

TEN POIGNANT WORDS YOU MUST KNOW

(Keywords that will give you the ability to see what is not evident to the average mind and will provide clarity to spiritual truths.)

From the desk of Bishop R. E. Libby

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT?

I am sharing with you important and poignant words that have helped me in my own walk with God. I have also used these helpful words and their rich meanings during the numerous counseling sessions I've held and in countless preaching experiences I've had in our church and other churches. Let's study them together.

Some of these may not be impactful to you right now; but think of them as tools you will most likely employ at some point during your life's journey. These words will also help you increase your vocabulary and allow you to help others with theirs. I found many of them both intriguing and effective at capturing complex thoughts, difficult concepts and sometimes-evasive principles found in the scriptures. As we discuss this list of words, I will mostly be using their Greek and Hebrew definitions. However, I will also be interjecting the English definitions for more clarity.

Growing to understand these words has helped bring me clarity, and I pray the same for you. This is a gift that I hope you enjoy.

TEN POIGNANT WORDS YOU MUST KNOW

I. CONFORM

DEFINITIONS

English: To be similar or identical; to be obedient or compliant

Greek: Having the same form as another; similar; to conform one's self (i.e. one's mind and character) to another's pattern; to assimilate

SYNONYMS: Comply, integrate, yield, obey

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

Romans 8:29 (KJV)

“**29** For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be **conformed** to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Romans 12:2 (KJV)

“**2** And be not **conformed** to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

Philippians 3:10 (KJV)

“**10** That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made **conformable** unto his death;”

DISCUSSION

This is one of my favorite words on this list—it’s a powerful one. By that I mean, it takes us out of the norm and brings us into the miraculous. We are talking about a “miraculous” change to our lives taking place by God’s grace. When we expose ourselves to God’s divine influence, He then changes us. We morph into people who taste, experience, and testify of his resurrection and embrace fellowship with Him even when it comes packaged together with suffering. This is the process of conforming to Jesus.

You and I cannot conform to the image of God without the work of God’s grace and power in our lives to complete the change. No matter the desire, zeal or determination, you cannot do it by yourself. We must submit to God’s grace, His unmerited favor and divine influence, in order to become who we were always intended to be.

Romans 12:2 (AMP) begins saying, “**2**And do not be **conformed** to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs]...” That directive tells me we have an option. We can be “conformed” to this world, or not. Being “un-conformed” cannot be done on our own. The person “conforming” to the world essentially refuses to have God living within him. He only has himself. We have Jesus. How blessed we are!

The concept of “conforming” to God’s principle and precepts is proof that salvation doesn’t stop at the new birth. We have to “morph”. If you’re not morphing, you are dying. This is an ever-growing process.

Here’s how that verse ends:

“...but be transformed *and* progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [*focusing on Godly values and ethical attitudes*], so that you may prove [*for yourselves*] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [*in His plan and purpose for you*].”

We see here, from a different perspective, that this word “conform” begs us to change, but only by the work of the Spirit of God.

2. COGNIZANT/TO KNOW

This word I have chosen for our second entry is not a biblical one. However, it is a very close synonym of words used in the scriptures that mean “to know,” which is an essential principle for us to understand.

DEFINITIONS

“Cognizant” in English: Knowledgeable of something, especially through personal experience

“Know” in Hebrew (Yada & da’ath): To learn, understand, experience; to recognize, admit, acknowledge, confess; to apprehend and experience a reality; to perceive

“Know” in Greek (Ginōskō & Eido): To learn, come to know, feel; to understand, perceive, experience; to become acquainted with; to pay attention, discern, discover

SYNONYMS: Mindful, aware

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

Psalms 9:10 (KJV)

“¹⁰ And they that **know** thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

Genesis 18: 17-19 (KJV)

“¹⁷ And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

¹⁸ Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

¹⁹ For **I know him**, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.”

DISCUSSION

I know Him and He knows me!

“To know” in the Bible means more than simply to be acquainted with or to know about something or someone. It implies understanding, knowledge by experience and much more.

In the above verses taken from the book of Psalms, it states that when we know His name and put our trust in Him, then He will not leave or forsake us. When we’re committed to Jesus, He is committed to us.

