

# On The Frontier

## The Solidarity Of God And His Word

by Linus A. Mathis III

Ours is an ever changing world. Nothing around us remains the same for very long. That's just a fact of life. We humans are certainly more comfortable in a stable environment but we've come to accept this reality. Nevertheless, everything is subject to change. No doubt Adam's transgression lies at the root of this process. Certainly we can attribute old age and death to sin, Adam's that is. In fact, the planet and EVERYTHING on it is subject to decrepitude. Perhaps we'll get to discuss this with him at the Gathering. Only joking of course. Still the facts remain, all things material are temporal. Why?

Genesis 3:17-20

And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life;

Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

A cursed planet! But fear not, there's hope!!!

Romans 8:18-25

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

Oh what a day that will be!!!

Revelation 21:1-5

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Revelation 22:1-5

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner* of fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month:

and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

That sounds like the place for me! What about you? Think of it, no more curse. What a wonderful future we have to look forward to! In the meantime what shall we do so as to enjoy order and stability? Simple, live according to the rules. What rules? Why God's of course. He always sets forth His rules for right living in a clear and logical fashion. As long as we adhere to them all is well. When we ignore them we veer off course and get into trouble. Even from the onset of man's existence God sought to provide direction in this manner.

Genesis 2:16,17

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Very simple with minimal requirement and great promise. So

much freedom and so very few restrictions. Only one to be precise. Sadly, Adam disobeyed the rules and the consequences are still with us. We are all too familiar with them. Aren't we?

God, being as loving as He is and still desirous of His original intent, promised a deliverer. That person being Jesus Christ, God's Son, the Redeemer of mankind and the promised seed of Genesis 3:15. That promise has been realized. God's Son was born and did in fact execute the ministry and purpose to which God called him. We now wait for his Return.

But many years passed from the mention of this promise (as recorded in Genesis 3:15) to its initial fulfillment (as recorded in Luke 2:7). Man was in dire straights. Confusion and emptiness had taken the place of perfection and order. The beauty of life was now severely disrupted. To restore order and perfection God gave rules. These we know as the Law of Moses, often referred to as The Commandments of which ten are generally thought of. The Mosaic Law was more extensive than defined initially by the Ten but the Ten do cover comprehensively the gambit of life. God gave them to restore order and give man confidence in his dealings with both man and God.

Psalms 19:7-14

The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins*; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

The Law of God gives direction and when followed order and stability. Without the Law of God we wouldn't even know what sin is. The Law defined it for man so that man could walk in light rather than darkness.

Romans 7:7

What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

Sin was in the world before Moses but the Law of God identified it as such and made it apparent.

Romans 7:12

Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

It wasn't the law that was at fault but rather man's inability to keep the law. You see man has had a long standing difficulty with abiding by the rules. Thankfully, with the shedding forth of holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, man has been given the spiritual wherewithal to live in light of God's Word. We now harken unto a greater law, the law of love. When we walk in love the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us.

Romans 8:1-6

*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

If we love God we will walk in His Word. This is being spiritual, this is walking by the spirit.

II John 1:6

And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

God has perpetually sought our love, this is the basis of keeping His commandment and always has been.

Deuteronomy 10:12-16

And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *is* the LORD'S thy God, the earth *also*, with all that therein *is*.

Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, *even* you above all people, as *it is* this day.

Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.

Rules give order to life. We are confident when we know our parameters. When the rules are unclear or subject to change, we are uneasy. To help you understand this I offer you the concept of income tax.

Once a year (at least) we Americans must pay our federal government. This revenue is collected by the Internal Revenue Service, the IRS. If you were to ask the average American businessman what his single greatest problem is, he would tell you Federal Income Tax. None of us enjoy handing over our hard earned cash. This is exacerbated by the lack of sensible use of said funds and further exacerbated by unclear tax rules. You know what I mean, I know you do. Haven't you ever wished they would simplify things? How many times I've thought, "Just tell me how much I owe and I'll be happy to pay!" Frankly, I think the entire process would be much more tolerable if only I could understand the rules! To make matters even worse, they change them every year. Nothing undermines confidence and promotes confusion as readily as unclear or dubious rules.

Should you be an outdoors man I'm confident you understand this as you've been forced to grapple with hunting and fishing regulations. Who can understand them? Take salmon fishing for example; it's up to you to figure out which confluence of what rivers at which mile marker you are free to fish. Depending of course on if you're down or upstream of what ADF&G marker and what day at what time, near which weir. Furthermore, with or without bait, single or treble hooks allowed or not and can you keep the fish or must you release it? If you are going to release it, better not take it out of the water. Oh yes, don't snag it either and immediately write your catch down on your soggy license with that pen that doesn't work. Should you shoot that Grizzly that's willing to kill you for your fish (that you haven't caught as yet) or not? You

might go to jail or at the very least pay a very hefty fine if it's your fault. How could it be your fault that he wants to maul you? Because you didn't pay attention to the rules that's why! Aren't you glad the nice Park Ranger has been watching you all along waiting for just the right opportunity to point out your errors? You must admit it's comforting to know that you're not alone. Right? Argggggghhh!!!#@\$% I really didn't want to fish anyway!

