***How to be Successful in Life - PH74-01  
  
Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 3:15-16***

Please open your Bibles once more today to Philippians 3:15-16, wherein the apostle Paul extends a call for Christian unity. As all of you know, the Bible is really God's divine manual on the care and functioning of a human being – how to care for your body, your soul, and, your spirit. This is like a manual that you get with a new car. Only the Bible can tell you how a human being is constructed in his material and psychological aspects. Only the Bible can tell you how those things are cared for and how we should relate ourselves to these facets of our being. The Bible is in complete opposition to what people think. All you have to do is begin on the physical plane. Where did life come from? What is the origin and structure of human life? And the evolutionary concept that the world holds is in direct, diametrical opposition to the Word of God. Many college students, even at Christian schools, are confused about this because of the theistic evolution concept that somehow God was behind the process of evolution.

I read a scientific article this past week which pointed out that the scientific world is now very secretly and quietly trying to bury the concept of evolution. They realize now that there are dramatic inherent errors which Darwin operated on as scientific principles, which were not true at all. Thus, his whole system has collapsed. This is extremely embarrassing to the scientific world because, as you know, they buried Darwin in the place of great honor in Westminster Abbey. So consequently, they don't want to dig him up, but they just want to quietly bury what he produced – evolution. And I think that's a rather interesting development.

**Mental Health**

We didn't have to wait for the scientific world to inform us so that we knew that that was baloney to begin with, because we had the orientation of the Word of God. So from the Bible, we find that the origin of physical human life is completely different. It is something else. The same thing is true when you look at the psychological part of man's being. It is important for you and me to remember that the Bible is in total conflict with modern psychology and modern psychiatry. Now, if you have something wrong with you in a psychological way, and you want to waste your money going to the psychiatrist or the psychologist, just go ahead and do it. Outside of a limited understanding of human behavior patterns and motivations, the concepts are absolutely contrary to the Word of God.

This is why the psychiatrists have admitted to themselves, with considerable distress, that a certain small percentage of people are helped by their therapy. It's something like 5% or 6% or 7% who are actually helped when they go to psychiatrists. Now, the thing that disturbs them is the fact that for people who do not go to psychiatrists, the same percentage manage to solve their problems. It is exactly the same percentage. So the psychiatrists are wondering if the people that they help are those who would have been helped anyhow – without them. And that makes them extremely nervous because they've gone to school for a lot of years. They've been envisioning $50-an-hour fees, and here it's all collapsing on their heads. Once a person gets into the Bible, the psychiatric business gets a blow, because you realize that they are wrong, and that there is no relating the Bible and psychology and psychiatric and psychological principles as drawn from the Freudian thesis. The whole thing is out the window in actually telling us how a person works in his mind; in his soul; and, in his feelings.

Israel in the ancient world, for this reason, functioned on a totally different concept from all the other nations around about it. As you read the Old Testament, and you read ancient history, you'll discover that Israel had a totally different attitude toward the human body. It had a totally different attitude toward the mind – toward the psychological part of man's being. It was a complete contrast to the ancient world, and modern science tends to look upon the Jews as being backward and inept, uninformed people. But the truth of the matter was that the Jews were operating on biblical principles revealed to them concerning the human body and the human psychological makeup.

In the church age, you and I are the beneficiaries of a complete manual for happiness through mental and physical well-being. A basic biblical principle is that most human behavior patterns are learned – not caused by heredity or environment. This is one of the points where the Bible is, of course, completely different from psychiatry and psychology today. Psychiatry and psychology say that you are what you are because of your environment. You are what you are because you inherited certain characteristics. To a very limited degree, that may be true. Unlike animals, whose behavior patterns are mostly instinct, the human being's behavior pattern are mostly learned. For this reason, God, knowing this (that this is how He made us), said, "Now I must give you a book of instructions. I must give you wisdom. I can't turn you loose out into the world that I made without a book of instruction so that you know how your body functions."

Remember that the Bible says that, "If you will obey the commandments and the directives that I gave you," speaking to the Jewish people, relative to sanitation and relative to things they would eat and not eat, the promise of Scripture was that, "None of these diseases which plagued the heathen about you will come upon you." Israel was a fantastically healthy nation because it was obedient to these commandments that God gave them. As they applied themselves to the wisdom that God gave, they were also a psychologically sound people. For that reason, we study the Word of God. It is the only way to get your head screwed on straight. Whatever your problems are, they will never be solved until you have the wisdom of the Word of God.

