

The Provident Living Times

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A Fascinating Time to Be Alive

A problem

We live in interesting times causing different reactions in our populace. Some individuals are oblivious, however, most people are not. The results being a fracturing of our society. There is a marked increase in angst, depression, anger, fear, and many people searching for relief.

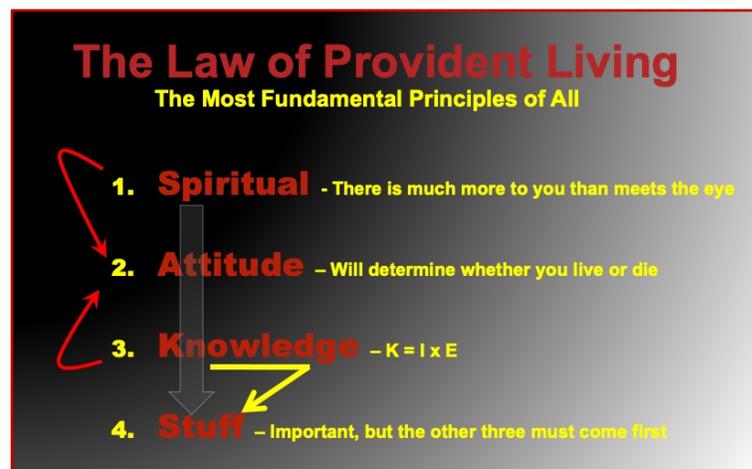
My wife sees it on a daily basis in her work at our local hospital. She administers a grant program to help people with the cost of mental/ emotional services. She is also on the hotline for people in emotional distress, this toll-free hotline was opened up in spring 2020 with the advent of the current “pandemic”. Fear and angst are now palpable, and the number of people she is serving has markedly increased over what she’d seen from 2015 thru the beginning of 2020.

The never-ending sensationalized media reports, rumors, the twists and turns unregulated social media where very few people ever fact-check anything before hitting “forward” or “send”, political intrigue, people fearfully hiding behind masks, and the bombardment of conflicting claims from “reputable” sources, all adds up to emotional chaos within individuals and groups.

The spiritual and moral foundation of this country—especially over the past 60 years of my 73—has been under relentless attack, resulting in a numbed sensitivity to what is right. Far too many people do not have a firm handhold on anything of an eternal nature outside of themselves. As a result, they are blown about by every wind of doctrine perpetrated in the name of science, social reform, the welfare of nature, or in the name of good government. We are now reaping—on a massive scale—the results of being thus distracted.

What’s to be done?

Those who attend any of my classes will regularly hear me refer to *The Law of Provident Living*, as the most fundamental approach on how to conduct one’s affairs—



The order of priority within this principle IS: **Spiritual**, **Attitude**, **Knowledge**, and finally **Stuff** (the material things of life). I wrote this overview to life for a class I authored and started teaching in 1985, Without Fire or Shelter, (I'll be teaching it again soon).

Consider—now 36 years later—how this concept fits the current situation. As pointed out above, we have a society whose general attitude/emotion is riddled with “angst, depression, anger, fear, and people searching for relief”. Illustrated in the graphic above, one’s **Attitude** comes from the individual’s **Spiritual** foundation and **Knowledge** of how and why things actually work.

That little formula to the right of **Knowledge** is short, but says a lot when you dissect its meaning: $K=IxE$, where K is knowledge, I is information, and E is experience.

In short, having information in and of itself is not knowledge, however, when you take information and multiply it by experience it becomes knowledge. Still, you have to dig a little deeper because knowledge of something does not make it correct or good. To have good/true/correct **Knowledge** the information supporting it must also be good/true/correct along with the experience to match. Faulty information or experience leads to “Knowledge” that is useless at best and harmful, even deadly at worst.

One more important consideration is also based on this fundamental law. If you have a strong spiritual foundation based on things far bigger than yourself which is backed up by a testimony or sure knowledge of its soundness, then your attitude is one of peace. Not resignation or cynical acceptance, but a profound PEACE that true justice reigns and all will work out for the best.

Having come through this discussion, and considering the emotional climate of our country today, what do we have?

Questions, confusion, and uncertainty in what’s going on surrounding—a virus, the economy, a government, personal finances, health, who is looking out for me, what’s in store for my future and my family’s well-being, and so much more.

The collective spiritual health based on accepted social norms—television, movies, magazines, video games, music, language, church attendance, kindness, care of the disadvantaged, killing of the unborn, animal cruelty, trafficking in children, illicit drugs, and this list goes on, and on ...

Personal action and commitment

Neither you nor I can fix everyone else, but we can stand as an example and a helping hand. We can choose to NOT turn a blind eye or deaf ear. We can get involved and bring others along with us, not to blindly tear down, but stand for what is righteous and shun anything negative and evil.

As for me and my house, this stance centers around the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the knowledge that there is something far bigger than me that I am part of. That we are

doing the best we know how to not be a burden on others, and contribute to the well-being of as many as we can. It is about making ready for an uncertain future, not out of fear and worry, but out of a desire to have that future to bless the lives of our family and others around us.

One last little definition to drive the point home on what's happening around us. I have a simple one-word definition for FEAR. For any experience, you have had, or will yet have, keep this definition in mind.

FEAR = IGNORANCE

Simply put, FEAR is an attitude. This means that any time you experience fear there is a learning opportunity on hand related to either, or both, your **Spiritual** understanding, and your **Knowledge** of how and why things *really* work.

You can either choose to remain in FEAR and IGNORANCE or find PEACE by how you choose to solve the gaps in your spiritual life and/or temporal Knowledge.

I invite you enjoy the adventure, it can be a grand one,



Jim Phillips

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