

# The Parable of the Pothole

Hymns from "Favorite Hymns of Grace." Scriptures from the New King James Version.

## Greeting and Opening Prayer

### Hymns of Worship

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## Devotional Summary: "The Parable of the Pothole"

Brothers and sisters, *whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.* Philippians 4:8

There is a little illustration that brings the exhortation in this precious Scripture home for us in a easy-to-understand way. A young man was working on some paperwork in his office in the back of his home. He heard some workers making a lot of noise out in the street, a good way down to the LEFT of his house. In his normal curiosity, he got up from the desk and went to investigate. From his vantage point standing on the front porch he could see city workers patching a pothole down the street a ways. That's right, the city had sent workers to his humble side street to fix potholes!

Well, this was exciting news! Directly in front of this young man's home was a small sink-hole about 9" deep and 18" around. It was left over from some work done a few years ago on gas lines in the middle of the road. It seemed that every car that went by his house hit it because you could not see it until you were right on top of it, the edges were rounded down, not sharp like a normal pothole. If the vehicle was big enough, it shook the house...BOOM, BOOM! Well, the fella went back to work with the contentment that finally the city was going to fix his pothole.

Some time passed and this young homeowner thought of the pothole. He had not heard any noise associated with fixing potholes in front of his house. He got up again and went out on the front porch to find the workers down the street a good way, to the RIGHT of his house, fixing another pothole down there. They had passed right over his pothole! Like all the other passers-by, they didn't see it either. HIS pothole was still there, lurking, laughing in the middle of the road! The flustered young man ran out to the pothole, stood beside it and hollered pleadingly to the workers, waving his arms, "Hey, you missed one! You missed one!" He stepped over into the hole to show how deep it was and, pointing at his feet, called out again, "It's right here, you missed this one!" The workers politely called back in acknowledgment, indicating that they would come back and fix his defect in the pavement too. RELIEF! They actually backed up and repaired the hole in the road in front of his house. No more BOOM, BOOM!

Well, you might say, "OK, what's the point?" Here it is: The pavement in front of this young man's house was really very good. It was just **that one spot**, that one worrisome blemish that consumed this young man's thoughts about his road. Ninety-nine percent of the street in front of his house was perfectly fine! Just that 1% got his attention and his nerves. **"IF THERE IS ANY VIRTUE, IF THERE IS ANYTHING PRAISEWORTHY, THINK, MEDITATE, FOCUS, DWELL ON THESE THINGS!"** Don't be consumed just about the faults and the quirky personality traits of those whom God brings into your life, young fella! Don't constantly look at the negative and the problems and the frustrations and the sin and the darkness and the devil all around you. Whatever is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report... **SET YOUR MIND ON THESE THINGS!!!** Maybe a hearty, "Thank you!" to the city for the other **good** 99% of our road would be in order.

So...more than likely, though we may see ourselves as "good" Christians, we have our job cut out for us! When the neighbor's dog constantly chooses our front yard to do his business... When an aggressive driver rudely cuts in front of us on the interstate... When someone close to us keeps pushing our buttons... When the boss asks us to work late on Friday night... When the deacon board chooses a color that is not to our liking for the new pews... When the pastor's sermon doesn't "scratch our itch" this Sunday... When the song selections during the worship service are not to our liking... When Sally bumps into us with her wheelchair - for the third time today... When the CNA comes barging in our room at the horrible hour of 8AM to give us a shower... When our daughter promises to bring the grandchildren on Sunday but never shows up...

***Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.***

For many of us it is so very easy to complain and whine and gossip and talk behind other people's backs, and get bitter about others and be unforgiving because we have acted like this and thought like this for years. It is just our habit, our way of thinking! But, the Lord is calling us to change our ways of thinking. It may not be easy. It may take a long time to break the habits of negativity and criticism. But it is worth the effort to try and keep right on trying! Every time we catch ourselves falling back into the rut of ugly thinking we can stop and remind ourselves of the Lord's will with this verse. We have our work cut out for us. Let's get started today!

## Closing Hymn

The Old Rugged Cross      p. 23

## Prayer Requests and Corporate Prayer

## The Lord's Prayer

## Recessional

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