So we have such tremendous wisdom passages like the book of Proverbs. If you'd absorb your thinking in the book of Proverbs, you would be a super kind of human being – absolutely. That is because that's the key to how we function. Unless you have this information, you turn into an animal: you act like an animal; you think like an animal; and, you react on animal level instincts and desires. That's all you are. It's Bible doctrine that gives us wisdom for physical and mental health.

Here in Philippians 3:13-14 that we looked at last time, the apostle Paul presents a very critical piece of this divine information from this manual on psychological and mental well-being. People who violate verses 13-14 become mentally ill. Remember that Paul, when he wrote 2 Corinthians, the book written at the end of his life, could say, "I have run my course. I am ready for my prize." He ran it well, and he looked back with satisfaction. When you know you're dying, it must be awfully hard to look back, especially as a Christian, and know that now you're ready to face the Lord. Or, come the rapture day, when you're ready to listen to what prize you get, it must be awfully hard to realize that you have squandered your life as a believer – that you played the fool by investing yourself in secondary things. Maybe you were reared like that, and never got a chance to know better. Well, it's terrible to look back and say, "I'm facing God, and I wish I had a little more time to straighten out and to do something worthwhile with my life as a believer in His plan. I've been running *my* plan. What am I going to do with it now for all eternity?"

So Paul says this is what you should have your eye on. If you concentrate on your errors or your mistakes (on the present), then you will find yourself mentally torn apart. God said, "I did not make you to live under mental tensions. You must resolve them. The process of resolving them is: confess the sin; forget it; and, move on." If you do not learn that lesson, you will live to regret it. Paul says, "Nobody is perfect on this earth, but we reach forward to the time when we have finished our life course, and realize that we have put the imperfect behind us." Paul knows that we all look back on squandered, wasted times in our lives when we were negative toward what was right. You remember the time you rejected sound advice, and later on found that that was smart thinking. You should have listened to it.

You remember the time that you were so arrogant in your self-confidence that you knew what it was all about. You remember the time when you were pompous in your righteousness, and ready to be the keeper of the righteousness of all other Christians who didn't live up to your opinions. You remember the time you were vile in your speech; the time you were so vile in your conduct; and, the time you were downright crude. Your remember the time that you were gross in the things that you pursued, and you wondered whatever possessed your mind to think that those things were important. You remember the time you were mean, when you could have been kind. You remember the time when you were insensitive, when you could have shown a little concern. You remember the time when you were harsh, when you could have taken a little easier hand, in spite of the fact that someone may have deserved it. You remember the time you were cruel, instead of being a little thoughtful and sensitive. You remember the time that you were so wrong when you thought you were so absolutely right.

Just remember that you may have the opinion that you're absolutely right in something you're doing; something you're pursuing; and, in some opinion you have now. Just think in your past how many times you were wrong, and yet so confident at the time. The older you are, the easier that is. The younger you are, you don't have too much flying time yet in order to be able to check your log to see how often you played the fool with your life.

Paul sees these moments as a great danger point for this reason – that they can be sources of great guilt feeling as you look back upon them. They can be sources of deep remorse over what cannot be changed and what you cannot go back to. Consequently, you have set something up in your psychological makeup that is conducive to producing mental illness.

So Paul gives us wisdom for mental health. He recognizes our lack of perfection. He tells us to deal appropriately with our failures, and then forget them. He tells us to forget the praise of people who lack divine viewpoint standards and evaluation, but to seek the praise of God. He tells us to strain like a runner on a racetrack for the things of the future, which we can do something about. The things of the past are gone. We can't do anything about them. He tells us to set our eyes on the rewards for Christian service, and don't waste yourself on the past.

