

Pastor Scott L. Harris
Grace Bible Church, NY
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Musing & Amusing Selected Scriptures

Introduction

It is good to be back with you this morning. Thank you to all that have been praying for my sister-in-law, Christine. The Lord's mercy and grace to her has been great. She improved greatly in her strength and mobility in the eight days Diane was with her. She has adjusted well to her limitations and is looking forward to the reversal of her colostomy sometime in the next couple of months as she continues to heal and get stronger. The plan is for her other sister and brother-in-law to care for her for the foreseeable future, and when she is strong enough, she can travel between siblings and spend time with them.

Diane's father at 88 is very limited in mobility, but otherwise doing well. My father at 97 is getting around slowly with a cane and has quite a few diet restrictions, but is still very mentally alert. My summary for both of them is that attaining great age is not for the faint of heart! My mother at 87 is still very energetic in taking care of my father and doing things for those in her fellowship group. Again, thank you for praying for us and all of them.

I was able to stream last week's service - the very first time I have ever done that - and what can I say except I praise the Lord for Ed who is such a faithful servant of the Lord and for the powerful sermon he preached. It was a sermon on a man after God's own heart who praised God preached by a man after God's own heart who praises God. Ed lives out what he preaches. If you did not hear it, go to our website and follow the links to watch or listen to it. If our roles were reversed, this is the church I would seek out and attend to sit under his teaching and learn godliness from him. As it is, I am blessed that we are co-laborers of the Lord here.

As someone who finds humor in many situations including the usage and meaning of words, I find this little riddle kind of funny that the very serious find nothing amusing about musing about being amusing. I do not mean to be confusing, but am rather curious about the meaning and connotations of the words, and so I am poking a little fun at *Musing and Amusing*, which is the title of my sermon this morning.

People are generally more familiar with the term, amusing, especially as used as a synonym for things that are fun - such as an amusement park, or humorous - such as a story that is amusing. Both of those meanings are connotations that have developed for the word, but neither actually describe the meaning of the word itself. Amuse is the word "muse" with the prefix "a" added which negates it. Muse and amuse are opposites. To be amusing is to be without musing.

The term "muse" is to "*be absorbed in thought,*" to "*contemplate at length.*" Because poets were known for having to think at length to produce their poems and sonnets, they are sometimes referred to as muses. The word traces back to Greek and Roman mythology of the nine goddesses that presided over the arts and sciences. Derived from this same term is our word museum which is a place that stores and presents objects - art, history or science - meant to cause you to think about it. A museum is designed to get you to muse. In contrast, an amusement park is designed to move your mind away from serious contemplation and enjoy the thrills and attractions.

Dangers of Amusement

This morning I want to contrast the kind of life that God has called us to live as people who think deeply compared to the general quest of people in our society for amusement. As someone a long time ago well described it, true Christianity is for people who think. Most of what people in our society pursue does not require that kind of thinking for themselves, and often there is a quest for something to distract them from thinking deeply. That is the reason for the pursuit of constant entertainment such as having the TV, radio or music playing constantly. It is also what is behind computer based addictions such as social media and games that David warned us about in his sermon a few weeks ago. The design is to keep your mind stimulated, yet never giving serious thought to what is being presented to you.

Headline news functions on its ability to give you tidbits - factoids - of information that affect you emotionally, but without giving you the needed information to think deeply about what is actually happening and what the proper response should be. Video based news by its very nature is great at generating impressions but terrible at factual discourse. For example, the polls after the Nixon-Kennedy presidential debates were consistent that those who listened to it on the radio believed Nixon won while those who watched on TV thought Kennedy won. Why? Because of the difference in the focus of each medium of communication. The focus of video is on how each candidate appears while radio makes you focus on the content of what each candidate says. Neil Postman discusses this at length in his book, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. These are reasons why if you are getting your news from sources such as ABC, CBS, CNN, NBC, MSNBC, PBS, the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, facebook, or your internet server's news page, you will know less about the news than if you had not seen, heard or read anything. Fake news and skewed news is bad news.

