THOUGHTS OF NOVEMBER, 2012

1. Common sense [educated minds, reason, logic and the like] are good and God-enabled. In this Thought, while granting that they are good and can function intermingled with and subject to faith, my thought is that they often are forced to stand contrasted to faith. Common sense without faith is fatal, as is faith without common sense.

Common sense cannot see its need to be tested. It considers itself to be true just by the thinking. Even if it fails the test, “it was at least common sense” so it is not faulted. Faith, on the other hand, is considered to be “nothing” until it is tested. Then it becomes substance and truth and is usable to God and man.

That is the reason I use so much personal testimony in my Bible classes. Those good words in the Bible are not real enough for some listeners until I used them in my personal life and could testify to their substance. Those words plus faith produced reality and, once heard, the hearer of their amalgamation is never the same.

When humans create our own religion and our own gods we use logic and common sense – Rom. 1:18-32. God did the both, which when tested proves the reality of Him and His words and His religion. Matthew 6:33 [for example] can be proved, and often has been.

2. A Thought for our brothers and sisters in law enforcement: 1 Timothy 1:8-11.

3. Dallas Willard is worth looking-up on the internet, as you will see below. The following is from his “The Secret to Ministry Satisfaction.” I think it applies to every minister, whether religious or workplace.

“In my early days of ministry, I spent huge amounts of time absorbed in Scripture and great spiritual writers. The Lord made it possible for me to spend whole days – without any issue of preparing for something or taking an examination – soaking up the Scripture. I literally wore out the books of great spiritual writers. This focus was foundational to my spiritual journey, to finding satisfaction in Christ.

“Experiencing God in that way leads me to satisfaction in Christ and to speaking to others out of that satisfaction. There is no substitute for simple satisfaction in the Word of God, in the presence of God. That affects all your actions.

“Men and women in ministry who are not finding satisfaction in Christ are likely to demonstrate that [dissatisfaction – ed.] with overexertion and overpreparation for speaking and with no peace about what they do after they do it. If we have not come to the place of resting in God, we will go back and think, ‘Oh, if I’d done this,’ or ‘Oh, I didn’t do that.’ When you come to the place where you are drinking deeply from God and trusting him to act with you, there is peace about what you have communicated.

“One of my great joys came when I got up from a chair to walk to the podium and the Lord said to me, ‘Now remember, it’s what I do with the Word between your lips and their hearts that matters.’ That is a tremendous lesson. If you do not trust God to do that, then he will let you do what you’re going to do, and it’s not going to come to much. But once you turn it loose and recognize we are always inadequate but our inadequacy is not the issue, you are able to lay that burden down. Then the satisfaction you have in Christ spills over into everything you do.

“The preacher who does not minister in that satisfaction is on dangerous ground. Those who experience moral failure are those who have failed to live a deeply satisfied life in Christ, almost without exception. I know my temptations come out of situations where I am dissatisfied, not content. I am worried about something or not feeling the sufficiency I know is there. If I have a strong temptation, it will be out of my dissatisfaction.

“The moral failures of ministers usually are over one of three things: sex, money, or power. That always comes out of dissatisfaction. Ministers are reaching for something, and they begin to feel, ‘I deserve something better. I sacrifice so much and get so little. And so I’ll do this.’ The surest guarantee against failure is to be so at peace and satisfied with God that when wrongdoing presents itself it isn’t even interesting. That is how we stay out of temptation.

“We are long on devices and programs. We have too many of them, and they get in the way. What we really need are preachers who can stand in simplicity and manifest and declare the richness of Christ in life. There isn’t anything on Earth that begins to compete with that for human benefit and human interest.

“When people hear preachers who are satisfied in this way, they sense that much more is coming from them than what they are saying. When I hear preachers like this, I sense something flowing from them. Preachers like that are at peace. They are not struggling to make something happen.

“That is one of the biggest issues for ministers today because of the model of success that comes to us. We get the idea we are supposed to make something happen, and so we need our services to go just right. The concluding benediction has hardly ceased before those in charge are saying to one another, ‘How did it go?’ or ‘It went really well.’ The truth is we don’t know how it went. From God’s point of view, it will be eternity before we know how it went. These folks are not at peace if they are trying to manage outcomes in that way.