In the passage taken from Genesis, we see God use the word “know” to express His absolute confidence in Abraham’s character. Here, God expressed His trust in Abraham’s ability to lead his family and generations after him in the “way of the Lord”.

I want God to “know” me in the same way He knew Abraham. What do you think about that?

3. DETACH/SEPARATE

DEFINITIONS

(Detach) in English: Disengage (something or part something) and remove it; leave or separate oneself from (a group or place); avoid or put an end to any connection or association with something

“Separate” in Hebrew (nāzar): To dedicate, consecrate; to devote oneself; to keep sacredly separate

“Separate” in the Greek (chorizo): Divide, part; put asunder, separate one’s self; to go away

SYNONYMS: Disassemble, disengage; dissociate, separate; disjoin, free

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

Leviticus 15:31 (KJV)

“**31** Thus shall ye **separate** the children of Israel from their uncleanness, that they die not in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that is among them.”

Romans 8: 35-39 (KJV)

“**35** Who shall **separate** us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? **36** As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. **37** Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. **38** For I am persuaded, that

neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, **39** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to **separate** us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:35-39 (AMP)

35 Who shall ever separate us from the love of [a]Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? **36** Just as it is written *and* forever remains written,

“FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG;
WE ARE REGARDED AS SHEEP FOR THE SLAUGHTER.”

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors *and* gain an overwhelming victory through Him who loved us [so much that He died for us]. **38** For I am convinced [and continue to be convinced—beyond any doubt] that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present *and* threatening, nor things to come, nor powers, **39** nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the [unlimited] love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

DISCUSSION

Separation can refer to consecration. It is a call to detach from the world for the purpose to be wholly dedicated to God and His kingdom’s work. Come out and be sold out! In the context of this passage in Leviticus, it is a call addressed to the children of Israel to do away with anything standing in the way of communion with God.

Scripturally, the term “detach”, or more specifically “separate”, implies a clear division, separation and removal from something or someone. To illustrate this concept to the church in Rome, Paul explains that the persecution Christians face, the humiliation we’re victims of, and our inevitable life challenges are unable to detach us from the love of Christ. Only “we” can separate us from anything, including God’s love. No one and nothing else can. Isn’t that great?

I love this word. It just has a good “click”. To detach, in my way of thinking, denotes “letting go” and releasing. How many times should we have detached from sins or destructive habits, and did not? How about fears from which we should detach? These fears bring to the surface our inability to trust. Some Christians do not even realize their need to detach from fear, though they live in it. I encourage you to ponder this multifaceted word.

Sometimes we also need to detach ourselves from negative and hurtful people. Have you had that experience in your life? I’m very sure that you probably have. It can be a difficult situation when we need to “detach”. We want to reach out, but some people can make

fellowship with them challenging. However, there may be a time when we must detach. When doing this we should do it carefully, kindly, gently and lovingly. By doing so, you may perhaps find restoration with the difficult individual. When the individual that you detached from wants to draw close to mend... always be loving. That's Jesus' way!

4. DRAW

DEFINITIONS

English: To cause to move continuously toward or after a force applied in advance; to cause to go in a certain direction (as by leading); to bring by inducement or allure

Greek: To draw by inward power; to lead

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

John 6:44 (KJV)

“**44** No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me **draw** him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 6:44 (AMP)

“**44** No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me **draws** him [giving him the desire to come to Me]; and I will raise him up [from the dead] on the last day.”

John 12:32 (KJV)

“**32** And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will **draw** all men unto me.”

John 12:32 (AMP)

“**32** And I, if *and* when I am lifted up from the earth [on the cross], will **draw** all *people* to Myself [Gentiles, as well as Jews].”

James 4:8 (KJV)

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will **draw** nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

James 4:8 (AMP)

8 Come close to God [with a contrite heart] and He will **come close** to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; and purify your [unfaithful] hearts, you double-minded [people].

DISCUSSION

To “draw”, in some instances, means to entice or to allure someone down a path they would not take if it weren't for the influencer's ill-intentions (see James 2:6).

On the other hand, to draw also connotes to lead to a higher path. Jesus promises that after his ascension, He will draw, instigate, and prompt all men to come to Him. He will do the “leading” but will leave the “following” up to us. We retain our free will and can wield it to either embrace or reject God’s call. The choice is ours.

