6:19-20), let alone prove their hearts to God.
- L. You cannot protect your children from all the bad events in their lives, from God's choice of physical, intellectual, and personality for each in the womb to wild accidents.
- M. The best you can do down here is expected returns based on statistical probabilities, but no one, not now or ever, is the average, so standard deviations are calculated for you.
- N. Why must investment advisors say, *Past performance does not indicate future returns*.
- O. If you say death is sure, you are right; you can count on it and should, but you do not know when it will hit (and you forget Enoch, Elijah, and a generation at Jesus' return).
- P. The lottery is not uncertain, it is certain confiscation, for it is taxation. Wake up, Fool!
- Q. Since tomorrow is unknown, live one day at a time to the best of your ability, and if you have an earthly future, today lived well is the best investment you can do for it anyway.
- R. Humility and modesty are great virtues against pride and boasting, so think today only, which precludes thoughts about your greatness or plans next month or in future years.
- S. It seems some, or all at some times, are confused, for they are disappointed and defeated by negative events that surprise them. They must think foolishly that good is guaranteed.
- T. Without tomorrow, today you should love, forgive, thank, comfort, and glorify the Lord.

- U. Without tomorrow, today should be free from sin, lust, or anything hurting your account.
- V. Without tomorrow, never delay in doing something to please God. Stop procrastinating.
- W. Without tomorrow, today is a gift, and you should give thanks and make it memorable.
- X. Without tomorrow, we must never be Felix, who deferred Paul for a convenient season.

Eternal Life is Guaranteed

- A. From the introduction, return to Paul's confident example of boasting (I Cor 15:51-58), for dear Christian with faith and life committed to God, there is glorious certainty for the most fearful event with greatest consequences for the longest duration, even forever.
- B. All Christians should be the happiest, most care-free persons at all times. Why are any ever defeated or depressed by little setbacks of this life. *I shall live forever. Hallelujah!*
- C. Jesus promised that He would not lose a single one (John 6:37-39; 10:26-29; 17:1-2), but He would raise each up and give eternal life for their present and eternal consolation.
- D. God promised eternal life before the world began, but Jesus guarantees it (II Cor 1:20), and when God promised eternal life, He swore with an oath for comfort (Heb 6:13-20).
- E. Nothing can separate you from God's love, and the lists are impressive (Rom 8:28-39), which is based on God's gift of His Son guaranteeing all else and our good in all things.
- F. Rejoice! The most frightening contingency in life by far has been totally taken care of.
- G. Rejoice! What should require the greatest concern, cost, and effort requires none at all.
- H. Rejoice! Without lobbying for a golden parachute, you have the most glorious of all.
 - I. Faith in Jesus will not let you be ashamed or confounded (Rom 9:33; 10:11; I Pet 2:6).
- J. Our hope is based on the solid evidence of God's promises and clear lists of evidence (I Thess 1:2-4; II Pet 1:5-11) along with the internal witness of the Spirit (Romans 5:5).
- K. Paul knew and was persuaded that his soul was in safekeeping with God (II Tim 1:12), so while you cannot know what a day may bring forth, you do know what death brings.
- L. When Jesus entered heaven after death, He had our eternal redemption (Heb 9:12-14).
- M. We could fervently and loudly use, *It is finished*, but it is not salvation (John 19:28-30).
- N. We know all bodies shall be resurrected, thus our Baptist baptism and comfort for each other (I Thess 4:13-18), and the details of this event are described for us, even the order.
- O. Eternal life is not potential, probable, proffered; it is appointed, ordained, predestinated; it is the gift of God, not an offering (John 17:2; Acts 13:48; I Cor 1:30; I Thess 5:9-10).
- P. The Bible describes the gift of eternal life as bequeathing by will (Hebrews 9:15-18), which is the personal choice of the testator and no other, made freely by His own will.
- Q. Paul praying for Israel did not doubt eternal life, but conversion (Rom 9:1-5; 10:1-5), and it is only errors and heresies of doctrine that produce fear for any soul being lost.
- R. As we can read in old confessions about God's decrees ... not one more, not one less.
- S. If it is hard to ignore the chaos and uncertainty of life by God's rule of all, then you should add to that fact

that the greatest fear and unknown has been completely covered.

- T. With the greatest and gravest concern and fear eliminated, then it is easy to roll with the events of life and put into practice anything and everything God expects of us now.
- U. We can rejoice always! We can have a continual feast! It is our fault we forget this fact!

