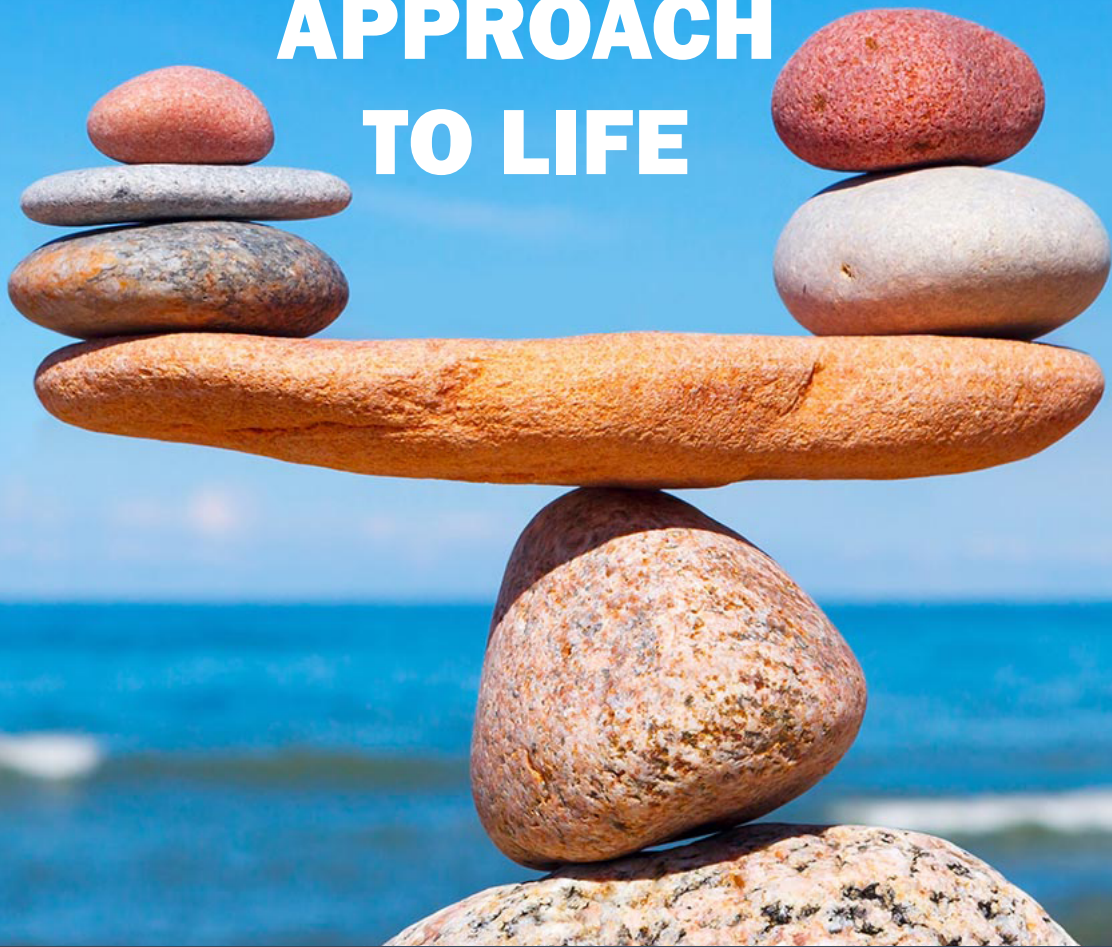


GRACE & PEACE

An E-periodical For spiritual enlightenment, edification and encouragement.



A BALANCED APPROACH TO LIFE



IN THIS ISSUE :

Perspective	Study	Anecdote	Outline	Exhortation	Reflections	Brief article
A Balanced Approach to Life	Brief Notes on Tabernacle-4	Devil's Device	The Balanced Life	Abounding in the Work of the Lord	Prepare with Diligence	The Heart of Bible Study
1	3	3	4	5	5	6

A BALANCED APPROACH TO LIFE

 By Nelson Thomas

Take any aspect of life; balance is fundamental for a smooth and successful life. For example, to be healthy, one needs to have a balanced diet and exercise. One who fails to keep a right balance between workplace and home will definitely face trouble. Stability and prosperity depend upon our balanced response to variety of duties and obligations however small they may be.

Anything in excess is always counterproductive. Just like a flat tire causes a vehicle to lose the balance and the ride becomes difficult, an unbalanced lifestyle makes the going tough. Whether it is personal, social or spiritual, giving the same importance to every area in a balanced manner is imperative for a peaceful and harmonious life.

