THOUGHTS OF SEPTEMBER, 2019

1. Our purpose: To encourage one another regarding our past and present performances [whether good or bad, faithful or unfaithful] so that we will more steadily grow in our calling. Our highest calling is to become like Jesus.

Jesus was made perfect [made into that which He needed to be as a human before He left this earth-life] through His sufferings – Heb. 5:8. What is your method?

Similarly, what things, ways, and people are the Lord using in your life to make you perfect [into that which He wants you to be as a human before you leave this earth-life] – Heb. 6:1? How frequent is suffering one of His [successful] tools in your life – Mark 10:30; John 15:18-20; 16:33; Acts 9:16; 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:21; Rev. 1:9?

Some helpful, simple stirrers of our memory:

1) This week did you take new responsibility for someone’s happiness, health, or wellbeing?

2) This week did you demonstrate or express forgiveness to someone?

3) This week were you purposefully unselfish toward someone?

4) This week did you hold your tongue so as to not gossip about or discredit someone?

5) This week did you extend mercy to someone to whom you were tempted to not extend mercy?

6) This week did someone offend you, and perhaps hurt you, but you returned love to them?

7) This week did you love someone who was “unlovable,” other than yourself?

8) This week did you accept or place yourself beneath someone who was otherwise below you?

9) This week did you comfort someone in their discomfort?

10) This week were you kind to someone with whom you would otherwise have had friction?

One week is long enough for us to have had those positive experiences, although we may not have recorded them as such in our memory banks. Out of the 10, what was your score? Due to many variables, our score changes every week.

It is indeed possible to learn to love deliberately. Here are some Holy Spirit guidelines:

1. Heb. 12:2 (1-3) – Fix our eyes on Jesus and His method.
2. Ps. 40:8 – Remind the Lord and yourself of the truth, often.
3. Mark 4:19 – Know your weaknesses; perhaps you should avoid exposing yourself to some of them.
4. Acts 1:8 – Accept the Lord’s commission and power to be a witness to Reality.

Through events of suffering, Jesus was made into the human He was supposed to be. The Holy Spirit provides us adequate daily opportunities and grace for this same purpose.

1. Whether it was the Jews in the Old Testament or Christians in the New Testament, spiritual and moral and financial and military and etc. decline started and still starts with:

1) Not believing that God is alive, functionally involved in, and running everything. The people remain religious, but their God is not a personally and totally involved God. They/we begin to live like He is there for them, not they for Him. They even exalt their religious actions and services, but He becomes a permissive, religious figurehead.

2) As their God “declines,” other gods “arise” from their anarchy and apostacy. These gods may be sex, drugs, multiple forms of perversion, money and property, social status, politics and power, – you name it. The devil perverts all of the good stuff which the Lord had created for good and meant to be enjoyed as such.

3) Evil ones see and seize the opportunity to organize and control. They gather power to themselves, often by uniting groups by promises, envy and rebellion. The masses who think of [not for] themselves are drawn down into the whirlpool. The whole process is obvious to the biblically informed, who gradually loose authority of voice and position. The louder, nonsensical voices prevail and take over.

Listen now to an up and coming leader in Europe: “We are socialists, we are enemies of today’s capitalistic economic system for the exploitation of the economically weak, with its unfair salaries, with its unseemly evaluation of a human being according to wealth and property instead of responsibility and performance, and we are determined to destroy this system under all conditions.” – Adolf Hitler May 1, 1927. Tune in to today’s news and you can hear those words being quoted, with the same motivation, and with the same intent.

At present there is no perfect political, economic, or any other world system. Almost all of them would be adequate if they had checks and balances on the fallen nature of leaders and followers, and were to some degree Christianized. The most perfect system would be a dictatorship, but which would require a perfect dictator [and perfect subordinates and perfect subjects]. It is called “the kingdom of God.” That system is our future and is coming soon here on planet Earth.

