

# THOUGHTS

By Douglas W. Schroeder

**SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY**

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## **DO NOT BLAME GOD**

In I Chronicles 1 we read how Israel grumbled against the Lord and blamed him for telling them to go into the Promised Land and fight for it. Fearful of the inhabitants of Canaan which they were to displace, *the people who had recently been rescued out of slavery in Egypt* made God out to be a problem for them! No wonder God allowed only two people to enter into Canaan, Joshua and Caleb. We who have the promise of eternal life in Christ dare not ever blame God for such things as His taking a member of our family through death Home to Life early! Our tongues are to bless God, not blame him!

I spoke with a man today whose wife is angry at God after spending six weeks attending to her sister, who died a painful death from cancer. The sister was 62, diagnosed five months ago, and was ravaged by the disease in less than a month and a half. There can be strong emotional tendency to blame God for such suffering.

I encouraged him to remind her of God's blessings, and that she might not be so hasty to condemn Him when considering the wider picture. The sister had been healthy and had a fulfilling, productive life under God's blessings for 61+ years, followed by five months of illness and less than two months of suffering. Then, God called her to himself and will at some point resurrect her in a glorified state and usher her to Heaven.

And for this her sister is angry? I think she should not be angry. God will keep his Promise of salvation, but on his timing. The early Christians suffered greatly through injustice and outright persecution. God makes no promises in the Gospel that our lives will be trouble and pain free. Many of us in North America have it so good that we carp when God gives us anything less than an ideal outcome. One of our best witnesses to the world happens when we suffer injustice, poor health or a financial setback, yet, like Job, refuse to blame God.

## **JESUS INVITES US TO REST**

Jesus invites those who are weak and heavy burdened to come to him for rest. That wouldn't apply to any of us, would it? The larger promise offered here is the invitation to salvation, to take Jesus' yoke upon ourselves. Oxen were yoked together to pull together, and here Jesus offers the opportunity for us to take the spiritual burden of discipleship, and with it rejection by the world, in exchange for him taking our frailties and sins upon himself.



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Jesus says his yoke is easy and his burden light. Compared to the weight of guilt from unrepented sin and consequences of God's Judgment, the "burden" of the disciple of Jesus is quite light. We do not end up finally crushed under the burden of our own guilt and God's wrath.

Moreover, in Mark 6 Jesus tells his followers to come away by themselves to get some rest. The signal that things were not right was that they were too busy to eat. Watch your diet; if you are in a family but eating alone often, rush through meals, or eat carry out food consistently, then the odds are good that you are neglecting your soul. Use your diet as a barometer of your stress and well-being. If you are harried in your meals, you likely would benefit from a schedule change, and along with it more prayer and quiet time with the Word of God.

### **SINFUL WORLD**

Whenever someone mentions the phrase . . . "they are a good person," I mentally pause and think, "Oh, no they are not!" I recall arguing with an atheist about the topic of God's judgment. He pointed at a person on the street and said, "You mean God would put that good person into Hell?" I replied that according to the Bible there are no "good" people; we all are tainted, ruined by sin, warped and deserving of condemnation. Like a faulty product is pulled from the assembly line, imperfect people will not pass the Heavenly inspection without Christ's restorative power.

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Myriad are the reasons why the Lord's Judgment is just. Case in point, the incident of "Bunny Hunting" whereby predators send messages or photos to kids as young as 11 or 12 to their laptops, game devices or phones in an effort to get them to respond. Why would adults wish to do this? Because some people are so perverse they are looking for victims for sexting, sextortion, cyberbullying, sexual predation and identity theft. Children now have to be educated to be safe while using their own electronic devices (Pay attention Christian parent; if you are not the authority for your child's sexual, social and spiritual development, *someone else will be.*) Predators used to be "out there," but now are "in there", potentially inside the childrens' own electronics.

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I recall the ageless condemnation of Jesus to those who would victimize others, "It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin (see Luke 17:1-3)." I venture to guess that suffering the torment of Hell endlessly would be far worse than actively drowning. Jesus' description of a consequence worse than the low tech "judgment by millstone" will be visited upon the high tech predators of today at the Judgment when Christ returns. At that time Christ will go "Bunny Hunter" hunting, and the perpetrators will not be able to hide in the Net to get away.

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Blessings!  
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