

Assorted Topics 20230926

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Date: 26 September 2023

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 0 0] Before we get underway, we need to remind you a little bit about something we talked about, and that is the possibility of a class in Urbana at the airport cafe.

Now, no decision has been made, but I wanted to give you time to think about it. That's why we brought it up last week. And if we were to do this, it probably wouldn't start until the first class in November, if we were to begin that.

And I just don't know whether that's something that you all want to do or whether you're interested in it or not, but I do know that there are a number of you fellows that come from Urbana and West Liberty, and it might be a whole lot more convenient for you if we were meeting there, and that would not change this meeting at all.

We would continue on here just as we do on Tuesday morning for the guys here in Clark County and Springfield area. So that's something that I ask you to think about.

And if we were to do that, it would have to be, according to my schedule, it would have to be either on a Wednesday morning or a Friday morning.

[1 : 1 4] Those are the only mornings that I would be available. And that's just something for you to think about, put in a hopper. We don't need to make a decision right away. But I don't know whether there's enough interest to do that.

I don't know if it would deplete this class too much for the guys in Champaign County to be going there, here. And it would probably be helpful if we do that, if you all would pass the word and let people know what's available so that if they're more interested that they could attend the Urbana class or this class, whatever.

But does anybody have any feelings one way or another about this, yay or nay, or what you would like to share? Dan? Do you want me to work that out on the email I have to the group?

Yeah, you could do that. That would be helpful. All right. Yeah. Yeah. Would you be doing Tuesday here and then Friday there or what? Yeah. Okay. Yeah, it would be two different classes entirely.

And the material would be different because the interest level would be different. And we would try to check with both groups as to what we would be doing. And just like we've done here, we've polled you to get what your level of interest is and issues that concern you.

[2 : 3 3] And we would do the same thing with an Urbana class if that class is to begin. I don't have any strong feelings about it one way or another, but I really do appreciate the efforts of men who come from Champaign County.

And I'm really grateful that you're here. We're glad to have you. But at the same time, it might be easier for me. I already live in the north end of Springfield.

It would be easier for me to be an Urbana class than for all the Urbana guys to come here. So that's something that you want to put in the hopper and think about. Joe? And you can attend both of them if you wanted to.

Both of them. Because I would miss the Champaign County guys' faces. I mean, I would miss them. If I couldn't see them once a week. So I'm going to attend both of them.

I'll tell you that right now. We're good looking over here. Well, nobody would be barred from attending one class if you attend the other. But that's beside the point.

[3 : 38] But anyway. Yeah. What? Pete Yost. You know Pete Yost? I know the name. And he has a study on Wednesday mornings in Champaign County.

Oh, really? Yeah. Okay. I don't know him, but I've heard the name. So that would probably leave out the Wednesday thing. Yes. Dan?

This has nothing to do with it. But one of our former members passed away. Steve Levesque. Remember he used to come here? Oh.

Steve? Levesque. L-E-V-E-S-T-E-S. Yeah. He passed away. Okay. I'm trying to place him. Steve Levesque.

Levesque. Levesque. I think he came with Dean of Hope. Yeah. Those two guys. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt. No. It's okay. It's okay. It came to my mind.

[4 : 33] Yeah. You need to pray for, I think, your wife. Yes. The family. Your subjects. I think you're going to be given them on Friday.

Yeah. Yeah. It would be two different. It would be two entirely different classes. Different content. Yeah. Larry, did you have something? Well, no. I'm just saying that Steve Levesque used to come with Dana Hope.

Dana Hope. Yeah. Okay. From Cremona. Yeah. I remember Dana, but I'm having difficulty placing Steve that came with him. Okay.

Any other thoughts about Urbana class? And is there some level of interest in Urbana? And here's another question that probably only those of you in Champaign County would be able to answer.

And that is, would there be a likelihood of more guys being interested in attending the class if it were at Airport Cafe? So that would be closer for a lot of guys.

[5 : 36] That's something else to think about. Well, we've got a couple of wrestling coaches. They know how to recruit. They know how to recruit. I could pass the word to the First Baptist Church, Urbana First Baptist Church, you know.