The Scripture also teaches us in James 4:8 that if we “draw” near to God He will “draw” near to us. We can draw near to God by seeking His presence with a hungry passionate desire to become like Him and walk with Him. I feel at times that we enjoy praising God, but we do not seek Him as well. In other words, we feel the presence of God, but we’re not moving closer. We’re “feeling His presence, but not moving closer nor deepening and surrendering.” If we don’t deepen, what is the point? Just like two magnets, when they start moving towards one another the “drawing” power becomes even stronger. God draws nearer to us when we draw nearer to Him. What do you think about that? If you move closer to Him, He will move closer to you. Hence, the magnet illustration. It’s like the law of attraction.

The law of attraction is the attractive, magnetic power of the Universe that draws similar energies together. It manifests through the power of creation, everywhere and in many ways. Even **the law of gravity** is part of **the law of attraction**. This **law** attracts thoughts, ideas, people, situations, and circumstances.

5. EFFERVESCENT/FERVENT

DEFINITIONS

“*Fervent*” in the Greek: To boil with heat; Love & zeal for what is good or bad; Fervent in spirit

“*Effervescent*” in English: Vivacious and enthusiastic; marked by or expressing an appealing lively quality

SYNONYMS: Lively, animated; high-spirited, vigorous; vibrant

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

Acts 18:25 (KJV)

“**25** This man was instructed in the Way of the Lord; and being **fervent** in the Spirit, he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.”

Romans 12:11 (KJV)

“**I** not slothful in business; **fervent** in spirit, serving the Lord;”

Romans 12:11 (AMP)

I never lagging behind in diligence; **aglow** in the Spirit, **enthusiastically** serving the Lord;

DISCUSSION

Contextually, both in the description of Apollos in Acts 18:25 and in Paul’s call to Christian ethics directed at the Roman church in Romans 12:11, the term “fervent” is used to convey liveliness, buoyancy and a longing to give oneself to the things of the Spirit.

When I think of the word “effervescent”, I think of the word zesty. I see gaiety, rather than “blah”, forlorn, glum or depressed. When we get in the Spirit, and the joy of the Lord is let loose in us, it should be buoyant and “effervescent”, like an Alka-Seltzer dropped in a glass of water.....*Plop Plop Fizz Fizz oh what a relief it is!*



How are you doing with that? You can flooowww..... into it or you can reject it. We can experience the joy of the Lord powerfully, regardless of the attacks directed at us or setbacks life brings our way when we focus on our relationship with God. We can, even in pain and trial, bring ourselves to that joy, which is boundless. When we seek and focus on Him and His joy for us, we can exercise our rights to overcome.

6. ETHEREAL/ Divine

DEFINITION

English: Of or relating to the regions beyond the earth; heavenly; spiritual

SYNONYMS: Otherworldly; divine; holy

(Ethereal - Is that a cool word or what?)

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

2 Peter 1:3-4 (KJV)

“**3** According as his **divine** power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

⁴ Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the **divine** nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

2 Peter 1:3-4 (AMP)

³ For His **divine** power has bestowed on us [absolutely] everything necessary for [a dynamic spiritual] life and godliness, through [a] true and personal knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

⁴ For by these He has bestowed on us His precious and magnificent promises [of inexpressible value], so that by them you may escape from the immoral freedom that is in the world because of disreputable desire, and become sharers of the **divine** nature.”

DISCUSSION

Is that cool!? “Ethereal” - This word just reaches out to me. When we “let go” and let God “have us” in the Spirit, seeking to surrender to Him, it speaks to me of the word “ethereal”.

Have you ever let yourself praise and seek God in ways that you get a taste of the ethereal? There will be no time constraints and you will be able to move into a place where you can have more of Him and less of you. I submit, much of our prayer and praise is more about us than it is about Him. Jesus must become dominant, and we “minimal”. Old time prayer warriors would moan, groan, seek, surrender and come out of a prayer meeting beaming with the glory of God. We are too rushed. We need to get into the ethereal. Can I challenge you to get there? Do you not have enough time? What would happen if twenty people would determine to consecrate themselves and spiritually die out, to the point that they move into that realm? Would there be twenty people who would congregate with me for the very purpose of going into the ethereal? Maybe on a Saturday for an hour or so?

