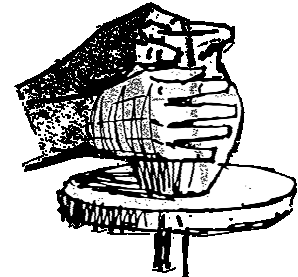


His Workmanship at Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*



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Isaiah 64:8

The Thoughts of God, *Isaiah 55, part 4* by Doy Moyer

Isaiah 55 gives us great insight into the way that God's word can supply the power to restore. Consider the principles we find here:

The thirsty (those who desire) recognize their need (they have no money), yet have the ability to act (come) and are motivated to do what is right (buy without cost). God says, "come to the waters," and "buy wine and milk." Not only does He supply what we need, but He also gives an abundance of what nourishes, strengthens, and sustains. These are the spiritual blessings we share.

"Buy without money" is a paradox. The price of what God gives us is purchased, but not with our money. Actually, He purchased us, not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, 1 Pet 1:18-19. Contrast that with spending time and resources on things that do not matter, v. 2. God gives us the bread of life, which is Jesus Christ Himself, Jn 6. And He always gives us good things in abundance.

Why waste our time and resources on something that ultimately does not feed us, sustain us, or nourish us spiritually? Instead we ought to "Listen carefully... and eat...and delight yourself..." v. 2. These are fundamental attitudes of the righteous; see Psalm 1 and 119:14, 111. All of this is done so "that you may live," v. 3. This is the simple message of the

gospel: listen, eat, delight.

The blessing of life is "according to the faithful [sure] mercies shown to David," v. 3. Paul used this passage to reference the resurrection of Jesus as fulfillment, Ax 13:34. Just as surely as God blessed David, made a covenant with him [a promise to him], and brought about its fulfillment through the resurrected Messiah Who now sits on David's throne, so we participate in this glorious kingdom and share in that resurrection promise. God gave His word. It is sure. His word is faithful because it flows from His nature—trustworthy, reliable, true, certain. Further, the promise God gave to David always extended beyond Israel, v. 5. It was a covenant with far-reaching implications, reaching finally to all nations, who, upon seeing its value and price, would run to the Lord to buy it without money. This is the glory of God's eternal plan—to save people from all nations.

Therefore, if we hear what God has said in vs. 1-5, we should "seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near," v. 6. The process of restoration requires us to seek God according to His word. The power of God's word will be available to us, but if we don't seek God through it, then we will never benefit by it, and we may become unable to draw near to Him.

Isaiah contrasts our ways and thoughts with God's: "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts," v. 7. This shows a basic distinction in authority and power. What authority do a man's ways and thoughts have? God says to forsake man's ideas so that you can listen to Him and partake of His ways and thoughts. "From heaven or men" is still the question to ask, Mt 21:23-27. Shall we take God's thoughts or man's thoughts? Your ideas or His? The distinction between men's thoughts and God's thoughts is especially seen in the concept of forgiveness. Note the progression from vs. 7 to 8. "He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts..." We may have our own ideas of mercy, grace, pardon, and forgiveness, but God's ways are what matter. True forgiveness only comes through listening to God's thoughts on the matter.

The only way to know God's thoughts is through the revelation of His mind, 1 Cor 2:10-13. We cannot know the thoughts of God unless He has revealed those thoughts to us. This is the point of the word of God—a revelation of His ways and thoughts. We must never presume to know what God does thinks unless He has revealed it in His word! We cannot even begin to comprehend the power and magnitude of God's thoughts. We think we have so much figured out, yet we know virtually nothing. We cannot imagine what God

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God's Ways and Thoughts, from p. 1 is able to do and think, Eph 3:20. We must not put Him in a box, try to limit His power and knowledge, or minimize the authority of His Word!

"He will abundantly pardon," v. 7, on His terms, not on ours. This helps us appreciate His grace. The fact that He has communicated anything to us, let alone given us an opportunity to be restored to Him through the death of His Son, is amazing! If this doesn't motivate us to seek Him, what will?

God's word accomplishes exactly what God intends, v. 11. People reject God's message, yet that is not a failure of the message, but of the hearts of those who so reject it. We may not always understand how or why God's plans are fulfilled, but we leave that up to God and simply trust Him for the results.