There might be some attendees in there I could say. That's a possibility, yeah. But what I include in that promotion are that they have wonderful pies for breakfast.

Okay. Well, there's something to think about. Does anybody else have a comment or question? Anyone? Sir? The time of starting Urbana. I don't know for sure because it all depends on what time they open.

But I can promise you this. Well, I can't say. Well, I can. I'm almost. Don't hold me to this, okay? But I'm almost positive the class would not begin before 8 o'clock.

Now, this is a 7 o'clock class. But I don't think they open there until maybe 7. So the class would probably begin at 8 o'clock.

[6 : 43] I really appreciate the folks here opening early for us. Collier's did this for us when we started here many years ago.

And we really appreciated it. And then when Studebaker's took it over, I really didn't expect them to. And I didn't even. I just assumed that they probably wouldn't.

But they offered to do it before we even asked to continue the class. And I really appreciate their accommodating us that way because that's very kind of them.

And yet I'm reluctant to ask the airport people to do the same thing. I just probably wouldn't want to do that. And they've got a very nice private room there that would probably seat a maximum of 30 guys without any problem.

So that's something to keep in mind. And they would be two entirely different classes, different content. Because the interest, one class, would probably be different from this class.

[7 : 43] So that's something we'd want to take into consideration. Anything else? We don't have to make a decision right away. But I do want you to think about it. And if you have any comments that you'd like to share or any solutions or ideas or anything, even after the class, why, feel free to let me know.

And we'll take it all into consideration. And I don't know. I don't know how. None of us know how long we're going to be here or how long we're going to be able to do this.

I recognize that capabilities are not what they used to be. And I wouldn't expect them to be when you get to be 88.

But at the same time, I just... I guess one brother put it this way. I don't mind wearing out.

I'd be glad to wear out. I just don't want to rust out. And I guess that's the way I feel. So when the time comes that I'm no longer hitting the ball, then I would assume that those who care most about me would let me know that so I could silently fade into the woodwork.

[8 : 57] But meanwhile, I'm going to keep on keeping on as long as I can. And I appreciate your support and your encouragement. Anything else anybody wants to share? Yes, Dan?

I have one more. Please, if there's any more changes to the roster, please email me or let me know. Next week is the deadline.

I'll have a revised time. Okay. Please let me know. I've made all the changes except Harry's. But I want to know so we'll have it accurate. Okay. Please let me know.

Thanks again, Dan, for doing that. You're welcome. This is a roster that is just for an in-house thing. This content is not shared with anybody for any other reason. So you can be sure that it's just kept among ourselves.

And the only reason we do it is to promote togetherness a little more. And if anybody wants to contact anybody in the group, you've got a name and a telephone number or whatever, just send them a card if you want.

[9 : 59] Yes? Yes? Yes? Yes, I've been here. There was a decision where I may get for you to hear the next slide, your next topic? I'm sorry.

I didn't hear that. What? The decision? Have you made a decision with the next topic of the age? Hold on. I got my hearing aids in, but all good. There's still one.

Well, I'm sure. It's going to be a call before we get started. Have you made a decision with the next topic of the age? Well, we're going to deal with the issues that you guys have been... Yeah. There are several suggestions that were made, and some of them would involve just maybe one session or two sessions, and we intend to cover all of them that you submitted by way of suggestions, questions, etc.

So we'll be doing that. But the first order of business is for us to finish these 33 blessings, and I want you to be advised that they are actually listed, I think, primarily in order of their...

I can't say they're important because they're all important, but some of these things are more familiar to us. Some of these blessings are more familiar to us than some of the others, and those that are considered most obvious or most standard are listed first, and we have covered most of them.

[11 : 27] And what remains in the later 20s and up to the 33 are not as well known, although I want to make it clear that none of them are unimportant.

They're all important because everything that Christ died to provide for you automatically makes it important just because of what he did to make it available.

So they are all important, and we've worked our way down into the 20s here. I'm not sure. We had a couple of classes where they were not recorded, so they are not available.

But I want to continue on as much as best we can, and we'll see if we can get through this. I'm not at all sure that we need to check all of these references, but you've got the sheets with the references indicated here, and you can check them at your leisure.