God's Choices Rule

- A. Peter told the Jerusalem council God had made choice of him among them (Acts 15:7), and though his point and words are simple, they introduce this great fact (John 15:16).
- B. Borders of nations display incredible differences by God's blessings (Malachi 1:1-5), and it is by these differences that we should recognize God's affectionate favor to us, which is why we have a problem at a southern border – everyone wants to come here..
- C. If you had been born into a Muslim family, you would certainly be a Muslim, and you can only prove true understanding by constant, fervent thanksgiving; this authority and power of God, and the exercise of them toward you, should both terrify and thrill you.
- D. One-third of earth is Christian; one-third of Christians are not Catholic; one-eighth of the not Catholic are Baptists; one-seventh of Baptists are independent Baptists (1/504); this line of thinking may be extended at length for each point of doctrine and practice.
- E. God made choice in eternity to predestinate some to eternal life (Eph 1:4-5; II Tim 1:9), which we have reviewed in this study as the guarantee of eternal life for even boasting, and it was clearly made according to the good pleasure of His own will (Eph 1:5,9,11).
- F. But think of all the other choices He made for you: each parent and their family tree; year born, intelligence, coordination, height, body type, school teachers, church, friends, looks, athleticism or not, opportunities, privileges, mentors, sponsors, laws passed, internal promptings, interview success or not, benefactors, health or not, etc.
- G. But let's back up further – your existence as a self-aware, rational human person – under the curse of a three-fold death for sin, which you cannot avoid, mitigate, or end – thus, you owe Him everything you are and have rather than curse life and Him or use suicide.
- H. Thus, for what you have, while others do not have, you owe God great praise, even celebration, and He takes note of it or not (Deut 28:47-48; 12:7; 14:22-26; Neh 8:8-12).
- I. Anything you obtain by gift or effort, use it responsibly (Prov 12:27), and you should also exploit it for the maximum value God intended (Pr 14:4; Eccl 10:10; II Sam 1:18).
- J. God is the First Cause of all things, and you should trace all back to Him for His glory, so it is plain wisdom to start with Genesis 1:1 for the foundation of your life philosophy, for no matter the effort you put into a thing, your ability and the thing are from Him!
- K. God's choices include your folly, stupidity, or stubbornness in all matters, so after confessing your sins, you should look for the lesson and fulfill any resulting obligation e.g. a person that married ignorantly is still married and should max the 50-year penalty, and a person that did not and will not get a transferable skill should enjoy his poverty.
- L. God has a secret will for sure, and His providence and time reveal it to us (Deut 29:29), which leaves no

chance events by Fate or human depravity outside His will (Ps 76:10).

- M. There are no chance events; even designed chance He fixes (Pr 16:33), which led His church and pagans to use lots for His will (Lev 16:8; Jonah 1:7; Acts 1:24-26; 13:19).
- N. Human ability, effort, training are duties and important, but time and chance are God's; His choices alter every event, no matter precautions (Eccl 9:11; Ps 127:1-2; Pr 21:31).
- O. Choice, not chance, had Abraham's servant instantly find the perfect wife (Gen 24:10-21), directed Ruth's hap to the field of Boaz (Ruth 2:3), send an arrow shot at a venture to find the joint in disguised Ahab's armor (I Kgs 22:34), caused Mordecai to hear an assassination plot, Ahasuerus to find it, and Haman to arrive at the wrong time, etc.
- P. Trust God's providence, what happens today, to be His pleasure for you (Job 1:20-22); no matter how good or how bad, you should respond by His word and worship Him.
- Q. Never complain about today's events, for God planned them for you with your choices, and the most important point is not the event but rather your response to the event, so that any bitterness or resentment, which God will perceive as including Him, is terrible.
- R. The state of America right now, atrociously abominable in many ways, is God's choice on a nation that deserves far worse. See His authority, judgment, prophecy, and humor; there are no surprises and nothing out of His absolute and total control. Trust and live!
- S. Why do bad things happen to Christians? We know, and all four reasons are comforting and for our profit, if we respond better than Job, for God almost killed him for pride.
- T. How should you plan? Humbly, wisely choose a way; let God direct details (Pr 16:9); love and follow providence; always submit your life and plans to Him (James 4:13-16).
- U. We call God's choices in our lives His dots; connected they are the history, or His story, of each of you, of job, marriage, family, of our church, etc. On this basis Israel would erect stones to mark events to recall to their children, like our Ebenezer (I Sam 7:12).

Sin Has Corrupted All

- A. In living as Christians, we remember sin's pervading influence and consequences, and this awareness goes beyond thanking God for salvation to grasp temptations and death.
- B. Any claim or research about life, love, health, death, longevity, perfection, beauty, preservation, productivity, strength, remembrance, violence, etc., without sin is vanity.
- C. The planned obsolescence of manufacturers is one thing, but sin has obsolescence built into everything, with or without the design of men. All corrupts, decays, rots, and dies.
- D. Health, sickness, and death are all impacted by sin more than any other factor that the world adores e.g. diet, exercise, nutrition, medicine, alternative medicine, drugs, etc.
- E. Do not blame God for what is your fault! female periods, difficult childbirth, hard work, lost efficiency, failing machines, bad hair days, rocky relationships, thieves and moths.
- F. The three-fold death by our first parents should alter thinking and actions (Gen 2:17), for your nature is corrupt from birth, you are dying physically, and eternal death awaits.