I look back to the “old days”. Many of our saints were completely sold out. I’m seeing some of them right now, who have been living for God for many years, through it all. They are shining examples of faithful servants of the Lord. And while I pen these words, I’m feeling a little touch of the “ethereal” just thinking about these dedicated saints. We would go to the prayer room, early morning or late night, cry out to the Lord and lose track of time, then watch God perform countless miracles in and around us.

Here's just one example of a divine miracle we experienced during the building process of the construction of our first church as a direct result of prayer:

During the construction process, we didn't realize we would have a huge need for dirt. We were building a two storied building on a flat piece of ground with the entrance on the second floor. A full “story” of dirt was needed to raise the ground up to that level. The contractor in charge of the building asked, “Do you know where we can get some dirt?”

We didn't, so the building process came to a halt. We didn't know what to do. We were stuck. The church congregation gathered together around the area where the church was being built and began seeking God for a miracle. One day later, a man comes up the road in a truck and asks, "Do you all need some dirt?" He continues with, "I've got a lot of it down the road at another site, and we've got to get rid of it." Turns out, there was literally tons of dirt. The very next day they started with six brand new huge dump trucks full of dirt from Rockville to our construction site in Gaithersburg. They did this all day long—shuttling the dump trucks back and forth, back and forth, free of charge. By the end of the day, we had all the dirt we needed.

Not only did they bring us all the dirt we needed, they used their own equipment to grate and level it-in just one day. It was amazing! Sis. Libby and I, Bro. Charles Smith, Sis. Jacqui Forbes, Bro. Lonnie Broadnax, Bro. Jim Doyle, and others were present and witnessed that miracle. What could we see God do if more of us regularly tapped into the ethereal and invited Him to do the supernatural through our prayers?

When we were in our rented church building, we were having a powerful church service—men, women, and children were praising and shouting when suddenly some police and firemen entered the building. I saw them coming in and went to them while the saints continued praising and shouting. The police said, "A fire has been reported, but we can't find any sign of it. We've looked and looked". Guess what? They were looking with their *natural eyes*. We knew what it was, it was the *Holy Ghost fire*. At the very same time another individual who was driving by on Rt 355, also saw flames coming out of the roof and called 911. The firemen walked through all the rooms that we had, main floor and upper levels too, because they had to be sure there were no fires. The neighbor who called the report in was so convinced, he followed the firemen to the roof and refused to leave convinced of what he had seen. They didn't make us leave the building because they couldn't find a fire. The congregation continued to praise and worship as they worked around us. Big huge firemen tiptoeing around us as we were having church. Finally, after searching the building thoroughly they left. We knew what the fire was! Pretty cool! That was for sure a time when we were in the "ethereal."

As I look back at that experience, I find it to be somewhat of a "monument". Everyone that was there was involved in it. We can do that again, but we must sell out and go deeper and deeper. We must die out to self. Does anybody want to go into the "ethereal"? Not just feeling the spirit and speaking in tongues but going deeper and deeper than you have ever gone before by surrendering. Letting "pettiness" go and becoming smaller so that Jesus can become "bigger" in your life. We're not talking about "normal," we're talking about dying to self. It's not easy because our flesh resists. Do you want to go to the ethereal? Would you be interested in going somewhere that you've never been before? Letting "you go" and

allowing God to come upon you. Makes you want to go doesn't it?! Would you like to go there???

7. EVOLVE

DEFINITION

English: To come forth gradually into being; to develop

SYNONYMS: Emerge, expand; grow, mature, unfold; advance, increase, obtain

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

Hebrews 5:12-14 (KJV)

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of **full age**, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

We should and need to *evolve* in our relationship with God.

Hebrews 5:12-14 (AMP)

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers [because of the time you have had to learn these truths], you actually need someone to teach you again the elementary principles of God's word [from the beginning], and you have come to be continually in need of milk, not solid food.

13 For everyone who lives on milk is [doctrinally inexperienced and] unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a spiritual infant.

14 But solid food is for the **[spiritually] mature**, whose senses are trained by practice to distinguish between what is morally good and what is evil.