Please remember that God's grace gives each of us one day at a time – one day of life at a time. You don't know that you're going to be living tomorrow. Some of you may have come to times when you said, "I wish I were dead." What you have said when you said that, remember, is that you were telling God, "You have given me one more day, and I'd like to squander it." Don't you ever dare talk to God like that. That is a sign of mental illness. That is a sign that you have not taken in the wisdom of the Word of God, so you don't know how to click inside your head. God gives you one day at a time. That's all. So just live that. That's what Paul is saying. Don't worry about those days that are past. Don't worry about the days that are in the future.

How many times I can think back, in my short span of life, over people as I grew up who were telling me how much they were setting aside for their old age? They told me how much security they were preparing, and how many plans they had for it. Well, in order to provide that security, and to move toward those plans, their lives had to be absorbed with everything that was temporal and passing. They had so very little time and so very little investment in the things of eternity. I'm amazed how many of those people I could name today who died right on the threshold of entering into everything they'd spent their life preparing for. So all of a sudden, it was as if God reached down, He ripped everything off of them; and, pulled them up into heaven, and there they stood stark naked, without all the things that they had been preparing to cover themselves with for all of their wonderful days. This is like the guy who built the bigger barn. I can think of a lot of people who did that.

So God's grace gives you one day at a time. We live for this day, but we plan as if we're going to be here for 100 years. But we live it one day at a time, and it is this day that God has appointed us. Don't you squander it by wasting it entirely on human viewpoint factors. And don't you waste it by deciding to take your life as a suicide? Both are out of line.

Now, in verse 15, the apostle Paul extends a call. He says, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." The word "therefore" that begins this passage is the Greek word "oun." This introduces an exhortation which is based upon Paul's example in the Christian life, which we find in verses 13-14, these things that we have just read. "Oun" says, "Now I have given you an example of realizing I'm not perfect. When I sin, I confess; I forget it; and, I move on. I've given you this example. I've called your attention to the fact that this is a piece of divine wisdom for your mental well-being. Therefore, in view of that, I call upon you to do the same thing – to move on in the same way as per this example."

The next words, "as many as," is the Greek word "hosos." This indicates a certain number of Philippians are in mind. Paul recognizes that not everyone in the churches in the city of Philippi can join him in the particular thing he's going to say here. But a certain number (in which he includes himself) are able to enter into this: "Let us, therefore, as many as." There is no "be" in the Greek. There is no verb. This makes it very emphatic – leaving the verb out. The next word is, "Perfect." The word "perfect" is "teleios." This is an adjective, and it identifies the "as many as" (the limited group) that he is speaking to in the churches of Philippi, in which he includes himself. He says, "I am talking to a group of people who can be identified as perfect Christians."

**Sinless Perfection**

Here, some very careless readers of the Bible have assumed that this means people who do not sin – who do not do anything wrong. In classical Greek, this word had the meaning of "full-grown, mature, or complete." It did not mean without shortcomings, without errors, or without sin. It simply meant that it was full-grown. It had reached its maturity. It was complete in all of its parts. There was nothing missing. In the "Koine" Greek language, which was the common language of the Greek world when the New Testament was written, this word means "brought to its end; finished; or, wanting nothing necessary to completeness." When it is used of people, again, it means "full-grown, adult, or mature." What this word does then is to contrast between childish ignorance and weaknesses, and adult understanding and stability. It does not mean, again, that, even for an adult, there are no errors; there are no mistakes; there are no shortcomings; or, there are no weaknesses. It simply means that you have moved from childish, immature, incomplete understanding to a position, as a Christian in spiritual things, of grownup, complete, mature understanding. You have, in other words, taken into your soul the doctrines of the Word of God. You have taken in the wisdom that you need for understanding your body and your psychological makeup.

**Paul's Contradiction of Being Perfect**

For some people, there seems to be a problem here, because in verse 12 you will notice that the apostle Paul said, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." In verse 12, the apostle Paul says, "I am not perfect." But in verse 15, he says, "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect," and he includes himself in a group that he says is perfect. Is this a contradiction? Notice that "perfect" in verse 12 is the verb form of this word. "Teleios" here is the adjective, but in verse 12, we have the verb form, and it's in the Greek perfect tense, which means that something has taken place in Paul's past experience and then continued to the present.