A couple quick examples of this from last week while I was in California and working on this sermon. CNN ran a story that a noose was found in the garage of a melanin blessed NASCAR driver. It then painted everyone involved in and who likes NASCAR as racists especially since its greatest popularity as a sport is in the South. They showed neither the support of NASCAR for the driver nor gave attention to the fact that the supposed noose turned out to be the pull rope to the garage door.

The news media started showing a short clip of a melanin blessed man hit by a car as another supposed example of white violence against a peaceful protester. The story was pulled after the earlier part of the video revealed the car was surrounded by "peaceful" protestors who were assaulting the car, and the woman driver, who was also melanin blessed, only accelerated after her window was broken out. Since it no longer fit the desired scenario of white violence against peaceful black protestors and was instead one of violent protestors threatening even a black woman, the mainstream media deemed it was no longer newsworthy. That is the same reason they have largely ignored the stories of police officers murdered in the line of duty this year (~27 as of June 26) including the melanin blessed ones.

Then there is the constant repeating that Black Lives Matter. Of course black lives matter, but so do the lives of people who are red, yellow, brown, tan, white, freckled or even have rainbow colored hair. In fact, contrary to the BLM groups constant chant, all black lives matter and not just the few that can be used for their political purposes. The lives of melanin blessed folks who are assaulted and murdered by other melanin blessed folks also matter as do the huge percentage of their babies killed by abortion. All black lives matter because all lives matter. The BLM chanting is nothing less than flagrant racism by marxists and anarchists and their useful idiot supporters.

But here is the bigger question which neither the news media or the leaders of these racist groups will answer because it requires some deeper thought. Why do the lives of the melanin

blessed matter, and indeed, the lives of all humans regardless of their skin hue? There is only one reason. All people are made in the image of God, so an attack on any human is an attack on what reflects Him. That is God's stated reason in Genesis 9 why He established capital punishment for man or beast that murders a human. By contrast, if evolution is true, which most of these marxists, anarchists and their useful idiots believe, then no individual life is of any great importance. Only the continuation of the most fit of the species is important. Life is simply the struggle for survival and reproduction of the fittest. In fact, the struggle for dominance by different "races" would be proper. Remember, the subtitle of Darwin's first editions of *Origin of Species* was "*the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*". Ideas have consequences, and evolution removes the value of any individual human while being made in the image of God gives every human value.

The lack of musing also shows up in the propensity for people to let someone else think for them. Three of the main reasons for this are laziness, ignorance and group think. Each of these and the combination of them result in people willing to follow someone who at least acts like he knows what he is doing and where he is going. As the number of followers increase, even more are attracted simply because others are doing so. That is part of group think. People tend to want to be part of and will go along with the crowd even when they know better and that what the crowd is doing is wrong. Why do you think polls are used so often to both find out and generate "majority" opinion? Since when is actual truth decided by majority opinion? A majority of people can claim that the emperor's new clothes are quite handsome, but that does not change the fact that he is walking around naked. Group think can quickly degenerate into a mob mentality as we have seen this last month as marxist and anarchist domestic terrorists riot, steal, desecrate, burn, injure and murder.

Reasons for Amusement

I do not want to attack all amusements, for there are times you need to give your brain a reprieve from serious thought and be able to just relax and enjoy the blessings God bestows on you. Your brain is actually going to be at work, but you can enjoy the beauty of a bird or a flower without having to remember its scientific name and various biological attributes. You can enjoy the aromas and tastes of food without having to know all the ingredients, how they were acquired or how the chef put it all together. Just praise God you could enjoy it and thank the cooks for their work in putting it together for you. Solomon commends such pleasures several times throughout Ecclesiastes as the gifts of God and reward for your labor.