Ephesians 4:12-14 (KJV)

12 For the **perfecting** of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a **perfect** man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”

Ephesians 4:12-14 (AMP)

“**12** [and He did this] to **fully equip and perfect** the saints (God’s people) for works of service, to build up the body of Christ [the church];

13 until we all reach oneness in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, **[growing spiritually]** to become a **mature** believer, reaching to the measure of the fullness of Christ [manifesting His spiritual completeness and exercising our spiritual gifts in unity].

14 So that we are no longer children [spiritually immature], tossed back and forth [like ships on a stormy sea] and carried about by every wind of [shifting] doctrine, by the cunning *and* trickery of [unscrupulous] men, by the deceitful scheming of people ready to do anything [for personal profit].”

DISCUSSION

When I saw the word “evolve”, I thought it had poignancy and “magically” capsulized my thoughts. It certainly is an antithesis to being stagnant or slothful. It connotes having zeal and vibrancy. The word “evolve” speaks to progress, growth and change. We need to seek progress in our prayer life, as we press for higher heights. I also love the words “expand” and “unfold.” Shouldn’t these be words we should have in our spiritual vocabulary?

Through the years, I’ve had both disappointing experiences and great ones. I’ve seen people backslide, and I’ve seen others who have grown and developed into spiritually strong individuals. Some have become ministers and teachers within our church, some have even gone off into their own ministries starting home mission churches, and some have become missionaries travelling to other countries. For example, Bro Charles Smith has stayed at CLC all these many years and applied himself to developing and helping our church evolve, grow and mature. His teaching, preaching and “filling in the gap” when needed has been a mighty help to our local assembly. Bro. Chris and Sis. Donka Robinson lived different places because of their employment with the government, and they used it for an opportunity to minister in those countries. Others, such as Bro. Paul Moorfield, is currently a missionary in India and has been for many years. Bro. Heintze started a home missions church in Olney, Maryland and Bro. Richard Glass is now pastoring a church in Hagerstown. These are just a few examples.

8. FLUID

DEFINITION

English: A substance that easily changes its shape; capable of flowing; changing readily

SYNONYMS: Flowing, fluent; liquified

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURE

Exodus 3:8 (KJV)

“**8** And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land **flowing** with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.”

DISCUSSION

When I read the word “fluid”, it speaks to me of the danger of “dryness” as it relates to praise and prayer times. When we encounter stagnation, God cannot easily guide us because of our own “rigidity” and “stiffness” in the Spirit. He can shift and redirect us when we are fluid. Take a look around and pay attention to those who just sit and daydream during service. They’re disengaged and simply wait for service to be over. They are stagnant. They listen but will not “flow”. They are not fluid.

In Exodus 3:8, the Bible talks about the Promised Land being a land “flowing with milk and honey”. That’s where we want to be as a church—in a land flowing with milk and honey; not dry, bridled, with a refusal to yield to the Spirit. Saints of God can get stuck, not even realizing they’re in that position. We can become rigid and miss the flow while operating under the pretense that we are flowing; but we are simply going through the motions, deceiving ourselves. I have seen that a lot over the years. It is so easy to find yourself in that predicament, with no “milk or honey”; with no nourishment.

We must intentionally remain fluid. Good saints of God can make mistakes. In fact, all of us can. They are involved in Sunday School, media ministry, sound ministry and other duties while the Word is being preached. We are being a blessing to the congregation, but sometimes at the expense of our own soul’s fluidity. As a pastor, I had to help people get out of those ruts. At times, we forsake having personal devotion time with God and solely rely on corporate praise and worship. We neglect to pray as a family in our home. We never minister to one another outside the four walls of the church. This is a recipe for disaster, or at least, stagnation. Have you ever experienced stagnation? It is a trap.

The Oxford Dictionary defines Stagnation as:

1. the state of not flowing or moving.
2. lack of activity, growth, or development.

To break free of that trap, I'd often prescribe people to get back in the pews, back to intimate devotion with God, back to being refreshed and renewed—back to good spiritual health. Then, after a while, I'd invite them back into their ministries. My objective was never to punish them. It was to keep them spiritually healthy.

9. GROVEL

DEFINITION

English: To lie facing the ground, especially in fear; to behave toward someone in a way that shows that you are small and unimportant, and the other person is powerful.