The result for those who love God's word is joy and abundant peace, v. 12. God's word prospers in the people who respect it and obey it. It causes fruitfulness, v. 10—the fruit of God's Spirit, Gal 5:22-23; Eph 5:9-10. His word is like the rain that waters the parched ground and causes it to spring forth and bud, *"that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater,"* v. 10; cf. Is 35:1-2, 6-7; 41:18-19; 43:19; 51:3. It blesses and benefits both sower and eater. Even the ground itself sings praise to such a good God! Instead of thorns and briars, God will provide useful, fragrant, evergreen, and beautiful trees that bless all, cf. Ps 1:3; Jer 17:8. When people see sinners become Christians, they see a wonderful change—a sign of God's power, love, and faithfulness that causes them to glorify Him! May God bless us as we seek to know and understand His will through His revealed word.

Dating to Display Jesus

by Marshall Segal, continued from last week

Last week we explored dating with an eye to glorifying God. After all, He created men, women, the biological compulsions that bind them together, and the institution of marriage which declares their union, keeps it sacred and safe, and displays His glory. Therefore, only He has the right to prescribe the

purpose, parameters, and means of our romances and marriages. God had so much more in mind with romance (and marriage) than merely companionship, sex, or even procreation, and so should we. So must we. So among singles and marrieds we have to work harder in our relationships to preserve what marriage ought to picture and provide.

Expecting More from Marriage. The vision of marriage we see in God's word—the beautiful, radical display of God's infinite, persevering love for sinners—makes it worth it to date and date well. The world's approach can provide fun and eventually even some level of commitment, but it cannot lead to the life-giving Jesus after Whom our marriages are to take their cues. God created us to enjoy and thrive in love that lasts, like Christ's lasting love for His bride. God engineered romance to express itself in fidelity and loyalty—in oneness, Gen 2:24; Mt 19:9; 1 Cor 7:2–13. Because dating is only a means to marriage, God's design for our marriages speaks to his design for our dating.

"The pursuit of a spouse is not a pursuit of perfection, but a mutually-flawed pursuit of Jesus."

Those who give their hearts too quickly are settling. They're settling for less than God intended and less than He made possible by sending His Son to rescue and repurpose our lives, including our love-lives, for something more. More happiness. More security. More purpose. The more is found in a mutual faith in and following of Jesus. Jesus asks more of us. A glorious, holy union can only be found through Christians' dating with Christ in mind—or with the mind of Christ. Dating as Christians—the intentional, selfless, and prayerful process of pursuing marriage—will secure and increase our greatest and longest-lasting happiness.

How Then Shall We Date? If our path has been marked more by mistakes than selflessness, patience, and sound judgment, we can take hope in the God Who truly and mysteriously blesses our broken road and redeems us from it,

and Who can begin in us a new, pure, wise, godly pursuit of marriage today.

Here are (some) principles for our not-yet marriages. It's not nearly a comprehensive or exhaustive list. They're simply lessons I've learned and hope can be a blessing for us and our future spouse.

1. *It really is as simple as they say.* In a day when people are marrying later and are more resorting to online matchmaking, we probably need to be reminded that marriage really is more about commitment than compatibility. After all, there has never been a less compatible relationship than a holy God and His sinful bride, and that's the mold we're aiming for in our marriages.

There is a reason the Bible doesn't have a book devoted to how to choose a spouse. It was not an oversight on the part of the God of all history, as if He couldn't see into the 21st century. The qualifications are wonderfully clear and simple: a) he or she must believe your God, 2 Cor 6:14, and b) he or she must be of the opposite sex, Gen 2:23–24; Mt 19:4–6; Eph 5:24–32.

Now undeniably there will be more involved in your discernment while dating. Apart from questions of attraction and chemistry, which are not insignificant, the Bible articulates some roles for wives and husbands. Husbands should protect and provide for their wives, Eph 5:25–29. Women should help and submit to their men, Gen 2:18; Eph 5:22–24. Fathers should lead their families in God's word, Eph 6:4. Parents must love and bring up their children in the nurture of the Lord, Deut 6:7. So admittedly we are looking for more than an attractive person who *"loves Jesus."*

That said, many of us need to be reminded that God's perfect person for me isn't all that perfect. Every person who marries is a sinner, so the search for a spouse isn't a pursuit of perfection, but a mutually flawed pursuit of Jesus. It is a faith-filled attempt to become like Him and make Him known together. Regardless of the believer we marry,

continued on p. 3



Psalm 133:1

God's harvest we'll glean in 2016 "Please let me go to the field and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." —Ruth 2:2

Dating to Display Jesus, from p. 2 we will likely find out soon that we do not feel as "compatible" as we once did, but we will marvel more at God's love for us in Jesus and the amazing privilege it is to live out that love together, especially in light of our differences.