So just to emphasize this again, enjoy with gratitude the amusements that enable you to get a break and relax a little. However, you must always be aware that your mind is going to be at work even when relaxing, and that many amusements are purposely designed to influence your beliefs when you are most vulnerable because your guard is down as you enjoy what you consider to be just an amusement. Movies, television and theater are particularly dangerous for this, but books, magazines and newspapers can be too. It is easy to get caught up on a story line and not recognize that it is slipping in lies and half truths to lead you to false conclusions. The younger generations are not just largely ignorant of both American and world history, but they have wrong ideas about what they think they know because they have picked it up from movies instead of history books, and those they do read are fictional works such as the 1619 project or Howard Zinn's, *A People's History of the United States*. No wonder they fall to idiotic claims such as slavery in America was the worst that ever existed. They know nothing about the ancient world or what occurred in other nations in the past or the present. Information presented in amusement formats play upon your emotions to lead you into beliefs that are contrary to truth and God's revelation and will. The claim that police are bad and that America is systemically

racist is a current example. The truth is the opposite. Sure there are bad cops and there are Americans within every range of melanin count that are racists, but the vast majority of law enforcement personnel are civic minded individuals who put themselves at risk and sacrifice for the public good. America is one of the most if not the most non-racist nation in the world.

How is it that our society or any society can become one in which amusement - lack of serious thinking - dominates over contemplation of issues to figure out proper solutions? There are many reasons such as group think such as already mentioned, but two that stand out in my own mind is selfishness accompanied by laziness and ignorance.

Man is innately selfish resulting in all sorts of sinful attitudes and actions. One of those is laziness. It takes time and energy to think for yourself. It is a lot easier to let someone else do the thinking for you. As bad as this is in the realms of politics and societal issues as we are seeing played out in the chaos of the present time, it is actually much more serious when it comes to matters of religion and faith. The vast majority of people are being lead down the broad paths that lead to eternal destruction because they will not make the personal effort to pursue God themselves and figure out what He has revealed about Himself and what He demands of them. In foolish selfishness they pursue their careers, hobbies, entertainment and other aspects of this fleeting life with little or no thought to preparing for eternity. In laziness, they just accept whatever their religious or philosophical leader says as long as it does not demand too much of them. That is why people in the last days *“will not endure sound doctrine”* but will instead want to have their *“ears tickled”* and will *“accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires”* (2 Timothy 4:3).

Tangential to this problem is ignorance. They do not know. There are many causes for the flagrant ignorance that has become part of American society, but underlying it all is laziness and a lack of curiosity. Why do I say that? Because even if the schools are bad, you grow up in a dysfunctional home, and the sub-culture of your neighborhood is against education - and all of these factors have become common - if you are curious and willing to put forth the effort, you can learn. God is faithful and He rewards those that will seek the truth because the truth will always lead to Him, for His word is truth, and Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. In John 8:31–32, Jesus said *“to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’”*

I will add to this that if you are curious and willing to put forth the effort, you will not be taken in by the skewed and fake news that dominates the main stream media or by the extremists in the alternative news sources. Instead, you will gain enough background knowledge about a wide variety of subjects so that you can discern between truth and falsehood even when those lies are subtle. This is a matter of curiosity and effort and not education. Don't be taken in by someone just because they have an advanced degree. Some of the most ignorant people around are those with a Master's degree or PhD because A) they have been indoctrinated with lies and half-truths, and B) their area of study is so narrow they are hobbled by it. By that I mean that they try to cram everything into their own narrow field of expertise and cannot see how their area of study fits into the wider fields of knowledge.

There is much more that I could say about why people pursue lives of amusement instead of deep thought and the many dangers that arise from that, but to avoid falling into traps, it is critical to know what path to walk on and not just what a pitfall might look like. The more important questions then are how does God want you to live? What does He want you to think about? What does He want you to accomplish with your life on this earth?

God's Call to Muse

It should go without saying that God wants you to think since He created man in His image

which includes rationality (the ability to think and reason), emotion (the ability to feel psychically) and volition (the ability to make decisions). Man has been given the ability to think deeply both logically and abstractly. Man can imagine things that do not yet exist and then figure out ways to make what was imagined in such areas as varied as art, music and literature to very diverse technologies. Even the most intelligent animals cannot begin to think as deeply as even a five year old human. God created man to muse, to think deeply.