1. He has forgiven us all our sins, and has done away with the “sin and death” system that we were under. All non-born again persons are still under the law of sin and death, but He will not relate to the born again ones that way again. Eph. 2:4-7; Col. 2:13-14; Heb. 9:26-28.
2. Which country has announced that it is moving its capital because its present capital is sinking into the sea? No, not America. It’s Indonesia; moving from Jakarta to Borneo.
3. We have our temporal needs [food, clothing, shelter] plus our wants [recreation, health, safety, betterments of life], and the Lord encourages us to ask Him for help in all things. The point of this Thought is that the Lord wants us to seek Him because of Himself [the Bread of Life], and not simply for the things of life. Those who seek bread from the Lord will be temporarily satisfied, but those who seek the Lord as bread will be constantly satisfied – John 6:26-27 and personal testimony.
4. When you have time for a special aside with the Lord for a leap forward in genuine humility [not sadness or limpidness], read Daniel chapter 4, asking the Holy Spirit to help you apply it to yourself. That is a need and a request to which He will listen and respond. He is the Lord who brings down the mighty, exalts the meek and humble, dries up the self-producing springs, and makes the dry places flourish with His life – Ezek. 17:24.
5. How are you doing with what you get from instructing the Lord, such as in your prayers? While you are praying, interceding, asking, knocking, seeking, searching, and hoping [all of which we are encouraged to do], have you been successful in getting the Lord to do what you wanted Him to do? [What a terrible question!] It’s an attitude problem, isn’t it! In studying our prayers, wouldn’t you think that He knows what He should do, and does not need to be instructed?

Let’s ask Him to help us make Him our only desire [that thought can be scary to our flesh]. Recall that many, including His disciples, wanted to instruct Jesus but it did them no good. Neither does it help us. Our approach to Him should be more like laying our needs at His feet, asking Him for help, and perhaps adding that which He already knows – that which we want; but leaving off what we think He should do and how He should do it.

1. The Lord’s teachings on care for the poor, and being a generous person [time, place money, stuff] in general, teaches us more than just giving to those who ask of us. We are not only to not deny the poor when they ask of us, and to not avoid/hide out from them in order to not give to them, but we are to pursue them in order to meet their needs. That means we go into the world or across town or down the street to seek them and to learn of their needs. Yes, we will be taken advantage of, but that has happened to Jesus before and He can take care of us now when that happens to us.

Example: When the Lord told me to relate to my medical patients in every way as I would to my family and parents, I ceased requiring my patients to pay me, and even had a sign in my waiting room for a while that said such. One result was that some people came into the multi-doctor clinic wanting to see the “free doctor.” Yes, I treated them, some for years. Some were moderately well-to-do, and still did not pay. [My parents were moderately well-to-do, also, and they did not pay me, of course. So, I treated all as my family.] I knew that I was being taken advantage of [as was Jesus], but it was not my job to establish justice from my patients to me. My job was to establish justice from me to them [which was costly of my sins of judgment and self-protection], but it was not my business to establish justice from them to me.

As a result, I found that the Lord is absolutely faithful to meet needs [that I could have avoided having if I had not trusted and obeyed Him as often as I did]. He delighted in creating needful situations, leaving me free to trust Him or not, carrying me onward when I failed Him, and moving upward all the time. At times I pursued those situations and He was always faithful to His leading and word. He is a generous, trustworthy Lord.

1. Three years ago, 52 % of British voters expressed their dissatisfaction with the way their nation was being dragged into nothingness [the pit] by the rest of Europe. They voted to withdraw from, or exit, the European Union, an action therefore called “Brexit.”

After two delays, and lots of political opposition from within and without, the withdrawal is scheduled to be completed this October. It will remain in doubt until it actually is accomplished. Enough British politicians have remained committed to the democratic voice of the will of the people for the effort to progress, but the opposition was and is strong. But it is not yet that October day – there is many a slip twixt the cup and the lip.

It is fitting that America will be vital for helping Britain stabilize itself as it moves into its future. [It would be fitting, also, if the shoe was on the other foot.] Maintaining peace and individual liberties, as well as commerce and travel, will be shaky for a while. We in America can be a major help in many areas.

The EU would probably be glad for Britain to be an example of why none of its remaining 27 nations should follow Britain’s action. But with a prosperous and brotherly America, Britain should be stabilized in a matter of months.

Why this Thought? Quality brotherhood is not limited to individuals. Even though Britain and America have both fallen away from our past levels of national righteous, we are not at zero. We may yet get to zero, but the Lord seems to be giving us a time of grace to repent and change our ways.

One example of national brotherhood is seen between Kings David and Solomon of Israel and Hiram King of Tyre – 1 Kings 5:1-12. When King David died, and the young King Solomon took the throne of Israel, King Hiram acted upon his friendship-commitment and supplied material for the temple in Jerusalem, plus making all of the furniture and fixtures [altar, table, lampstands, pillars, capitals, chainwork, pomegranates, the sea (the large vessel for water from which the priests washed themselves and their sacrifices) with its 12 supporting oxen, basins, shovels, cups, snuffers, bowls, and even door hinges! Solomon had the funds, but Hiram had the material and human talent.