Someone has rightly said, “Extremes are always in the gutter.” Favouring one side and neglecting the other may look convenient for the moment, but in the course of time it will prove to be dangerous. Most of the violence today is the result of extreme ideologies. Even if the intention is right and the cause is noble, we should never lose the balance.

This balanced approach to spiritual life should begin with our understanding of and obedience to the word of God. Twice Moses exhorted the people of Israel,

“Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.” (Deuteronomy 5:32; 17:11)

Then the LORD reminded Joshua,

“Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:7)

Notice the instruction carefully, ‘do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left’. One of the ideas this expressions gives is the need to maintain balance while we obey God’s word. Holding on to one aspect of the law passionately and neglecting the other will be disastrous.

TWOFOLD TRUTHS

It is interesting to notice that most of the Bible teachings have two different aspects. For example, faith versus works, law versus grace, fear of God versus love for God, tradition versus the scripture, zeal versus knowledge, being judgmental versus discerning, worry versus thoughtfulness, etc., are all often misunderstood by many because they focus on one aspect and miss the other. Failure to comprehend and follow such scriptural passages in their dual aspect as revealed in the scripture will lead to error.

Apart from that, there are certain truths that look contradictory or inconsistent, like the divine sovereignty versus human responsibility. For our finite minds, such scriptural truths may be incomprehensible. However, accepting one aspect with all enthusiasm but avoiding the other will only lead to confusion, and even to wrong conclusions.

VIEW IN ENTIRETY

We have to consider both aspects as the scripture presents and take a balanced position. If something is not yet fully revealed to us, we need to humbly accept that fact instead of assuming something else based on our own logic or preference.

Similarly, regarding the wrath of God, some find it difficult to see God who is angry at the sins of man. They only see a God who loves, cares, and blesses. That's actually only one side of the truth. God's love and wrath have both been revealed in the bible and hence we need to hold on to both aspects.

In fact, it is in the background of God's wrath that we fully appreciate the love of God. On the cross we see these both marvellously demonstrated. In His everlasting love, God allowed His only begotten Son to bear His wrath and die as an atoning sacrifice.

SINCERELY ERRONEOUS!

Extreme, unbalanced teachings claimed to be based on the Word of God are plenty. Even sincere, godly believers have gone too much to one side, and the very truth which is supposed to liberate, has become a trap for them. At the same time, some others in their effort to be moderate and progressive took the other extreme, maybe without even realizing its seriousness!

In the gospels, we see the Lord Jesus often rebuking the Pharisees for their unbalanced religion. They were so strict in keeping the law that they counted each grain and gave a tenth, yet they neglected weightier matters like justice, mercy and faithfulness. They gave importance to outside show but gave no care for the truth inside. The Lord Jesus called them hypocrites, fools and blind who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! (Matthew 23:15-25) Notice, how firmly He pronounced woes against them because of such lop-sided religion.

It is sad to notice that certain Christians, universally known for their sound doctrine and profound Bible teaching are now advocating a U-turn to extreme liberalism. Seeing the open-

mindedness of these liberals, some others went to the other extreme and become too much narrow minded!

BONDAGE AND DIVISION

Moreover, while taking two extreme positions believers tend to be so aggressive in advocating their stand even to the extent of fighting with one another. Such unbalanced mind-set and Christian outlook is harmful for individual life as well as the Body of Christ. Instead of the truth liberating and unifying the believers, we see saints under bondage and divided, all because of misplaced emphasis, often on obscure passages.

Let us base our doctrine and practice on the basis of the Word of God in its entirety. Let the entire revelation—the Word of God—be our guide, not any so-called expert or system. Let us be ready to abandon man-made ideologies and practices.

However, we must never compromise a practice or a teaching that is according to the Word of God for the sake of popularity and progressivism. We need to be balanced, not moving to the left or to the right.

As we witness a lot of confusion and contradictory teachings among the born-again Christians today, let us pay attention to the Lord's command to Joshua, "do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left."

Do not forget, there are numerous Bible truths that have different facets and holding on to just one aspect is not wise. Let's seek the help of the Spirit of God to understand the whole counsel of God and follow a balanced Christian life.

Let the right understanding of the word of God enhance our love for one another, not haughtiness and hatred against each other. Praise God for the light that God has graciously given us on His word, and let's prayerfully and humbly share this with others. And finally, let's be steadfast and immovable by the grace of God, in favour with God and man. Luke 2:52.

BRIEF NOTES ON TABERNACLE – 4

 By Charles .E. Wigg , Australia

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COURT

The fence was made of linen sheets attached to brass pillars, which stood in brass sockets, and silver rods which joined pillar to pillar, and the pillars were held upright, in spite of the strong prevailing winds of the wilderness, by chords that were attached to silver hooks, formed in silver bands around the top, or neck of each pillar, and to brass pegs driven into the desert, Ex. 27;9-15.

