THOUGHTS OF DECEMBER, 2016

Thought number one: Don’t despair. Our Judeo-Christian God [not to diminish Him into being only that] designs our relationship and life and future with Him to be an impossible one humanly, and that we should come to know it as such. When we see it, He turns our eyes off of the impossibility by saying, “But with God, nothing is impossible.” Logic, experience, “the mind He gave us,” reason, -- those things that can hinder faith, are actually His enticements, like water stations along the wilderness trail, to lead us onward to the end of ourselves, where He finally gifts us with the unbelievable -- Himself. More good news: That is not a one-time event. It happens over and over along our life’s walk. The end of ourselves is a good place because at those places we become more empty of self and able to be more filled with Him.

In that Life are found foundational truths like 1) heavenly power is disguised in earthly weakness, 2) God’s foolishness is superior to man’s wisdom, 3) keeping our peace brings the Prince of Peace into the situation, 4) wisdom is revealed through foolishness, 5) truth will stand by itself, 6) giving up is necessary in order to gain, 7) strength is found in the midst of weakness, 8) humility is a powerful weapon, and 9) we must die in order to live.

Then He gives us a symbol of our new, abundant life in Him – the cross, a cruel place of His and many others deaths. But to the believer the cross represents life out of death, a necessary process that proves that death and the fear of death has no power over us. In regards to death, He is the Resurrection and the Life. We will stand with Him on the day of His return.

What a program!

2. There are many things going on in our nation and in your nation and in the whole world, all of which are designed for good for those who love the Lord and who will yield to Him for His purposes – Rom. 8:28. The United States has been on the rocks for decades. Immorality, greed, self-centeredness – the flesh in all ways, has been coming to the front and the Lord has graciously let us get our snoots full of the results, like the Israelites in their own wilderness got all of the quail they lusted for and got sick and many died – Num. 11:31-34. Then they turned to Him.

Jesus our Messiah has not arrived in disguise as Donald Trump, but Trump is God’s choice at this time – Rom 13:1. It seems that the Lord has given us the chance to turn to Him, part of which is contained in the wisdom and morality of our original constitutional government. This year enough voters expressed themselves so that a government of “we the people” may again be at hand. But, that will not be enough unless enough of us return to the Lord with open hearts and yield our ways to Him. This may be our time, a time of spiritual awakening.

Our Constitution was provided so that the people could control the government, not the other way around. It is to defend our rights and limit our government’s power. Our forefathers, who prayerfully wrote the Constitution, certainly knew the nature of even the best of humanity, even born again humanity. Leadership, unless perfect, must be limited and restrained.

It has been widely reported that Donald Trump was born again during the campaign when he had his meeting with Evangelical leaders. I saw a change in him during his televised events after that visit, including his closing his speeches with “God bless you.” As I said, he is not our Messiah but has been sent by our Messiah. “For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”

3. One of the things of the church that gives us a good indication of whether the Holy Spirit is about to bring new life is the presence or absence of hunger for God’s Word. If present, the famine is about to be over; if not present, the famine will continue. The Lord sent His Word-carrier, Jonah, to an entirely heathen city, Nineveh, with a specific message. The people, from the king to the street folks, heard that Word and repented. Their Word-famine was over and abundance arrived. The Lord did the same with His people Israel, and when they received His Word He healed them; their famine was over also – Ps. 107:20. At other times, when His people were happily doing their own thing, He warned that He was about to send them a famine so that they would hunger and thirst, not for bread and water but for hearing the Word of the Lord – Amos 8:11-14.

You noticed that in the above paragraph I capitalized the word “Word” when it meant God’s Holy Spirit breathed word for that time and place. There are other presentations of those same words of God that are of less or even no power, as people like Martin Luther learned. God’s Holy Spirit-breathed word can be received as such, have God’s planned effect, then written down or memorized, and then read or repeated to others without its original effect in subsequent hearers. Large groups of people gather for church services in which are proclamations and readings of God’s word without reception of Life as on its first and other proclamations. The words are the same, the reading or preaching may be different, and the ears are highly variable. It is tough enough when there is no hunger in the pews, but often the preacher lacks his anointing or even his calling.

