



#29

Theme: Mental Sweat

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 10:5-6 (NIV)

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the Knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

A Thought: The Renaissance and Enlightenment periods (13th - 17th centuries) challenged the Christian faith, its traditions and more importantly its belief of a living God. Today modern-day adherents continue this bias thought process in various forms. Hence, the importance of the above Scripture. Apostle Paul the tough-minded first Century debater of record defends his authority and the power of Jesus Christ. With his intellectual fisticuffs he boldly confronted the religious members of the Jewish and Greek communities. Paul was not vague. He set the tone with absolute conviction. He did not back down. The clarion call to us is that we must be prepared to defend the Truth. It is very fashionable for the world to challenged our belief, our traditions and our love for Christ Jesus. As Christians we must hold to our faith...to do so, we must study the scriptures. No shortcuts! Luke 6:40 (NIV) states the inevitable...*“Everyone who is full trained will be like His teacher.”* The apprenticeship starts the day we accept the Lord. In one of my earlier writings I reasoned the difference between childlike faith and childish faith. The implication is not to confuse our profound love for Him with childish thinking. Our intellect comes into play as spelled-out in Matthew 22:37 (HCSB) *“Love the Lord your God with all your Heart and with all your Soul and with all your MIND.”* In their book, *Love Your God With All Your Mind*, coauthors J.P. Moreland and Dallas Willard emphasize the importance of good Christian citizenship with the following thought (paraphrase) *“If I am a plumber, clerk, bank manager, homemaker, senior citizen...I am in full-time Christian service no less than someone who earns his or her living in a specifically religious role.”* Take note of Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV) *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”* Did you notice the words “teaching them?” It’s apprenticeship time! Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

Talk to yourself:

- How often do you have independent Bible study? Corporate study?
- Do you use study materials...commentaries, concordances and study guides?
- Do you have a mentor or someone to discuss scriptures?
- At home do you have a special place to study? Access to study materials?

Scriptures to read:

- Luke 6:40; 1 Cor. 11:1; 2 Cor. 11:5; Matt. 11:29-30; Matt. 22:37;
- Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Peter 3:15-16

Quote: Cotton Mather, 17th Century Puritan Minister
“Ignorance is the Mother not of Devotion but of Heresy”

Bottom Line: When I first received the Lord into my heart questions continued to linger in the margins of my Bible. I was told to read the word and not to pay attention to commentaries. Well, I did the opposite - thank God. Reading the Word and other materials...the Bible became clearer and the margins had less questions and my faith became stronger. There is a very popular radio program entitled, “Intersection of Faith and Reason” the title may give a spark of interest and impetus in your journey to learn the Word. Because of faith and reason I learned why the Lord died for my sins and why this sinner is saved by grace. I struggle with juggling my daily activities but a day does not go by that I do not read and study the Truth. Writers Moreland and Dillard have it correct...*“If we cannot be His students, we have no way to learn to exist always and everywhere within the riches and power of His Word.”* Saint Paul in his instructions to Timothy reminded the young *“my dearly loved child”* that *he and his cadre of evangelists will confront tough times ahead. He must teach the sacred Scriptures in order to follow a godly life.*” Hence, (2 Timothy 3:16-17 HCSB) “ C. S Lewis’s take on faith and reason: *“We must keep the central truths of our faith before us daily - in meditation, prayers, religious readings and the like.”* Mental sweat gentlemen.

NOW.....THAT’S THE BOTTOM LINE.

Spiritual Dabbler, Your bro, Ray

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