



ISSUE

23.41

October 10, 2021

Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
SEN PARK
CHURCH OF
CHRIST

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

9:30 AM

10:30 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Patrick Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Justin Smiley

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

Staying in Sync with God

By Ed Bragwell, Sr.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. 55:8-9, KJV).

These words, taken at face value and out of context, seem to be just saying that God’s thoughts and ways are intrinsically higher than man’s. This is the general application made of this passage. It is absolutely true that God’s ways and thoughts are inherently superior to man’s. Paul reminds us that God’s ways are past finding out by man: **“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counselor?” (Rom. 11:33-34).**

We must depend on God's revelation to know of God's thoughts and ways because they are too deep (or high) for man to find out on his own. Everything about God is inherently superior to anything man has—thoughts, ways, or whatever. In view of this, one cannot dogmatically rule out this application of these verses. At any rate, accommodating these words to the inherent superiority

of God does not seem to do any violence to the Scriptures or His nature.

Having said that, we may miss the real thrust of God's words to Israel and a great lesson by not looking more closely at verses 8 and 9 in context. They are a part of an appeal to the sinful nation of Israel in Isaiah's day. Note the appeal starts with verse 6: **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."** Then on the heels of that, in verse 7, he calls on Israel to **"let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD."** It was a call for their repentance and return to the Lord before it was too late. That is, they needed to seek the Lord before they put any more distance between themselves and God. A person or a nation can get so far away from God in their depravity that they can no longer find God to call upon Him.



Olsen Park Church of Christ

Then the first word in verse 8, **“for,”** suggests that He is assigning a reason for what He calls on them to do in verse 7, namely that **“the wicked”** and **“unrighteous man”** forsake **“his [own] ways”** and **“his [own] thoughts.”** The reason assigned: **“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”**

Israel had turned from God’s ways and thoughts to follow her own. In fact, they had gone so far from God’s ways and thoughts that the gap was **“as the heavens are higher than the earth.”** Their thoughts and ways were not God’s ways and thoughts, but they should have been. They needed to repent and make their thoughts the same as God’s thoughts and their ways the same as God’s ways.

When God’s people cease to think His thoughts and walk in His ways, they cannot please Him. This was a perpetual problem with Israel. They allowed the thinking and ways of their pagan neighbors to adversely affect them, causing God to have to constantly reign them in through prophets like Isaiah and punishment by their neighbors like Assyria and Babylon.

The problems among God’s people, His church, today is that many have left God’s way of thinking for their own. Like, Naaman of old, it is **“behold I thought”** (2 Kings 5:11), rather than hearing what God thinks. All we can know about what God thinks and of His ways is found in His word, the Bible.

The great lesson is that when we find that our thoughts and ways are not God’s thoughts and ways, we need to repent and bring our thoughts and ways into harmony with God’s. Paul said the purpose of our warfare is that of **“bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”** (2 Cor. 10:5).

So, my brother, if you find your ways and



thoughts out of sync with the Lord's, make the changes needed to get on the same page with Him by synchronizing your thoughts with His thoughts and your ways with His ways.

I have a clock, watch and computer

that tell me what time it is as I write this article. They all show the exact same time. They can do this because each daily synchronizes with a signal transmitted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology from Fort Collins, CO.

Likewise, we can all be on the same page in religion if we each would keep our thoughts and ways constantly synchronized with God's thoughts and His ways. It is when someone gets out of sync that apostasies and divisions occur.

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We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.