From the very beginning, God has called upon man to use his mind to fulfill the purposes for which God created man. On the day that God created man He mandated them to *“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”* Man would have to think deeply in order to do that, and even before God fashioned Eve from Adam’s rib, God brought all the animals before Adam to be named. Again, that required thinking.

Throughout the Scriptures the specific reason that something is done is pointed out beginning with Genesis 2:24, *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”* God established marriage on day 6 of Creation and not something for man to figure out on his own by experimenting with different social arrangements. Jesus quotes this passage in Matthew 19 in pointing out that marriage was to be one man and one woman for life by God’s design and not to be disrupted by the whims of people in divorce. This is still true today regardless of what legal standing immoral governments want to give to human relationships God declares to be abominations before Him. Sinful man does not want to think deeply about either God’s design or the consequences of not following it. Instead, sinful man grabs onto the claims of human philosophers who muse about how to self justify the quest for sin often by changing the meaning of words and never with thought of the consequences.

They shouted “love wins” over the legalization of the gross immorality of homosexuality proving they were not giving any serious thought of the consequences. No, love lost and lust gained, but God is still judge and His wrath is revealed as He turns such people over to the consequences of their sin which includes disease, broken relationships, and depraved minds which in turn rots the social fabric of the nation resulting in its own destruction. We are now seeing the woe of Isaiah 5:20 being played out before us as leaders in politics, society and business declare what is good to be evil and what is evil to be good. The decision by the Supreme Court last week showed utter depravity in that it could not even discern the difference between boys and girls. Equality is turned on its head as females will take the brunt of the consequences as depraved men and perverts take advantage of the new opportunities to not only invade the privacy of women in bathrooms, dressing rooms and locker rooms, but to destroy women’s sports in very unequal competition.

We are limited creatures and therefore cannot comprehend all that God is or does, and it would be sufficient for our Creator to simply give us His commands and expect us to obey them, but He goes far beyond that. God declares His reasons for His actions and commands because He wants us to think deeply about them so that we might know and understand Him. He wants us to think through His commands that we might apply them properly in every area of life.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus is often found saying, *“for this reason . . .”*, five times in Matthew alone. In Matthew 6:25 it introduces the reason we do not have to worry about food or clothing. God promises to provide all the needs for physical life for those that seek first His kingdom and righteousness. In Matthew 12:27 it explains the reasons the Pharisees would be judged for their blasphemy in accusing Jesus of casting out demons by Beelzebul. In Matthew 18:23 Jesus uses it to introduce His parable explaining the depth and breadth of forgiveness we are to have. I already cited Jesus’ use of it in Matthew 19:5 in quoting Genesis 2:24 about God’s

design for marriage. In Matthew 24:44 Jesus uses it to warn about the need to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man in judgment.

God wants you to muse about Him. You are to think deeply about what God has done and contemplate what He wants you to do, and He has equipped you with a brain and given you reason so that you can do that and He will hold you accountable for it. Revelation 20:12-13 states that God will judge sinners based on their own deeds. Neither ignorance nor claims to be merely obeying authorities will be valid excuses for not knowing and following God's commands. That may surprise some who have been citing Romans 13 a lot in the last few months as justification for quickly acquiescing to illegal government dictates in shutting down society including churches. Your ultimate authority is always God and He is always to be obeyed regardless of what any human commands and any persecution they may bring upon you for obedience to God.

Biblical Christianity demands musing and there are so many areas in which we need to deeply contemplate God and His revelation of Himself and His will. I have been preaching for over 3 decades and have only scratched the surface of all that can be studied and presented from His word in thinking deeply about God. A personal interest of mine is all that can be learned about God from the study of the various fields of science since they proclaim the intricacies of an intelligent designer beyond our comprehension. Empirical science is completely contrary to evolutionary thought which demands adherence to its philosophical musings regardless of the evidence. To study and understand actual science is to think God's thoughts after Him and it causes you to fall down in awe and worship of the astonishing God of wonders whom we cannot fully comprehend. God wants you to muse about Him and what He has done.