“One mark of preachers who have attained deep satisfaction is they are at peace, and they love what they are doing. Peace comes from them. From such preachers I sense something coming to me that is deeper than the words. Hearers sense the message opening up possibilities for them to live. In the presence of this kind of preacher, people find ways of doing the good that is before their hearts.

“That is the living water. Jesus brought people that opening up of possibilities. In John 8, when he said to the woman caught in adultery, ‘Go now and leave you life of sin,’ I don’t think she felt, ‘I’ve got to do that.’ She experienced Jesus’ words as: ‘That’s really possible. I can do that.’ That is one characteristic of preaching that comes from a satisfied life.

“Another mark of satisfied preachers is they can listen. They can be silent in the presence of others because they are not always trying to make something happen. Such a person has the capacity to listen to people and come to an awareness of the needs that underlie the felt needs. We should be attentive to the felt needs of people, but we should know that the game is at a much deeper level of the soul.

“A large part of what the pastor does in preaching and life is to listen and help people feel their real needs, not just superficial needs. The satisfied preacher speaks from a listening heart. Since people often do not know what they really need, such preaching can help them find out. This requires a spaciousness that only comes if your cup is running over because you are well cared for by God.”

4. In the Old Testament, the Lord ordered that practitioners of occultism in any form were to be punished by death. Why? 1) It was worship and contact with spiritual forces that oppose the one true God and, 2) those forces took up residence in the practitioners of occultism. Therefore, anything and anyone having anything to do with those forces were condemned. It was a matter of God’s good judgment and our protection.

5. Why did the Lord give His people the Law? Because of their sinfulness [lack of love for Him and others]. In the lostness of their common humanity they wanted and needed some sort of guideline for life, for living together, for the exercise of righteousness [if they chose], for knowing right from wrong [as determined by a higher power than their own minds/desires/wills/etc.].

But the Law was only temporary; meant to show us [not only those ancient people, but us now in or out of the church] that we should but cannot meet the righteous demands of a righteous God. The heart that desired true righteousness would be convicted and melted by his failed desire. In his impossible situation, he would call out to God for help. God’s projected help [Helper] was to be Himself, as Jesus’ work at the cross and the Holy Spirit’s abiding presence in and with us.

So, the Law was mankind’s tutor, meant to have in itself superiority and perfection, to work us toward that superiority and perfection, but not to have the ability to accomplish such godly qualities in us. But, in God’s time, it brought us to Christ so that we could be brought to the place of accomplishment through faith [accepting Christ’s accomplishments for ourselves].

Now that that faith and succor has come, the Law has been set aside from being used for that purpose. Now the blood-covered believer is continually presented to [interceded before] our Father by the One who shed that blood as if having never sinned, and the Holy Spirit continues that work of faith in us as He produces works of Christ’s righteousness. See Galatians 3:19, 24-25.

John Witherspoon and our other founding fathers understood that whole process and applied it to life together in our new nation. He said: “To promote true religion is the best and most effective way of making a virtuous and regular people. Love to God and love to man is the substance of religion; when these prevail, civil laws will have little to do.”

6. Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the Castle Church door on October 31, 1517. That they were nailed on that day was not an accident; it was Halloween. He had had enough of the church’s pagan practices.

7. I have known for years that I am to keep a clean attitude toward the poorly spiritual and poorly righteous church [you can label that church segment in any specific way you desire]. I think I have done a reasonably righteous job of loving those groups and individuals, helping them in various ways, instead of adversely judging them and withdrawing from them.

NOTE: “The spiritual/righteous person judges all things,” [1 Cor. 2:15] which I understand to be a righteous, factual, clear-minded judgment that produces compassion and helpful, positive actions. Whether it is righteous or unrighteous judgment has little or nothing to do with the accuracy of the judgment. A factually wrong judgment can bring forth wonderful, loving and righteous actions, and a factually correct judgment can bring forth terrible, unloving and unrighteous actions. Correct facts and righteous attitudes produce God’s results.