- G. Eden's consequences are horrible from lost confidence, innocence, and opportunities to altered relationships, reproduction, professions, etc. Always remember – you chose sin.
- H. Why do babies die? There is one answer – sin. Evolution has no intelligent explanation for life or death, for it denies the two most crucial facts of your existence – God and sin.
- I. Wise men accept, believe, and confess they are no good by nature (Rom 7:14-23); they profit by knowing this about themselves and about others to avoid confusion or despair.
- J. All you are, have, touch, produce, or love has been, is, and will be altered by sin, including parents, the one you marry, the children you produce, friends you choose, etc.
- K. Nothing naturally turns out the way you wish it would or know it could, for it is altered by sin and death, but knowing the cause and cure of the issue gives wisdom and hope.
- L. The whole creation is under the curse of sin, so your roses fade and your pets die, your beautiful motorcycle rusts and seizes, your wedding dress fades, yellows and is eaten, but the whole cursed mess you caused shall soon be delivered by the one true Deliverer; whether laws of thermodynamics or not, the universe groans under sin's curse of death.
- M. Sin is the cause of evil in the world – it was and is man's choice, not God's fault – all thoughts, words, or responses to the contrary are devilish, hopeless, and damning; the evil in the world is not confusing, if human depravity and God's judgment are known.
- N. Given sin's corruption, how much should you believe yourself (Jer 17:9; Eph 4:17-19)?
- O. Given sin's corruption, how upset should you be about death (Rom 6:23; Job 1:20-22)?
- P. Given sin's corruption, how confused should you be a school shooting (Rom 3:9-18)?
- Q. Given sin's corruption, how will you react to sodomy and transgenders (Rom 1:18-32)?
- R. Given sin's corruption, how hurt, angry, or hopeless will children cause you (Pr 22:15)?
- S. Given sin's corruption, how defeated will you be by failing periodically (Psalm 51,32)?
- T. Given sin's corruption, do you appreciate Proverbs' lessons about others (Pr 30:21-23)?
- U. Given sin's corruption, how sound is your mind now and later with dementia (Ps 94:11)?
- V. Given sin's corruption, how will you avoid a bag of yellow skin and bones (I Tim 4:8)?
- W. Charity's rule for brethren – believe all things, hope all things – is limited with others and with other circumstances, just like turning the other cheek has limited application.
- X. Man is motivated selfishly, so do not be surprised with those closest to you and you!
- Y. All exercise is a losing proposition, but it can be fun to preserve some strength awhile.
- Z. Never let energy and hormones of youth deceive you; they will leave fast, so remember your Creator in the days of your youth before the evil days come (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7)!

God is Greater than Man

- A. His choices, which rule your life, which were a previous point, prove His sovereignty.
- B. This should be your favorite fact, and you should express it in true terms of your own liking that move your heart and mind to total dedication and devoted worship of God.

- C. For example, the universe exists for God's glory, God's pleasure, and God working out His perfect will with rational creatures for His own praise and worship. Hallelujah!
- D. For example, God gave me self-aware, rational existence, which I cannot turn off and where suicide only makes things worse, so I humble myself before infinite sovereignty.
- E. For example, I am not important at all in the big scheme of things, for I was created for the pleasure of God, not my own pleasure, and His pleasure might be to send me to hell.
- F. For example, I thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth, that you gave me existence, for without it I could not know thee, so I do adore thee now, and I will love thee forever.
- G. For example, I am thine, O Lord, and I exist for thee, not for me, and if you can get greater closer by abusing me, then please do so, but I will actively glorify thee myself.
- H. Let two verses guide your self-awareness, existence, and activities (Pr 16:4; Rev 4:11); you should read the extended commentary on the verse of Solomon for its profundity.,
 - I. God does not owe you anything at anytime, such as good news or good things or good events, even if you beg Him most sincerely, and you should never reduce Him, even subconsciously, to a gumball machine that dispenses candy when you insert a quarter.
 - J. As a rebel before your Creator, you have no rights. You have a responsibility to obey. He can blind and confuse you verily easily, and He exercises His rights every day.
 - K. As the infinite Creator and Sovereign Ruler, He does not owe you an explanation for anything, so get down, look down, and shut up. He is greater than you (Job 33:12-12).
 - L. Job responded perfectly in the start of trials and trouble from God (Job 1:20-22), but he was provoked to justifying himself and questioning or charging God for wrongdoing. God explained through Elihu that he could have lost his life. Never complain or blame.
- M. We are a wicked race, and anything He allows us to have short of hell is a great blessing, but due to His general benevolence to America, we have more than heart could wish.
- N. Look at the clouds and realize you are nothing to Him (Job 35:5-8). On your best day with your greatest effort, you cannot add anything to Him, and you cannot hurt Him.
- O. Let one of the greatest kings in human history tell you what he learned (Dan 4:34-35).
- P. Let the great Jehovah tell you what He did to one of the greatest kings (Isaiah 10:5-19).
- Q. If you are not humbled sufficiently yet, the illustration He chose for Him and you is not a grandfather with a lad on his lap entering a toy store, but rather a Potter with a lump of worthless clay that He can make something good or bad (Isaiah 45:9-10; Rom 9:21).
- R. He can make you without hands; He does not owe you hands; He does not owe you; therefore, submit and smile, get excited and rejoice, blast forward and upward. Worship.
- S. He can make you a vessel of mercy for heaven or one of wrath for hell (Rom 9:22-24), and for this incredibly great salvation, you owe Him everything with devoted passion.
- T. He can clothe lilies better than Solomon or make you a dunghill (Mat 6:28-29; Is 25:10), and for this you should fear Him and love Him with all thy being both now and forever; he knows you better than you know you for good or evil. Any chastening can get worse.
- U. He knows your innermost thoughts and strips you naked before Him (Heb 4:12-14).

