

# THOUGHTS

By Douglas W. Schroeder

**SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY**

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## **JOIN ME ON A JOURNEY TO INDONESIA AND SINGAPORE – VIRTUALLY!**

I would love to have you join me for an update evening on The Word Today, including a presentation of images and videos from my trip to Indonesia and Singapore! Please set aside October 15<sup>th</sup> at 7pm (after 6pm worship service at Our Shepherd) for this event! For those too far away, I hope to post the media to our website, [thewordtoday.org](http://thewordtoday.org)

## **SHOWING YOUR FAITH**

Once in a while I see license plates on cars or bumper stickers advertising the driver as being a Christian. Whereas it does not take all that much effort to place the ubiquitous fish symbol on a vehicle, getting a license plate seems more serious.

So, what to make of the person with the Christian designer plate who roars past you at well over the speed limit? The most recent instance was a plate reading “IM 4 GOD” zooming off into the sunset. The mind conjures all manner of thoughts... *If you're so into God, HOW ABOUT OBEYING THE LAW?*

Should a Christian stifle their witness on the outside chance that an occasion temporary hypocrisy might develop? I think not. We should use our creativity and display our love for God. In the public arena we are seeing clearly that if we do not flex our spiritual muscles and rights as citizens we will lose those rights. We need more, many more, people overtly proclaiming their allegiance to Christ, not fewer.

## **JETS vs. GLIDERS**

The Christian is “powered” by the Spirit of God. We aren’t simply “gliders” which are subjected to the winds of change, the popular opinion of us and what is important in the world. Rather, like a jet we have a power source independent of the winds of public opinion.

God’s Spirit will not let us down, so if we find our zeal lagging it is often because we are trying to accomplish our tasks under our own power, or seeking too much affirmation from society.

One more application from the glider and jet analogy; if we wish to “fly higher,” we have to put forth more power. We are to grow in faith and commitment to Christ. You may wish for the greater blessings of faith, but are you committing yourself to increased efforts to attain this? Are your offerings growing? Do you spend more time in the Word of God than a few years ago? Has your prayer life faltered, or grown? Check yourself to see if you have been “coasting” and if so, repent and get back under power – the Holy Spirit’s power!



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## FINANCIAL SICKNESS

In an article entitled "Are Your Finances Making You Sick" on foxbusiness.com there was discussion that most Americans (and I would presume also most people globally as well) worry about money at least once a day. Is this news? It should be evident to anyone who has bothered to observe the socio-economic landscape. Supposedly financial anxiety is making us sick, and affecting our home lives, social interactions and careers. I believe it, but it seems people generally do not do enough to put it to rest.

I had to laugh at the advertisements embedded in the article, which included:

"Forget Apple! Here's a better stock to buy!"

"He made 21,078% Buying Amazon. Here's his new pick."

"Shark Tank just revealed a Trillion-dollar idea"

Motley Fool founders issue a new stock buy alert"

Do you get the connection? *We are now incessantly bombarded by come-ons, lures and adverts to change our money habits by being discontent and feeling the need to do better.* Just as social media can pressure people to commit suicide, and the bombardment of negative news stories makes us feel the world is going to pieces, so also constant money mongering has made us hyper-sensitized to our personal wealth (or lack of it) and made us fiscally unhappy. *We are now as a culture perpetually displeased with what God has given us.* We don't live by "Give us our daily bread," as the Lord's Prayer petitions the Father, we live by "Give us our cushy retirement (whether we earned it or not)!"

Many are stressed about credit card debt, and 28% of Americans do not have *any* emergency savings. I would be highly stressed, too, if I didn't have anything saved! Godliness demands we act prudently, using wisdom, self-denial, sensible decisions and as an outgrowth of godliness to create a stable home. I find that most people do not make big enough adjustments to put the stress to death. They make piddly changes when they should sell a car, move into a much smaller home, eat out much less frequently, etc. We simply do not wish to give up our fun to have financial peace. So be it, enjoy the stress, and the stress on the relationships!

Christians who abide by the Spirit's promptings, and who practice deep contentment, are able to give generously to the Lord's work. There is a profound joy available to us when we do not idolize money. It is a far richer life to have fewer clothes in the closet or drive a less fancy car, but to be free from stress and anxiety about the future. It makes giving our offering all the sweeter!

Blessings!  
Douglas W. Schroeder