Back to the condition of the church, which is greatly divided. Criticism has the power and authority to further divide us. A house divided, especially against itself, cannot stand – Matt. 12:25; Mark 3:24-25; Luke 11:17. I hope to find the power and wisdom to be a helping hand to our brothers of many persuasions. I have noticed that when Jacob got over his pouting, and blessed that [wife] which he already had [Leah], the Lord gave him that which he wanted [children] through the wife he really loved [Rachel]. Until then, he had what he wanted [Rachel] but not the results [children] he wanted. That is a powerful word to those of us who need to get our acts together.

8. Abraham Lincoln was extra special. I have noticed that the Lord seems to remove early those who are extra special – not all of them, but some. He was also one of those who had a higher view, meaning he was above the fray while yet having to deal with the fray. He saw things that needed to be seen, and could only be seen, from the highest view possible. One day he said: “It is the duty of nations to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.” No doubt, he had been reading and living Psalm 111:10.

9. How does my religious experience in this Thought match up with yours? It has to do with hardened hearts. It seems that the hardest hearts are found where the best preaching has been uttered or, said slightly differently, that those with hardened hearts have heard lots of good preaching. In those places where the preaching has long been weak, there are few hard hearts. Those hearts have not been confronted with enough of the gospel to cause resistance.

10. Some of us often wonder how we [America] could have wandered so far from biblical principles. It’s the same Thought, but without obvious religious attachment, to ask, “How could we have wandered so far from the America and American principles as were founded by our Fathers?” That’s easy to answer.

John Adams answered that question from the beginning of our nation. He said, “We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

Paul and the Holy Spirit knew the nature of man, also. In Romans 1:28 Paul wrote, “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ..” May the Lord God once again rule in America.

11. Here is a Thought for each man among us to think about, and for every man’s woman to help him see the truth for himself. Some men are plagued by the thought that they are really not very loving. That thought bothers them mainly in relation to their families – wives and children. The problem I’m pointing out is that they don’t see their own love as being that – love. They see in the Bible that they are supposed to be loving, but they don’t see their love as being that commanded love.

We are commanded to love our wives as Jesus loved the church and gave himself for it/her – Eph. 5:25-33. Sometimes our wives think we don’t love them because we {and I’ll say it this way] don’t display our love for them in a feminine way.

A man’s love is commonly displayed by going to work and bringing home an adequate income to house, feed, clothe, educate, etc. his family. Even if he does not utter the word “love” toward his family, he is loving them. If he slops around from job to job, often being out of work, and drinks most of his checks he is not loving his family.

The greatest love he can show for his family is that he is laying down his life for them – John 15:12-13. We know that the Lord Jesus was talking specifically of His voluntary physical death for us, but it also can be accurately applied to our current Thought. The husband/father lays down his life when he foregoes bowling with his buddies and instead attends his son’s ball game, or when he gets out of bed early to fix breakfast for his wife, or keeps the baby so she can be with the ladies, or stays on the job for the pay check. Those are very light examples of dying for his family. They are everyday examples, compared to the occasional ones of going into the burning home to rescue his child or of dying on the battlefield.

A man’s love is commonly shown in his exhibitions of manhood, as deeds of life.

12. Most of us are beyond the dating game. If widowed, we are content to be without spouse, but only because that’s the way life turned for us. My twice-widowed mother-in-law decided to not marry again because she did not want to take care of and bury another old man. I think I understand that. I probably would not marry again if the Lord took Nancy before He takes me, but only because I have had the best for 60 years and would be destined for disappointment in another marriage.

So this Thought is probably for us to hand down to those who are now, or might later, be hunting for a first or a replacement mate. Because no one is usually interested in advice when their hormones are flowing at a high rate, we might better get their attention by using some reverse psychology. Instead of giving pointers on how to pick the right one, let’s go over some pointers on how to pick or be picked by the wrong one.

1) Expect the prospect to change. He/she loves you enough to become a different person once the ring is on the finger. Ignore reality and keep telling yourself No. 2 ...