Anything that you want to pursue, you may do so on your own with the references. And if there's anything in these items that you want to discuss, we'd certainly be glad to do that.

[12 : 35] We can stop wherever we need to and pursue that. Somebody made a statement before we got started, and it kind of piqued my interest a little bit.

And this has got nothing to do with the sheet that we're given, but if you go to Revelation chapter 8 for just a moment, I want to share something with you, and we'll pool our collective ignorance and see if we can come up with something because it's a very interesting thing that is mentioned here.

And I bring it up because the comment that was made here at our table before we actually began has to do with prayer.

We are all, once we are in Christ, once we have come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, we are automatically on praying ground because then we have an intercessor.

We have one who is a go-between, an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, John tells us in his first epistle. So when you become a believer, you are on praying ground in a way that an unbeliever certainly is not.

[13 : 56] And yet at the same time, we must confess that according to Romans chapter 8, we know the Apostle Paul, and by the way, guys, to me it's very significant that a statement like this came from someone of the stature of the Apostle Paul who said, for we know not how to pray or what to pray for as we ought.

But the Spirit of God makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. I wish I understood that better, but I can certainly identify with what he said that we do not know what to pray for as we ought.

And this remains one of the more significant mysteries of the Christian life. We've all heard testimonies about wonderful examples, miraculous answers to prayer.

Frankly, I must be honest and tell you I'm a lot more familiar with reading about them and hearing about them from other people than I am from experiencing them personally myself.

And that of course causes us to wonder, but at the same time we know God is in charge of all of these things and we do know this, the more you study and learn the principles of the Word of God and what is involved there, the less you're going to have to pray about.

[15 : 38] But the more significant your prayers will be because they'll be more intelligent as a result of what you've learned from Scripture. So I must confess along with a lot of others that I can really identify with what Paul said because we know not what to pray for as we ought.

And that's just part of our humanness. That's okay. There's nothing wrong with being human. We're certainly not even close to all knowing. And we hit and miss a lot of times. And I know people who have prayed for a long time about something.

I mean years and years. Especially in connection with praying for a lost one, a mate, somebody's salvation. And you hear these wonderful stories.

Well, I prayed for them for 30 years and God finally answered and they came to faith in Christ. And it was a wonderful testimony.

But what about the unanswered prayers? Have you ever been disappointed with any unanswered prayers? Dan?

[16 : 46] I don't think there's no such praying, is there? Well, that's a good question. Is there such a thing as an unanswered prayer? Somebody says God answers all prayers. Sometimes the answer is yes.

Sometimes it's no. And sometimes it's wait. So, in Revelation chapter 8, if you will turn there, please.

We'll see something and again, we can pull our collective ignorance here. And I don't profess to have a handle on this, but anyway, we'll look at it.

Revelation chapter 8. And we read that when he opened the seventh seal, this is John having a window entrance into heaven.

He said, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. and I heard one preacher say one day that this was positive proof to him that there will be women in heaven because there are 30 minutes that pass here and there is silence.

[18 : 00] Nobody said anything. But, but you know what? The guy that said that went on to admit that he was speaking to a strictly male audience like I am.

So, guys, don't let this go any further than this room, okay? Anyhow, and another angel, verse 3, came and stood at the altar having a golden censer and there was given unto him much incense.

Now, a censer is simply a container. it's a container that holds the incense that is set afire and burned so that the smoke and the incense comes up from it.

It goes back to the Jewish tabernacle and the golden censer that was there and the tables that were involved in the tabernacle and so on and this is a take off on that.

And the text says having a golden censer and there was given unto him much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the altar which was before the throne and the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand and the angel took the censer and filled it with fire of the altar and cast it into the earth.

[19 : 50] Now you've got to get a picture of this guys. This is a vision that this one is seeing, that John is seeing. He's recounting what he sees in this vision and it is very apparent to him as this is played out and he's watching all of these elements take place and describing them to us.

Frankly, it is just, to me, it's just unimaginable and we wouldn't have a clue if it were not for the graphic description that he has given of it. And we read that the angel took the censer, filled it with fire of the altar, cast it into the earth, and there were voices and thunderings and lightnings and an earthquake.