Does this sound familiar to some of you? How about that item you purchased with the "life time" guarantee? Or the computer software with the 24 hour technical support? It does smart when the toll free number has been changed as have the rules governing your "life time" guarantee. Doesn't it? Rules are needful, to be sure. But they must be clear and they must not fluctuate.

Sometimes men change the rules midstream. They do this to insure the success of their own personal agenda. This is never right and always unacceptable. We have rules that govern the playing field in all sporting events and officials to insure that they are upheld. Men change the rules of play on other men because of a lack of integrity. Evil men are lacking in character and consequently frame their definitions to bond their conquest. This is not how God works. With God the rules don't change. His Word is solid because He is. With God a lie will always be wrong. Sin is sin and no manner of manipulation of terms and arrangements will change that. His Word is His Will! It will never be acceptable to steal, murder, commit adultery, bear false witness or take the Lord's name in vain. God must

be first and we must never worship any other god before Him. Period! No excuses, these things don't change. What's wrong is wrong and will forever be wrong, likewise with what's right. We should rejoice in this. The solidarity of God and His Word gives a man firm footing. You can stand upon His Word with confidence knowing that it will never change.

Isaiah 40:8

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Isn't that a wonderful reality! We ought to be very thankful for this. Imagine what would happen if God decided tomorrow to change His Word? What would happen if He decided to add requirements to salvation? Or what if He changed the criteria for sin and forgiveness? We can be sure of our salvation because His Word doesn't change. His promise will not fail! Consider the following record:

Malachi 3:1-6

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

And he shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they

may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

As bad as these folks were the Lord did not consume them. He is a God of love and mercy, a God of grace, forgiveness and great compassion. If He weren't they would have been consumed. If He were to change and no longer be what His Word declares, all mankind would be doomed. But He will not change. What He was in the beginning He is today. What He is today, He will be tomorrow. He always has been, He always will be and He will not change. Hallelujah!!!

The same can be said for His Son.

Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

The same, as we have seen, is true for His Word. I for one am glad of it!

As it stands now we are each fragile and subject to failure. There is a day

coming when this will change but none of us knows the time or season. While we wait for God's Son from heaven we should strive for personal integrity. This will be pleasing to our Father and add dignity to our walk. This we can do because of the solidarity of God and His Word. It's from that source that I offer you the following methods.

**Ecclesiastes 5:1-7**

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.

For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice *is known* by multitude of words.

When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for [he hath] no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.

Better *is it* that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay.

Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it *was* an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?

For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there are* also *divers* vanities: but fear thou God.

Be like God, if He says it He means it. His Word is His Will. Make your word your will. Don't say it if you don't mean it. There's no excuse for not keeping your word. Remember, excuses only satisfy the people giving them. If you make a promise keep it, or don't make it. Better yet, don't make any promises and then you don't have to worry about breaking them.

**Matthew 5:33-37**

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

**James 5:12**

But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

God is faithful to His Word, He doesn't change. Imagine if He did! What ever would we do if the oxygen exchange principle ceased to work? How would we keep warm if the Sun

refused to shine. What if gravity failed? All these things are faithful because our God is faithful. They continue because He said they would.

**Genesis 8:22**

While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

These things remain because God said so. The sun will rise tomorrow morning and in the evening it will set. The rain shall come as will seedtime and harvest because God said so. Consider the faithfulness of the creation, of physics if you will. Awesome and yet God's Word is that much more solid. If He promises, if He says it, it will absolutely be so. There's nothing that can be done to break the Word of God. Think how much that means to YOU!

**Jeremiah 33:20-22**

Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season;

*Then* may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.

As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.

What a magnificent God we have!!! His Word is so awesome that it defies human comprehension. God's

promise to David was as stalwart as the day and the night. That is, neither could be stopped. Faithful, faithful is our God! More sure is His Word than the rising and setting of the Sun.

Life may foil us, change the rules mid-game and discourage us. We may be stopped and even bound. But not God and His Word! His Word has stood the test of time. It's as solid as He is. It was the Truth, is the Truth and always will be the Truth. Now let's obey it!