What he says is, "I have not, at some time in the past, become a sinless human being, and have continued to be so to the present." He has not arrived at a state of continued sinlessness. Last time we referred to that as ultimate perfection. Verse 12 is simply saying, "I do not have ultimate perfection." But in verse 15 Paul cannot be claiming ultimate perfection. He has already denied that. That leaves, consequently, only two other kinds of perfection that we studied, and that is positional or experiential.

It cannot be positional perfection, which is your perfection because you are in Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That is because every Christian has that kind of perfection. Paul is speaking about "as many as" – a limited group. So he says, "It is not ultimate perfection I claim." We know that he could not be referring to positional perfection, because all Christians are perfect, in God's eyes, in their position, because they are in Christ. So verse 15 has to mean experiential perfection – the perfection of some Philippians who have moved on to the building of a spiritual maturity structure in their soul. They have come to full spiritual maturity. They have built grace orientation as the outlook in their lives. They operate as grace believers. They have produced a relaxed mental attitude. The "agape" love of God permeates their souls. They have learned doctrine, and thus they are capable. They have the capacity for loving.

**The Spiritual Maturity Structure of the Soul**

Remember that Bible doctrine is biblical principles of divine wisdom. What Bible doctrine creates is this container. This container is a capacity that God builds in the soul through the Word of God that you receive, and that you know and are positive to. So the relaxed mental attitude is a life that's free of bitterness. That helps a great deal in a proper mental condition. You have a mastery of the details of life. You know that you have to eat; that you have to have a car; that you have to have a roof over your head; and, that you have to have clothes on. But those are secondary in life. You do not become absorbed in them. You can become a very wealthy person, and you know how to let your riches hang on you lightly. While you care for them, they do not consume your life, but you use them in a way that God can honor you for all eternity. You have the capacity to love: to love God; to love your wife or husband; and, to love your friends. This is the only way you get that capacity. You have an inner happiness that is not dependent upon people; on circumstances; or, on things. This is like Job, with the world collapsing around your ears, and yet you're the happiest person in the world. All hell may have broken loose outside, but you have a millennium in your soul.

This is the thing that Paul is talking about in verse 15 – this kind of progress toward experiential perfection. This is getting to be a grown-up Christian in your day-by-day walk. That is the name of the game. That is the only thing for which God has left you in this world. That is because out of this maturity flows maximum evangelism and flows maximum instruction in the Word of God. The people who do not have this are cornball in what they attempt to do in the way of evangelism – usually doing more harm than good. The people who do not have this fritter away the lives of people that have come to listen to them be instructed in the Word of God because they have nothing to offer on which that soul can grow, and on which that soul can receive the rewards that God has for them for all eternity. I'm sad to say that most preachers are robbers of eternal reward, and of temporal well-being of the people of God.

If you want to know more about this in detail: the spiritual maturity structure of the soul; how to develop these facets; and, what's involved in all of them, I'd suggest you get the studies on these particular subjects. There's a whole series on it, and they are, I think, very informative.

Well, Paul has applied himself to doctrine. He has gone from spiritual babyhood to adolescence to adulthood. He is now speaking to the adulthood group. Some of the people in Philippi are such, and he includes himself in that group. Once a Christian reaches the maturity of a fully developed spiritual maturity structure, James 4:6 tells us about God giving us more grace. The text says "superior grace", or "overflowing grace." So after God has built these facets in your soul (the container has been built), then the result is that you have here something that God keeps pouring His grace in, and this begins overflowing into the lives of everyone else around you, and bringing maximum blessing and happiness to yourself. Paul is talking about Christians who are super grace people. These are Christians whose lives are overflowing with what the grace of God is pouring into them.

So in verse 12, Paul is speaking about those who are permanently complete in the fact that they are in Christ. In verse 15, He is speaking about those who are developing spiritual maturity, but who have reached the adult level, and now are at a strong point of their Christian life. In every local church, there are Christians at different stages of spiritual maturity. At each level, you have people who are capable of relating themselves to the things of God to a certain degree. They have certain specific attitudes, and they have certain specific services they perform, and these are not too hard to see.