Israel and Tyre are good examples of national brotherhood in operation. Q: Why did the Lord have Hiram send Huramasbi to the task – 2 Chron. 2:13-14? A: Huramasbi was probably the most qualified multi-excellent artisan and teacher Hirasm had and, for a diplomatic masterstroke, Huramasbi’s mother was an Israeli. When you care enough you send the best.

Q: What do you think of 1 Kings 9:10-14? King Solomon paid for all of King Hiram’s work, but wanted to further bless King Hiram, so he gave him 20 cities [probably villages with land] in Galilee. Galilee was prime farming and ranching country. Recall that Hiram had asked to be paid in grain and oil for his work on the temple items, and that’s what David did. But Tyre was a seafaring nation, not agrarian in the least. They needed grain and oil, but in no way were they interested in farming and ranching. So Hiram made a special trip to the Galilee to see David’s land-gift, then flatly turned it down. Perhaps to soften the force of rejection, Hiram sent 120 talents of gold with his rejection message. Their fellowship and cooperation continued full-steam despite the potential strain. Their relationship and brotherly expressions are exemplary.

1. The Lord chose us [not “I chose Him”] before He laid the foundation of the world [6,000 years ago; yes, really, 6,000 years ago]. He has a plan for us [even for of us, in our time, place, age, and circumstances]. We are to fit into His plans [not my plans for Him] for His building of His house [not mine or ours], by His power [knowledge, finances, will, provisions].

As we live by those specifics and let them be functional and real, instead of generalizing and watering them down as if the Lord does not really mean them, He does all that He said He will do. That includes making all things [that means even our sins and their effects] work together for His good purposes, and for the good of each of us who love Him and yield to His workmanship.

The Lord is purposeful; He does not act randomly. There are no accidents in His kingdom. He is orderly; He is not haphazard. He is in total control; He knows the end of the book from before the beginning of chapter one. He is the author and finisher of all. There is no limiting Him. All of creation bears witness to the Creator, Sustainer, and eventual Receiver of all. There is progressive revelation of Him and His purposes, and we enjoy it as we walk in faith with the Faithful One. We are the ones of His blessed assurances.

THEREFORE: We are patient as our Coach puts us through our daily workouts of challenges and grace, preparing us for our next victory. You know the routine: He promises us Isaac in order to develop our patience. Patience [a prime ingredient and evidence of faith] is His purpose. So, what must we not do? We must not focus on that promise and how He might want us to accomplish it. We might see the promise, while missing His purpose. When we think that getting the work done is His focus, we miss seeing that The Way is His focus.

He is calling us to wait for Isaac. Patience is the work to be accomplished in us, not Isaac. The Lord will accomplish His word, Isaac, at the right time. We are not to be misled by that which is easy, natural, and pleasing to us – Hagar and Ishmael. When our patience is stretched to its breaking point, we must depend on His grace to calm us and allow Him to expand our patience. Our dreams may and must die a thousand deaths, but Isaac is on the way.

1. Who originated language, and when? Some answers: 1) God, Who has spoken and fellowshipped among Himself from eternity past – Gen. 1:3. 2) God, before He created Earth, created angels who speak among themselves and with God, and praise Him. 3) God, on the third day of creation, created dry land, including hills, which sing and praise Him – Ps. 148:9. 4) God, on the fourth day, created the moon, sun [and other stars], which praise Him – Ps. 148:3. 5) God, on the fifth day, created the birds and sea animals, which communicate among themselves and praise Him – Ps. 148:7. 6) God, on the sixth day, created the land animals and mankind, which communicate among themselves and praise Him – Ps. 148:10-12. 7) God, in Babylon, when humanity needed to be divided due to our being united for and in sin – Gen. 11:1-9. 8) God, in Jerusalem, when He gave the gift of speaking and understanding unknown languages to humanity [a reversal of His affliction on humanity in Genesis 11] – Acts 2:4-6.
2. There is no way to have Holy Spirit revival [which is the only type of revival the Lord brings] without having change. Therefore, resisting change is an announcement that no revival is on the way. The stronger the revival He plans, the more disruptive He will be, the more reordering He will do, and the more evident He will become. Because He is always fresh and vital, He will take a church out of the hands of traditionalists [forms and traditions] and bring in His life. When the Holy Spirit begins to step into the life of a person or congregation, it is not difficult to see who has been running the religious organization and wants to continue their rebellion. The occasion of revival is an opportunity of the century and cannot be scheduled, planned, or directed by man. The Lord will use man as man submits as a child to the One Who is able to run His church by His own power and presence.