2) … Rely on the chemistry brewing between you. You are perfect for each other because you “feel it” when you look into his/her eyes. Professor Hollywood has taught us that lust, fantasy and infatuation will solve all problems. Believe it.

3) You don’t have to share common beliefs and values. That’s old fashioned. Like a good investment portfolio, you need to keep your marriage diversified. That’s sophistication at its best.

4) Deny reality. You are broke and old [or young], he/she is broke and old [or young], but nothing can go wrong. This non-problemed relationship is what you need.

Happy dating.

13. I have written previously on the coincidence of Hurricane Isaac striking the U. S. exactly 7 years to the day after Hurricane Katrina. The number 7 is the number associated in the Bible with “completion” or “fullness.” [That could mean, “I have had enough!”] Katrina hit New Orleans on 8-29-05 during the week of the annual homosexual convention there. For a repeat performance, Isaac struck on the first day of their annual homosexual convention. Read Psalm 2, remembering that Isaac means “laughter” or “he laughs.”

That was review. Now add to that scenario the fact that Hurricane Sandy hit the east coast on October 30, 2012 exactly 21 years to the day that the Perfect Storm hit it in 1991. The number 21 is three sevens. Three is the number of “divinity,” “trinity,” “divine perfection,” or “divine completeness.”

Lastly, Isaac disrupted the GOP convention, and Sandy disrupted the U. S. presidential [et. al.] election. That makes 3 major coincidences in one year.

Are we listening? Homosexuality and its acceptance as part of normal life is a danger flag to any society, especially to a Christian or Christianoid one. Change is coming. Either voluntary change by grace to righteousness or forced change due to calamity. The worse calamity would be that the Lord removes His hand from us [Rom. 1:24-32]; the less worse would be that His chastening, fatherly hand would be upon us [Heb. 12:4-13].

14. This Thought is about God’s power, God’s character, and God’s leadership, and how His children may have one, two, or all of it. It was said by Jesus that evidences of the Holy Spirit’s power working through us is not proof that we are functioning under the direction of the Holy Spirit – Matt. 7:21-23.

Also, the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write that the presence of fruit of the Holy Spirit [Gal. 5:22-24] is not evidence of our currently functioning under His direction – Gal. 5:25.

Holy Spirit power is evidence that we have been anointed, and Holy Spirit fruit is evidence that we have lived at least somewhat by the Spirit. Functioning under the direction of the Spirit is another thing, in which we are knowingly subject to the Law of Christ, satisfied with the Lord’s present work in us, know ourselves to be free from the law of sin and death, display the truth of being pleasing to God, and are alive because of righteousness.

The Thought is that we are offered His power, His character, and His leadership – three distinct offerings, none of which is pushed on us. He offers all of Himself in exchange for all of our selves. Selah

15. Israel has a problem with Syria, Lebanon, Hamas, and others related to their current state of near-war. This problem should open the world’s eyes. It has to do with the probability of a flood of refugees into Israel from those countries and territories – the lands of Israel’s enemies. There are populations in those areas with whom Israel has good relations. Israel has said it will give them refuge, and has been preparing for that event for a long time, even though it has not yet happened.

Lord, open blind eyes to see truth and reality. Save your people! [He will.]

16. Scripture shows us that the Lord Jesus was abandoned by everyone. Scripture indicates that Israel also will be abandoned by everyone. If “everyone” still means “everyone,” it must include America. Since we have a long history of being Israel’s strongest backer, I have watched and wondered how that might come about. Over the last several years America has moved from Israel’s strongest ally to a weak semi-ally, until Israel has had to state her readiness to go it alone against her many enemies. That is a lonely and dangerous road, is it not, especially when the majority does not believe in their Lord?

17. There has been a study that ranks the nations on the basis of their economic freedom. In 2000 America ranked third, behind Hong Kong and Singapore. Now we rank 18th.

In this ranking of economic freedom, the freest nations economically are the more prosperous, life expectancy is 20 years longer [in the top fifth compared to the bottom fifth] , and infant mortality is ten times greater in those countries with the least economic freedom.