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## The Counselor's Corner

### Gravity

Gravity is fascinating. Without it we would float around helplessly. She's a faithful helper. But cross her and she's ruthless and unforgiving. Gravity is a physical law instituted by God for the benefit of mankind. We love her even if she oft times reminds us of our limitations. Gravity is VERY, VERY IMPORTANT! I doubt if we could live without her. In fact, I'm told that astronauts living in zero gravity for extended periods of time are subject to grave health concerns. The body suffers greatly without gravity, the muscles atrophy and bone density is compromised. Imagine that! Who would have thought that gravity supports the skeleton, foundation of the human body. If that weren't enough, there is reason to believe the internal organs are also affected in some way. All due to living in an environment of zero gravity or weightlessness.

However, there's another type of

gravity with which I'm concerned. This one is perhaps even more important than the one that keeps us "grounded" securely on good old *terra firma*.

Consider the following guidance given to those who would lead God's people:

**I Timothy 3:1-5**

This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

One might argue that the above passage was intended for Timothy. That's true. Notwithstanding, it has tremendous guidance and conveys poignant requirements to all who serve as overseers. Because this is found in Scripture we can be assured that these demands are godly ones. As such, all of God's people should embrace them. Especially those of us who have children! Parenting is a momentous position of oversight.

Look at verse 4 again:

One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in

subjection with all gravity [*semnotes* = the characteristic of a person which entitles to reverence, respect and dignity];

The Phillips New Testament in Modern English renders the verse this way:

He must have proper authority in his own household, and be able to control and command the respect of his children.

Obviously if he can't how can he take care of God's called out?

James Moffat in his translation gives the following:

. . . able to manage his own household properly and to keep his children submissive and perfectly respectful . . .

And The New English Bible:

He must be one who manages his own household well and wins obedience from his children, and a man of the highest principles.

Obviously, if your children respect and honor you they will obey you. It's when they are disrespectful that they are disobedient. When one is grave they are serious and dignified. Our children must view us as such. God does not take this lightly. He is VERY serious about respect and demands that a child honor his father and mother.

Exodus 20:12

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

This is one of the Ten

Commandments! It's sin to break a commandment. To dishonor your father and mother then, would be sin. That's right sin! When your child is disobedient and disrespectful to you it's not cute, it's sin. God's promise to those who honor their parents is longevity. What do you think the consequence of breaking this commandment might be? Before we go any further I'd like to show you that this commandment has not become obsolete.

Ephesians 6:1-3

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

There is no exception to this. It's NEVER okay or acceptable for a child to be disobedient or disrespectful to his/her parents. The Word of God doesn't say, "Honor your father and mother as long as they ..." or "Honor your father and mother except when you're right and they're wrong." Let me say this now, as you get older you may need to "suck it up" when it comes to your parents should they still be alive. So get ready to do just that because there may come a day when your aged dad/mom does something to you which you think entitles you to be disrespectful. Think again! Honor thy father and mother has never been amended! We aren't talking about the Constitution, we're talking about the Word of God.

Remember the Lord's prayer?

Matthew 6:9

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

First, he taught them the concept of God as Father. Next, he reminded them of the reverence that must be given to God. Hallowed be thy name! I honor and revere Thy Holy Name!

Consider how the Lord prayed as recorded in the following verse:

John 17:11

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*.

I come to Thee Holy Father. He certainly recognized his relationship to God. He knew God was his Father but he never insulted Him with hackneyed appellations such as "pops" or "daddio." Why? Because he honored and respected his Father, as we should. Not just our Heavenly Father but also our earthly one. While we're at it let's not forget mother. God considers this to be of the utmost importance.

Notice the groupings in the following passage:

Romans 1:28-32

And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit,

malignity; whisperers,

Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Do you want your child to keep this company? If not, you must see to it that they are obedient and respectful.

II Timothy 3:1-4

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

The "last days" are measured from the day of Pentecost until the Lord's Return. People behave today precisely as the above verses declare. They have been doing so with increasing frequency and intensity since God poured out His gift some 2,000 years ago.

As we approach the end of this age we can expect to see these things grow in scope and popularity. I've already seen this in my short years here upon Earth. Haven't you? Do we want our children to fall into the above category? Do we want them to be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, etc.?

I didn't write this passage but it's evident to me that disobedient to parents is sandwiched by blasphemers and unthankful. How important is it then that we earn our children's respect? This is accomplished by being the kind of men and women that God's Word says we are to be. We fathers must manage our households properly and keep our children in submission so that they're perfectly respectful. Our wives must do their best to support us so that the proper authority is exercised as God would have it to be.

Gravity is a big deal! It's a law and you can't break a law but you might just break you neck in the attempt. You do your child a grave disservice when you allow disrespect to you or your spouse. Disobedience will never promote a happy healthy childhood. Sin in a child's life may hinder the construction of a God-fearing man or woman. What do you want for your child?

"One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;"

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