

## Ed Heidelberg - Fatherly Counsel

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Precious Bible Blessed Bible Precious Word. Boon most sacred from the Lord. A boon is a benefit, a thing to be thankful for, a blessing Boon most sacred from the Lord. Glory to his name be given for this choicest gift from heaven. Tis a fountain pouring forth streams of life to gladden earth whence eternal blessings flow.

Antidote for human woe. Yes. Blessed Bible. Precious word.

Today we want to draw attention to this blessed Bible, the word of God and its counsel. An antidote for human woe. Our discourse focuses on Psalms 73:24, which reads, Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. This text came to us in a card of comfort and consolation, which we greatly appreciated. You know, growing up, we recognized our parents as our immediate counselors.

Our parents provided the greatest influence in our lives and assisted guiding us through school and helped provide direction in the choice of a career, whether by example, knowledge or experience. Now, by definition, a counselor is any person who gives advice, but properly one who is authorized by natural relationship or by birth, office or profession to advise another in regard to his future conduct and measures. Now, the first person I remember growing up having counselor as their title was my high school guidance counselor. It was his responsibility to suggest, advise or guide us to a future life or career. Well, in my case, it was repeatedly suggested that I find a career as a manual laborer.

Today, guidance counselors play an important role in a high school student's life since by that time many at that age feel that the number one job of their parents is to make their life miserable, especially in that 14 to 18 year old range. But then later in life they realize, especially when they have kids of their own, they should have listened better to the advice their parents gave. Some of the advice they still pass on to their children. Today, our lives have become much more complex than it used to be. You know, we aren't living in the Little House on the Prairie that some of you may have watched that show several years ago, Sister Sally used to say how nice it would have been to live in those times and when most, for the most part, neighbors helped each other.

People had respect for each other and people took responsibility for their actions. Yes, in that way it was nice. But I reminded her that back then, people worked all day, every day just to survive. All year round you worked all day and you canned. You canned for your food for the winter.

So it wasn't as glorified as it seemed back then.

Since we're living in more complex times, we're finding a variety of counselors popping up Counselors for just about everything. There are legal, financial, medical, psychological, grief, marriage, parenting, exercise, nutrition, various addiction counselors, and the list goes on. Hundreds. One time I googled it and there were literally hundreds of counselors that are out there. If anyone needed help with anything today, help can be found.

One of life's most important lessons is recognizing our own weaknesses, our own lack of wisdom. After learning of God's love and mercy by providing our Lord for the forgiveness of our sins, we not only accept it as forgiveness, but we desire to live in according with his rules of justice, and then in doing so, we found more than ever that that we needed good counsel. Counsel we could trust in. It

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was then we knew we could go to the Lord to His Word for that counsel.

The more we studied it, the more we found of our Father's wisdom profitable not only with regard to our future, but also in our day to day activities in life. As time passed, we learned more of our own weaknesses and imperfections and more of the wisdom and grace of God. Then we heard him inviting us, calling us to a full consecration of ourselves to him, to a joint heirship with our Lord Jesus in God's kingdom. Then, after finding the narrow way to the divine nature and glory, we came more than ever to appreciate the need of this very wise counselor. We found that even the best earthly counsel is only as good as it's been directed by divine counsel.

Then we learn that in every experience in life we need to listen to the voice of our Heavenly Father through His Word. We needed heavenly counsel.

When seeking and listening to his divine counsel through His Word. We should be careful not to misinterpret His Word or what we often refer to as run ahead of the Lord hastily letting self will enter when trying hard to determine his will, as opposed to being patient, watching and praying to see what the Lord's providence permits. I can speak from experience because for many years, and you may have too. You know, you go through an experience and you're looking for the Lord's will and you're saying, oh, must be this, must be this.

And then you head in that direction and it doesn't turn out like you think it should have. When in reality I wasn't patiently waiting on him and you're trying to rush to a conclusion.

In fact, I think my flesh and my new creature could co author a book entitled how to Run Ahead of the Lord and Get nowhere.

That's why it's so important that our new creature takes full control of our flesh. So we can without hesitation wait patiently on him, wait for his direction, watch and pray to see and allow what the Lord's providence permits. Why? Because faith can firmly trust him, come what may.

Let's not forget the advice given to us in Proverbs 3, 5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thy own understanding. The adversary tries to keep us from understanding God's word and therefore misrepresents it as being contradictory. Remember, he's the master of deception, however, not falling for it. We seek grace to help at the throne of heavenly grace and to be providentially led of the Lord to His Word. If we do fall into temptation or become deceived by some of the adversary's methods, the heavenly Father will correct us with chastisements and or disappointments and providentially bring us back in contact with the Word at the time when our heart is ready to receive it, and when we'll more than ever feel our need for His Divine counsel.