The poorest in economically free countries earn 8 times more than the average in the least free. That’s remarkable, but not a surprise. Freedom is the way to go, whether it’s political freedom, financial freedom, religious freedom, freedom of the press, market freedom, etc.

The Lord is the greatest believer in freedom. Have you noticed? Free humanity does not mean perfect humanity so governments take away freedoms in order to perfect society – which works backwards. But freedom works good things among the imperfect, and it results in self-responsibility. It promotes good character among the imperfect. The church knows this fairly well but politicians will be politicians.

18. We were all born into an imperfect world no matter how good our parentage was. In chapter 5, verse 21 of his first letter, John pointed out that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. That evil one, Satan, does not have total power or total authority or total freedom to do that which he desires. That resides in the Lord who uses Satan for His own purposes and glory, and for our eternal betterment. Moses learned that in regards to Pharaoh; Jesus knew that in regards to the Jewish leaders and the Romans; and we know it. As a result, we know that we are untouchable until the Lord says, “Touch.” It also means that evil has no power over us, and that despite our days being numbered, heavy and pained, we who walk in faith will be promoted to glory.

In the meantime, we are offered the way of the cross, the way of life. Peter drew us a map, a treasure map, in his second letter, chapter 1, verses 1-11. In verse 3 he named the route, calling it “everything pertaining to life and godliness” and revealed that it is a promise of how to escape our carnality and live righteously. The way is not for those who are satisfied with their present condition. It requires all diligence. That guarantees us that not many will make even a good start. But some do start – with all diligence.

With the measure of faith that we have we are to ask the Holy Spirit to point out our immorality [lack of virtue]. That will be the stopping place for some of us because we tend to enjoy certain unholy things and practices. After all, “No one is perfect” and “God loves me just the way I am.” But, some will get past that resting place and continue with all diligence toward seeking the Lord Himself in a face to face relationship.

Only the pure in heart are permitted to see His face [Matt. 5:8]. That’s the reward -- being allowed to know Him that intimately. The remainder of us has chosen to stay back in the crowd, craning our necks to get a peek at His backside [Ex. 33:20-23] even though through Jesus He has opened His veil to us.

That abiding relationship produces functional spiritual strength in us, known as self-control. That’s not our flesh gaining control over our flesh, but the righteousness of Christ reigning in us. The result of adequate self-control is perseverance [consistent success] such that the Holy Spirit even calls it godliness. God Himself says we are like He is!

Well, the triune godhead gets along very well together, does He/do they not? So, the result of our godliness is brotherly kindness, of which we need some large, steady doses. It is difficult to believe that the next development could ever happen in a human, much less in me or you, but it is “love.” That’s what God is – love, as in 1 John 4:7 and 1 Cor. 13. What a prize for staying on the trail!

19. Food is God’s love made delectable.

20. One of the questions asked when talking about being in the end times is, “How can we determine the marks that identify God’s people?” It has been suggested that we look for gratitude, generosity and authentic love. Yes, that should be helpful.

21. Question: How much of your day is lived in the presence of and under the gaze of God? Answer: All of the day [Kid stuff]. Another question: How much of the 24 hours are you aware of His continual presence and oversight? [Your answer this time.]

And another question: Do you think to be aware of His presence is to also be aware of His sovereignty? If so, you probably have no higher goal than to honor Him. A good example of one who acknowledged God’s sovereignty when he found that his Sovereign was present is Saul on the road to Damascus. He immediately knew that Jehovah was present, but that which Jehovah said puzzled him. His first response was, “Who is it, Lord?” Whoever had thrown him from his horse, blinded him and was now talking to him was the “Big Boss.”

Wholeness of life can be found only within the All-mighty. It is integrated in and by the Lord; thus that person has the reputation of having integrity. The opposite life shows disintegration – inconsistency, disharmony, conflict, and chaos. David was able to move from shepherd to king because he was in Jehovah, thus was integrated. Saul was exactly the opposite. Jesus’ life was like David’s – in God as a carpenter and as the ministering Messiah.