Other religions demand a blind obedience to its authority and traditions developed to fulfill that obedience. This is a problem even for religions based on the Bible. Jesus cited Isaiah in condemning the Pharisees for replacing the doctrines of God with their own precepts (Matthew 15:7-9). The same problem still occurs today even in groups that are supposed to be Biblically based evangelical churches. Tradition and authority replace thinking. That was part of my warning in the sermon about liberty, legalism and licentiousness a couple of weeks ago. You know that is happening when you are told to do whatever and do it this way because that is the way we have always done it or because the religious leader says so. Authoritarian leaders like to cherry pick verses such as Hebrews 13:17 about the necessity of obeying your leaders, but they stay far away from the many warnings in Scripture about false teachers including Paul's in Acts 20:29-30 about the danger of savage wolves from without and erring elders from within that would speak perverse things to draw disciples away after themselves.

The proper authority is always God and His word, and a good church leader will always direct you back to that in helping you to think through and make decisions about what God wants you to do. A good pastor will teach you to study and know the Word of God for yourself so that your convictions are based on that and not on the teachings of men. That is the reason I teach the way I do and offer a rotation of classes each year designed to enable you to be a good student of God's word. This Fall will be hermeneutics - how to study the Bible in its proper grammatical and historical context.

I have spoken the way I have this morning because I am greatly disturbed by what is going on in society and the weakness it has revealed in the evangelical church. I am passionate that the solution to the problems in the churches is a return to the Bible and thinking deeply about God, what He has done and what He desires. Professing Christians who mimic the world in thought and deed demonstrate their ignorance and lack of thinking about God and what is godly. The church cannot be a godly influence on society unless it is godly itself. Those who profess to be Christians must know and follow Christ and that will require them to set aside the distractions of

their amusements and stand against the shallow thinking and claims of false teachers and secularists instead of succumbing to them.

Musing About Salvation

We will go long today because I do not want to end until I have at least covered what I believe is the most important call in Scripture for us to think deeply about God and what He has done. I want to muse a little about salvation itself before we end because the call to salvation requires some deep thought.

The book of Isaiah begins with a condemnation of the people for their pursuit of sin instead of righteousness. God found their sacrifices and religious feasts to be disgusting. He calls them to repent in verses 16-17, and then in verse 18 states, *“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.”* The passage then continues with a blessing if they will obey and a warning of curses if they will not. The statement in verse 18 seems counter-intuitive. How can something stained a deep red be turned white? How can your sins be removed? That was the question Bildad asked in Job 25:4, but he did not have a good answer for it. Unless you are willing to study what God has revealed in His word and think deeply about it, you will neither understand it or receive it.

One of the reasons that so many self-professing Christians fail to mature and are so easily led astray from Biblical truth is that they were never challenged to think through salvation when they made a profession to be a Christian. The gospel was reduced to some easy formula and a prayer. Faith is then placed in that formula and prayer instead of what God has said and the person to whom we pray. Believe and receive is a nice memorable diddy, but unless you believe the right things you will not receive what is being promised.

How can man be made clean before God? Man’s problem starts with something he does not like to admit, may refuse to accept, and does not want to think about. No human meets God’s standards of righteousness and sin earns God’s condemnation - Romans 3:23; 6:23. Most people will admit they sin, but it is usually the generic everyone has sinned and therefore are no worse than anyone else accompanied by the wrong belief that God only punishes the worst of sinners - Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, the person that stole from or did some other wrong to you, and anyone in the opposite political party. Even if the individual admits personal sin such as idolatry, blasphemy, dishonor of parents, lying, stealing, sinful lust, murderous hatred or coveting, there is the belief that A) there is some way to make up for it and earn God’s favor, or B) God is loving and therefore will forgive it anyway, or C) a combination of these two.