So the apostle Paul says, "As many of us who have reached the super grace level of perfection, let us be thus minded." The word "minded" is "phroneo." This word means "to think in a certain way." Here the word connotes an attitude of mind, resulting in a certain action. It is present tense, which means continual mental attitude. It is active. It is the mature Christian's own attitude. It is subjunctive which indicates that this is an exhortation. It is something potential. That's why it's translated, "Let us." This is what is called the Greek hortatory subjunctive. It is a challenge being placed out. It is an exhortation to these Christians who are at this level. "Let us be continually thinking this." "This" is "houtos." What he is referring to by the word "this" is what we looked at to begin with today in verses 13-14. I am not perfect; I do sin; I have weaknesses; I have pressures; and, I have made very grievous uses of my life in the past. I confess; I forget; I move on; and, I head down the track, reaching out for the prize that is yet to be mine when I'm called up into the Lord's presence at the rapture and the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Paul says, "Let us keep thinking the same thing that I have presented to you as an example. I want this to be your mental attitude." That is what he is saying: "This is my attitude. This should be your attitude. I want you to think in this same way." It also includes all that he said in verses 2-14 that we have been studying together. He wants people to recognize that all of this they must understand – legalism; celebrityship; and, the whole bit, and to get our eyes off of people, and onto the Lord and the "bema" rewards. So we may translate the first part of verse 15 in this way: "As many, therefore, as are spiritually mature, let us be constantly thinking this – that I have just explained to you (in verses 13-14) about mental stability."

What Paul has told us here is very important – the importance of Paul's mental attitude to you and me as a Christian. It provides us with a couple of things. First of all, it provides us with the factor of mental health. Mental illness in the Christian, according to the Bible, is never due to pressures upon you; it is never due to heredity; and, it is never due to environment. There may be some chemical imbalance that causes mental illness, and there may be some organic disease that may cause it. But remember that the Bible never condones or confirms the modern psychiatric view that mental illness is due to pressures on a person; to heredity; or, to environment. The Bible always attributes mental ill health to a problem in the soul.

This is why the modern psychiatric service is totally incapable of doing anything about it. They don't begin with the right frame of reference. They don't begin where the problem originates. As a matter of fact, many of them totally reject that the spiritual factor could in any way be involved.

Mental ill health is connected with the mental attitude sins which are unconfessed, but which we remember, and so we're wracked with guilt feelings over them. The Bible says that's what makes you mentally ill. The Bible says that it's connected with negative volition to the Word of God so that your conscience is bruised and wounded. Please remember that one way of looking at conscience is to understand it as being God-consciousness. Conscience is being conscious of God. This is why we learned back in Romans 1 that every person who has ever lived had the opportunity to be saved – because he had a conscience. Conscience meant that he was aware of God, and he was aware of qualities of right and wrong for which God would condemn him. If he went negative toward his awareness of God, that was the end of the line. If he went positive, then God was obliged to bring Him the gospel so that he could go positive toward gospel hearing and thus be born again.

Everybody has a conscience, and that God-consciousness is violated when we go negative to the Word of God. The Bible says that mental ill health is connected to building calluses on the facets of your soul, so that you become insensitive to divine viewpoint. Get our studies on that if you need to. It says that it's connected with emotional domination of the soul, so that you go spiritually insane. Your emotions run your life. The Bible says it's connected with subjection to the attacks and the opinions of others. It is due to getting your eyes on yourself and on people instead of on the Lord.

So, number one, Paul has told these Philippians, and us today, "You think the same way I think. When you do something wrong, recognize that the death of Christ on that cross has covered that sin. You are still in the family of God. You are simply demonstrating, indeed, that you are not sinless. Go to the Father and confess it. Name the sin; admit it; and, then forget it. Put it behind you and move on toward the prize of your upward calling." Paul says, "If you do this, this will give you good mental health.

**Success in Life**

I want to show you something else that it will do. It will also provide you with success in life. Now, if there's anyone here who's trying to reach some kind of a goal, you better listen. If there's anyone here who has some plans in life that you'd like to see succeed, you better listen. You're not going to hear this anywhere else except from a source of divine viewpoint of the Word of God. The Bible gives us a most astounding revelation concerning this point of mental health as the result of this principle that the apostle Paul has outlined for us in verses 13-14.