We shouldn't limit divine power to think that there's no other channel than Scriptures that could be used in communicating between God and ourselves. We believe in divine providences and believe that they're a means for bringing us into a condition where we can be taught of God from His Word, but never should take the place of God's Word, and we've all experienced his dealings in our life. His providential overrulings his and it just increases our faith when we go through those, and it draws us closer to God when we place our reliance on Him. We are continually encouraged to search the Scriptures to know God's will and his counsel.

The apostle Paul, in his second letter to Timothy, writes in 2 Timothy 3, 16, 17 that the written word is sufficient, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished, and in 1st Corinthians 2. 5 it says that your faith should not stand in wisdom of men, but in the power of God. In harmony with

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this our Lord prayed to the Father for the Church, saying in John 17:17, Sanctify them through thy truth. Why thy word is truth.

And it's for the same reason that the Bereans were well thought of in Acts 17:11, in that they searched the Scriptures daily. The strongest and most faithful Christians have revered the Bible and went to it as the word of God when looking for counsel, this is the oracle of God, and as the prophet Isaiah says in Isaiah 8, 20, if they speak not according to his word, it's because there is no light in them, and then the prophet David says in Psalms 107 verses 11 through 13 that some sit in darkness that it is because they rebelled against the words of God, and condemned the counsel of the Most High. Therefore he brought down their heart with labor they fell down, and there was none to help.

Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and what did he do? He saved them out of their distresses, and this is also confirmed in Proverbs 1:20, 25.

Some reject the word of the Lord altogether. Others accept it to some extent, but never really accept its counsel in the sense of putting it into practice in their daily lives. These would include most of the nominal Christians. The apostle James calls attention to the difference between the hearer of the word and the doer of the word in James 1:22, 24 says, Be ye doers of the word and not hearers, only deceiving your own selves for if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his face in a glass for he beholds himself and goes his way, and straightway forgets what manner of man he is. Also in Psalms 1:3 the Lord points out to us the blessedness of those who walk according to the divine law or counsel, and not according to the counsel of the ungodly.

He says again, Psalms 1:3 he shall be like a tree planted by the river of water that bringeth forth fruit in its season. His leaf therefore shall not wither, and the thing which he doeth shall prosper.

Our goal in life is to serve the Lord acceptably, to cultivate the character required of us, and thereby be fitted and prepared for the glory and blessings promised to us. The apostle Paul says in Philippians 3:13 14 this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

All that do as Paul did will prosper in that one thing they're doing and gain the great prize set before us. Brethren, we must stay focused on making our calling and election sure.

Now we're going to look at just a few examples of divine counsel provided by our Heavenly Father in His Word. If you like, you may want to jot down some of these Scriptures and refer to them if you're going through the same issue and want to seek his counsel along those lines in whatever the situation applies or, and if approached correctly, in maybe helping another brother or sister by pointing them to this counsel. So here are a few examples.

Have you ever been asked to co sign for a loan and wished you hadn't a few smiles. If you have, you may have saved yourself from a lot of grief had you counseled with the divine counselor first and noted not to be a surety for another, especially a stranger. Because in Proverbs 11:15, we're told he that is a surety for a stranger shall smart. For doesn't say will be smart.

It says shall smart, which means to be in pain, a sharp pain. How many of us suffered financially by neglecting this advice from our great counselor? This is why it's called tough love, especially when

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it involves your children.

Has anyone had a teenage son or daughter that wanted you to buy them a car? Well, we had that experience and this is a little out of script, but I thought I'd share this. You may appreciate it. We'll make it brief when our daughter, Sister Jennifer Quenes, now Jenny, came up to me in high school and she says, dad, Bobby's dad bought him a new Mustang when he turned 16. What are you going to buy me?

He said, excuse me. So I said, how much money do you have? He says, oh, I saved \$235. I said, tell you what, I'll match that. Well, this is 25 years ago.

We ended up buying a \$500 junker and then the next car and the next car and the next car, and I found that may have been a mistake on my part because guess who had to fix all those cars. But the lesson was, is that, and it's tough. You know, it's tough when you when they're competing with kids like Bobby and the rest of the world.

But we just felt it was an important lesson, but it was really costly and painful. But it's the advice that's important. The council now, another bit of advice. Nothing, however, in the thought of not being a surety for another implies selfishness. The counsel of the Lord is that we should be generous.