Whether we are in church or on the job, or out fishing, or involved in sports, or healthy or ill, we are meant to have and display integrity. It is a life that is lived openly in and before the Lord, and is fully and gladly aware of it.

22. It has been observed that the most difficult people/things in our lives are those who/that are most familiar to us. The reason for that seeming incongruity is because we think we already and completely know them, thus don’t continue our search for deeper truth.

Let’s consider the well-known story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil had to do with more than their gaining the knowledge or truth about good and evil. The clue is in the word “knowledge” or “know” or “knew.” You notice later in 4:1 Adam “knew” Eve and she conceived. That means he had intimate [sexual] contact with her and she became pregnant. He reproduced his life in her as a result of their sexual intimacy. It’s the same use of the word as used by Mary when she was told she would become pregnant. She said “I have known no man, how can that be?” Mary said she had been sexually intimate with no man, so did not understand how she could become pregnant.

Back to the garden. The tree with its forbidden fruit was the tree of the “intimate union” of humanity with good and evil. Adam and Eve ate it and thereafter had intimate union with good and evil – meaning instead of God’s clearly defined definition of right and wrong, Adam and Eve would be saddled with that burden, without God’s wisdom and righteousness to deal with it. If they had refrained from eating the fruit, they would never have been faced with a moral dilemma. The result would have been immortality in paradise forever.

So the story goes that Eve listened, looked, took and tasted. If I understand righteous Adam, he saw what had happened to Eve, knew its result per God’s word, and decided to die with her – perhaps as a redemptive act. Indeed, from then onward mankind needed redemption, and one was promised. I wonder if Adam knew the story, or knew God’s redeeming nature, and anticipated redemption. Anyway, from then onward they and their descendants were subject to personal sensory delights [read “the flesh”] instead of the only thing they needed -- God’s will. Now we find ourselves deciding for ourselves the difference between right and wrong, resulting in personal and social confusion.

Mankind had been fused with both good and evil. God even cursed the ground because of Adam [v. 17-19]. When Adam planted wheat, thorns and thistles grew with it. He had the extra duties of pulling [or deciding to not pull] the weeds from among the wheat. That’s a picture of Adam’s and Eve’s moral confusion being spread abroad on their earth.

Eve found that her natural activities were cursed. They became associated with anxiety and pain.

So what had motivated them to disobey God when they already had the ideal life? What, in addition to the above, was missing? You will recognize this. [Yes you will, because the Adam or Eve in us will inform us.] There is within mankind the compelling need [?] to challenge restrictions and limitations. They had to have that last attainable thing that only God possessed – and it had to be experienced, not only taught them. The thrill of experiencing the impossible and the restricted beckons to humanity, be it flight, moon walking, walking to the poles, plunging to the depths of the seas, or some other “deniable” feat. Just someone say it can’t be done, or it has never been done, and humanity is off on another quest. That in itself is not rebellion, unless an authority [like God] says, “Don’t do it.”

I’ll leave it to you to decide whether the Lord was punishing Adam and Eve [and us] or if He was teaching us about consequences. Consequences are self-inflicted punishments, which I think was God’s action in this and other cases in the Bible and in our lives.

However, of the three persons in the story, the Lord certainly did curse the snake. The serpent’s purpose was to oppose God’s humans. Without opposition there is no growth. You don’t have to be an athlete to know that. We need opposition. When we overcome our opposer we are happy and better off. So is our Coach. Because the Lord’s long range and ultimate purpose is to bestow great blessings on us, not only as a gift but also as co-overcomers, we must have a worthy opponent. And when we fail, He must provide us with ways out of our failures. Satan entered the scene as almost human. He walked on legs, spoke intelligently, and presented a world view alternative to God’s. That’s really something! That’s meaningful opposition. And, in case you have noticed or have been wondering about his purpose, Satan was [in this manner of understanding] the ultimate servant of God. Job had a good grasp on the evil one’s ministry and did not fall as had Adam and Eve.