Was not the Lord aware of this before He put so much of the involvement [responsibility?] of the church into the hands of humans, both born again and not born again? Yes, of course He was, and He continues being more than aware. Nothing has escaped His purview and planning. All of the deafness and blindness in and out of the church are part of His plan. Pharaoh, Ishmael, Esau, Judas, and Pilate are not the only examples of God’s wisdom being revealed in that way.

4. If you have not been sufficiently warned about globalism [one world government] by Scripture, here are some bits of information that should fill in what you have missed. Although we should always properly resist evil in its many forms, as the Lord’s return draws nearer our resistance will be less effective socially but more effective personally and among believer groups. There will be revival wherever our resistance centers around faith in Jesus and bearing our crosses.

Believers will become more united and will speak with one voice, although the worldly church will not join us. It will not resist the deception and force of sin at that time. Instead, it will become even more worldly and aggressive against the more faithful and effective saints, especially therefore against Holy Spiritual, biblical Christianity. That’s how it will be before the Lord’s return. At that time the rapture will occur, meaning that all born again believers will be removed from the earth. The result will be much less resistance to sin, so that the Man of Sin, the Anti-Christ, will begin to have his easier way with the world.

But now for a list of information so that you can see where the battle has been, is now, and will be until we leave Earth via that rapture. After that, the devil will have a limited free-hand on the earth for a short time.

1. Global governance refers to political globalization. International institutions will diminish national and local governmental capacities.
2. There will be transnational regulation of markets and the creation of new human rights norms.
3. Nations have been accustomed to variable degrees of international cooperation for centuries, but globalization is embedding its ideology in wide-reaching areas of international interaction.
4. Globalists have an almost religious zeal. Already among them are university professors and teachers at all levels, nongovernmental organizations, international lawyers, journalists, elected and appointed governmental leaders, international civil servants, celebrities and cultural elites, and experts in the United Nations.
5. They are not interested in only resolving pressing international problems, such as resolution of international conflicts, providing emergency humanitarian assistance, and increasing prosperity among nations.
6. Globalism seeks to establish an entirely secular order over education, health care, economic development and justice by global experts [international bureaucrats], not local and national leaders.
7. Those global experts are hostile to religion and traditional cultures.
8. They believe that experts, not elected officials, are the only way to advance a progressive agenda.
9. They are environmentalists who regard human beings and population growth as a scourge on global ecology.
10. They are population control advocates who regard the traditional family and religious beliefs to be threats to environmental integrity.
11. They are advocates of gender plasticity who seek in the name of human rights to promote global redefinition of masculinity and femininity and thus a redefinition of the human person and marriage as a normative basis of human life.
12. They are materialists who deny the transcendent spiritual nature of human beings.
13. They are relativists who reject the concept of objective moral truth, of natural law, and the religious and spiritual nature of mankind.
14. They gain, then use, power and control to remake the world in their own image.
15. They have adopted the mantle of peace, justice, and human rights – the social gospel of the church -- and have attacked the church as an institution.
16. They are opponents of religious liberty and even of freedom of conscience.

There is more but, if you have not already done so, watch for those signs and behave appropriately and faithfully. Prepare yourself and others for tough times at the hands of the secular world and the worldly church. Our one world government is coming, with King Jesus on His throne in Jerusalem, but first must come a preparation time for the counterfeit, the grand deceiver who will have his way with a spiritually and biblically blind world, pretending to be the Christ.

[I am grateful to Robert F. Gorman and his book, “What’s Wrong With Global Governance?” for the gathering together of this information in a clear and easy format which, with the further help of the Acton Institute, which I edited for us.]

5. I am always thrilled [in retrospect] when the Lord’s prophets of today see and hear things that until the time of their seeing and hearing had been only in God’s mind. That is tremendous. It is reality. The reason I said “in retrospect” is because at the time the spectacular seemed quite normal and casual. When the occasion passed and I had time to think it over, even over several years, shivers went through out my body and soul over the power and magnitude of His presence.