If you've never wondered I'm sorry? If you have ever wondered if it's wise to loan someone money. We're counseled in Luke 6:35 to do good and lend, hoping for nothing again. In other words, don't expect to get it back.

We may do good and lend according to our opportunities and abilities, but are not to obligate ourselves beyond what we would be willing to give. If you have the means and can help, do it, but expect nothing in return, and we know that the expectation has caused a lot of grief and divisions in families, so this is wise counsel for that.

What about needing A loan for yourself? I just can't make it on what I get paid. I'll just borrow money for whatever I need or want. How many of us would have found it wiser to have followed the Lord's counsel in Romans 8:13, which says, to owe no man anything but love? How many have suffered for years trying to pay debts which should never have been acquired to begin with?

I'm sure our Apostle Paul knew that bankers never follow this advice, expecting nothing in return.

We need to be careful not to spend beyond our means or fall prey to easy credit. We got to watch out for the guy that says credit. Forget it, we got it. You get it? That was a furniture store in Detroit that advertised it on TV credit.

Forget it. We got it. You get it. You have to be careful. It's tactics like that that can cause financial crisis.

Now, if we do get behind in our finances, what's wrong with mooching off our friends and family? Well, we're counseled in Ephesians 4:28 to let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor working with his hands, the thing which is good that he may have to give to him that needeth. In other words, instead of taking from others, find a job, doing with your might what your hands find to do as unto the Lord again that he may provide for the needs of his household. Our Father knows what our needs are, both spiritual and temporal.

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The best counsel to follow in regard to our finances is also found in 1st Corinthians 16, 2. That we should lay by in store that we may have to give in need, and then in first Timothy 6, 19, it reads, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life. Save, save, save.

My mother, Sister Marley, used to send us. Every time she'd send us a card. This is when dad was still alive. She'd say. She'd sign it mom and dad.

And then after her name, she'd say KP she would put KP and then below by dad, it was sym. KP Was keep praying, and from dad, save your money.

That was his counsel for us. Save your money.

Being economical, frugal, and providing for our needs and for others needing assistance, both spiritual and temporal, are what we are counseled to do. That brings us to another issue. Contentment. What a blessing. Comes to us with a true appreciation of the Lord's Counsel.

From 1st Timothy 6:6. Godliness with contentment is great gain. The combination of godliness and contentment is necessary to our peace and spiritual prosperity. However, as much godliness as the discontented may have or seek to have, they cannot have true happiness. Likewise, however, however content they may be while in sin or ungodliness, they are certainly losing a great deal in not having godliness.

Godliness with contentment does not mean having a lack of concern for our condition and welfare, either spiritual or temporal. We're to be ambitious, especially in spiritual things and in the use of our talent in our Lord's service. But while spending every bit of energy in serving the Lord, we may be content with whatever blessing the Lord is pleased to give us, so we may continually be thankful as to how the Lord has led us Content whatever lot I see, since tis my God that leadeth me.

We're living in a time when more and more the whole world of mankind is growing discontented as well as losing godliness. We need to cultivate these qualities not only for ourselves, but also as counselors and examples to others.

All the divine counsel the Lord has provided for us in his word is useless if we are not humble, meek, and teachable. Pride of heart will bar us from the kingdom. You know Pride is an acronym for Pride Results in Destruction Eternal. Pride results in Destruction Eternal. That'll kill us.

That'll kill our new creature. The Lord instructs us as the attitude of heart necessary if we're to receive and profit by his counsel. He says in Psalms 25:9 the meek the meek will he guide in judgment the meek will he teach his way. Yet pride can affect us all. Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 16:18.

Brother Russell says in reprint 16:29 that if you find a humble one with ability, encourage him in its exercise but if he is not humble minded, don't encourage him even if he has the ability. For the higher you push him, the greater will be his fall.

Another good piece of advice is found in Psalms 39:1 I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me. How many painful experiences could have been spared by complying with this good bit of advice? Our lips express

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what's in our heart. As we mentioned this morning, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks again.

Matthew 12:34 Whoever guards his tongue will find that the easiest and best way to do it is to fill their heart with with love. Then the good thoughts will leave no room for bitterness, slander, malice, hatred, or strife, which can destroy our characters remember the lesson of the chips and the apples.

The Father wanted the son to fill the bushel with apples and he goes into the shed and the bushel is full of chips. He said, well, you got to remove the chips if you want to put in the apples, and that's the same thing here. The same lesson is we've got to remove those chips. The bitterness, slander, malice, hatred, strife has to be removed before we can develop those fruits of the Spirit.