- V. He knows the hairs on your head; He gave His Son for you; so trust His great goodness.
- W. Your ideas of fairness are bizarrely cruel and foolish in comparison to God's infinitely perfect wisdom, and the best study you can make of character and conduct is the Bible

Bring Everything Back to the Bible

- A. Truth or right thinking can be known by only one source, which is the Bible, God's revelation of truth that must rule, correct, and teach all proper thinking on all subjects.
- B. No one else, regardless of how many or how respected, can ever come close to scripture.
- C. Is there a better verse for this point than the one we have loved forever (Ps 119:128), which in context makes us wiser than enemies, teachers, ancients (Psalm 119:98-100), and which divine revelation does great things and brings great reward (Psalm 19:7-11)?
- D. Pastors have an inspired manual to provide perfect truth for teaching (II Tim 3:16-17).
- E. This divine library is better than hearing God's voice from heaven (II Peter 1:16-21).
- F. We are Bible Christians, for it is the Bible that teaches our Leader and Savior and His religion – we care nothing for the tradition of men no matter how popular or powerful.
- G. Both Joshua and David knew that prosperity was by the Bible (Joshua 1:1-9; Ps 1:1-3).
- H. Ideas, opinions, or thoughts without scripture are inherently impudent and imprudent.
 - I. Choices against scripture have negative results unless judged with prosperity of fools.
- J. Love preaching, for it builds faith and saves from error (Rom 10:15-17; Eph 4:14-15).
- K. Reject thoughts of men. Let God be true, but every man a liar (Rom 3:4; Psalm 94:11), and all other ideas should be hated (before) and condemned as darkness (Isaiah 8:20).
- L. Receive preaching the right way – with a ready mind and work to confirm (Acts 17:11).
- M. Is this point too simple? Never! Do not ever get led outside God's word on any topic; you are in the perilous times of the last days when churches and Christians compromise on most everything with the world; you must hold right side up in upside down world.
- N. Bible reading, study, and preaching must be exegesis, not eisegesis, no matter the topic.
- O. Exegesis = bring or draw out = exposition or explanation of the Bible based on a careful, objective analysis. It identifies and accepts whatever the Bible says, even if disliked.
- P. Eisegesis = import or draw in = exposition or explanation of a Bible text of one's own subjective interpretation and personal preference not supported by the text itself.
- Q. What makes young men great? Elihu great? Inspiration of the Almighty (Job 32:6-10).
- R. Rebellion and stubbornness are terrible sins, let them never happen (I Sam 15:22-23).
- S. Crave Bible reading, Bible discussion, and Bible preaching, and not necessarily in that order; teach your children all about the Bible from morning to bedtime (Deut 6:6-9).

The Only Right Measure is Fruit

- A. When setting life goals or measuring life success, you must use the right criteria or measure of success

lest you be deceived horribly about yourself or also about others.