That little Thought was generated by Elijah in 1 Kings 18:41, where he heard “the sound of the roar of a heavy shower” long before the heavy shower existed in its created condition. My delay in wonderment indicated that we may be unaware of the intensity and frequency of the prophetic word as it is proclaimed all around us. It is coming at us from so many directions. It speaks to God’s workings in kingdoms and tribes and businesses and schools and individuals. It’s there in the newspapers, on TV and radio, in personal conversations, and even in churches. It is spoken by believers and unbelievers. The Lord is giving us His word through understandable, our-language voices to prepare us for these and coming times. I have not yet heard Him speak through the mouth of a donkey, as did Balaam in Numbers 22:21-35, but He has spoken through me and I hear Him speaking all around. Listen.

If we will repent and ask the Lord to forgive us of our misfocuses and inattention that have caused our deafness and blindness, we will reap the benefits offered us by God’s prophets. If not, we will simply continue as we are, and die spiritually and physically in our blindness and deafness.

A little encouragement from Scripture in regards to the Lord’s soon return: 1) Jesus said that the generation that saw the regathering of Israel would not die until He would return. Israel was regathered in 1948 when on one day [as said Isaiah in 66:7-9] the United Nations proclaimed Israel a nation. The generation that saw that occur in 1948 is now 69 years old. 2) Forty is the biblical number for testing. A Jubilee year is every fiftieth year. There are 40 Jubilees [40 50s] in 2,000 years. It has been almost 2,000 years since Jesus left us with His promise to return at a time unknown to Him and at a time when we [could know the season, year and possibly the month and week – ed.] would not know the day or the hour -- Matt. 24:32-42; Mark 13:24-33; Luke 21:25-33. The exact timing of Jubilee years is lost to antiquity, but some consider early 2017 to be part of a Jubilee year. [Go easy with things like that, but don’t be ignorant.]

6. How do you handle the occasions when it comes time for you to receive and use God’s abundant and adequate grace? That’s often in time of trial. Part of the Lord’s plan for us as believers or unbelievers is that we have worldly troubles [temptations, testings, trials], so He teaches us that the important thing is that we have the right attitude about them – John 16:33. He typifies that right attitude as “cheer up,” which can be worthless if it is not faith-based. My Nancy says it this way: “So what!” Remember that our response to what happens to us is more important than what happens to us.

7. Nehemiah teaches us how to restore a person, a church, a business, or a nation. The work begins with looking over its ruins [seeing what is wrong, remembering how it happened, determining not to go there again], careful planning [walking away from condemnation, getting a fresh start on the original foundation, having directions from the Architect/Lord], getting to work [personal commitment, group determination, orderliness], and knowing our weaknesses at every point [divisiveness, unrighteous judgments, doing what is right in our own eyes]. Nehemiah looked his/their failure in the face, stood on the rubble, and started re-building using the rubble – Rom. 8:28.

8. Why does the Lord test us? Surely, He knows the end from the beginning so He already knows how we will do. So our tests are for us to test Him, that we will learn the trustworthiness of Him and His word; and that we will learn how frail we are without HIm but how strong we are when we walk with Him. Therefore, we are stronger after a successful test and wiser after an unsuccessful test.

9. Nancy, my wife, is not disposed toward boasting, but if she was she would probably do it like the Holy Spirit and Paul did: “.. I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong” – 2 Cor. 12:10. Two weeks ago she came out of a one-month stay in the hospital. Her body and mind were greatly weakened, but both are improving. Yet, in her weaknesses she was and is peaceful and faithful and loving -- a living and stable testimony to the Lord’s reality in frail human flesh. The weaker she has become in her 84 years the stronger the Lord’s testimony becomes, and the brighter His light shines. She knows who she is, whose she is, where she is headed, is satisfied with the Lord’s handiwork, and knows that she is on the Lord’s schedule. Her road is not always smooth or straight, but it is the road chosen for her. There is no complaint from her or from her roadmate.

10. It may not feel good to know this, but some of our prayers are not meant to be answered while we are here in our present form during this earth life. King Jesus’ kingdom on earth will come as it already is in heaven, as He taught us to pray, but not while we are praying for it to come; not until He returns to earth to head it up – Luke 11:2. We pray now for that to happen on our Father’s schedule in the future, not now.