And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. And the first angel sounded and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood and they were cast upon the earth, the third part of the trees was burned up and all the green grass was burned up and so on.

Now, what I want to focus on for just a few moments that we have here is this in verse four, with the prayers of the saints that ascended up before God out of the angels' hand.

What prayers of what saints? It isn't categorized, it just says prayers of the saints. Who are the saints? saints.

[21 : 26] The saints literally means the holy ones. And the word in the Hebrew and in the Greek both simply means the separated ones.

A saint is a separated one, one who is distinguished from all the rest of humanity. And the picture that I've tried to describe before, it is, just imagine here you've got, just imagine you've got a hundred people and they're just standing there.

You've got a hundred people. And envision if you can a hand coming down from above and picks up four or five of those people out of the hundred, lifts them up, moves them over, and sits them down all by themselves, separate from the group.

They are the saints. They are the separated ones. They are those who are called of God out of the mass of humanity and I say five, I don't have, I'm not using percentages, I don't know what, all I know is we who are in Christ do not belong to the mass of humanity in the same way everybody else does.

we are different. It doesn't mean that, well I can't say that it doesn't mean that we aren't better because we are better and we are better because of the one who made us better.

[23 : 03] We are not better in and of ourselves but we are better because we have an exalted position, because we have forgiveness, because we have salvation. That's what makes us different from all the rest.

So, these saints are not qualified in any way other than to say saints. The question automatically arises then, what saints or which saints are these?

Could it possibly be, and I'm asking this as a question, could it possibly be all the saints of all times and it includes all of the prayers of all of those saints of all times?

For what purpose? Now, think about that. How many times have you prayed about something, about anything? How many times have other believers all over the world, in all languages, backgrounds, etc., prayed about anything over the years, going back all the way, thousands of years, how many prayers are we talking about?

What, Joe? A lot of them. I was just going to try to answer your question. Why the prayer? What are they praying for? I think they're praying to not let happen what is about to happen.

[24 : 30] If you go on the scripture, you know what's going to happen. It's about what to happen. I think they're praying to avoid that. Don't let it happen. Don't let them suffer. I think they're praying to God to avoid this if he can.

That's just my idea. Okay. Somebody else? Larry. Someone once said be thankful that God's answers to our prayers are wiser than our prayers.

Oh yeah. Somebody said just be thankful that you don't get all you pray for. Because we pray out of what we perceive to be a sense of need or desire.

And a lot of times, like Paul said in Romans 8, we know not what to pray for as we ought. And there's an element of ignorance there if we will only admit it. Yes? Yes? Fulfillment, total fulfillment of the prayers that have gone up throughout the ages, would that be part of this?

Okay. Okay. Actually, I was tending to think along that line too, that these prayers, and we can't, you know, we can't really define this completely, but I am persuaded that none of our prayers that go up to God are ignored or wasted or whatever.

[26 : 08] God knows the burden of our hearts, he knows our needs, and he has a sympathetic ear to our weaknesses. There's no question about that, and I think the scriptures make that very clear, especially if you read the Psalms.

But let's face it, guys, our prayers oftentimes go amiss. and when Paul said, we know not what to pray for as we are, I think he used himself as an example, when he had this thorn in the flesh, and we still don't know for sure what it was, but we can make some fairly intelligent guesses, and he said, Paul said, I besought the Lord three times to take this thing away, and whatever it was, it obviously was a hindrance to his ministry, to his effectiveness, to his travels, to whatever, and we know it was something physical, and you know, there's speculation about it being his eyes, and his eyesight, and whatnot, we just don't know, but it is a perfect example of God not answering the way we want to what we think is a very legitimate prayer, and I don't know why God wouldn't answer in a positive way, and give me this thing that

I've asked for, or do what I've asked for, because I'm not asking selfishness, it's for somebody else, you know, and yet the prayer goes seemingly unanswered. What's going on, anyway?