To crawl with the face downward and the body prostrate, especially in abject humility and fear; to give oneself over to what is base or unworthy

SYNONYMS: Cower, cringe, crouch, throw oneself at someone's feet.

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

John 3:30 (KJV)

“**30** He must increase, but I must **decrease**.”

Luke 22:42 (KJV)

“**42** Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, **not my will, but thine**, be done.”

DISCUSSION



The word “grovel” certainly has negative connotations. If this verb was used to describe our behaviors, we would most likely feel uncomfortable, abased, demeaned, offended or hurt. No one likes this verb because of its harsh and unflattering definition. In fact, we generally flee from people with a superiority complex problematic enough that they seek to have others grovel in their presence. I’m sure all of us know bullies. We dislike spending time with them, for fear of them imposing their will on us. Who do they think they are?

However, I submit to you that there is one that we should all “grovel” before. A more palatable expression might be “to be vulnerable”. Be completely vulnerable with God; open, trusting and without fear. Do so in worship and commitments to the Lord.

Although Jesus will not impose His will on us, it is only by embracing His perfect will, often at the expense of ours, that we can live a life of purpose. The definition of grovel that indicates we should “behave toward someone in a way that shows that [we] are small and unimportant and the other person is powerful” should be embraced, given that the other person is Jesus Christ. At the heart of it, as Jesus taught us by example, we must deny our will (Luke 22:42). Ultimately our desires, wants and aspirations do not matter. His will be done.

When God calls us to humble ourselves and submit to a greater extent than we ever have before, we can foster a deeper relationship with Him by realizing that **He is all, and I am nothing**. John the Baptist illustrated this beautifully when he said, “He must increase, but I must decrease”, indicating the subservience of His ministry to that of Jesus.

Can you be “nothing”? Can you surrender without resistance? I think we will find in the times to come the importance of being increasingly more submissive. Because the more we can “grovel”, the more we’re able to receive all that He can give us, because we can give Him more of us. In other words, we are nothing, He is everything. That’s something to chew on, isn’t it? Can you adapt that principle into your daily life? You will deepen and find treasures when you, “grovel” before Him in your attitude and daily walk. Not with fear but surrendering with love.

When Jesus was dying on the cross between the two thieves, one of the thieves “groveled” and one didn’t. The one who was willing to “grovel” was saved, and the one who didn’t

“grovel” was not. As they were dying on the cross, one of the thieves was only concerned for his own comfort and pain, not acknowledging his sins, nor unworthiness, nor the fact that Jesus didn’t deserve the punishment. Instead he insulted God by saying, “Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!” The other thief recognized his own unworthiness, and sins, and he also recognized that Jesus didn’t deserve it. He “groveled,” and said, “Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed *are suffering* justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!” (Luke 23:39-43)

Who do we want to be like? The thief who “groveled” or the one who didn’t? I submit that the thief who “groveled” became a shining example for others. Although he was lost, he totally surrendered and had redemption. I applaud him. He was humble. He knew he was a sinner. He humbled himself. He begged for mercy, and he received it. He became a child of God. I believe that he was an example of a man that was an “ugly sinner” who turned at his last breath, humbled himself and took advantage of the moment God was giving him. He went to be in paradise with Jesus that very day, but the other thief would not repent and was lost.

10. LEAN

DEFINITIONS

Hebrew: Lay, rest upon; to sustain, refresh, revive; to trust in

Greek: To recline; to sit

English: To cast one’s weight to one side for support; **to rely for support or inspiration**

SYNONYMS: Rely, trust; believe on, have faith in

SALIENT (Important) SCRIPTURES

2 Kings 18:21 (KJV)

“**21** Now, behold, thou **trustest** upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man **lean**, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that **trust** on him.”

Job 8:13-15 (KJV)

“**13** So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:
14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose **trust** shall be a spider's web.

15 He shall **lean** upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure."

Proverbs 3:5 (KJV)

"5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and **lean** not unto thine own understanding."

Proverbs 3:5 (AMP)

"5 Trust in *and* **rely confidently** on the LORD with all your heart and do not **rely** on your own insight or understanding."

John 13:23 (KJV)

"23 Now there was **leaning** on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved."

DISCUSSION

What we're talking about is trusting God instead of leaning on ourselves. To "Lean" - what an exquisite word as it relates to our relationship with God. It speaks to dependence and striving to become proficient in "leaning", rather than being "self-sufficient". In other words, you've got to be a master at "being less."