But the Lord does work wonderfully in the old structures of religious Christianity – no doubt about it. The inherent problem there is that the old, hallowed, honored structures put limitations on the Holy Spirit’s workings. He requires freedom, and He works to bring it about individually and corporately, because without ongoing freedom His work will not endure. Without yielding control and direction of the church to the Lord of His church, and without changes in structure and “leadership,” it is virtually impossible to have or to maintain revival. The love of tradition is an enemy of revival.

1. As if our multiple gods are not enough, plus sacrificing our unborn and newly-born children, Union Theological Seminary in New York [Episcopalian] now has a ritualized service for confession of our sins to plants.

You may recall from the Bible or from your History of Religion class that it was not only alien-type creatures and animals that were worshipped in the olden days, but also plants [recall the “high places” on mountain sides/tops]. We are at it again; this time in America. “We are trading the truth of God for a lie.” In Romans 1:25 Paul wrote, “So they worshipped and served the things God created instead of the Creator Himself, who is worthy of eternal praise.”

One formerly major news channel has suggested that we should also confess to the weather and ask for its forgiveness in regards to our causing climate change. All of the loons are not out on the lake.

1. Here is a Thought that will have difficulty taking root in religionists. To a considerable degree, the Kingdom of God has been replaced by the Church and the Religion of Christianity. The harlot church is displaying itself, applying for the affections of the masses. The present example of an Episcopal bishop [pastor] being put on church trial for not allowing his diocese [flock] to marry homosexual couples, simply because God said not to do such things, is remarkable and authoritative to those who live in the kingdom of God. Bishop Love, bishop of New York in Albany, New York, the one who is being put on trial, knows that he has no authority to counter King Jesus’s decree so must refuse to take part in it and to protect his flock from it. Neither does someone of the world’s kingdom, or some apostate one of God’s kingdom, have power to change God’s word. Brother Love, trust the Lord. We love you and are praying for you.

A word meant to be both corrective and encouraging: Members of the Kingdom of God are protected by the King and His word [Scripture], not by “tradition.” The harlot church stands on hallowed tradition, but the Kingdom stands on God’s word. King Jesus is both Lord and Savior. If He is not your Lord, He is not your Savior; if He is not your Savior, He is not your Lord.

The Church System is a business with its ow, but false, assurance of salvation. Its easy gospel produces easy converts who accept an easy Jesus but it is not the Jesus that is shown in the Bible. The easy Jesus is a carnal extension of ourselves, thus making God in our own image. If we confess with our mouths the Lord Jesus, and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, we will be saved – Rom. 10:9. Why do we call Him Lord when we do not do what He says – Luke 6:46.

1. At times I find myself trying to be a better person. At first thought that seems to be a noble effort because trying is necessary to resist sin. But there is weakness and failure in trying to change myself [my soul]. The Lord’s bargain with me at the beginning was that He would give me His life if I would give Him my life. I saw that offer and accepted it 100%, knowing that His grace would carry me through. When I get off-base it is because I am trying to run my life or to change my life [self, soul]. When the Lord shows me my error, I return to living my exchanged life by trusting Him and His truth. “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” – Gal. 2:20. I need to stop trying to attain to that which Christ has already attained within me.
2. Peter was stirred by the Holy Spirit and experience and biblical knowledge and logic to advise those younger believers who read his first epistle in chapter 5, verse 5 to submit to their elders. That is not “young” believers, but “younger” believers. That indicates that every believer, no matter his or her chronological age, is provided by the Holy Spirit with a more spiritually mature “older” believer, for at least one specific purpose, that the younger can grow strong in humility. If we desire to come to a more full knowledge of Christ, to grow up into Him in all things, we are to know and properly relate to our elder(s).

Elders may not have more of everything that we have, but they are given us to provide a deeper work of the cross in our lives. They usually have much to offer, such as wisdom and maturity, but our submission to our elder is the big functional part of the relationship. There is indeed a broad submission to one another that covers all levels of maturity among all believers, but this elder-younger relationship is very specific and obvious.

Hasta!