

The QBC Daily Nugget March 4, 2010

“The Rules of the Lord are true and righteous. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold” (Psalm 19:9b-10a)

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18 – Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: **SOME THINGS SHOULDN'T CHANGE.** Ever been in a spiritual desert? Ever feel like your soul simply was parched, barren, and could break as easily as a dry twig or limb? A. W. Pink wrote an article in the March 1939 edition of *Studies in the Scriptures* titled “Spiritual Fluctuations”. In the article, he defined five “changes” experienced in a Christian in his or her walk with the Lord Jesus. These “changes” reflect the reality of the Christian life in all its seasons. Here is an overview of them.

First, there is a change in our conflict with sin. Pink wrote, “At conversion it often seems as though the believer is completely delivered from all his spiritual enemies. But how soon he discovers that the wilderness of sin lies between him and the promised land, and that though the Egyptians be dead, there are Amalekites to assail him” (**EXODUS 17:8**). Then, there is the change in our faith. Pink states, “On some occasions his heart goes out instinctively to God so that he can exclaim, ‘I will trust and not be afraid’ (**ISAIAH 12:2**); but at other times he is filled with doubts and fears, and is quite unable to lay hold of the Divine promises.” A third change experienced by Christians is in our prayer lives. Pink describes this change known all too well by us, “One day he is favored with real freedom and his devotions are delightful, but another day he is bound in the spirit and his attempts at supplication are wearisome.” The fourth change is the change in our enjoyment of the scriptures. Again from Pink’s pen, “Often he is able to feelingly exclaim, ‘More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb’ (**PSALM 19:10**). But alas, it is by no means always so. When fellowship with God is broken, our relish is lost for His Word, and it becomes more or less neglected. And when the Lord chastens His child because of his waywardness, so far from His Word affording comfort, it pricks, condemns, and terrifies.” The final change is what Pink called “our outward lot” and these are times of suffering and affliction. He wrote, “For a time, perhaps years, the smile of Providence is upon him, and then all is drastically altered. One trouble follows swiftly upon the heels of another, until the sorely tried soul is ready to say with Jacob, ‘All these things are against me’” (**GENESIS 42:36**). In the conclusion of the article, we see the wisdom of God’s servant and his God in these instructive words about all these changes we experience – “But such ‘changes’ or afflictions are helpful, for they deeply exercise an honest heart, humble him before the Lord, cause him to tread more softly, and deepen his fear of God.”

As we ponder what Pink wrote and the reality of our changing spiritual frames, there are some things in our daily walks which should not fluctuate. I confess they fluctuate with me but they are to remain constants in the exercise of my will apart from the fluctuations of my heart. They are found in today’s reference. Three constants are to be sought and maintained in the daily battle of a fluctuating heart. First, live in a spirit of worship – “rejoice always”. Worship takes our eyes off ourselves. With a focus on us, fluctuations flourish. With a focus on the Lord Jesus, fluctuations are restricted. The next constant is live in the spirit of communion with God – “pray without ceasing”. We are to learn to walk in the course of our day being aware of and communing with God. Don’t be discouraged if this isn’t happening throughout the day. Learn to practice the presence of God. The third constant is live with a thankful heart. This is hard and easy - hard because we are forgetful of God’s many blessings (**PSALM 103:2**), but easy, if we choose to engage the will and remember them. Spiritual fluctuations are inevitable, but we can learn to minimize their impact on us by seeking to live out the constants of worship, prayer, and thanksgiving.

PRAYER: “Lord, forgive me when I don’t live in the spirit of thanksgiving.”

QUOTE: “A thankful heart begins with an exercise of a thankful will.”