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For Your Consideration

*“Let us consider
how to stimulate
one another to love
and good deeds.”*
Hebrews 10:24

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Ron Adams
“Be thoughtful and kind.”

BIBLE RESOURCES

<http://ra10ar.com>

(Quotations from NASB)
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MAKE A PEARL

Most of us can afford to take a lesson from the oyster. The most extraordinary thing about an oyster is this: irritations get into its shell. It doesn't like them and tries to get rid of them. But when it cannot get rid of them, it settles down to make one of the most beautiful things in the world: a pearl! It uses irritations to do the loveliest thing an oyster has a chance to do. When there are irritations in our lives, there is only one prescription: **MAKE A PEARL!** It may have to be a pearl of patience, but make it with faith and love.

— Author unknown

[IRRITATE]: 1. To rouse to impatience or anger; annoy. 2. To chafe, sore, or inflame.

—American Heritage Dictionary

VIEW IRRITATIONS CORRECTLY

To see irritations as an all consuming problem is self-defeating. To see it as an opportunity to put faith to the test makes it tolerable. “Life is hard” is not an excuse to let it tear you apart, but a reason to persevere. Do what you can to alleviate or minimize what affects you. Accept what you cannot change. Then decide how to deal with it.

MAKE A PEARL

ATTITUDE IS IMPORTANT

You alone control how you deal with it. Others can be supportive, but it's your attitude, your patience, your resolve that matters.

Do not borrow trouble or blow things out of proportion.

Do not think “woe is me.” You are not the only one suffering.

Do not look around for someone or something to blame.

Do not lose anticipation of what is promised. Hope is an anchor for the soul.

Do not despair. It will sap your strength.

MAKE A PEARL

TAKE IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER

We are encouraged to seek His help in prayer. “*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*” *Philippians 4:6*

Prayer can change things “...*The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*” *James 5:16*

Take heart that the reward of being faithful is worth it all.

MAKE A PEARL

ADVERSITY IS A PROVING GROUND

Abraham's faith was established when he was willing to offer his son.

Job's faith was tested as he endured the loss of all things.

Daniel's faith was tested in the lion's den.

The Apostles' faith was tested as they faced difficulties, and persecution.

The early Christians suffered, but their faith and number increased!

Paul learned to be content with his “thorn in the flesh.”

Your adversities will test your faith. “*The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests hearts.*” *Proverbs 17:3*



WHEN ADVERSITY IRRITATES YOU

MAKE A PEARL

with Patience, Faith, and Love

Succinctly Put

First, take ownership of your actions.
Then take control of your actions.

BIBLE TEXT FORMAT HISTORY

When the books of the Bible were originally written, they did not contain chapter or verse references. The chapter divisions commonly used today were developed by Stephen Langton, an Archbishop of Canterbury. Langton put the modern chapter divisions into place in around A.D. 1227. The Wycliffe English Bible of 1382 was the first Bible to use this chapter pattern. Since the Wycliffe Bible, nearly all Bible translations have followed Langton's chapter divisions.

The Hebrew Old Testament was divided into verses by a Jewish rabbi by the name of Nathan in A.D. 1448. Robert Estienne, who was also known as Stephanus, was the first to divide the New Testament into standard numbered verses, in 1555. Stephanus essentially used Nathan's verse divisions for the Old Testament. Since that time, beginning with the Geneva Bible, the chapter and verse divisions employed by Stephanus have been accepted into nearly all the Bible versions.— gotquestions.org

ONE PROBLEM

Verse numbering has become the means of "verse plucking." That is taking a verse out of context and developing a premise for a Biblical truth. For example, verses 8-9 in Ephesians 4:

8 *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;*

9 *not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

Concluding that "works have no part in one being saved." This statement is not supported by the full context (and other scriptures).

The best thing to do when someone says, "I found a verse that teaches..." is to ask them where they found it and have them put it back in place.

ONE SOLUTION

Electronic Bibles for tablets and other electronic devices use the same numbering system, but when the text is displayed the verses numbers are inserted as superscript numbers, thereby keeping the flow of the text intact. In my estimation, it's the best system possible. **Easy search** and **full context**. (The numbers aren't as prominent, but maybe that is a plus and not a minus.) And many translations are readily available for easy comparison.

TWO FORMATS

Printed and electronic Bibles. Both have their distinct advantages. Both are useful for reading and searching the scriptures. Both contain the Word of God. I'm thankful to have both.

THURSDAY'S THOUGHT

REVISITED

NEW THOUGHTS ABOUT A PREVIOUS THOUGHT

The Gift of Encouragement

ENCOURAGE (defined) 1. To inspire with hope, courage, or confidence; hearten. 2. To give support to; 3. To stimulate; spur.

— AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY

Who Needs to Receive the Gift?

ONE WHO IS SUFFERING

When one is dealing with personal sorrow.
And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother [Lazarus].

John 11:19

ONE WHO IS DESPONDENT

When one is overwhelmed by trials or persecution.
We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak be patient with everyone.

1 Thessalonians 5:14

ONE WHO IS BEING TEMPTED

When one is being lured by the forbidden.
But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Hebrews 3:13

SUFFERING – DESPONDENT – TEMPTED

These are common to all, including Christians. From time to time we need encouragement. We are blessed when we receive encouragement from others. And when we give encouragement, we are blessed as well.

It's paramount that we are aware of one another. "One another" is a hallmark of Christian behavior.

Communication is important. It's the life-blood of any relationship. Listening is just as important as broadcasting. And we communicate with body language as well as words.

We need to be observant of the demeanor of others. Often the need for encouragement is not apparent, but on closer observation there are usually signs of an inward struggle.

We need to look for ways to help without being intrusive, because some don't know how to ask or are ashamed to ask for help.

And, most of all, pray for them.