Paul's pattern was a pattern of daily meditation on Bible doctrine and acting on it. This produced, as we have shown you, a spiritual maturity structure in Paul, and consequently, he had in his soul divine viewpoint standards in his life. The result was the ability to take life in stride, one day at a time, successfully. His goals were reached; his ideals were realized; and, happiness was the normal course of his day. How did he achieve this? The Bible tells us that you achieve your goals in life through meditating or learning Bible doctrine.

To show you just how much human viewpoint you and I are shot through with, most people who would hear that remark would immediately say, "Oh, yeah. Okay. Well, that's cute. Read the Bible every day, and you'll be a better person." No, I'm giving you a piece of divine viewpoint wisdom which thousands upon thousands of Christians have realized. I've heard some of them give their testimonies of how amazed they were of all the failures they had experienced in trying to reach certain goals in life (things they were pursuing), when suddenly they realized that all the other things that they were doing to reach that goal, they should have done. But they had failed to do the one thing that would ensure success. Having failed to do this one thing, they ensured defeat for themselves. I'm talking now as a believer (as a Christian). The devil helps his own, and they get away with murder. But if you're a believer and you want to be successful in life, then there's only one way you're going to do it.

Turn to Joshua 1:8. Joshua is preparing the people to enter the Promised Land. He says, "This book of the law (the Bible – the Old Testament) shall not depart out of your mouth. But you shall meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written therein. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success." Now what do you think that means? Do you see Joshua standing up here now as the military commander and the civil leader of the nation? They're standing once more, as they did 40 years ago at Kadeshbarnea. They're now ready to cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land that they have been wandering around, waiting for the old slave generation to die off so that the new generation could move in and take off.

Do you envision Joshua as simply standing up there before the troops and giving a challenging speech, as commanders do before battle? And so that's all this means? You're wrong. God, in this moment, was speaking through Joshua a piece of divine viewpoint wisdom which will give you success in your life endeavors. Notice that the keyword was meditation ("meditate"). "You shall meditate therein day and night." The Hebrew word there is "haga." The word means "to reflect." The basic meaning of this word is "to murmur." Sometimes it is used in the Bible to apply to the growling of a lion. But it just means to simply be talking to yourself in undertones under your breath. As you walk around during the day, sometimes you have the habit of talking to yourself, and that's not bad. It gets a little edgy if you start answering yourself, but if you just talk to yourself, that isn't bad.

That's what this word means. It means murmuring. You're talking what you're thinking. You're saying, "Let me see. I've got a lot to do now. If I'm going to get this, I'll do this first, and then I'll go over there, and I'll get this." And you're talking to yourself. What are you doing? You're meditating. You're murmuring to yourself, and you're sealing things in your mind. Some people on college level have a hard time learning things because they are the kind of people that can't just learn things from reading. They have to hear it. Some people have been helped marvelously by simply being told, "Just read out loud what you're studying. Read your textbook out loud." Children in school are discouraged from doing this because it slows them down in their reading. But some people who can't learn just by the visual approach can do a great job if they can hear what they're saying aloud. That's what "haga" means. It is murmuring to yourself. That's meditation. That's sealing; listening; concentrating; reflecting; and, thinking over God's divine viewpoint.

The word does not mean theoretical speculation about Scripture like the Pharisees used to fool around with. It means a practical exegesis (a practical explanation) for the purpose of observing, in practice, so that the result is success in life. Now, if you want to really read about the blessings of meditation, read Deuteronomy 28:1-68. We don't have time to read it together now, but I really wish we did. This is Moses's final declaration of the people as he's about to die, and they are about to enter the Promised Land without him. He reviews for them that if they will obey the Word of God, and they will take wisdom into their souls, and then murmur (meditate and reflect upon it), that they will be, on the one hand, blessing of the most fantastic kind. And then he lists some things on the other hand. He says, "If you won't do this," and then he lists the most horrid list of failures that you can find anywhere in the world. It is a depressing chapter to read, especially if you sense that you yourself, in some way, reflect this very same thing.

We have other passages that confirm success as the result of reflecting upon the Word of God. Psalm 1:2-3 say the same thing: "But his delight is in the law of the Lord (the Bible), and in His law (in Bible doctrine) he meditates day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bring forth its fruit in its season. His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he does shall prosper." How do you like that for a promise of the Word of God? The person who meditates on doctrine is the person who prospers in everything he does in life.