Another issue that we deal with and has been a divine counsel along the lines of our tongue is found in Proverbs 15:1 Proverbs 15:1 and we gave this this morning as well A soft answer turns away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger Brother Russell on reprint page 2325 comments on this Text he said this text is excellent advice. It's good policy for anyone Christian or worldly to learn to give soft answers even under anger provoking conditions. He said, businesses make this a matter of policy. It means sales, profits, wealth, and to ignore this rule in business is considered foolish.

Any other answer than a soft answer is incompatible with the Holy Spirit of love with its meekness, gentleness, patience, and brotherly kindness. If the truth needs to be spoken, and if presented under severe circumstances, it needs to be stated as softly as possible. This evidently is the thought of the apostle when he recommends speaking the truth in love. This advice is nowhere more needed than in the home. Each unkind word is a testimony in opposition to our profession.

To be the Lord's people, and to be begotten of his Spirit. Put away all anger, malice, hatred, strife, and so forth.

Another counsel of the Lord sometimes overlooked is to be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for some thereby have entertained angels unaware. Found in Hebrews 13:2. Now, in past times, spirit beings on numerous occasions presented themselves in human form to deliver messages to mankind. However, the Lord's method now is to use his people in the flesh as his messengers. We communicate with each other.

Yet it is still true that all who have the Lord's spirit should be hospitable, especially toward any whom they have reason to believe are fellow servants of our Lord. Likewise, all who are entertained as the Lord's servants should be extremely careful that as ambassadors for God, their influence wherever they go, to make sure it is good and a blessing to others.

Our Father counsels us on the importance of our fellowship amongst our brethren in John 1 I'm sorry, where we're told that he who loveth not his brother, whom he hath not seen how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

Any lack of fellowship with any who love the Lord and are consecrated to him, should be considered a sure sign of spiritual decline. Our hearts must be brought back to a condition where we have an assurance that we have passed from death unto life. How 1 John 3:14, 16 we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abides in death. Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no

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murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Hereby we perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Along the lines of fellowship our heavenly counselor instructs us in Hebrews 10:25, not to forget the assembling of ourselves together, and so much the more as they see the day drawing on the meek who receive this counsel will seek as far as possible to make use of any means. The Lord provides all fellowship of those who have the mind of Christ will look for it. Wherever the Spirit of the Lord is in any heart, it will look for the fellowship in others of like spirit. Therefore, if our own hearts are in the right condition, we will proportionately desire fellowship with the Lord.

Where do you turn when you need help in time of need? Well, our Heavenly Father counsels us in 2 Corinthians 12:9, where it says, my grace is sufficient for thee my strength is made perfect in weakness. How often would this good counsel of the Lord, if remembered, bring a blessing and a relief from the attacks of the adversary who would love to lead us to believe that our unavoidable weaknesses and imperfections are proofs that we're not of the Lord's. This counsel, however, gives us the strength we need in combating the world, the flesh, and the edge. It leads us in the moment of temptation to lift up our hearts in prayer to the Lord for grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16 the Lord wants us to learn the lesson of our own weaknesses and imperfections, and to learn to go to him for strength and help not before we need it, but in time of need, in every time, trouble, or occasion that we need it.

How many times or how many of us have failed to apply the divine counsel that assures us that if rightly exercised by it, tribulation worketh a hope which will not be put to shame, because the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by such experiences. If we keep this counsel in the forefront of our Mind, it will be much easier to endure tribulation. It would not only set aside fear, but quickly bring about a growth in grace. This counsel is found in Romans 5:1:5, which reads, Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.

Knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience, experience and experience, hope and hope makes not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us the greatest comfort and peace that we've found in the counsel of our Father through His word comes to us in his promise that all things, all things work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose. You know where that's found. Romans 8:28. We that love God and are called according to his purpose and pay attention to his counsel, know that the all things include the trials, disappointment, difficulties, and temptations of the narrow way that we've consecrated. The walk in the good that will be worked out will be the chiseled and polished character likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, if faithful to the end, will be perfected in the divine glory, honor, and immortality that we were again promised.

We need to be copies of our dear Lord in this text in Romans 8:28. This has been my favorite because I've gone to it many times and reminded myself all things again. I mentioned this before, but the key to looking at all our troubles and tribulations is to look at them through the eyes of our new creature. Because good is there and it will help us find it, and we will learn from that experience.

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It puts everything in perspective, a good perspective, and is supported by all the other exceedingly great and precious promises.

But that was put to an extreme test recently at the near loss of our sister Sally. The test was in the all things.

