

# On The Frontier

“For the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel”

## One More Chance

by Linus A. Mathis III

I don't know about you, but for me this is a time of year where I am deluged with catalogs. I even get ones that warn me (I wish it were true) that, should I fail to place an order, the mailings will end. Right! Instead of reading, "This is your LAST catalog." They should say, "Now we REALLY mean it this time." Or, "All joking aside there will be no more of these valuable catalogs sent to you." Better yet, "Okay, okay, this time we're REALLY serious, this is the last one. Really, we wouldn't kid you. Before, we were testing you, now this is for real."

Along with all these threats to remove me from such wonderful mailings, I found a promise. All caps and in bright red letters. ONE MORE CHANCE! Not last chance but, ONE MORE CHANCE. Now I know that this wasn't a true promise but it got me thinking. Not about filling an order before December 22, but about God and His Son. About your life and mine. Really, all of mankind has been given one more chance. You know as well as I that the graciousness of God has afforded all of us chance upon chance. As for mankind, perhaps one more than was deserved!

Before I continue, let me qualify something. I'm well aware of the actual day Jesus Christ was born. I'm also aware of the Scriptural commands that govern our acknowledgment of days and times.

Galatians 4:9-11

But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years [something we're not to do].

I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

Colossians 2:13-17

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday [holiday], or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*:

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Romans 14:1-13

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful

disputations.

For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he

might be Lord both of the dead and living.

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

What further encouragement do we need? You see then what's really important, don't you?

I'm vitally concerned with the minute accuracy of the Scriptures but not at the expense of love. The greater principles are love, compassion and edification. We dare not use our superior (I speak foolishly) knowledge of God's Word to be judgmental. Woe be to us should we flaunt our grounded spirituality (again I speak as a fool) to shame others. Yes, I know when the Lord was born and I am thankful for that knowledge. But THAT he was born has affected me to a far greater degree than WHEN. As we just read in Romans, I am thankful for the Redeemer's birth, EVERYDAY. But I digress.

When I think of the birth of the Saviour I'm reminded of God's giving mankind ONE MORE CHANCE. With the first prophetic

record of mankind's redemption man was given ONE MORE CHANCE. Immediately after Adam and Eve disobeyed God and fell, they were promised ONE MORE CHANCE.

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The promised seed, the Messiah. ONE MORE CHANCE for mankind. What a God!!!

The fulfillment of that prophecy occurred some 2,000 years ago. The announcement was made to simple shepherds watching over their flock in a field. What joy must have flooded their souls!

Luke 2:10,11

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

The long awaited redemption of mankind was at hand.

A little over a month after the Lord's birth he was brought into the temple where the following record took place:

Luke 2:25-32

And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Salvation for mankind, a light to illuminate the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. Wow!!! All of mankind given ONE MORE CHANCE. That which Adam discarded would be regained and much, much more.

Following Simeon there came a woman:

Luke 2:36-38

And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

Redemption in Jerusalem. Guess what! There's still redemption today. Redemption in Palmer, Alaska, in New York City, in Los Angeles, in your town. You've got to let folks know that they have **ONE MORE CHANCE**. What a privilege to be the bearer of such glad tidings. Joy is ours when we refresh the weary with the gospel of deliverance. It's not too late, you have **ONE MORE CHANCE**. We should shout it from the roof tops.

This time of year I'm reminded of how imperfect I am. Things are hectic. I can hardly keep up with my routine obligations let alone the added ones. The supplementary activities of the holidays only serve to cue me as regards my foibles. I just can't seem to get it all done, or do it right. And then there's the people you don't want to forget. It would be most stressful. If it weren't for one thing. I've been given **ONE MORE CHANCE**. All of this is supposed to be in recognition, celebration and remembrance of the Saviour's birth. Right? His birth is proof that you've been given **ONE MORE CHANCE**. When you accept Jesus Christ as your lord and believe that God raised him from the dead, you are saved (Romans 10:9,10). You get a brand new life (II Corinthians 5:17). You've been forgiven, the past is over. It's a brand new day!

As if that weren't enough, there's also forgiveness for sins committed after you get born again (I John 1:9). How wonderful that our God would continue to make life available to us.

I John 2:1,2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

He's the total payment for the sins of the world. In order that we all may be given **ONE MORE CHANCE**. You can walk a holy life, you can follow in the steps of Jesus Christ. God is always there ready to strengthen you and make everything alright. You may fall, but He wants you to get back up.