God calls on us to think deeply about our sin - *“though your sins are scarlet.”* There is no wiggle room in the fact that man is what the theologians refer to as totally depraved. He is sinful by nature and can neither do anything to remove the filth of his sin, nor will he want to do so unless there is outside intervention. As Romans 3:10–12 quoting from Psalm 14 states, *“THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; ¹¹ THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ¹² ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”*

It is not surprising that false religions refuse to accept those truths, but they are also rejected by many within Christianity who want to find some way to make man good enough to pursue God by their own desire. The *“none who seeks for God”* is explained away - often by recounting some personal experience - or given an exception if some ritual is performed. But the more you study the scriptures and think deeply about this, the greater the conundrum. Why? Because there are so many scriptures in which God calls to or even commands people to repent and / or seek Him (Psalm 145:18; Isaiah 55:6; Jeremiah 29; Matthew 11:28; Act 17:30; Hebrews 11:6), yet no

one will do that on their own for none understand and none will seek for God. Jesus made clear the necessity of God's intervention in John 6:44 saying that *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him."* Paul adds in 1 Corinthians 2:14 that the natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God and cannot understand them. Paul stated it directly in Romans 8:7-8 that the mind set on the flesh will not and cannot subject itself to the law of God. Man is called to seek, repent and believe in Christ, but no human will do that on their own. How is this dilemma to be overcome? Actually it is simple. God intervenes.

God's intervention to bring man to salvation also requires some deep thinking that can tie theologians into knots if they are not careful to accept and believe what God has declared. Just as in the Garden of Eden after Adam had sinned, man will hide from God instead of seeking Him, but God will seek for man. It is God that sends the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8). It is God that opens the mind of man to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45; John 1:9; 1 Corinthians 2:13). It is God that makes those dead in trespasses and sin alive with Christ to believe and be saved (John 6:63; Ephesians 2:5). That is why salvation is by God's mercy and grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and not by any kind of works of righteousness done by man (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). Good works of righteousness follow salvation as evidence of it instead of proceeding it as a means of gaining it (Ephesians 2:10; James 2:20-26).

Then there must be deep thinking about what exactly it is that is believed about Jesus that can bring about salvation. You cannot be saved if you have the wrong Jesus as do the cults and many professing Christians who believe in a caricature of Jesus instead of the real person. The Jesus that can bring salvation is the promised Messiah, the Christ. The one prophesied to come that would be both fully God and fully man being born of a human virgin mother by the power of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:35) - a concept we cannot fully understand but which we can accept as true. He would be of the blood line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jesse, and the kingly line of David with a right to the throne via Jeconiah, yet not of his specific blood line. He would be born in Bethlehem of Judea (Matthew 2:5-6) within the time frame set in the prophecy of Daniel 9. He would live a sinless life and then of His own volition die by crucifixion as the payment for the sins of mankind (Isaiah 53; John 10; Matthew 20:19; Galatians 3:13). He would physically rise from the dead on the third day (Luke 24:26; Matthew 28; John 20). This same Jesus has ascended to heaven (Luke 24:51; Ephesians 4:10) where He is preparing a place and making intercession for His followers (John 14:2; Hebrews 7:25). He will one day return to take His followers to be with Him forever more (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18). He will also return as conquering king to establish His reign on the earth (Zechariah 14; Revelation 19) which we believe according to Revelation 20 will last for one thousand years.

That takes a lot of thought, but those who have a Jesus that does not match that description have a different Jesus and therefore their trust in the wrong thing and therefore are not saved. That is a major reason why people will make a profession of faith and then walk away. As they find out more about the Jesus revealed in the Bible, they realize they do not want that Jesus and so they reject Him. That is why contemplation of the things of God are so important starting with such essential elements as the correct identity of Jesus Christ.

It is also essential to salvation that your faith is based in what Jesus did for you by paying the penalty of your sins and His righteousness being imputed to you as stated in 2 Corinthians 5:21 - *"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* That is called substitutionary atonement. Any trust in your own efforts at righteousness for salvation is self-righteousness, and self-righteousness will exclude

you from heaven for it is a different gospel as warned about in Galatians. That was the consistent problem of the Pharisees.