- B. The Bible is largely an *IF, THEN* If God has saved, you go to heaven. If you keep His commandments the way He has defined, then He will bless you and your children, and what our God and Father looks for in our lives is fruit more than anything else.
- C. The measure is never hearing, believing, feeling, thinking, words, or results, but rather fruit, for men can hear and not do, believe insincerely as Jesus proved repeatedly, feel their own lying emotions and lusts, think proudly by innate, foolish vanity, words only create more responsibility, and results can be the deceiving judgment of God on men.
- D. Results can be nothing more than the prosperity of fools (Pr 1:29-33). Do not believe the lie – they must be living right, for God’s blessing is obvious – for God can deceive! And never forget that God gives some reprobates their heaven now (Psalm 17:14-15).
- E. Do you want personal freedom without restriction? Then choose to obsess for love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Gal 5:22-23).
- F. Learn to love the Bible’s descriptions of great men and women (Psalm 15:1-5; 24:3-6).
- G. Learn to love the Bible’s descriptions of things God hates (Prov 6:16-19; Gal 5:16-21).
- H. Evidence of eternal life are lists of fruitful action (Gal 5:6; I Thess 1:2-4; II Pet 1:5-11), so we want to do anything we can to lay hold of eternal life (I Timothy 6:11-12,17-19).
 - I. The Lord resents fruitless fig trees, so beware of the pastor’s protection (Luke 13:6-9); your pastor has not succeeded with his digging and dunging until you bear Bible fruit, and if you do not bear fruit though he does dig and dung, you are in serious trouble.
 - J. God took the kingdom from the Jews and gave it to us Gentiles, let us make sure we always and with great abundance and passion give Him fruit (Matt 21:31-46; 22:1-14).
 - K. Confidence and boldness at Judgment is fruit, not faith without works, not baptism by itself, not a Christian family or good church (I John 2:28-29; 3:18-19; 4:15-17; 5:1-3).
 - L. Learn to measure all men by Bible-defined fruit – spiritual religion – life changes to make them very different from men of the world – abounding in loving service, joyful happiness, peaceful relations with all, longsuffering without criticism, etc., Yes, Lord!
- M. It is a hilarious joke when we hear or read of selfish and unhappy Christians at “peace” in their lives, for they do not know what the word means – they interpret the removal of accountability and instant preaching as peace, for now they can live their lustful lives.
- N. Approval by God is known by fruitfulness – a changed life that matches the Bible’s description; anything less than this or anything other than this is a lying delusion of sin.
- O. Stop thinking about DNA as sufficient for love. Demand Bible-defined fruit in actions.
- P. Stop thinking about words. They are worthless. At least 95% of those in our county would say they were Christians. Demand sacrificial action in godly things consistently.
- Q. Stop talking about sweet, whatever it means. Jack the Ripper was sweet during the day.
- R. Stop liking friendliness, which all whoremongers use. Think sacrificial zeal for God.
- S. The real measure of fruit is all fruit, not approved or favorite fruit, but all fruit, for we must add all seven to get eight, and the nine Paul listed are singular *fruit*; do not comfort yourself or trust anyone else with

deformed fruit (only some), for you are likely wrong.

- T. Church discipline is never a surprise; fruit-bearing Christians do not break Christ's rules for church members or not use His process for differences; it is surprising and the reason for this point that you should know who is or is not bearing fruit and not need to react.
- U. Do you want a fruit? Precious fruit? How about a soul? How many souls have you won to faith and obedience in Christ? It is important (Prov 11:30; John 4:36; Jas 5:19-20)

You Are Not Your Own

- A. Paul assumed the Corinthians should have known this fact, which would have been a guide for their conduct in body and spirit, for they were not their own (I Cor 6:19-20).
- B. Total depravity includes man's obsessive infatuation with himself, so that selfishness rules all goals, plans, and thoughts, regardless of service to others to get what you want.
- C. Selfishness is the single greatest opposition to God and godliness, for you choose to live for yourself not as God expects or requires, and you always choose yourself over others.
- D. Your existence, enjoyed by that self-aware spirit in you, flattered by a mind always on your side, and passionate about your ideas by a lying heart, does not find your purpose.
- E. God created you, so He owns you, His rules are best, and you owe Him all for existence; these facts should be self-evident from the first verse of the Bible, reducing you to clay, but far beyond these initial thoughts, He made you for Himself (Prov 16:4; Rev 4:11).
- F. If you did not exist with a rational and self-aware soul, you could not know Him; then you need His supernatural operation to reveal Himself to you by His Spirit; and it is this combination that you should give thanks for every day and love those He tells you to.
- G. Our religion is very simple – God is first and demands all our love, and any love left over is for our neighbor, whom Jesus defined as a cultural enemy in need, which is far less than a spouse or a fellow child of God, or both for the highest duty of all. Beware!
- H. This surely shows up in marriage, where familiarity can breed contempt, but that does not make it right or excusable; it is the depravity of a junkyard dog (Col 3:19; Eph 5:33).
- I. We like to define true joy as Jesus, then others, then yourself last, which is living out the Bible and God's plan for us in this world. We are third. We are even domestiques.
- J. Self-love or self-esteem are a modern concept as far as something to be learned, taught, and promoted, for in the past men quickly called it pride, narcissism, or related sins, for the selfish concern, defense, promotion, and protection of self is conceited haughtiness.
- K. Do not believe the humanist psychologist's lie that we need to love ourselves more, for we already do it far more than we should, and criminals have the most of all, and it is this standard of ridiculous self-infatuation that Jesus called us to show others (Jas 2:8).
- L. God saved you, if you are a fruit-bearing believer, from Adam's damning sin and from your own selfish, sin nature, so you are His again for a different reason than creation; if you will consider your origin and then your salvation, you are twice His by ownership.
- M. God demands all we have in affection, obedience, sacrifice, thanksgiving, and worship for Himself, but

then He directs us outward from ourselves to others, even the lowly, for all believers are children of God, and He expects us to love Him and then His.

