

Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.

1Corinthians 8:1

Store In My Heart

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Though commanded to Israel the principle taught in this passage still instructs us today. God expects His people to make His Word active in all their thinking and reasoning. No matter what we are doing we ought to consider God's desire and commands. The more we read and meditate on His Word, the more it will work in our decision making process.

Keep the Word active in your mind each day.

Serpents And Doves

David Smitherman

"Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16).

Serpents and doves -- two creatures that have little in common. And yet, in the development of our character, we are to be "as" they are in some respects. Quite a paradox, isn't it? Well, much of the Christian's character is a paradox.

For instance:

We are to control our tongues (**James 3:1ff**) but also speak boldly (**Ephesians 6:20**). There is no virtue in a bold tongue that is uncontrolled or one so controlled that it is never bold. Our tongues need a "controlled boldness" in order to rebuke sin both publicly (**Galatians 2:11f**) and privately (**Matthew 18:15**). Though the consequences may be unpleasant (**Mark 6:16-18**) we must speak boldly and when occasion demands it our bold tongues must be blunt (**Matthew 23:15**). Fear of saying a wrong thing should not keep us from saying the right thing (**Matthew 10:26-27**). Someone has wisely said, "Silence is not always golden; sometimes it is just plain yellow".

Paul's humility (**1Corinthians 15:9**) and yet his confidence (**2Timothy 4:7-8**) exemplify yet another paradox. Humility should not breed timidity but neither should confidence give rise to arrogance. Humility will keep us aware of our own weaknesses but should never cause a hesitancy to point out sin in the lives of others (**1Corinthians 5:1-13**). We are humbled by our liability to err in opinions and understanding



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We want opportunities to speak with others about the Lord's Kingdom.

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For Our Information

John Jackson had an upper endoscope and biopsy done last week.

Paula Laubach is trying to find ways to deal with arthritis pain while allergic to many pain meds.

Amy Simpson has been dealing with hip pain.

Brenda Keisler still has neck pain. Ruben Keisler is doing well in physical therapy.

John & Betty Ragsdale still have health issues slowing them down

Pray for safety, courage & healing.

of Truth, but are confident that there are some things that cannot be compromised (**Galatians 2:5**).

The virtue of longsuffering (**Galatians 5:22**) must be balanced with intolerance (**Colossians 2:4,8,16,18**). Longsuffering is needed as attempts are made to progress toward maturity, but intolerance is demanded when progress is not made and goals not reached (**1Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 5:11f**). It is one thing to suffer long with sinners as they attempt to conquer sin but quite another thing to tolerate wrong-doing (**Revelation 2:15-16,20-21**).

We must certainly care what others think about us (**Matthew 5:13-16**) but at the same time think little of how others evaluate us (**Galatians 6:10**). The virtue of living to influence others (**Philippians 2:12-16; 1Peter 2:11-12**) can so easily become the vice of living to please others (**Galatians 2:11f**).

Some are prone by "nature" to be "*as serpents*" or "*as doves*" and the Devil uses our "natural inclinations" to cause an imbalanced character. He would have us emphasize what comes easily and de-emphasize what doesn't. As a consequence we often go to extremes: either a pseudo-sophisticated person who thinks that "cultured" people avoid bold speech, confident affirmations, intolerance of sin, and conduct that may "offend" others; or a crudeness that is abusive in speech, arrogant, intolerant, and unconcerned about what others think.

The development of a balanced, ye paradoxical, character does not come quickly (**Hebrew 5:12** -- "*by reason of time*") nor is it easy (**1Corinthians 9:25** -- "*striveth...self control*"), but there are no short-cuts to maturity.

(This article reminds us once again that the life of a Christian does not follow the easy path. It will always be a struggle to keep our life balanced between pride and humility, knowledge and love, etc. We have also seen in our Corinthian study that we cannot let our responsibilities to our family distract us from our service to God. Life is a balance and it takes a lot of work to keep that balance. I am reminded of children trying to stand in the middle of a seesaw and keep it level. With practice it can be done, but if one is not constantly focused on the task, one side or the other will certainly get away from us. DLH)



We seek only to serve God according to His Will!