Though your sins are as scarlet, they can be washed white as snow because God can make the most foul sinner into a saint. God is glorified by His own work to redeem, forgive and regenerate a sinner to become righteous in Christ and conform that sinner into the image of His son. None of these concepts are easy to understand, but all of them are comprehensible through the ministry of the Holy Spirit as time is given over to muse - think deeply - about them.

Conclusions

God has created man with the ability to reason, and He calls on us to be people who think deeply. He want us to contemplate who He is, what He has done and what He desires from us. While there are times that amusements can be a welcome relief from the stress of living to be able to enjoy the simple pleasures of life, we are to recognize and thank God for those pleasures while at the same time being aware and on guard against the dangers of amusements to slip in thoughts and beliefs that are contrary to godliness. It is the lack of deep thought and contemplation of truth that has led to the societal problems that now plague not only our nation but the world. People who are ignorant and lazy are easily led astray into greater levels of sinfulness because it fits the desires of those who are unregenerate.

My call you to this morning is to be someone who will muse instead of seeking to be amused. Take the time to think deeply about the things of God for yourself so that you will not be led astray by false teachers or the ungodly philosophies of our time. Equip yourself so that you will be a resource to others to do the same. It is in that way that the whole body of Christ is built up and able to stand firm against the waves and wind of doctrines that wash across our land that seek to carry away, if possible, even the saints.

Sermon Notes - July 5, 2020
Musing & Amusing - Selected Scriptures

Introduction

Its kind of funny that the very serious find nothing amusing about _____ about being amusing

Amusing is used as a synonym for fun / humorous, but it is actually the _____ of musing

Muse means to “*be absorbed in thought,*” to “_____ *at length.*”

A _____ is a place designed to make you muse. An amusement park is designed to keep you from musing

Dangers of Amusement

Most of society seeks activities which do not require deep _____ - entertainment, social media, TV, etc.

Headline news gives you only enough information to affect you emotionally without causing deep _____

Video based news by its very nature affects the emotions more than the _____ - *Amusing Ourselves to Death*

Fake news and skewed news is _____ news

Black Lives Matter is a marxist group that _____ cares about the black lives they can politically _____

The lives of people of _____ skin hue matter because God made humans in His image

All that matters in evolution is the continuation of most fit of the species - it promotes _____ competition

On the Origin of Species or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life - Charles Darwin

Lack of musing promotes the tendency of people to be _____ due to laziness, ignorance & group think

Reasons for Amusement

There are times for amusement and just _____ the blessings God bestows - Ecclesiastes

Caution! Your mind is always at work & amusements are a door for _____ ideas to be slipped into your mind

_____ results in all sorts of sinful attitudes & actions including laziness.

It is easier to let someone else think for you - which is bad in politics & devastating in _____

Ignorance - _____ of knowledge - is due to lack of education, false indoctrination, laziness & lack of curiosity

God is faithful to reward those who seek _____ - and truth will always lead to Him for His word is truth

The _____ are not easily fooled by those who proclaim what is false (news media, self serving “experts”)

People with _____ degrees can be very ignorant due to indoctrination & narrow fields of study

It is not enough to know how to recognize and avoid pitfalls, you must also know the _____ to walk

God’s Call to Muse

Man is made in God’s image & has been given the ability to _____ deeply both logically and abstractly

From the beginning, God called on man to use his _____ to fulfill the mandate God gave to man

Throughout the Scriptures God states the _____ for what He does or commands starting with Genesis 2:24

Sinful man does not want to think deeply about God’s design for _____ & family and its ramifications

We are seeing the woe of _____ played out as our society reverses what is good and what is evil

God declares His reasons so that man might think deeply about God to _____ and understand Him

Jesus often said, “for this _____ . . .” - Matthew 6:25; 12:27; 18:23; 19:5; 24:44, etc.