- N. Thus the emphasis and constant prayer for love of souls and the warnings about not letting church be a family reunion in any way at all, for you must learn to love others; God does not care you are shy, timid, lazy, selfish, or hateful; He orders you to love.
- O. God ordained us to conscientiously keep the *one another* duties He assigned us toward the other adopted children in the family of God, which is deep, broad, personal; you do not have a right to be comfortable – you have a responsibility to get discomforted.
- P. You are not your own. He made you a team player. Examine yourself at all times, for everything in you and around you is constantly persuading and pressing you about you.

Circumstantial Surmising Is Devilish

- A. Total depravity includes our presumption to know God's ways and works to claim why He does this or that with others, usually presuming the best for events in our own lives, and the worst for events in the lives of enemies, and assigning judgment for this or that; of course, there are melancholy negative thinkers that assume the worst for themselves.
- B. Job's three friends are terrible examples of this corrupting fault, for they blamed Job for secret sins that had brought God's judgment on his hypocritical life; part of Satan's provoking of Job, he fell for it and questioned God, though his friends were very wrong.
- C. Recall the ignorant pagans on the island of Melita, how quickly they moved from kindness to Fate taking vengeance on Paul to thinking Paul was a god (Acts 28:1-6).
- D. You know so little about God's infinite operations in the world and the external and internal details of others' lives that you should rarely pass judgment with connections.
- E. Circumstances are not the measure of God's actions as seen by your limited intelligence, discernment, and wisdom, for He says you cannot know His will that way (Eccl 9:1-3), so be very careful to leap to conclusions or to voicing them; instead, think the opposite.
- F. Do not think the wicked get away with their wickedness, for there are many factors out of your sight, and He is heaping up wrath against them for eternity, which you are foolishly overlooking by focusing only on today's news (Psalm 73:1-14; Romans 2:5).
- G. Malachi had to blast this type of sinful thinking by the Jews, for they had long forgotten their captivity in Babylon and mocked godly living as having no value (Mal 3:13-15).
- H. The world wrongly says of those that get an unusual blessing, *He must be living right*, for they are fatalists of sorts with no wisdom about God's works or real Christian fruit.
 - I. The prosperity of fools deceives men when God blesses the wicked as part of His wise rule of the world and testimony of Himself (Prov 1:32; Ps 17:14; Job 12:6-11; 21:7-15).
- J. God keeps silent at times and does nothing in the way of judgment, so foolish men presume He approves of their lives, since they get away with sins they know (Ps 50:21).
- K. Did God approve Lazarus or the rich man? Circumstances prove nothing! Amen.
- L. Think again. Does poor health or poverty prove election? Never. Forget circumstances.

- M. This is more than evil surmising about others – it is evil surmising about Jehovah Himself, for you by foolish presumption put Him in a limited box with your outcomes.
- N. Your claim to peace though sinning is rebellious insanity, implying God is dealing with you much more favorably, unless you have fully repented of all sin and known by others.
- O. Israel claimed they were poor victims of ungodly parents – *the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge* – they were very wrong (Ezek 18:1-4).
- P. Do not presume that God approves of your life except by careful and diligent matching of your life to the word of God, where fruit is emphasized to the minimizing of results.

The Information Era is Dangerous

- A. Never has so much information been easily, freely available to anyone on earth via Google, YouTube, Email, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, etc.; you can have constant, infinite, changing opinions, news, filth without distinction by a thumb move.
- B. All kinds of good can be done and is being done with the Internet, such as evangelistic spread of God's truth and wisdom, but there are ungodly temptations and consequences.
- C. We gladly reach the entire world every single day for very little cost in eight languages, and we thank God for this witty invention that He gave us for His service (Prov 8:12).
- D. Within this rule and warning, we include social media and its ridiculous encouragement of narcissism (haughty self-love) and the personal and social evil results of its banality.
- E. Nearly all the information is worthless tripe at best, then declines to an addicting mind/heart distraction, and then to intentional brainwashing or lust-fulfilling at worst.
- F. We have made a study of the technological advances of the last 150 years and how they have greatly increased the world's influence to us at all times no matter where we are, so the ability to isolate yourself on a farm that was once common is nearly impossible.
- G. The sober warning of perilous times for Christians is drastically different than what they fear or warn against, for it is moral corruption by false doctrine (II Tim 3:1-17; 4:1-4), and it included much information and learning for silly women without gaining truth.
- H. David committed to serve God, and he included what he could see (Ps 101:3); for you to avoid the world corrupting your heart, you must intentionally reject its information.
- I. Paul ended his epistle to Philippi by listing what they should think about (Phil 4:8-9), which things are generally ignored by the Internet and found only with careful searches.
- J. Information is necessary for learning, but false information only increases ignorance, and constant information distracts the mind, tires the body, and destroys productivity, as Solomon warned about the making of many books even back in his day (Eccl 12:12).
- K. What happens when fools have an ear? They go wild in their insane delusions, and we are seeing it happen today to a degree never imagined, since any fool can comment on any event or subject or write a blog or create a website or have a FB page for his insanity.
- L. Paul warned against foolish and unlearned questions, profane and vain babblings, and evil communications, noting the risk of deception (II Tim 2:23,16; I Cor 15:33); most that is on the Internet on

most topics flunks his warning, especially religious content.

- M. If Christians are to redeem the time (Eph 5:16), then the Internet and other forms of modern entertainment are a powerful opponent, no matter the content, innocent or vile; this is a trait of technological inventions that is often missed until habits are examined.
- N. If learning the Bible and using it as the criterion for truth, wisdom, and walking with God is crucial, than unnecessary activity taking time, focus, mental energy is an enemy, for learning the Bible and learning how to apply the Bible take much time and focus.
- O. It is easy to reason – *is there anything wrong with learning? I like to stay on top of current events and new information.* But Jesus and fruitful living are not so learned, and if you do not know what to do with your time, then go invest in a brother for his fruit.
- P. While the waste and temptation of video games are known by all except foolish youth, what of parents with their own personal addiction to the Internet, social media, etc.?
- Q. Knowledge easily leads to pride, but charity is the greatest and edifies others, and any knowledge outside the Bible has very limited value and/or multiplying sources for such.
- R. The knowledge Paul was fervently committed to and for which he had suffered the loss of all things was the excellency of the knowledge Christ Jesus his Lord (Phil 3:8).
- S. Paul warned a child of God should be simple concerning evil (Rom 16:19), and there is little or no profit or fruit by learning more about heretics and heresies of any kind.
- T. All political news is mere noise, for you can do nothing about what you learn, and it provides no earthly or heavenly advantage, and experience proves it steals souls of men.
- U. If the devil is like a roaring lion walking about to devour weak souls, our sober vigilance against him must include the tsunami of information rolling at us daily (I Peter 5:8).
- V. We have the greatest collection of pure knowledge, absolute truth, and glorious wisdom in the Bible, and to bring everything back to it as taught earlier requires studying it!
- W. No matter how much more information may explode, including the raging trend of artificial intelligence, we have a more sure divine library settled forever in heaven.

Tempting God Is Profanely Foolish

- A. We tempt God when we doubt Him, provoke Him, or presume on Him unnecessarily; who do you think you are to question Him, sin presumptuously, or assume foolish risks?
- B. Moses told Israel to not tempt God like they had at Massah, doubting He could provide water and complaining against Moses and against the LORD (Deut 6:16; Ex 17:2,7).
- C. Israel presumed on God's temple and worship as safeguards against His judgment, no matter how they lived, so He bluntly warned them and gave a precedent (Jer 7:1-15).
- D. God expects us to use means He makes available for us, for doing otherwise is to tempt Him to protect or provide like a fatalist, which we are not (Proverbs 21:31; Matt 4:5-7).
- E. Christians and Muslims have opposite views when a man falls overboard; the Muslim says what will be will be; the Christian says God may have planned for me to help him.

- F. It is a disgrace when some believing in predestination carry it too far and sacrifice their use of means (of course, only in those things not necessary, for they will work for food).
- G. Praying without using available means is foolish presumption, not faith; consider David's great example feigning madness to Achish and devising Ahithophel's downfall, in both situations he prayed for God's blessing, but he made sure he did his part as well.
- H. Never question God. Never charge Him with any error. He is perfectly just and wise always in every choice. He has never given you more than you can bear. He has never left you without a way of escape. He has at all times been infinitely kind – count them.
- I. Never take His name in vain, foolishly swearing like the world around us. He will judge such irreverent and profane uses of His glorious name, especially using His Son's name.
- J. Never take His name in vain by baptism, church membership, communion, and joining in corporate worship and then thinking and living otherwise when away from services.
- K. Never take unnecessary risks foolishly, for you presume evilly of His promise to protect; never fail to insure what can be insured, for it is another wise means to protect yourself; it is not a lack of faith to avoid risk and insure against it – rather it is faith loving wisdom.
- L. Never let anyone tell you that real faith takes risks others do not by confidence in God, for your reasoning is not much different from the foolish snake handlers of Appalachia.
- M. Do your duty in all parts of life – work and charity – the future is all His (Eccl 11:1-6), so there is no reason to forebear working or to delay charity, which is to tempt Him.
- N. Your efforts are only valuable to a point; He must bless efforts for results (Ps 127:1-2), so learn how and when to do your reasonable best and then to let Him do the rest.
- O. Trusting mere faith for anything here or in eternity tempts God's integrity (Jas 2:14-26), so never forget the rule of fruit, for faith without fruit is profane, presumptive tempting, and sola fide is flatly rejected by the apostles (James 2:24-26; Gal 5:6; I Thess 1:2-4).