THE PILLARS

The way the scripture reads indicates that the pillars were of the same metal as the sockets of brass. The pillars were strong; they stood upright, never leaning one way or the other. I would suggest that they represent the responsible brethren or elders. This view is supported by the statement of Paul in Gal.2;9, where he says that James, Peter and John seemed to be pillars, also the reference to the

overcomer in the Church at Philadelphia, whom the Lord said He would make “a pillar in the temple of My God”, Rev.3;12.

THE SOCKETS OF BRASS

The pillars were not embedded in the desert, and did not stand in their own strength, but stood in sockets of brass. There was evidently a stout tendon on the base of the pillar which fitted snugly into a slot or mortise in the top-centre of the socket.

The sockets of brass represent the person of Christ and His finished work, in which we alone can stand. “Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus”² Tim.2;1. So the elders are to stand firm, not leaning this way or that, according to the prevailing winds, Eph. 4;14, but not in any self-confidence, for such will fall, 1 Cor. 10;12. The brass or bronze is a metal that can withstand, and absorb the heat of fire, and thus speaks to us of the person and work of our

Lord Jesus Christ.

All through His life, He stood the fire of persecution that was directed against Him by those who made themselves His enemies, but when hanging on the cross, during those three hours of darkness, He bore, and exhausted, the fierce and unmitigated wrath of a holy God against sin. All that the justice and righteousness of a holy God could demand against man and his sin, the blessed substitute fully paid.

ANECDOTE:

DEVIL'S DEVICE

 Klyne Snodgrass

Once the Devil was walking along with one of his associates. They saw a man ahead of them pick up something shiny. “What did he find?” asked the associate. “A piece of the truth,” the Devil replied. “Doesn't it bother you that he found a piece of the truth?” asked the companion. “No,” said the Devil, “I will see to it that he makes a religion out of it.”

“JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER” (HEBREWS 13:8)

 By Stephenson Isaac, Kota

If He is the same today as yesterday, then my soul, do not set your affections upon these changing things, but set your heart upon Him. My heart, do not build your house upon the sandy pillars of a world that soon must pass away, but build your hopes upon this rock, which, when the rain descends, and floods shall come, shall stand immovably secure.

My soul, I charge you, lay up your treasure in this secure storehouse. My heart, I bid you now to put your treasure where you can never lose it. Put it in Christ; put all your affections in His person, all your hope in His glory, all your trust in His efficacious blood, all your joy in His presence, and then you will have put yourself and put your all where you can never lose anything, because it is secure.

Remember, my heart, that the time is coming when all things must fade, and when you must part with all. Death's gloomy night must soon put out your sunshine; the dark flood must soon roll between you and all that you have. Then put your heart with Him who will never leave you; trust yourself with Him who will go with you through the black and surging current of death's stream and who will walk with you up the steep hills of heaven and make you sit together with Him in heavenly places forever.

Go; tell your secrets to that friend that sticks closer than a brother. My heart, I charge you, trust all your concerns with Him Who can never be taken from you, Who will never leave you, and Who will never let you leave Him, even “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

SERMON OUTLINE:

THE BALANCED LIFE

 By Don Robinson

1. Balanced in getting and giving (Pro 30:8-9 cf. 1 Cor 11:23a)
2. Balance in Hearing and doing (JAS 1:22)
3. Balance in doctrine and practice. (Act 1:1)
4. Balance in the home and church.
5. Balance in our entertainment and work.

ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD

 By George Sturm, Albania

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, in as much you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:58

This is a wonderful verse that has encouraged many Christians throughout the centuries. First of all, it promises us that our labour is not in vain in the Lord. We must receive this verse by faith since there are moments where we see no obvious fruit and we think that “all has been in vain.” But this is not true. Sooner or later, perhaps in eternity, we will see that all that we have done for the Lord Jesus bore fruit.

Secondly, this verse exhorts us to be always “abounding in the work of the Lord.”

I think of the old Keith Green song where he said, “Jesus rose from the dead, but you cannot get out of bed.” So many, especially among young people, wish to be great missionaries, great orators, great this, great that, but ask them if they have regular time of personal devotions with God each day. So often the answer is that they barely make it out of bed in time to get to work before 8:00!

Dear saints, Jesus rose from the dead and we need to “get out of bed” and abound in the work of the Lord. Beyond our personal walk with the Lord, it also involves our service for Him in the family, in the local church, and in prayer, evangelism and discipleship.

