

Hebrews 4

"Today, if you hear his voice, do not
harden your hearts."

4: 11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Romans 2

1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

2 We know that the judgment of God
rightly falls on those who practice
such things.

3 Do you suppose, O man—you
who judge those who practice such
things and yet do them yourself—
that you will escape
the judgment of God?

4 Or do you presume on the riches
of his kindness and forbearance and
patience, not knowing that God's
kindness is meant
to lead you to repentance?

5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

6 He will render to each one according to his works:

7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;

8 but for those who are self-seeking
and do not obey the truth,
but obey unrighteousness,
there will be wrath and fury.

9 There will be tribulation and
distress for every human being
who does evil,
the Jew first and also the Greek,

10 but glory and honor and peace
for everyone who does good,
the Jew first and also the Greek.

11 For God shows no partiality.

12 For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

13 For it is not the hearers of the law
who are righteous before God,
but the doers of the law
who will be justified.

14 For when Gentiles,
who do not have the law,
by nature do what the law requires,
they are a law to themselves,
even though they do not have the law.

15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them

16 on that day when,
according to my gospel,
God judges the secrets of men
by Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 4

3 And even if our gospel is veiled,
it is veiled only to those
who are perishing.

4 In their case the god of this world
has blinded the minds of the
unbelievers, to keep them from
seeing the light of the gospel of the
glory of Christ,
who is the image of God

6 For God, who said,
"Let light shine out of darkness,"
has shone in our hearts
to give the light of the knowledge
of the glory of God
in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:22-26 NASB

22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

23 But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.

24 The Lord's bond-servant must
not be quarrelsome,
but be kind to all,
able to teach,
patient when wronged,

25 with gentleness correcting those
who are in opposition,
if perhaps God may grant them
repentance leading to
the knowledge of the truth,

26 and they
may come to their senses and
escape from the snare of the devil,
having been held captive by him
to do his will.

Hebrews 4

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God's Ways in Governing Our Wills
In preferred order
Motivated by Love and Wisdom

1. Influence by attraction and instruction to win our heart's affections and obedience for our own good

2. Correction through verbal warning
to win our hearts back to His
and restore relationship

3. Discipline through consequences
both natural and at times
supernatural,
to correct our wayward
and stubborn hearts

4. Judgment that produces a historical boundary on the violations of the things God values most.

In His loving-kindness He can't wisely allow these to be promoted any longer after a long-suffering season of merciful patience toward the violators.

“Severity must tame
whom love cannot win.”

Abraham Heshel

A Prayer for Awareness

From Windows of the Soul by Ken Gire

Thank You, O God

For seeing beyond the surface of my life...

Thank You for sitting down beside me,

Putting Your arm around me,

and speaking with such tenderness,

such compassion, and such understanding.

Help me to be aware of the pictures in my life
that are everywhere around me and at all times
showing me something I need to see,
telling me something I need to hear,
offering me something I need to receive.

Help me look beyond the surface of those
pictures to see windows.

Give me eyes to see, ears to hear,
and a heart to receive

what You are offering me through those windows,
that I might sense what is dear to You
so that it might become what is dear to me...

A Prayer for Grace

From Windows of the Soul by Ken Gire

Thank You, God,

For those moments in my life
when You opened a window
and offered a word
that nourished the hunger in my soul.

Give me the grace to realize
that these are the words I live by,
not by bread alone,
whatever form that bread may take
however satisfying it may seem at the time.

Give me the grace to live
not just reflectively but receptively,
that I may not only notice
when a window is opened
but also receive what is offered,
understanding that what is offered
is my soul's daily bread...