They did not know that they were naked before they sinned. But they were present with one another, dealt with personal issues together, saw and understood their differences, but were not impressed or aware of their nakedness. They had related to one another’s souls – to the true and eternal selves. That’s a very high level on which to recognize and relate to one another, is it not? I think that Christians are called to that level of relationship, plus better. Our bodies are temporary containers of our souls, which are alive by our spirits as soon as we are born again, alive by God’s Spirit.

After they sinned, they were alive to their senses and one another’s differences [very understandable and experiential to me!]. Bodies became a distraction to the soul. That’s a real humiliation to one who knows better. They knew better. That’s what it was to Adam and Eve, humiliating, so they covered themselves with leaves. Everything of God’s creation was degraded after the fall. Bodily coverings de-emphasized their and our externals, enabling our weakened conditions to continue relating soul to soul if we desire.

I will insert this observation that as time, place and millennia passed the bodily coverings served other purposes.

When the Lord came for His daily walk through the garden, Adam and Eve were embarrassed, not because of their physical nakedness but because of their souls’ nakedness before God, their creator and provider. They had failed their one task, to not eat of the tree that would give them an intimate union with good and evil. The Lord offered them an opportunity to correct their mistake [I think -- ed.] but they answered “honestly” from their new-found sinful souls. Instead of owning up to their mistake, they invented the blame-game.

What a story. I can see my old [and occasional new] self all through it.

23. There is a law in economics, medicine, finances, law, aerodynamics, war, etc., etc. that says, “If something can’t go on, it won’t.” We are seeing that law in action around the world, principally in the area of economics and finances.

24. Scientists at Duke University have done the impossible. They have made objects invisible by bending light rays around an object, then putting those light rays back on their original path. That needs time to sink in, doesn’t it.

Next, when we will be able to move in and out of dimensions other than our presently known common ones, we may find ourselves encountering then-visible spiritualities who are already among us.

25. Here is something valuable to remember when things or persons or places important to you are being done away with. One of the Lord’s ways is to do no new thing until He does away with the old. There are many examples in Scripture: 1) John the Baptist had to decrease [and die] before Jesus could significantly enter into His ministry. 2) Jesus had to go away before the Holy Spirit would be given to the world. The principle also applies to things within us needing to diminish or go away before He will give us our soul’s increase. The diminishing process is sometimes painful or scary, but the faithful will abide while He is doing that which is necessary and that only He can do.

26. It is a delight to fit Scripture together like a jig-saw puzzle, is it not? Daniel [and others] saw things and recorded them although they did not make complete sense to Daniel. The Lord still does that. But, that which the Lord gives must be faithfully used for the purposes for which they were spoken. To receive God’s word or anything else of Himself imparts a responsibility for us to do with it as He wants.

In Daniel 7:9-10 Daniel saw God the Father on His throne, with millions of faithful attendants about Him. Our Father sat at court. In verses 11-12 he who is known as “the beast” is destroyed and “the rest of the beasts” had their dominion taken away but they were not destroyed at that time. That sounds like a scene given us right out of the Book of the Revelation, such as in chapters 4 and 5, where that Judge is holding court, surrounded by righteous ones, books are opened for judgment, but only One is found among the righteousness who is worthy to begin the end. To Him is given the dominion that was taken from the beasts.

That scene appears to be yet in our future because immediately thereafter begins the end. Yet, in Matthew 28:18, 2,000 years ago, Jesus said that He had [already] received all authority in heaven and on earth. My understanding is that, for God and His righteous ones, righteousness and faith create reality [substance = assurance and conviction] for God and the righteous ones until the time of its scheduled temporal fulfillment. At this time in 2012-2013 it does not appear that all authority is in/by/through Jesus, or that God is always a loving God, or that the All-Mighty is in complete control – but He is. Father, Son and Holy Spirit know that, and the faithful know that – because we reside in the truth no matter the [intermittent] temporal evidences to the contrary.

Thus, Paul by the Holy Spirit, wrote in Colossians 2:15 that Jesus Christ re-ascended into heaven “.. having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” Picture the Lord leading the triumphant procession, followed by Satan and his demons -- all in chains. While on the contrary we are unbound, freed from every bondage by His blood.

The King is coming.