

TALKING ABOUT “NOTHING”

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The Bible has a lot to say about “nothing.” “Nothing” is that which is non-existent. There are some lessons to be learned when the Bible speaks about “nothing.”

God created the heavens and earth from nothing.

Genesis 1-2 is a divinely revealed historical account of the creation of the heavens and the earth. We learn that God created with the power of His word: *“Then God said...and it was so.”* It was by the miraculous power of His word that the universe and all that is in it came to be in six days, *“for He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast”* (Psa. 33:9). *“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible”* (Heb. 11:3). The invisible (spiritual realm) brought forth the visible (physical realm) from nothing, and it was completed by the power of the word of God in six literal days (Ex. 20:11).

We can do nothing and be lost.

Among those who will be punished in eternity will be those who *“do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (2 Thess. 1:8). Those who are Christians must be careful to be *“doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves”* (Jas. 1:22). The man given one talent buried it, accomplishing nothing with it, and was condemned as an *“unprofitable servant”* (Matt. 25:30). Those separated to the left hand of the King on the judgment day will be those who *“did not do”* (Matt. 25:41-45). Remember the warning: *“Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin”* (Jas. 4:17).

We can do nothing without Christ.

Jesus taught His disciples, *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing”* (Jn. 15:5). Without the guidance, authority, and strength of the Lord, we cannot please God or accomplish the good works that He has set before us (Eph. 2:10; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Paul wrote, *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”* (Phil. 4:13).

The gospel brings to nothing the wisdom of the world.

The world regards the things of God as foolishness. Absolute truth is declared dead while man exalts his wisdom and accomplishments to his own glory. *“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent”* (1 Cor. 1:18-19). The Scriptures provide the framework by which we may order our daily lives and distinguish between truth and error in teaching and practice. The wisdom of God must be our guiding light to avoid deceptive human wisdom that will cause us to stray from the faith (1 Tim. 6:20-21).

Knowledge and deeds without love profit nothing.

Love is one ingredient that cannot be left out of our words and service to others. A lack of love will render our work ineffective and unprofitable. *“And though I have the gift of*

prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:2-3). Our great abilities, knowledge, and works will be wasted if not used with love for God and others. If they are used only to serve ourselves, we will be nothing in God's eyes.

Flavorless salt is good for nothing.

The influence of the Christian is a very powerful thing in this world. This influence is compared to being the *"salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men"* (Matt. 5:13). A good "salty" influence can bring peace (Mk. 9:50) and make our speech graceful to those who need to hear the truth (Col. 4:6).

We will carry nothing out of this world.

Since death is an appointment we all face (Heb. 9:27), we must realize that the material things of this world will not be going with us. *"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out"* (1 Tim. 6:6-7). The wise man said about the rich man that *"as he came from his mother's womb, naked shall he return, to go as he came; and he shall take nothing from his labor which he may carry away in his hand"* (Eccl. 5:15). It is your soul that will return to God (Eccl. 12:7), and you must be sure that it is ready to stand before the righteous Judge.

As you can see, the Bible does say a lot about "nothing." Remember these principles so that you will be among those that the Lord will welcome into that eternal home.