Let us not forget that to Jesus, the exalted Lord and Saviour, all authority has been given in heaven and on earth (Mat 28:18). His final command to us was: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations . . .” (Mat 28:19).

REFLECTIONS

PREPARE WITH DILIGENCE

 By Shawn Abigail, Canada

“It is good for a man that he should bear the yoke in his youth”. (Lamentations 3:27, NASB)

Some time ago I received an email from an old friend. We hadn’t chatted for about 13 years, so it was nice to get reacquainted. After exchanging a couple of emails we found we were both teaching senior Sunday school classes. I offered him some curriculum I had written about New Testament church principles for my class. His response was interesting. He wanted the curriculum and said, “If I don’t teach it to them, nobody will.”

We started out as bright young men with a great deal of potential. And we spent time learning the Scripture and preparing ourselves for future service. But somewhere along the line we grew up. Our time of preparation was over. Yes, as adults we still study the Bible, but the time of life when we had nothing to do but prepare for the future is over. Now we must balance our study with our employment, family obligations and active Christian service.

Of course when we were young men we thought we were busy. But looking back I’ve come to realize the truth of Lamentations 3:27. It really is good for a man to bear the yoke when he is young. Looking back I wish I had spent more time and energy in spiritual preparation. How much opportunity was wasted on activities which were not evil but were simply... inane, pointless and unprofitable?

I am now 54 years of age. I am not a bright young man with potential anymore. I’m at an age where a man must be fully active in serving the Lord. Whether I’m well prepared or not, if I don’t do it, it probably won’t get done. But if I have prepared myself with diligence I will be much more effective in the Lord’s work. Young men, my charge to you is to prepare yourself with diligence. The day is coming soon when you will have little time for preparation and will need to be active in service.

THE HEART OF BIBLE STUDY

 By Warren W. Wiersbe

One of the great delights of the Christian is to read and study the word of God, which is or light, (Ps.110:105), bread (Matt.4:4), sword (Heb.4:12) and treasure (Ps.119:72). The Christian God blesses is one who meditates in His word (Ps.1:3).

The important thing is that our hearts are prepared to read and study the Holy Scriptures. What kind of a heart do we need?

1. *A converted heart (1Cor.2:6—16).*

The unsaved person cannot understand spiritual truths, because they are revealed only by the Spirit of God. The Bible is the only book you cannot understand unless you know the Author personally.

2. *A clean heart (Ps.51:10).*

Sin robs of fellowship with God, and we must be sure that we have confessed our sins and received His forgiveness (1Joh.1:9).

3. *A believing heart (Heb.11:3, 6).*

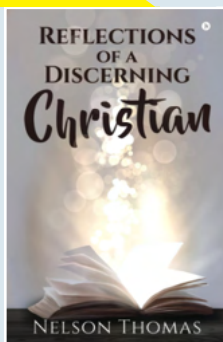
When we have faith in God, then He can teach us His word; and as we receive His word, He increases our faith (Rom.10:17). The Bible is the word of faith (Rom.10:8) and is understood by those who have childlike faith in God (Matt. 11:25, 26).

4. *An obedient heart (John.7:17).*

Unless we are willing to obey what He teaches us, He will not us. It has well been said that “obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge.” You do not get the blessing simply reading the Word, or even studying it, but by obeying it (James 1:25).

As God’s own children, we should love His Word (Ps.119:97), learn His Word (rom.15:40), and live His Word (James 1:22—25).

MRP ₹215 /-



REFLECTIONS OF A DISCERNING *Christian*
NELSON THOMAS

Book From Grace & Peace

AVAILABLE AT:

NotionPress: <https://notionpress.com/read/reflections-of-a-discerning-christian>

Discount Coupon Code: NEWRELEASEOFFER (for 30% Discount on Notion Press)

Amazon India: <https://www.amazon.in/dp/1638735433?&tag=notionpcom-21>

Amazon International: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1638735433>

GRACE & PEACE

An E-periodical For spiritual enlightenment, edification and encouragement.

'Grace & Peace' is an electronic periodical, sent out monthly, aiming the overall spiritual growth of Christian Believers. You can reproduce this e-periodical fully or in part in any medium, provided it is unedited, and retain the original author / copyright information and a reference to our website - gracepeace.net

For further details contact:- gracepeaceu@gmail.com

Prepared, and posted by **Nelson Thomas Kumaramparampil (NTK)** for the Glory of God & the Joy of the saints.

Editorial assistance : Tom Jacob

Design & Layout : Jiju Mathew

Visit:- www.gracepeace.net