In our case, it was, how much of all things have we placed complete trust in the Lord for trust in that, whatever the outcome, it's a good thing.

We've said many times that we need to die to make our calling an election. Sure. That's our goal, right? So when we die, if faithful, our moment, our next moment, will be with the Lord. It's been the goal of our whole consecrated life.

Our new creature doesn't fear, yearns for it. Just ask Sister Molly.

It may be easy to accept that for ourselves, but when someone Tells you your loved one may not. May not make it through the night. It puts the all good to the test. You're one on one with our Heavenly Father praying very carefully for his will to be done, not ours. This came to us the day Sister Sally had her pulmonary embolism.

That night, while in the waiting room, we felt a calm come over us. This was really. This was amazing. In fact. Well, we didn't know if that calmness came as a result of Sister Sally making her change or that our Lord intervened through this experience, that she would make it through the night and keep her for us.

Well, it took another three hours before we saw her heading back to the ICU that we realized his will for us, and that was to keep her here for us. We found out the next day that about the time the calmness came over us, it was about the time they began their procedure on her to vacuum out the clots out of her lungs. That calmness was our Heavenly Father assuring us not to worry. He had everything under control. But it was so strange.

Like I said, it was like somebody flipped a switch, and it was so strange that I looked at my phone to see what time it was. It was 11:30 at night, and again, that's when we found out at 11:30 was the time they were doing this procedure, and I, you know, I was.

I lost it. I was that whole time in the waiting room crying my eyes out. My nose was running, and I just wasn't thinking.

And then all of a sudden, the tension out of my body relaxed, the tears dried up, and I didn't have to blow my nose anymore, and so it was just like the Lord said. Take it easy. We got you covered. Don't worry about it.

And something we'll never forget. Well, brethren, I see our chairman's up here, and we've shared about 15 or so scriptures of our Father's counsel. Yet if we had more time, we could have no doubt found hundreds more from our great divine counselor and find them full of wisdom and blessings to us. Yet the blessings would not be in simply knowing of his counsel, but in proportion as we obey it and do it.

Do the will of the Father. The Lord's counsel, as the apostle confirms, is summed up by one Love. Love to God and to our brethren. All the meekness that he instructs us to have, all the patience, together with all the experiences in life that he permits, are designed to cultivate and to develop in

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us the spirit of love, which, as our counselor says in Colossians 3, 14 is the bond of perfectness or completeness. Because love is the only condition of the heart that is acceptable to God, our conduct in life is to be regulated in harmony with our Lord's character and will, as counseled by his word.

Remember, perfect love is not received instantly, but the result of our experiences and in obedience to our Father's counsel. However, to whatever degree we succeed in cultivating the spirit of love, it depends on our zeal and obedience to this great counselor. But this love and zeal that in the beginning may have simply brought us to the Lord for His help and safety will hopefully get us to the point of development that we can cry out to God, O Lord, I delight to do Thy will. Our Father knows the end from the beginning. He knows exactly what will please him.

He knows how to direct us in his way. His word of counsel is sufficient.

If we're required to walk by faith and not by sight, the Lord's grace is sufficient for us. The results promised are a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If the trial is sharper and more intense, it only but for a moment, it's only but for a moment. Just as our Apostle Paul says, these light afflictions, which are but for a moment are work out for us a better hope. 2nd Corinthians 4:17.

I used to say, anytime we've had, you know, an experience, I said, yeah, it only hurts for a little while, and that's true because it'll be worked out. We look for the good. Our attitude must be knowing, knowing that if our trials and experiences bring us closer to making our calling, an election and sure, bring him on, bring him on. All the faithful now tested by severe trials will be made like our Lord and share his glory.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, 1 John 3:2 and then in 2 Peter 1:3 4 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, whereby are given unto us exceeding, great and precious promises, that by these we brethren might be partakers of the divine nature.

Sister Sally's recent experience and the power of your prayers made us realize how much we need each other to help each other draw our attention to our Heavenly Father's counsel and to provide the divine wisdom necessary for us to benefit from our experiences. There are no others on this planet that we can share our Father's divine wisdom and counsel with than with our brethren. No one can appreciate the mind of Christ than one begotten of the Holy Spirit. No one, but a new creature in Christ can assist us in this narrow way. You won't get that from your neighbors.

Well, that's not unless you live at the BSRC or they're all like minded. Dear brethren, let us remember always to look to God's Word for our heavenly counsel, our fatherly counsel, and to assist our brethren looking for the same. If your faith is true and simple, we will take him at his word and our lives will be all sunshine in the sweetness of our Lord, and may the Lord add His blessing.