2. Know what makes a marriage worth having. In our worst moments, our objectives are small and misguided. We just don't want to be alone on a Friday night anymore. We just want to post almost-candid, artistically-framed pictures with someone on a bridge somewhere. We want a guilt-free way to enjoy sex. We just want a guy or girl to tell us we're handsome and funny and smart and good at our job, etc. If marriage offered us only these things, though, it really wouldn't be worth it. Many will try to deny that, but the divorce statistics are enough to establish that marriage asks more of you than most could have ever imagined on their wedding day. Most of my married friends would say that what seems fun and pretty and unbreakable at the altar did not feel as clean or easy even days into their lives together. It's still intensely good and beautiful, but it's costly, too costly for small aims.

Marriage is worth having when we get God in our lifelong commitment to one another. Marriage is about knowing God, worshiping God, depending on God, displaying God, being made like God. God made man and woman in His image and joined them together, giving them unique responsibilities to care for one another in their broken but beautiful union. What makes marriage worth having is that we, our spouse, and those around us see more of God and His love for us in Jesus. If we don't experience

Discipleship Here At Home

that with our sweetheart, we need to break up with him/her. If that's not our priority, we need to get a new game plan and probably a new scorecard for our next romance.

Next week: Boundaries, including community, and evangelical dating to display Jesus.

Assisted Suicide in Colorado, from p. 4 (saving the insurance company hundreds of thousands of dollars), it would likely have been approved the same day, and I would be dead right now! My family would not be required to know, and I would not be required to be evaluated by a psychologist or psychiatrist.

"My journey hasn't been easy; however, people facing serious or terminal diseases have much better options than assisted suicide. While no option is perfect, assisted suicide legalization sends a dangerous message to people like me about what the government thinks is my best option. I urge the Colorado Legislature to reject the idea that lethal drugs are an answer to serious illness or terminal diagnoses.

"Ultimately, physician assisted suicide takes away the patient's choice to fight and live, and it puts the power in the hands of doctors (who may have limited experience with the diagnosis and long term survivors) in a profit-driven health care system or to over-burdened caregivers.

"Why should anyone die before his/her time, if in fact there may be a reason for hope?"

Christians do not look at suffering in the same way that the world does—and this view should transform us. God uses suffering to make us grow; taking life is not a right choice. Contact your state representative today and ask him/her to oppose this dangerous bill.

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Christian Harrod; Addison Tope; Rocco Jr. Ann Cox; Logan Corray—asthma
Orchid Cox—chronic blood clot condition
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease
Kirk Johnson—MS; **Amanda Mailloux**—IBS
Virginia Menard—macular degeneration
Sandra Perry—diabetes complications; oxygen
Cheryl Reames—fibromyalgia; diverticulitis
Judy Sartin—rotator cuff injury; spinal stenosis
Judy and Mike Strand—hepatitis treatment
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness
Travel DeWayne Howell will be in San Francisco Mon-Sat for work.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Lloyd Menard**—moved to hospice care facility, please visit (see website schedule) at Westlake Care Community, 1655 Eaton St, Lakewood 80214; 238-5363
- **Linda Szymanski**—broke arm & wrist on ice
- **Jordan Corray's father, Glen Kowalski**—home after ICU for diabetic complications
- **Judy Strand's daughter Shawntiel**—broke leg on ice, had surgery to insert pin
- **River and Forest Cox's great grandmother Martha Rowe**—in rehab after diabetic coma for knee strengthening
- **Kory Tope's uncle Skeeter Schulz**—broke hip
- **Brittany Tope's mother Gayle**—biopsy of spot on liver shows breast cancer has spread; **Brittany's grandmother**—on dialysis
- **Ava, Brielle, & Frankie Kosik, and Lorraine & Christian Harrod**—flu; breathing difficulty
- **Judy Sartin's friend George Vernon**—stage 4 esophageal cancer
- **Kim Howell's coworker Rachel Daniels**—recently had baby, **Titus**, with genetic disease
- **Jordan Corray's colleague and mentor Craig Smith**—in ICU with brain injury after fall from roof; friend **Kylie Cabalka**—staph infection complications; out of ICU to rehab and making progress
- **Sarah McMurray's mentee Lakesha Griffin**—age 12; safety, stable home place
- **Connor Boyd's friend Christian Lyons**, high school freshman—leukemia
- **Berney Charo's brother Eliud**—prostate cancer
- **Andrea Songer Greer**, daughter of **Bill and Debbie S.**—chemo for stage I breast cancer
- **Judy Strand**—finished with chemo for liver transplant; tests tomorrow to determine whether chemo effective
- **Sheryle McNeill**—pinched nerve
- **Ernesto Gonzalez's father Fidencio**—stage IV lymphoma; to rehab center to gain strength
- **Mary Ellen White**—recovering after hip replacement
- **Letha Fink's brother Kenneth Morrison of GA**—liver disease, diagnosed with neuro-muscular disease
- **Bill Dennis**—made dr. appointment, improving
- **Larry Campbell's FL partner Terry Hargadine's wife Michelle**—difficult recovery from mastectomy; **Terry**—recovering from knee replacement surgery
- **Kayla Knighten, Christine Adams's daughter**, needs our prayers; **Judy Strand** requests prayer for her son **Joe**; pray **Ed's son Rodney Schulz** and **Sheryle's daughter Tiffany** receive the gospel;
- **Sylvia Chapman, Brett's grandmother**—third stage pancreatic cancer; **Brett's grandmother Sue**, and Aunt **Connie Doss**—cancer returned
- **Eric Perry**—recent diagnosis of pre-diabetes
- **Noah Hadders's teacher Sharolyn Elmore**—chemo for breast cancer
- from Northgate church: **Andy Schmoltdt's** mother passed away Sat am; cards to 8546 Cody Ct, Arvada 80005-1542
- **Pat Johnson's brother**—pancreatic cancer



Exposing current trends *assisted suicide*

Colorado Proposes Assisted Suicide, from the Colorado Springs Gazette
 Colorado is now advancing an assisted-suicide bill. The "Colorado End-of-Life Options Act" successfully passed a democrat-led house committee after an intense 10-hour debate two weeks ago. It now will go to the full House for discussion.

To make the bill more appealing, certain safeguards, such as ensuring the patient is mentally competent enough to make this type of decision and having two doctors sign off after a six-month prognosis, are in place. But one doctor from Greeley, John Volk, wrote, "Legislation forms culture. When a culture looks to death as the solution to a problem, it changes us. We become casual about life and death. We grow calloused and hardened. The culture itself begins to decay and die. In the 1980s, when Dutch leaders considered this question, could they have imagined that, within one generation, their physicians would be euthanizing the elderly without consent and babies with birth defects?"

Dana Palmer, a beautiful young Colorado woman, wrote against the bill in the Springs Gazette last week: "In 2005, I was diagnosed with Glioblastoma-terminal brain cancer. My prognosis was [to live for] only 3-12 months. Shortly after my diagnosis, my doctor received a form asking, 'When will the patient recover sufficiently?' He drew a horizontal line through it and wrote 'never'! "My experience is similar to that of thousands of Coloradans who every year face terminal diagnoses and the stigma that they won't live and may be better off dead!"

"Assisted suicide only worsens this stigma.
 "After surviving my terminal prognosis for ten years, I heard the story of the young California woman named Brittany Maynard who faced the same disease I did and at the exact same age. She took her cancer story public, and it was used to headline a national effort to "normalize" assisted suicide. Immediately, she and other assisted suicide supporters sent a message to patients across the country: 'Assisted suicide is for you' and 'There is no reason for hope.' This is a very dangerous message for current and future patients!"

"Assisted suicide supporters call it a 'choice,' but to people facing a diagnosis like mine it can be interpreted as an obligation, since many patients already feel like a burden. At any time after a terminal diagnosis, emotions can run wild, and minds often change daily regarding treatment and care. But assisted suicide is final; it's an action that can't be undone. It can leave doctors and loved ones with regrets.

"Under a bill currently proposed in Colorado, I would be eligible for assisted suicide based on my diagnosis. I would be permitted to see any doctor regardless of whether I had a previous relationship with him/her, and I could receive a lethal prescription in just a matter of days. Recently, I had a recurrence and battled my insurance company for a month to try to get approval for an out-of-network consultation at a major cancer facility that specializes in brain cancer. While I was appealing their decision, the cancer became more aggressive!"

"Sadly, if the law had been in force and if I had asked for a lethal prescription continued on p. 3



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 DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

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Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, studies on the attributes of God: "Show Me Your Glory," Jim Reingrover
- **sermon**, "Preaching through First Corinthians, (PTFC): Chapter 5, Addressing Sin in the Church," Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

- **questions answered**, "Do We Have to be Baptized to Eat the Lord's Supper?" Larry Campbell

Wednesday night study:

The Thessalonian Letters