Ask yourself: "Who is in control? Who is calling the shots?" Do we consult and confer with Jesus before we make moves? Are we truly relying and counting on our God, or are we leaning on our own thoughts and desires? Are we leading ourselves? This is a major spiritual life skill which is so necessary, but not easy to master.

It is a difficult task. The bible conveys **"the less you are, the more you are"**. Weird, isn't it? In the world's systems, it is all about getting as much as possible and controlling as much as we can control; but in the kingdom, less is more. It's counterintuitive. It's doing what we should do, and what we wished we could do, but do not want to do because we want to be in control. What a conundrum. We need to be purposefully dependent (like an infant is dependent on the parent), showing our desire to be discipled by Jesus. When we step back and allow God to guide us, things will be much better. Learn to depend on God. Let the sweetness of His hands lead you to His will. It's all about, "letting go of self" and, "leaning on Him".

The scripture taken from 2 Kings is a simile paralleling Egypt to an untrustworthy reed that injures anyone that depends on it. Just as Egypt pierces the hand of anyone who leans on it, so does sin to anyone partaking of it (see Romans 6:23). You cannot depend on the vices, the "quick fixes" or the wisdom of this world to sustain you. In fact, you must not lean on anything but God and His Word. That's why we should be continually prayerful and avidly consuming God's Word. We should be submitting to God's direction and fight the urge to seek self, because it is so easy to do. Your own being will trick you. It will trick you into rationalizing what you want to do. Seek deeper to put yourself out of the equation so that Jesus can completely control and lead you. Put simply, if you lead your own self, you will not

be successful. You will fail and not flourish in His presence, plan or will. That's what the above passage from Job illustrates for us.

Allowing God to lead us means to first seek His counsel before making a decision. That's how we lean on Him instead of leaning on our own understanding, as we are admonished to do in Proverbs 3:5. Always look to God for counsel before you make a decision, because if you do anything without consulting God, your spiritual leadership and then submitting to it, you will do the wrong thing. It's due to our carnality (Romans 8:7). The more that we are dependent on God, the more God can anoint and use us. Even Jesus had to "check" and realign himself when He prayed ".....nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." Luke 22:42 KJV

Ultimately, the more dependent we become on God, the more intimacy we gain with Him. That's what we see with John the Beloved. Why does the scripture highlight the fact that Jesus loved John, as if Jesus loved no one else (John 13:23)? What were the other disciples doing? Did they even notice what was happening? They were all in the same room and all had the same "access" to Jesus. I'd like to think that if I was there and saw how John was close to Jesus, that I would be taking note of that.

It speaks to the level of intimacy that they shared. John was the only one who was leaning on Jesus' "bosom". He was close like no other disciple. Why was he the only one? Were the other one's casual? We know for a fact that at that very moment it seems that he was the closest disciple to Jesus. We decide how close we want to be to Him. We decide if, whether and how much we want to lean on Him. John was the only one who "leaned." *[Afterward in the garden, when Jesus gave Himself over to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders,....]* Everyone else ran, and he was the only one who didn't. *[followed Jesus to the cross, thus showing his intimacy and closeness to the Lord].*

Oh! To follow John's example in my relationship and daily choices concerning the Lord.

CONCLUSION

I've shared these insights that I've gained from my personal study of these words to lead you into deeper knowledge of their use in the Scripture so that you can confidently apply these concepts in your personal walk. As you go through life, remember these words, these scriptures and examples, and the principles discussed here so that you can recall how to remain steadfast and strengthened in your spiritual walk with God. I encourage you to further study these words, discover how they are used in Scripture, and apply them in your own life so that you can continue learning and growing spiritually.

I can't stress enough how important it is for you to continue going back to these words: *studying* them, *learning* them, *embedding* them in your being, and *memorizing* them. That's what I did as a new Christian. I remember driving and reciting the scriptures I wanted to memorize as my wife sat next to me with the bible on her lap. If you can do that regularly

in your personal devotion time, you'll become amazed what will burst into your being, and you will know these miraculous scriptures for the rest of your life. Thank you for spending time with me, and I pray for your success in your walk with God.

Notes: