

THING(S)...WHAT ARE THEY?

By: Bill Richardson Edited by: Bill Kelly

Please take a little more thought to the title before you begin to read and study with me on this subject? I'm only asking because I think that I'm not altogether different from what I think many of us to be; because in my imagination I'm thinking that in your curiousness that you may have said, "What is he going to write about on the subject, *"THING (S)?"*" Did I miss it? Please forgive me if I did.

I can't explain why I chose this subject. I don't suppose I have to. I said that just to get your attention. Myself, I have to confess to having a curious mind. I find no fault in me for that. And I know also there are curious acts which can be wrong...it's a mind thing. That's what I am involved in, O.K.! My mind needs a dose of what the Holy Spirit teaches.

I will make another confession to you. I mulled over, I reasoned if you please in my mind many, many *things*, words, and principles before I finally settled on the chosen subject. Do you know what? I still don't know how it came about. I can and will tell you why. The "why" will be embellished in words I choose to use and in cited Bible verses!

In my studies I always do research of the Scriptures after I choose my subject. And as it turned out my chosen subject for this writing was right on for me. I have fear in my heart sometimes. I do fear I may lose you. But I beseech you; if you have read this far, please don't leave me now. Please read on. One little sideline thing that I want to tell you. I didn't know this until I was looking up the definition of *"thing."* Did you know that there is such a thing as a thing-a-ma-bob? It is defined in the dictionary as, "a thing the specific name of which is unknown or forgotten." There is also a thing-a-ma-jig. This "thing-word" is for sure wide open. Oh, by-the-way, I'll give you my definition of thing-a-ma-jig, "something, anything, or nothing." You can tell I'm feeling good.

Thing is a good and interesting word. It is a Biblical word, used many times. Thing, singular is used more than 500 times in the Bible. Things, plural, are cited more than 1100 times in the Bible. Many other "thing-expressions" are used in the Bible also; i.e., anything, everything, that thing, this thing, all things; these things; unclean things; and what things. I can't say that the listing, which I have cited here, is all-inclusive.

Coming to the knowledge of the many times that *"thing(s)"* is used in the Bible, the conclusion must be that it is important, that it has purpose and meaning, and thus we need to study and learn the application to our life and service to our Creator. Do you agree? I will say that is one of my "whys" for this study.

I will again use the procedure of defining the title word before beginning the citing of Bible Scriptures and discussing their application and before any narrative commentary. God bless you for reading and studying this subject with me. My prayer is that we will all benefit by increasing our knowledge of His Word that we increase and grow in our love for Him, for our fellow man, and for each other. And by our gain may we be blessed to become better and more active in our stewardship service.

There is one thing for sure that can be said of the English language and that is, that many words have multiple meanings. That is to say, an associative meaning of a word in addition to the literal meaning. The thing about the word 'thing' is...I can't find the literal meaning thereof. More often than not, in order to know what the point is or what is being said when a statement is made and prefaced with the word (thing), "knowledge-art" (savvy) comes into play. If you read such in the Bible, generally in order to know what the thing or things, which are being written about, more than likely, has been explained in text above or will be explained in text below. It's true also you may sometimes have to locate the 'thing' in another section. If that were so it has merit...it will cause one to study. And in studying we learn. That's some of what it is all about. Not all...but some.

Here goes! The definition, interpretation (what can be said), the meaning, and or the explanation of "THING," or "THINGS:"

- (1) **Thing:** Whatever exists, or is conceived to exist, as a separate entity.
- (2) **Thing:** An act or deed; transaction, a statement; an utterance: i.e., "To say the right thing."
- (3) **Thing:** An idea; opinion; i.e., "Stop putting things in his head."
- (4) **Thing:** The proper or befitting act or result; i.e., "That was the thing to do."
- (5) **Thing:** The important point; i.e., "The things we learned from the war were this."
- (6) **Thing:** To see things; to have hallucinations.
- (7) **Thing:** A concrete or tangible object, i.e., "As goodness is not a *thing*, but an attribute of a *thing*."
- (8) **Things:** Inanimate objects; i.e., possessions; goods; also clothes; apparel, i.e., "put on your things and go for a walk"
- (9) **Thing:** In law, whatever may be possessed or owned, or be the object of a right, distinguished from person.

I am going now to the consecrated use of the titled word, "THING" by citing 1 Corinthians 2:9-13. The Apostle of Jesus Christ, Paul, by inspiration said, but as it is written:

"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them (things) to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Who is from God, that we might know the things, we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

In your private studies read all of Chapter 2 of 1 Corinthians and note all the things, which are listed that God has provided for those who love Him. Note some of the things in verses 9-13 cited above which God gives us. They are: Divine Revelation; His Spirit; The Spirit search for all things; Acts of the Spirit, the Spirit teaching us that we may know; The Holy Spirit revealing Spiritual truth; and teaching us the things which are words of wisdom.

Remember on page 1, paragraph 5 above, I cited the number of times that the words thing and things were used in the Bible. Well, there would not be space enough for me to search and list all of them. I do, however, want to list some which will be a strong foundation to cause us to realize the need to study. Let's give thought to them and draw benefit as we think of the blessings we have received and will continue to receive as we live life and labor to do His Will.

All things good are from above and come down from the Father of Light. That's from James 1:17. With that on our heart, let's look at the listing of things which are cited in this study.

1. FOLLOW *THINGS* THAT GOOD IS:

In Psalms 38:20, "*They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the things that good are.*" King David, in his prayer, prayed for strength to never render evil to anyone, but to always follow the things which are good. We as children of good must be known for our goodness. Our doing of good things must be through faith and motivated by love. I just love that expression in the cited Psalm, "*Follow things that good is.*" It's a unique way of expressing it. We don't say it that way, and I suppose it's why I take notice of it. Anyway, doesn't it make you feel good when you follow things that good is? Does me! Look back at the #4 definition of "thing" and see how this cited Psalm relates to the said definition. I like that too!

2. SPEAK THE SAME *THING*. 1 Corinthians 1:10, Paul by inspiration said to the church at Corinth, "*Now I beseech (that is to beg) you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.*"

There was a problem in the church at Corinth. Paul was instructing them how to settle it and get right with the Lord. It was true then and it is true this day and always. Let us pray and in our striving always in all things and in all judgment speak and do the same right things. May we never think, say, or do that which would create broken fellowship. Let us labor together to keep the Church pure.

3. KNOW WHICH *THING* IS TRUE IN HIM AND IN US.

It's powerful but it is true. I am convicted that we can know...not easily done in some things because some require more time on our knees...lasting perseverance with

determination and a dedicated heart of love. Those are some of the areas where the devil is lurking. You know what? It's nothing more than a walk in love. Walking in the light is another way to say it.

Notice the commandment in 1 John 2:8, "*Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.*" The command to love is an old commandment from the beginning. "...but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. You can't do and do right except, you do it in love. Deuteronomy 6:5, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*" There is no devil lurking in there! The new commandment John spoke of in 1 John 2, cited above, is because Jesus' coming has fully shown us God's love, and He enables us to live in love. The Christian is one who walks/lives in the light—the Gospel. That's love for God, our neighbor/brother, the WORD/Jesus. That's the thing, which is true in Him and in us.

4. AVOID THE *THING* THAT IS CONTRARY TO SOUND DOCTRINE.

This is the advice from the inspired Words of Paul in 1 Timothy, Chapter 1, beginning in verse 8, when he, Paul, made the statement that the law is good if a man uses it lawfully. Then Paul lists some 14 things that the law condemns, and then ends the list by saying, "*if there be any other that is contrary to sound doctrine....*" What is contrary? Answer: It is to oppose in essence, purpose, and aim, etc; contradictory; opposite (in opposition to); or oppose. Do you think that you would be in jeopardy if your attitude toward sound doctrine is as described in the defining words? If that were us, even in ignorance, we'd be in big trouble.

We must know the truth and sound doctrine. The Gospel, the sound doctrine, is to be upheld and taught. It has been entrusted to us. Faithful hearts that love God will be fruitful and teach. The opposite of that is, there are those who do not love God. They will and do misinterpret and pervert God's Word. They go about teaching and affirming things for which they have no true scriptural basis. Theirs are not sound doctrines. Theirs are the works of the devil. The bottom line for us is, we must...walk in love hand in hand with Jesus avoid things that are **contrary to sound doctrine!**

5. DO THE *THINGS* WHICH THE LORD SAYS.

In Luke, Chapter 6, verse 40 and following, Jesus teaches us that a disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. Every tree (man) is known by its own fruit (Luke 6:44). A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good (Luke 6:45). Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks (Luke 6:45). Then Jesus invites saying in verse 47, "*Whoever comes to Me, and hears My saying, and does them I will show you whom he is like.*" Jesus is the THE MASTER TEACHER. We must let Him teach us, and He does, through His Word. The purpose is for us to become like Him by coming to Him, hearing Him, and doing the things He says. Jesus expresses the fate of man in verse 49 as He tells what man is like who hears not what Jesus said, that is the warning to us as hearers, "beware!"

6. IN ALL *THINGS* WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US.

It is made known to us in Romans 8:37 that we are conquerors because of our relationship with the Father through Jesus Christ. Romans 8:34-39, “...*It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also raised, who is even at the right hand of God. Christ also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulations or distress, or persecutions, or famine or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Know this, you who know and love God, and be persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor heights nor depth nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” These cited Scriptures are prefaced by the question in Romans 8:31, “...*If God is for us, who can be against us?*” To win in life and be conquerors through Him who loved us, we must know the ‘things’, which it takes to win. Do you recognize the words below?

“Soldiers of Christ arise and put your armor on, strong in the strength, which God supplies through His beloved Son.

Strong in the Lord of host, And in His mighty power, who in the strength of Jesus Trust, Is more than Conqueror.