Isn’t it strange that we are to pray for something to happen that is predetermined and definitely scheduled by God. Daniel was in a similar situation. He read in the writings of Jeremiah that Israel was to be in captivity for 70 years, then would be brought out of slavery to return to Israel to rebuild Jerusalem, the temple, and the nation. When he read it, it was time for the captivity to end, but he did not just tell the Lord it was time for Him to release them from captivity. In prayer he reviewed the entire story before the Lord, the bad and the good, then asked for Him to fulfill His promised, scheduled word – Dan. 9.

So, here we are, on earth without the will of God being done like it is now being done in heaven. In fact, things here are vastly different than in heaven. But we have God’s word that His kingdom is coming, and that the timing of that kingdom’s arrival is set in Stone [Acts 1:7]. Yet we are told to follow Daniel’s example – pray for it to come. It seems that our prayers are not for God to do what He said He will do, but to prepare us for its perfect and complete fulfillment. That preparation probably has something to do with the tendency of those of previous outpourings of the Holy Spirit to reject new outpourings and those of the new outpourings. It causes those of previous outpourings to miss the new. Let’s not be among those. If we are humble, our biblically formed minds, sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, and solid experiences will not blind us to God’s newness among frail humans.

11. It’s hard to believe, but if you have no debt and also have $10.00 in your wallet you are wealthier than 25% of Americans.

12. “When we shift from personal purity to personal happiness, we lose biblical hope because we are not focusing on God’s agenda, we are focusing on our own” – N. T. Wright [1948- present], retired Anglican bishop of Durham, U. K.

13. Two sociologists were walking down a road. They came across a badly wounded victim of a mugging. One said to the other: “Whoever did this needs help.”

14. “When a man assumes a public trust, he should consider himself as public property” – Thomas Jefferson [1743-1846], third president of the United States, principal author of the Declaration of Independence. His statement shows the need for strength of character that is adequate for self-denial, which is gathered on the believer’s cross walk.

15. “Integrity has no need of rules” – Albert Camus [1913-1960], Algerian and French philosopher, author, journalist and probable atheist. He could see the truth, that godly character needs few and non-detailed rules. Jesus had only one rule for Himself – love. He loved His Father and all that He created. All else fell into place as He kept that law. Then He passed it on to us, detailing is a bit more for our sakes as, 1) loving God with all we are and have, and 2) loving our neighbor as ourselves.

The better we live those two laws, the less we need them further detailed for us. The worse we live them, the more we need laws describing them, until we need and have laws that bind us – like the Jews’ many laws when Jesus came, and like our laws and ordinances and binding traditions in civil society and religions. We begin to think that having laws to cover every misbehavior is a good thing. After the report of some legal but immoral or unethical behavior you may have heard and thought, “We should have a law against that!” Our drift away from the law of love has gradually revealed an unloving people, for whom more and unloving laws are sought and needed. It is a shame to be known as a people who are a nation of laws. The whole movement [slide] is downhill. Laws will not perfect or heal an unloving person or people.

16. How would you like your headstone to read? Actually, it makes little or no difference. Headstones, like funerals, are for the living. Weddings are for the bride and her mother. Vacations are for the kids. Wars are for the kings. My all-time favorite is written on the headstone of Solomon Peas: “Here lies the body of Solomon Peas, under the daisies and under the trees. Peas is not here, only his pod. Peas shelled out and went home to God.”

A dentist’s headstone reads: “Stranger, approach this spot with gravity; John Biringham is filling his last cavity.” Moses’ headstone, if he had one, could read, “Moses, My servant” – Deut. 34:5-6; Josh. 1:2; Heb. 3:5. All of those Old Testament saints were related to the Lord as His servants, and John the Baptist was the greatest of them – Matt. 11:11. But every blood-bought New Testament saint is greater than John the Baptist because we are sons of God [who do serve Him], not servants [who are not of the Family]. Fortunately for those Old Testament servants, the Messiah shed His blood for them, too, and when He preached the good news to them in their prison [temporary holding place before the work of Jesus’ cross] they had the same opportunity to believe we have – 1 Pet. 3:18-20.

So, what would you want written on your headstone? How about, “Ann, My daughter,” or “Alan, My son.” All else would be clutter, but perhaps clutter is helpful to others.

17. Here is a Thought that can help us get re-organized. Don’t try to fit kingdom things into your life; check to see if things of your life fit into the kingdom. When we get the revelation of Jesus, our entire perspective changes, doesn’t it.

18. There are millions of people who are never born. Lack of impregnation, miscarriage, and abortion prevented their being born. They were never born into this world, so that they could not see it and participate in it. Some were in the womb and never came to birth. Without a doubt, I can assure you that unless someone is born, he cannot see or enter this world, planet Earth. Being born is not the goal of the human life, but it is the necessary first step. Having come through mother’s narrow birth canal is a necessary passage for going onward on our life’s broad path. Our goal as humans is to live the good, self-fulfilling life.

There are millions of people who are never born again. Lack of the word of the kingdom of God, lack of understanding it, lack of it reaching the heart, lack of it taking firm root in the soul prevents their seeing and being involved in God’s kingdom. Without a doubt, I can assure you that unless someone is born again, he cannot see or enter this kingdom, God’s realm. Being born again is not the goal of God’s kingdom life, but it is the necessary first step. Having come through the narrow gate of faith in Jesus Christ puts us on the narrow path. Our goal is at the end of our path; it is the Lord Jesus Himself.

As you noticed, this Thought was adapted from John 3:3-6. Actually, Jesus is the Door, the Way, and the Goal.

19. When sick patients came to see me, they did not want to look better; they wanted me to fix what was wrong with them, even if it meant losing part of their body. They wanted “new health” again. They wanted their problem to be done away with. Sometimes only a bit of treatment was necessary, but sometimes a radical treatment was necessary. Health and life were at stake.

John the Baptist is recorded in Matthew 3:10 and Luke 3:9 as saying that the Messiah was coming to His people to heal their problems, and that He would use an axe on the root of every tree [person], not a pair of trimming shears to make cosmetic changes. It is clear that we have nothing to offer the Lord except our sinful selves; no trim-ups, no cosmetics, only our sinful selves. Only that which is of the Holy Spirit within us can be used to produce eternal quality results. He can use vessels empty of self, offered to Him to be filled with His Spirit. His stuff within us produces His results.

In 2 Kings 4:1-7, the faithful widow of a faithful Israeli prophet was in a hard place financially. Her two children were about to be taken into slavery by her creditors. She asked the prophet Elisha for help. He was ready immediately to let God’s supply flow through him to her [NOTICE THAT, SAINTS!]. He asked her how he could help, then, quiet reasonably, asked her for an inventory of that which she had. Her report: A jar of oil.

In Scripture, oil is always an allegory for the Holy Spirit; so she had only a bit but was of the best -- God. Otherwise the family was running on empty. TAKE NOTE: Being empty of all but a bit of the Lord is a very good situation to be in. it is scary to our unbelief but exhilarating to our faith.

Elisha saw the situation clearly. It was God’s time and place and people. The Holy Spirit [OIL, in this case] was about to be given in abundance, but in private. This was not going to be ShowTime like, when a few years earlier, Elijah had called fire down from heaven before hundreds of people. No, Elisha told the widow to borrow as many EMPTY pots as she could, go into her house with her two children, and shut the door behind them. He told her to pour that jar of oil into every borrowed empty pot. NOTE: Oil was to be poured only into empty pots [that’s us, if we are offering ourselves empty to the Lord]. She did, and she filled up all of those empty pots. NOTE: Only when there were no more empty pots did the oil stop pouring from her small jar.

We have ways of asking for God’s help with our wants and needs, when we are not empty. Not being empty means full of ourselves, having a self-focus, and having no real idea of what the Lord is doing at the time.

Spem in Allum Nunquam Habui.

