

Table of Contents

NEEDLESS, NEEDLESSLY, UNNECESSARY, POINTLESS.....	2
SENSELESS, SENSELESSLY.....	5
USELESS, FUTILE, FUTILITY.....	6

NEEDLESS, NEEDLESSLY, UNNECESSARY, POINTLESS

When Jacob refused to be comforted because he thought Joseph had been killed, his sons could have confessed what really happened at any time. Instead they continued to lie about it for *years*, knowing it was causing their father grief and pain that were completely **unnecessary**. (They must have really despised their father, to do something like this to him *and never repent*.)

- **Genesis 37:31-32, 35:** "And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. ... And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him."

Moses believed it would be **pointless** for him to go to Pharaoh and ask him to free the Israelites. He was convinced that Pharaoh would never let them go. (Even though God told him that He would accomplish it, Moses didn't believe it.)

- **Exodus 6:12:** "And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips?"

Bildad compared Job's words to a strong wind. (In other

words, he was saying that Job's words were **pointless** and stupid.)

- **Job 8:2:** "How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?"

Job said that the words of his three friends were vain (**pointless** and empty).

- **Job 16:3:** "Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?"

It's **pointless** to rebuke a scorner because he won't listen.

- **Proverbs 13:1:** "A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke."

Someone who can't see trouble coming is simple minded. Such people will suffer **needlessly** because they'll get into trouble that could have been avoided.

- **Proverbs 22:3:** "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished."

If we put a lot of effort into something, we need to make sure it's going to benefit *someone*. If it doesn't then the work is **pointless**.

- **Ecclesiastes 4:8:** "There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and

bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail."

It's **pointless** for us to honor ourselves.

- **John 8:54:** "Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:"

The love of money inflicts **needless** sorrows on a person's life.

- **1 Timothy 6:10:** "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

SENSELESS, SENSELESSLY

When the servants of Joab and Abner attacked one another, they didn't even try to defend themselves. Instead they all died **senselessly** (in what amounted to a stupid act of mass suicide).

- **2 Samuel 2:15-16:** "Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Helkathhazzurim, which is in Gibeon."

Jeremiah thought it was **senseless** for God to command him to buy a field at the time when Jerusalem was being conquered by the Babylonians. (God's point was that the coming judgment wasn't the end of all things. One day things would be better.)

- **Jeremiah 32:25, 42-43:** "And thou hast said unto me, O Lord GOD, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. ... For thus saith the Lord; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans."

USELESS, FUTILE, FUTILITY

When Jacob demanded Esau's birthright in exchange for the red pottage (broth) that he had made, Esau claimed that since he was about to die of hunger, his birthright was **useless** to him. (Esau was being overdramatic and foolish.)

- **Genesis 25:30-32:** "And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?"

The reason Jacob left without warning was to protect his family from Laban. (This was **futile** and didn't work. The only reason he survived was because God intervened and saved him.)

- **Genesis 31:31:** "And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me."

When Hiram saw the twenty cities that Solomon had given to him, he wasn't pleased with them. (Although these cities were near Hiram's territory, they were in a rocky and mountainous area. That meant they were barren and **useless**. What Hiram needed was food for his household, and food couldn't grow in that area.)

- **1 Kings 9:12:** "And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not."

Eliphaz compared the words of Job to the east wind (something that was empty and **useless**).

- **Job 15:2:** "Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?"

Eliphaz accused Job of saying that prayer was **useless** (which wasn't what Job said).

- **Job 15:4:** "Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God."

Job said that the fathers of those who mocked him were **useless**, and unable to provide any profit to those who hired them.

- **Job 30:1-2:** "But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock. Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me, in whom old age was perished?"

God said the sword, the spear, and the dart were all **useless** against the leviathan (which was a dragon).

- **Job 41:1, 26:** "Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down? ... The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon."

Compared to eternity, our lives are empty and spent in

futility. We build things that won't last and do things that will become undone. Ultimately the people of this world will forget us and all our possessions will be destroyed. (That's why we must spend our life serving God, which has everlasting value. Those who spend their lives serving themselves or seeking pleasure have wasted their time.)

- **Psalm 39:6:** "Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them."