Prayer Changes Things

- A. In an uncertain life, with sin pervading and corrupting everything and everyone, and lies abounding, there is something we can do to change things externally and internally, and it is fabulous therapy also, for the Spirit prays with us and unites our hearts to God.
- B. What a wonderful gift from our great God – He hears, answers, assists, exceeds prayers; Jehovah is the most prayer-friendly God imaginable and far better (Ephesians 3:20-21), and we have done our best to summarize His great traits that number now about 14-15.
- C. He is not only our God, but He is our Father, and He delights in giving better than any father, and He compares Himself to any father, who is evil by nature (Matt 7:11); and this great Father in heaven remembers your frame and pities you kindly (Ps 103:13-14).
- D. We have not, as explained by our God, because we ask not, or we ask amiss (Jas 4:1-3), and He will not hear with unconfessed sin or with doubting faith (Ps 66:18; Jas 1:6-8), but if we do ask and correct the three errors just mentioned, prayer is mighty for change.
- E. God's secret will does not change, so we pray based on His revealed will (Deut 29:29); His secret will does

not change, but His eternal purpose can include foreseen prayers; His secret will does not change, but from our perspective prayer does change His will.

- F. Remember this example: *May I pray for the sex of a child already conceived?* We answer, why not? The child's determined sex is no different than any other desire/need that is part of God's secret will; there is no event of life outside His will; and with the fallibility of early sex tests, you might even pray your desire after knowing the sex.
- G. God helps our praying by the Spirit altering requests to God's will (Rom 8:27), which is after the Spirit's unutterable groanings that maximize our fervency (Romans 8:26), so that two of the essential aspects of prayer are provided by God Himself for Himself.
- H. Prayer for fear-inducing needs will bring peace passing all understanding (Phil 4:6-7), which is the best remedy for anxiety, fear, or worry. He does this by mighty Spirit power, which is able to fill you with all joy and peace and abounding hope as well (Rom 15:13).
- I. Prayer is the most powerful thing you can do to help any matter, whether large or small, no matter whether impossible external things or a very discouraged spirit on the inside, and by casting your care upon Him, He will care for you and give you peace (1 Pet 5:7).
- J. Prayer is a command. Prayer is worship. Prayer exercises faith. Prayer leads to love. Prayer exercises your heart and mind in the right direction. Prayer calms the nerves.
- K. For content, use Epaphras short version (Col 4:12) or Paul's long version (Col 1:9-17), remembering that by putting His kingdom and righteousness first, He provides the rest, remembering that Paul's prayers for the churches did not include clamoring for stuff.
- L. Walking with God is praying day and night, making every event and effort joint ventures with Him, and you can/will have indescribable peace and His intended continual feast

For Further Study

Dominion of God. Only Right Worldview ... The Only Right Worldview (16 sermons). Proverbs 16:4 Commentary. Sovereignty of God, Pink ... A.W. Pink's The Sovereignty of God (PDF, monergism.com). Knowing God (attributes). Elihu Lessons to Job ... Elihu Exalts God (13 sermons). Ecclesiastes Commentary ... Ecclesiastes (34 Sermons). Proverbs Commentaries ... the Proverbs commentary index. Nebuchadnezzar Humbled ... God, A King, and Politics. Catastrophe and Cure. Whole Creation Groaneth. Bible Hermeneutics ... Hermeneutics: Knowing the Scriptures, Bible Study Tools 2019. Assurance of Salvation ... Assurance of Eternal Life #1.	Right Side Up ... Right Side Up (#1), Right Side Up (#2) – 2020, Right Side Up!. Your Three Time Zones ... Past, Present, and Future. Bring It Back to the Bible ... Bring It Back to the Bible! (2 Sermons). Ordinance of Authority ... God's Ordinance of Authority (2 Sermons). Effectual Prayer ... Bible Guidelines For Effectual Prayer, Effectual Prayer (8 sermons). Fruit of the Spirit, What God Calls Fruit. God-Glorifying Lives. Superstition or Truth. Problem of Evil. Author of Confusion ... Is God the Author of Confusion? (4 sermons). Why Bad Things Happen ... Why Bad Things Happen (1 Sermon). Famous Last Words.	Boasting about God (Isaiah). Afflictions and Suffering ... Afflictions and Suffering (5 Sermons). Health, Sickness, Death ... Health, Sickness, and Death – 1, Health, Sickness, and Death – 2. Christian Ethics ... Christian Ethics – Case Studies. Confidence in Prayer, Confidence & Excitement in Prayer. Character of David ... David (15 Sermons). Measure of a Man. I Am Third. Techno Sins. Self-Love Heresy ... Lie Of Self-Love. What Is a Domestique? ... What Is a Domestique? (2 Sermons). One Another Duties ... One Another Body Building, One Another Duties. Paul's Prayer Content ... A Prayer for Christian Men.
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