Now, you thought that what you had to do was to get a little more education, didn't you? You thought that what you needed to do was to get a little more experience, didn't you? You thought what you needed was a little more exposure and a few more contacts. You thought you needed to hustle a little harder; to work harder at it; or, to get other people to help you. The Word of God says the critical factor is taking doctrine into your soul every day (on a daily basis). This is not walking into church on Sunday; maybe dropping in Sunday night too; and, possibly even coming to prayer meeting for the little short quips that they give out Wednesday night. Instead, this is daily intake upon the Word of God; sitting and murmuring to yourself; talking it over with yourself; and, reflecting upon God's viewpoint. That so permeates your thinking; so permeates your emotions; and, so permeates your will that you find yourself, in a wonderful way, making the right moves in life, because you have a proper mental balance.

Psalm 119:9 says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to the Word." Verse 11: "Your word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against You." Sin causes tension in the soul. How do we avoid it? Meditating on the Word of God will enable you to say, "No" to sin. You betcha.

Psalm 119:97: "Oh, how I love Your law. It is my meditation all the day." Why can he say that? Because his soul is so saturated with meditating upon the Word of God that automatically the principles of divine viewpoint guide him in the decisions he makes; in the actions he takes; and, in the emotions he has. Verse 100: "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts." You understand more than your teachers, because you have divine viewpoint meditation, and you can spot where your teachers are in error in their thinking, so that you can reject what you're hearing.

Let's pick up one in Proverbs, the great book of wisdom. Proverbs 4:4: "He taught me also, and said unto me, 'Let your heart retain My words. Keep My commandments, and live.'" You thought living was going out to the Southern Kitchen. You thought living was having a car with monstrous, stereophonic music pouring in from all sides. You thought living was having any number of things; doing any number of things; or, traveling. If you're like I am, you're nuts about traveling anyplace. It's a thrill for me to travel down the street to the grocery store. I like to travel, and you get the sense that that's living: seeing places; going places; and, seeing a thing – that's living. No, the Word of God says, "Do you want to live? Let your heart retain My words. Keep My commandments. Meditate upon them." Meditation will give you a life that's not wasted.

There is one more, in 1 Timothy 4:15: "Meditate upon these things. Give yourself wholly to them that your profiting may appear to all." Here's another factor about meditation. Here, again, we have Paul's words to one of his understudies, Timothy. And he says to Timothy, "Meditate upon doctrine, Timothy. The result will be that all will be able to see your prospering – your profiting will appear to all." What's he saying? He's saying exactly what Joshua 1:8 said: "Do want to be successful in life? The key to it is meditation upon the Word of God."

If you've got a mind that's a complete hollow cavity, when it comes to being filled with God's viewpoint, you're not going to get very far in success in life. If you want to be negative toward this, that's great. It's no concern of the preacher what you do with it. It's only concern that you know it. But if you want to be successful in what you're pursuing in life, the key to it is meditation upon the Word of God. I don't care what it is. As a believer, don't forget that God will keep you from success. He will bring failures, and he will bring restrictions upon your life in the very things that you'd like to accomplish. This is because you know better, and you refuse to meditate upon His word. You're a sometime-Charlie type of Bible student. God says, "That doesn't go with Me." The result is that God brings trials and failures upon us. But remember that even these are God's way of bringing us back to meditation on doctrine.

Don't go for bitterness to drown yourself in self-pity and wounded feelings when you have failures in life. I'm telling you that you're going to have failures. I can tell some people (in some things) are never going to achieve their goals, because I know them that well, and I know how they lack this key factor. Our Heavenly Father wants to take somebody who is weak, and to turn him into a tower of strength, and meditating upon doctrines is the way to do it. If you can't get what you're striving for, check your practice of meditation on the Word of God. That's the essential piece of preparation for success. This is the foundational basis of divine viewpoint mental good health. Why should you lack it, when all you have to do is reach out and take it? Get our other studies, and get started on your success program. There is no charge for this. You can pay vast sums of money for success programs in other places that will supposedly teach you how to be successful. All they will tell you to do is what you're already doing. They won't give you this one: meditation upon God's word. Today is the day to get started.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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