And I'm just throwing this in the hopper, guys, because I don't know, but I have to believe that a whole lot of people, in many respects, are just like I am, and they've been puzzled more than once over unanswered prayers, and we don't quite know what to make of it, when we've prayed about something for a long time, and God sifts and sorts our prayers, and he answers in accordance with his wisdom, wisdom, and sometimes God not answering a certain prayer is the most wonderful thing he can do for us, but we don't look at it that way, we think that, come on God, be reasonable and do this my way, you know, and you've got to remember, guys, that as you are a loving father to your children or grandchildren, and you really want only what's best for them, if one of them comes to you and asks you to do something or asks you for something, and you know, they don't know, but you know that's not in their best interest, and you are deliberately going to withhold something because you know that's not what they need and that's not good for them, and you do that out of a protective mode, but if you're two or three years old and your dad or your mom won't give you what you want, sometimes you throw a hissy fit or you cry or whatever because they are depriving you of something that you want, and yet they know that if you are given that shiny, dazzling thing that you're reaching out for and that you want to pick up, that it's going to burn you because it's a fire lit by a candle, and yet it can be attractive to a two-year-old and you want to pick that up, so mom and dad is there to say no, no, and you move that away because you know that's going to hurt them.

They'll understand that, but you do, so how much more does God understand than what we do in the things that we ask for? How many times has God said no out of a protective mode for us because he knows that's not what you need or that's not in your best interest?

[30 : 12] And I think Paul is a perfect example of that. Paul said whatever that thorn in the flesh was, whether it was his eye vision or whatever it was, he prayed that the Lord might remove it, and I'm confident that he had the best of motives because I think it would have, in his eyes, it would have furthered his ministry or made it more effective or whatever, and God didn't answer.

And Paul prays again, and God didn't answer. What's going on? And I think I know Paul well enough to know that it isn't likely that it was a selfish prayer.

And three times I sought this thing, and the Lord did not answer and he said, I'm not going to do that, Paul. I'm not going to answer your prayer.

What I'm going to do is I'm going to give you an extra measure of grace to enable you to continue on with that thorn in the flesh so that the extra grace will compensate for it, but I am not going to remove it.

Well, guys, we tend to think sometimes we are so smart and we know, we think what God ought to do, and then when he doesn't do it, we're disappointed.

[31 : 44] And may I assure you that when you go to the Lord in prayer about anything, I don't care what it is, whether it's your health, your life, your mate, your finances, whatever it is, you ought to realize that when you address the Lord and you're asking for some particular thing, whatever that is, be aware that you have every right to simply snuggle down and be warm and cozy in the assurance that whatever God deems as the best answer for that request is exactly what you need.

and thank him for it, rather than to say, why doesn't God answer my prayer? What have I done to offend him that he doesn't answer my prayer?

Blah, blah, blah. And we look for all of this. We tend to have a pity party, you know, and we hear the prayer requests miraculously answered from other people, but why doesn't that happen to me?

Why doesn't God answer my... And guys, God God loves you too much to give you everything you ask for. He loves you enough that he knows and he discerns what is in your best interest, whether you believe it or not, whether you want it or not, God knows.

And he responds in accordance with his wisdom. And fellas, we ought to take great comfort in that. That our heavenly father is sifting and sorting and he is only kindly disposed toward us and he will not bring anything or allow anything to come into our life but what he intends to use it for our own ultimate good, even if it hurts.

[33 : 48] Even if it hurts a lot. God makes no mistakes and he doesn't have any occasion for do-overs. Yes?

In the Bible 365 times it says, do not fear, do not be afraid. And also it says that you prune a tree or a bush to make it grow better, to produce better.

Absolutely. Absolutely. And sometimes that's what we need. We need pruning. Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.

And guys, I just wish there were some way that we could communicate to the whole body of Christ. Whether you believe it or not, you are in a win-win situation.

I don't care what comes your way. By way of health or wealth or loss thereof, you are in a win-win situation. How shall he not with him also freely give us all things, all things that he knows are for our interest?

[35 : 02] He who spared not his own son. Isn't that the ultimate gift? Absolutely. And then Paul goes on to say, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Everything is secondary to that. And what Paul is saying there in Romans 8, I think it is, is that, listen, God has already done the ultimate for you in simply providing Christ and welcoming you into the body of Christ.

And the all things that he will give you in addition to that, consists of all the things that he deems wise and good on your behalf, as only he is able to determine.

