

# THOUGHTS

BY DOUGLAS W. SCHROEDER  
SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY

## INVISIBLE THREATS

In this 45th year of The Word Today, please join me in thanking the Lord for protecting the program! What am I talking about? How could the program be threatened?

During the Covid debacle, the program was threatened when churches had to close for 8 weeks. In response, we started streaming services at Our Shepherd Lutheran. TWT has very committed supporters, so the ministry's funding was not eviscerated. Many other ministries were seriously damaged or even shuttered.

This year brought another serious outside threat to TWT because of global events. We could have lost a significant number of our programs for an extended period of time. Due to God's grace and a series of decisions that were made as long as 10 years ago, TWT has sidestepped the potential for disruption!

I have been asked to keep the information confidential; I have and will honor that. The story may never be told publicly, but I wish to thank all of you who pray regularly for TWT! My sister, Dana, has said through the years, "God protects The Word Today because He knows how much it does for the Gospel!" I testify that has been true, and we have many prayers of thanks to offer God for His protection of TWT!

## CONCEITED OR SPIRIT-FILLED?

When David the shepherd boy, who ultimately became the second king of Israel, found out that the Philistine, Goliath, was taunting the Israelite army, he was indignant and determined to fight the giant. The reaction from David's brother, Eliab, is interesting, "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle" (see I Samuel chapter 17). From that one sentence, we learn there was a great deal of friction between Eliab and David, and perhaps the rest of his brothers as well.

Sibling rivalry is a sad but chronic issue in our sin-infested world. Mental health disorders, wicked intent, and jealousy can drive one sibling to make life difficult for the other. There is a hint of the attitude of Cain, who killed his brother, making him the first murderer, in all such behavior.

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We are supposed to display confidence in the Lord. Sometimes, when we do so it will appear to others that we are arrogant. It is not our intent to be so, but if they do not share the same perspective, they will look at us as though we are full of ourselves! Confidence is a tricky emotion, one that can surge through us or dissipate quickly. Motivations such as empathy, concern, or zeal to right a wrong can make us bold and cause us to have little concern over



*The Bible is God's Word...Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh...  
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*

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what others think or whether they join us in our cause. It was that sense of justice that motivated David to offer himself as the warrior to go into battle against Goliath. Eliab thought David was a loudmouth, arrogant boy.

Jesus received pushback from his own half-brothers, too. As He preached publicly, Mary and His brothers came to take charge of Him, likely because they felt He was going too far. That Mary was involved in the incident speaks poorly of her supposedly sinless reputation in the Roman Church. She is not to be upheld as a sinless patron for Christians. Clearly, Jesus' half-brothers were skeptical to outright oppositional to His agenda, as they sarcastically urged Him to take center stage during the Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth) celebration in Jerusalem (John 7:1-13), the text stating plainly, "For even His own brothers did not believe in Him."

We cannot control others, much less our siblings. Best to seek to be filled by the Spirit of God and attempt to exercise self-control, one of the fruits of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23).

### **SUPPORTING, REPLACING NATURE IS EASY, RIGHT?**

Never underestimate the capacity of humans to do damaging things. As evidence, I offer the Osborne Reef, an attempt in the 1970s to create the world's longest manmade reef by dumping millions of tires into the ocean. Whenever I see the words "local nonprofit" associated with an environmental effort, I become suspicious. As with government programs, someone is making a lot of money and it often does not help the average person or environment.

What absurd logic would make people think that tires make for a good replacement for coral? No one in their right mind would conclude such a thing, which is why I suspect it was a ploy to line someone's pockets.

### **THE POWER OF THE SILENT :)**

I text as little as possible. I would prefer not to text at all, as it is such a poor form of communication. Perhaps 25% of the time it is preferentially more efficient, but almost always it is more stilted than speaking to someone directly. I have no desire to spend any more of my life punching letters into a phone than necessary.

It is not uncommon to have a message conversation that would perhaps ramble on past the point of necessity, so I have a simple but pleasant signal that shows the other party that while I like them and have found our conversation to be productive, I am finishing the conversation. It is a simple smiley face. It's not that I couldn't have more to say but that I do not wish to say more. I won't waste their time and I will preserve mine :).

Blessings,  
Douglas W. Schroeder