20. If anything perfect and eternal is to be accomplished, it must be by the Lord’s Spirit, but remember that “by the Lord’s Spirit” doesn’t require a loud voice, or smoke and thunder on a mountaintop, or an ecclesiastical collar. It requires an imperfectly yielded, imperfectly faithful, imperfectly perfected saint who yields, trusts and obeys the Lord. In his writings, Zechariah [4:6] summarized that basic teaching for us. It applied to Mary’s problem as to how God’s word would be fulfilled in her body – Luke 1:35. It applies to us as we yield to the Holy Spirit’s leadership. It will apply to Israel when they will acknowledge Jesus Messiah and call on Him to save them – Zech. 12:10; 13:9; John 19:37. A common term is appropriate here – “Listen up!”

21. It could not be clearer. Circumcision of the penile foreskin, required by Jehovah of each individual male for establishment of and their outward sign of covenant with Him, had been set aside. The replacement of circumcision by faith should not long have been a surprise to those early Christians, because all of the other performance laws required for being accepted by God had also been set aside – Sabaoth, tithe, animal sacrifice, ritual days, etc. Those obediences of faith were shadows of reality, so were replaced by the reality of faith.

Those replacements were and are still hard for the works-orientated believer to accept. In Philippians chapter 3 Paul, always eager to set believers free from the Law, again spoke clearly and straight-forward. In verse 2 he wrote, “Beware of the dogs [that’s strong language! – ed.], beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision [“mutilation,” Gr. katatome – NASB margin]; for we are the true circumcision [Gr. peritome – ibid.], who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh [specifically “removal of the foreskin” – ed.], although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh [his own circumcision – ed.].” He then lists several things of the flesh that, previous to his conversion, he had thought were efficacious for his personal acceptance before Jehovah. First on his list is circumcision. Verse 9 sums it up: “.. and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law [circumcision, etc. –ed.], but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, ..”

22. The spread of Christian compassion is due greatly to the activity of the Holy Spirit in each believer, the teaching of God’s word to the church and to the world, and to the church’s influence on society. That compassion is rightly aimed at everyone, and specifically to certain ones, especially to the poor and the weak, whether human or animal. Without the activity of the Holy Spirit, the weak would be generally downtrodden further. That is the way of animal and human flesh, which says that the strong and the weak are meant to live in that relationship, and that the weak are there for the use of the strong. All efforts at social reformation are fruitless without the working presence of the Holy Spirit, which points to the responsibility of the church.

23. The Lord made two unconditional covenants in the Old Testament with His chosen people. They are important to us who have inherited the promises because God did them on His own, and maintains them on His own, and will fulfill them on His own. The first was with Abraham. He covenanted with Abraham that from his seed all the nations of the world would be blessed. The second was with King David, that from his family lineage would come the King who would reign forever. Those promises have been, are being, and will be kept. They do not depend upon the righteousness of God’s people, but upon the choice and faithfulness of God who made the promises. Through faith we are Abraham’s children and we are in the man Christ Jesus, to whom all of the promises were made.

24. When Jesus said, “The ruler of this world is coming and he has nothing in Me,” [John 14:30] He was showing us that the less we are filled with ourselves, the less we want for ourselves, and the more we want only that which is of the Lord, the less we are susceptible to temptation. That left Satan with only one option – the destruction of Jesus the man. It did not work!

25. In America, why don’t we vote for our politicians on April, 16 – the day after we pay our annual income taxes? A few years ago, I asked a politician why we don’t simply pay our taxes only when we buy things. In that way those who have and spend more would be taxed more, and those who made less or saved their money would pay less taxes. You know his answer: “Then people would know how much taxes they were paying!”

26. Early in life I did not like the saying, “Those who can, do; those who can’t, teach.” It sounded smart, and I used it on friends who chose teaching instead of “doing.” Over the years, I began to see that it was a prophetic statement that had become a fact. Example: The ideas of the political left do not work. They sound good to the untrained ear, but their consequences are a degenerated populace and a bankrupt government. The slow among us are awakening to the fact that those ideas, those very ideas that do not work, are now concentrated in institutions where ideas do not have to work in order to survive. Those institutions are institutions of learning and other “talking” ones.

27. If you were God’s signal for the return of Jesus, and it depended upon your level of humility [or sincerity, or servanthood], when would He return?

Harambee