

Something About Nothing

Paraphrasing the late Donnie Barnes, "Sometimes, Something is Nothing. At other times, Nothing is Something. Sometimes, we know Nothing about Something. But we must know Something about Nothing." The Bible uses the word nothing quite often. Scripture teaches from a negative view often to make the truth stand out more clearly. God's word uses the word nothing to highlight specific points. Let us review several examples.

From NOTHING, God created the world. Nothing physical, but by the power of the Word. *"By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host"* (Psalms 33:6). The Hebrew writer amplifies this to say that God made the world through the Son, *"whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world"* and that the Son *"upholds all things by the word of His power"* (Hebrews 1:1-3).

We can do NOTHING and be lost eternally. The unprofitable servant in Matthew 25:24-30 did nothing with his master's property and was thrown *"into outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."* A similar person is the one who refuses to obey, *"And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes"* (Luke 12:47). The warning to all of us is, *"To one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin"* (James 4:17).

We can do NOTHING meaningful without Christ. *"He who abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing"* (John 15:5). Furthermore, if we are without Christ, we are his enemy. *"The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters"* (Matthew 12:30).

Jesus' brought to NOTHING the understanding of the scholars by His death on the cross. To the Jews, Jesus was a stumbling block, and others believed God's son dying for people's sins was foolishness. But it is the saving power of God to the lost (1 Corinthians 1:18-24). The great gift of God is refused by the worldly and revealed to those seeking Him (Matthew 11:25).

Anything done without love is NOTHING. Paul said that all the things he might say and do accomplish nothing if it is not done through and by love (1 Corinthians 13:2-3). And Galatians 5:6 reminds us that faith works through love.

Savorless salt is good for NOTHING. The salt available in Roman times was not like salt today. It was not pure salt. So if the saving portion dissolves out of the rock that held it, the remaining rock was thrown out. The analogy Jesus uses is if a child of God no longer is a saving influence on the world, he or she is worth nothing (Matthew 5:13). Paul said, *"Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person"* (Colossians 4:6).

We can possess NOTHING in this life since all creation belongs to God. We borrow things while we are here, and they are taken away from us at death (Psalms 50:10-12; 1 Corinthians 10:26). Job said, *"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there"* (Job 1:21). Two other inspired men said the same, Solomon (Ecclesiastes 5:15) and Paul (1 Timothy 6:7). God provides the physical

things we need to do His bidding during our journey in this world, and we need to remember it all belongs to Him.

Paul writes of the paradox of *"having nothing but possessing all things"* (2 Corinthians 6:10). Abraham was called into the wilderness to possess nothing himself. The promises of nations and lands made him look forward to Christ, and the *"righteousness of faith"* (Romans 4:1). Paul wrote to the Romans, *"For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all"* (Romans 4:16). God appointed His Son, *"the Heir of all things"* (Hebrews 1:2). And all of us who are obedient children of God are also heirs of all things in eternity (Galatians 4:7). Therefore, while we can possess nothing in this life, we have Christ, His gospel, and freedom from sin now. When this life is over, God will give us an inheritance that provides everything we need for eternity. Therefore, although we have nothing physical, we have everything spiritual.