God wants you to muse about Him - & neither ignorance or claims of following authorities will _____ you

Biblical Christianity demands _____ as you study the Scriptures to know and follow God

Musing about God is demanded in all areas of _____ - true science only reveals our Creator’s designs

Blind obedience to authority & traditions results in the precepts of _____ replacing the doctrines of _____

God & His word are the proper authorities. A good church leader will teach you to know & follow the _____

The solution for our society is for Christians to _____ to the Bible and thinking deeply about God

Musing About Salvation - Isaiah 1:18 & selected

God calls upon man to _____ with Him about salvation - how can sinful man be made clean & saved?

Christians who do not think deeply about the gospel will remain _____ and be easily led astray

People seldom admit their personal sin, & usually think they can make up for it or will be forgiven _____

Romans 3:10-12 leaves no wiggle room - man is totally _____ and will not seek God on his own

God calls / commands people to repent / seek Him, but no one will do so unless _____ intervenes (John 6:44)

God intervenes by sending the _____ to convict, open the mind and regenerate

You must think deeply to believe in the _____ Jesus of the Bible - a false Jesus cannot save you

Faith must be based only in what _____ has done to save you - self-righteousness excludes you from heaven

God is glorified in saving sinful man - and those who will _____ about God’s work will give Him praise

KIDS KORNER – Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help. Young Children – draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. Older Children – Do one or more of the following: 1) How many times are the words “think,” “muse,” and “amuse” mentioned. 2) Talk with your parents about how to think deeply about God

THINK ABOUT IT – Questions to consider in understanding the sermon and its application. What are the connotations of the word “amusing.” What does it mean to “muse.” What does the word amuse actually mean? Why do people usually seek to find something to keep them from thinking deeply? What are the dangers of “headline” news? What are the dangers of video based news compared to audio or written forms? What fake or skewed news have you heard in the past week? What is the basis for valuing human life? How has Darwinism (biological evolution) contributed to racism among humans? When is it proper to enjoy amusements? What is the danger amusements pose to your thinking and beliefs? How do ignorance and selfishness accompanied by laziness contribute to a society dominated by a quest for amusement? Why is this more dangerous in religion that it is even in politics? What are some of the reasons that people are ignorant? Why can people with advanced degrees also be very ignorant? How can ignorance be overcome? How does man’s ability to think compare to the ability of animals? Why does God so often state the reasons for His commands or something He has done? What is God’s purpose and design for marriage? How is our society destroying itself by not following that purpose and design? Why can neither ignorance or the claim to be obeying authority be used as an excuse for not knowing and following God’s commands? Why does Biblical Christianity demand musing about God and His word? Why do other areas of study such as science also demand musing about God? Why is blind obedience to religious authority and traditions so dangerous to the soul? Why must you know how to study the Bible for yourself? Why is it so common for self-professing Christians to remain immature and be easily led astray from truth? Why do so many people refuse to acknowledge their sin problem? If they do, how do they think they can overcome it? Why can’t man save himself? Why are men “totally depraved”? How does God intervene to save man from sin? Identify the Biblical Jesus Christ? How can faith in Him save you?

Sermon Notes - July 5, 2020
Musing & Amusing - Selected Scriptures

Introduction

Amusing

Muse

Museum

Dangers of Amusement

An amusement centered culture

Headline news

Video based news

Black Lives Matter is a marxist group that only cares about the black lives they can politically exploit

People have value because they are made in the image of God

Evolution removes the value of the individual

On the Origin of Species or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life - Charles Darwin

Reasons for Amusement

Ecclesiastes

Caution! Your mind is always at work

Letting someone else think for you

Truth seekers

Advanced degrees yet still ignorant

God's Call to Muse

Man made in God's image

God states His reasons - starting in Genesis 2:24

The woe of Isaiah 5:20

Jesus often said, “*for this reason*”

Musing about God

Study the Scriptures

Blind obedience

The solution for our society

Musing About Salvation - Isaiah 1:18 & selected

Reasoning about salvation

Shallow think results in a shallow gospel

Romans 3:10-12 - Total depravity

God calls / commands people to repent / seek Him but no one will with our God’s intervention

God’s intervention

A false Jesus cannot save you

Saving faith

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