So, you pray and you relax. And you leave the requests with the Lord.

Frankly, I don't want anything that God doesn't want me to have. As far as I'm concerned, that's pure poison.

[36 : 19] We just ought to take great comfort in the fact that when we pray, God sifts and sorts and sometimes he says yes and sometimes he says no and sometimes he says wait. and I don't know if that's what's involved in Revelation 8 and the prayers of the saints or not, but it just, it's just a thought that occurs to me.

How many saints are there? Oh my, I can't number them. From all the ages? Yeah. And you know what? God knows every one of them by name.

God knows you through and through and he doesn't mix you up with anybody else and he's not confused and when he calls our name, it'll be us and it just, as a believer, well, it just ties in with these 33 blessings.

None of us have any idea how rich we are. And you know, guys, if you start getting a handle on this, and I know many of you already have, I think one of the most pronounced results of that will be an ongoing, overwhelming sense of gratitude and thanksgiving more than anything else.

Well, anything else anybody else want to share? Let's look at this. We're not making much progress here. I do want to share one thing with you from, well, let's go to that Romans 8 passage if we may.

[38 : 05] Just a couple of things there that I think are significant. I'd just like to touch on, I don't remember, frankly, my short-term memory isn't what it ought to be, but I don't remember if we touched on this or not, but it is important.

And there are two ways, two ways that God looks at things. And there are a couple of legal terms, actually, that I've come across that I've developed a fondness for, and one of them is called de jure.

It's two different words, d-e and j-u-r-e, de jure. And the other is d-e and f-a-c-t-o, facto.

One is de jure and one is de facto. And this is legalese, and those actual words are not used in the text, but the principle is applied.

And what they mean is this, de jure has to do with the legal ramifications of something.

[39 : 16] It's related to the word jurisprudence, which has to do with legal matters and legal things and legal documents and legal wording and so on.

Jurisprudence. And then the other is called de facto, and it has to do with the actuality of a thing, not necessarily focusing on the legality of it, but on the reality of it.

And here in Romans chapter 8, we find a beautiful example of this, because if you look at, well, we could even take 28, and Paul says, we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

You know what this glorification is? It says he also glorified us. Fellas, our glorification has to do when this body of weakness, this body of corruption, is transformed into a body like the body of Christ.

[41 : 06] That's called glorification. It is the kind of body that Jesus Christ had when he came out of the tomb. It was the same Jesus, but it was with a different body.

It was a body that had undergone the process of glorification, and it was a body that would never die again. That's the kind of body that you and I are going to have one day, a glorified body.

But I want you to notice in the text, it says here, in past tense, that he also glorified us. Think about that.

Do you realize that you are glorified? Well, de facto no. The fact is, you are not glorified. But the juror is, you are.

That is the legal position. That is God's perspective. Our perspective is, I'm not glorified. That's not a fact.

[42 : 13] I'm just me, here in this same body. God's God's God's concern. It is a done deal. It is the same way that he speaks, that Paul speaks in Colossians 1.

Be risen with Christ. Not risen with Christ. I'm right here in Studebaker's restaurant. Not risen with Christ. Yeah.

As far as God is concerned, it's a done deal. We are risen with Christ. We are glorified with Christ. We already have a glorified body. God considers it a slam dunk.

It's overdone. We look at it as something future. God looks at it as something already accomplished. That's the difference. The legal term that Paul uses here, and it sounds like some kind of double talk, because he says, then he also glorified.

Well, I'm not glorified. Yes, you are. As far as God is concerned, you already are. You're a finished product. We see ourselves as anything but that. That's because we have our way of looking at it.

[43 : 14] God has his way of looking at it. And when you see both of these side by side, de jure and de facto, one is a reality, one is a legality.

And it's a beautiful thing. And it's found throughout scripture in a number of ways like that, where God treats, he calls those things that are not as though they are.

Because as far as he is concerned, it's a slam dunk and it's a done deal. Hey, thanks for breakfast. Give some serious thought to this Urbana thing if you would.

We'll talk about it a little bit more later. Appreciate you being here. Thank you, Michelle, for the great service. Thank you, Michelle, for the email address. week. That means you you have to