It's a **futile** and vain thing to gather riches that we can't keep when we die. (It's far wiser to lay up heavenly treasure instead.)

- **Psalm 39:6:** "Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them."

Asaph said it was wrong to say that it's **useless** to be righteous.

- **Psalm 73:13, 15:** "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. ... If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children."

Asaph said that none of the mighty men have found their hands. (In other words, they've been **useless** in battle.) His point is that God is stronger than Israel's enemies.

- **Psalm 76:5-6:** "The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both

the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep."

There are times when God sends emptiness and **futility** into the lives of those who don't believe in Him.

- **Psalm 78:32-33:** "For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works. Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble."

Solomon compared removing wicked people from a nation to removing dross from silver. Once the wicked are removed, the nation can be established in righteousness and become a useful vessel. However, as long as the wicked remain, the nation is poisoned and **useless**, unfit for any task. (Wicked nations are far from the kingdom of God. In fact, they're its enemies.)

- **Proverbs 25:4-5:** "Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness."

If you bind a stone in a sling then it becomes **useless**. The sling can no longer throw it. (The point is that honoring a fool is harmful and shouldn't be done.)

- **Proverbs 26:8:** "As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honour to a fool."

Solomon said that laughter and mirth were **useless**. They accomplished nothing. (His point is that if you're searching for the meaning of life, you're not going to find it in mirth. That's not where meaning comes from.)

- **Ecclesiastes 2:1-2:** "I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?"

The wood from trees can be used for many different purposes, but the wood from a vine is **useless**. (God's point was that Jerusalem had made themselves useless because of their idolatry and sin, and He was going to come against it and burn it with fire.)

- **Ezekiel 15:2-3, 6:** "Son of man, what is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? ... Therefore thus saith the Lord God; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

Offering gifts and sacrifices to God is **useless** if the people who are making those offerings don't know Him or walk in His ways.

- **Hosea 6:6:** "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

In Joel's end-times prophecy about the battle of Armageddon, God tells the Gentiles to turn their farming instruments into weapons of war and bring them to the battle (where they will be utterly **useless** against Him). (In other words, God is going to gather the nations to battle so He can judge them for their wickedness.)

- **Joel 3:9-13:** "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."

It's **useless** to prepare for the day of God's judgment by stockpiling water and building defenses. Those things can't save a city from God's wrath. (The only thing that can save us is repentance and faith in Christ.) God was telling Nineveh that although they were preparing for war, all their preparations were in vain.

- **Nahum 3:14-15:** "Draw thee waters for the siege, fortify thy strong holds: go into clay, and tread the mortar, make strong the brickkiln. There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like the cankerworm: make thyself many as the cankerworm, make thyself many as the locusts."

A candle that's lit but isn't providing light is **useless**. It's not fulfilling its purpose.

- **Matthew 5:15:** "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house."

- **Luke 8:16:** "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light."

We're only **useful** if we're following Jesus and have put Him above everything else. If we've lost our saltiness and have become like the world then we're not fit for any work in God's kingdom.

- **Luke 14:33-35:** "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Those who boast about being circumcised must keep the entire Mosaic law perfectly, or else their circumcision is **useless**.

- **Romans 2:25:** "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision."

Even if we're able to speak in heavenly languages, that gift is **useless** if our words aren't said in love.

- **1 Corinthians 13:1:** "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

The Bible isn't **useless**, and it must not be laid aside when dealing with the wicked. Instead it's the only offensive weapon that Christians have.

- **Ephesians 6:17:** "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Christians need to move beyond basic principles, which the author of Hebrews compares to milk. Otherwise we'll be **useless** at even basic tasks (such as discerning good from evil).

- **Hebrews 5:12-14:** "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

We must not pursue salvation by works. Our works are dead and **useless**, and are wholly unable to save us.

- **Hebrews 9:14:** "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

The reason Rahab's faith was called a living faith is because it produced works. Since her faith produced works, it wasn't dead and **useless**. (Genuine salvation *always* produces the

fruits of the Holy Spirit. If those fruits are absent then salvation is absent as well. A belief that doesn't have any impact in the way you live your life is utterly useless and doesn't accomplish God's will.)

- **James 2:25:** "Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?"