Stand then in His great might, with all His strength endure; but take to arm you for the fight, the *panoply of God.

Leave no unguarded place, no weakness of the soul, take every virtue, every grace, and fortify the whole.

Then having all things done, and all your conflicts past, you may o’ercome through Christ alone, and stand entire at last.”

By: Charles Wesley
Wm. B. Bradbury

*Panoply: The complete equipment of a warrior.

7. LET US THEREFORE FOLLOW AFTER THE *THINGS*, WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE AND THE *THINGS* BY WHICH ONE MAY EDIFY ANOTHER.

For he who serves Christ in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit is acceptable to God and approved by men. That’s the admonishment of Romans 14:17-18. Note the principles identified by words that we should give thought to when we study these Scriptures.

The words to which I am giving attention are listed as follows: 1). Peace; 2). Edify, 3). Joy; 4). Righteousness; 5). Spirit; 6). and approved. As you begin to study the list expands. Study produces growth in knowledge. Exercising your knowledge by doing is the product which culminates joy in our heart and glory to God. Thus we are following after the things which make for peace and by which one may edify another. That was the idea from the beginning. HALLELUJAHS PRAISE JEHOVAH!

There is so much involved when we follow after the things which make for peace. Here and now I want to plant some seeds with you. I am confident that you know what I say here. But I need to look up some scriptures and do a revival on myself. Seed needs to be watered and watering is good. And too, there may be some new seeds that drop out of the seed bin while we're doing this study here. It would be great if it were to happen. If so, these new seeds need the opportunity to become germinated.

Note this beautiful little verse in Hosea 14:9, "seed", which can be watered, "*Who is wise? Let him understand these things. Who is prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the Lord are right. The righteous walks in them but transgressors stumble in them.*" What a blessing that beautiful scripture is to hearts of love the righteous!

We know that if we walk in the ways of the Lord, we are following the things, which make for peace. We know also to become "*complete, to be of good comfort, to be of one mind, to live in peace that the God of love and peace will be with us.*" Paul tells us this in 2 Corinthians 13:11.

What is involved if we follow after the things by which we may edify another? I am listing these edifying words and phrases below to help us. They tell us what to do.

Christians, men and women receive edification through 1). Prayer. 2). Hearing the Gospel. 3). Attending to the Lord's business. 4). Reading and studying the scriptures. 5). Good works. 6). Meditation. What do you think of the list? Good is what I say!

Literally, edification is a [building up]. When applied to spiritual things the word means advancing, improving, instructing, adorning, or comforting the mind and spiritual nature. These are required by Children (servants) of God in life's walk with HIM.

Should you use this writing for a continued study it can't but help. If you would take the numbered paragraphs 1-7 and search the Scriptures relative to their titles, so to speak, you can find a gazillion more Scriptures, which can be used to admonish yourself and others on the point or title of things we should know, teach, and do.

I invite you to view all writings on my Website, www.geocities.com/dubbyt. Please note other writings and my poems. There is a writing posted that I am sure you will want to view and copy. The writing title is, "The Church of The Bible, Christ's Church." It has a two-page enclosure, the title is, "What Must I Do To Be Saved." Please study both of these writings with an honest and receptive heart for truth and obedience. You will be blessed!

Here are some goodies I picked out of a publication; let's call it an attachment. Good for learning, accepting, making a part of life and teaching to others!

GOD'S PLAN of SALVATION

God's Part

- God loved us and gave His
- Son for us (John 3:16)
- Christ died to save us
(Rom 5:8)
- Christ gave us the saving
- Gospel (Rom 1:16)
- Christ built His church
for us (Matt 16:18)
- God wants all men to be
saved (1 Tim 2:4)
- Christ is preparing Heaven
for us (John 14:2)
- God has done His Part

Man's Part

- Hear the saving Gospel
(Rom 10:17)
- Believe in Christ
(John 8:24; 20:31)
- Repent of his sins
(Luke 13:3)
- Confess faith in Christ
(Rom 10:10)
- Be baptized for
forgiveness (Acts 2:38)
- Live faithfully
(1 Cor 15:58)
- Have you done yours?

God bless you for studying with me on this needed study on "*Things*". There are many *things* in our walk of life, which we need to do, and really, they are commandments, and we have no choice, it is a "Thou shall", but remember, we must (shall) do it in love! Oh yes, remember to keep the main thing the main thing! God loves you...and I do too! God will bless us all in obedience and in all related *things* related thereto in our walk of obedience with HIM! Your servant in the Lord

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My Website and its links are also on the front cover to this study. I cite it here below also so as to encourage you to use it and advertise it for me. *Please do! I need your help!*

My Website, www.geocities.com/dubbyt is link to:

www.hartsellechurch.org, which is the Hartselle Church of Christ, Hartselle, AL, a link to, www.austinvillecoc.org which is the Website of Austinville Church of Christ, Decatur, AL, and a link to www.northcobbchurch.org, which is the Church of Christ at North Cobb, Kennesaw, GA. Please visit those Websites also; you will be blessed.