Proverbs 24:16

For a just *man* falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

So if you do fall (and you will at times) get back up. You still have **ONE MORE CHANCE**. If it weren't this way none of us would last very long. But it is this way because of God's great love (John 3:16).

Please **DO NOT** misinterpret this to mean that you have carte blanche to sin. God is not mocked (Galatians 6:7,8). **DO** think of it when you feel less than His best. Remember, God so loves you that He has given you **ONE MORE CHANCE**. Take it, it's yours, whenever you need it.

I'm sure you'll want to consider this in the coming new year as I will in January.

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## The Counselor's Corner

With Rev. Linus A. Mathis III

### A New Day

A new year is upon us and with it a score of challenges. All that remains of 1998 are a handful of fading memories. Though we may enjoy the results of our victories and perhaps endure the sting of our losses, these too shall dwindle. So, we can neither "rest on our laurels" nor "stew in our beer." Like the man said, "you can't cash last week's pay check no matter how big or small." Thus, we look to the exciting prospect of starting anew. This is why so many people make "new year's resolutions." The anticipation of a new day is motivating. Anticipation is what puts the spring in our step. It's what gives us a reason for being, for doing, for living. Of course the greatest anticipation we as Christians have is the Return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. That's our Hope [not a hope but the Hope]! Now that will **REALLY** put a spring in your step. We may not know **WHEN** it will happen but we do know **THAT** it will happen. With that in mind every day is a new day be it the first of the year or the last.

When it comes to new beginnings, among the greatest (for me and I trust for you too) is the birth of a child. So many wonderful opportunities present themselves in that precious little package. The privilege of nurturing, loving, protecting, instructing, admonishing and cherishing is unparalleled. Their little hearts are as fine blank parchments. What we write on them will be read for years to come. What an incredible thrill and a bit scary too! And well it should be as the gravity of the task is immense. But

fear not, victory is yours, if you just remember to handle it one day at a time. Yesterday is over and tomorrow is not here yet. All we have to deal with is today. Thank God!!! Here's some great Biblical advise:

**Philippians 3:13,14**

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We need to learn how to live in "day-tight" compartments. Today is the only day you can do anything about.

Talk about great counsel. These verses offer more (when believed, i.e. practiced daily) than all the psychiatrist's couches put together. They will work in child rearing, marriage, work, school, play, whatever and wherever. If you feel you didn't do such a great job with your child or family yesterday, just remember that today is a new day. Perhaps you've heard it said, "today is the first day of the rest of your life." That may be a cliché and it may be old, but it's true.

Before you go off on a tangent on me, please be **WARNED** that this is **NOT** to be used as an excuse for failure, irresponsibility or cruelty. The point is that worry over tomorrow and regrets about yesterday will do nothing to benefit today. They will only distract you from doing what you should do. The only time you have is right now. We live in an eternal now. You don't live yesterday

and tomorrow may never be yours. But today is and it's brand new. Too many people miss today thinking about yesterday and living in fear of tomorrow. Make up your mind to live today and let yesterday go. As for tomorrow, it will take care of itself.

**Matthew 6:34**

Take therefore no thought [no anxious thought] for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

When working with a child one can really see how each moment is new. There is little to compare with the light in their eyes as they learn or experience something for the very first time. For those of us who love to teach, there's no richer prize. A new born represents years of marvelous treasures in learning. There really is no time when they stop. What changes for our children, in the curriculum of life, is their teachers. Sadly, the time does come when mom and dad are no longer their sole learning centers. Parents, value the time when you are the one who is chief in the dissemination of knowledge for your child. It's but a brief moment in time. We rarely, if ever, get to do it over.

Fresh starts and second chances are something that belong to the spiritual realm. Through God they are made available and realized in totality. Becoming a Christian is the pinnacle of all new beginnings for children and adults alike.

**II Corinthians 5:17**

Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

For both young and old the newest day dawns with the new-birth.

Keep God at the center of your life and everyday will be a new day.

**Lamentations 3:22,23**

*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

His promises are new everyday!

-*"The Counselor's Corner" also appears in Alaska Parenting Magazine in an edited version as "The Christian Corner"*-

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***Happy Holidays  
from our household  
to yours!***

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