



# On The Frontier



“For The Glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel”

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*All Scripture presented is from the Authorized King James Version unless otherwise noted. Comments and notations by this author within Scripture text will appear in brackets.*

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## Misleading Appearances And The Value of Content

We are often led to premature conclusions based upon that which presents itself outwardly. The prophet Samuel was no different in this regard.

**I Samuel 16:1**

And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

God “dethroned” Saul due to his unrepentant disobedience and continued refusal to admit guilt.

Consequently, Samuel was sent to anoint the one God had chosen as Saul’s replacement.

**I Samuel 16: 4-7**

And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD’S anointed *is* before him.

But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Unlike man, God looks on the inside. Most people judge things by that which is external, but not God. He looks on the heart.

You must understand that it is the heart that makes you who you are. The heart is where the real you is found and from the heart the real you is manifested. Thus, God’s Word exhorts us to pay special

attention to our hearts. The best and only way to assure that our hearts are acceptable before Him is to fill them with His Word.

**Proverbs 4:23**

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Consider how Darby renders this verse:

Keep thy heart more than anything that is guarded; for out of it are the issues of life.

Guard your heart above all things dear to you, for nothing is of greater importance. Again, the only way to do this is by filling it with God’s Word.

**Proverbs 4:20-23**

My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

God’s Word is life and health to both us and those to whom we speak. Providing of course it is believed (put into practice).

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**Hebrews 4:2**

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*.

So then, we must “mix” faith with the Word we’ve heard if we are to profit.

How then do we get faith?

**Romans 10:17**

So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Isn’t that marvelous! Imagine the very thing that we need to mix with faith brings us the same! What a wonderful God we have!

Having said that, we must understand that this hearing is not to be a “passive” one. Oh no, it is to be one that anticipates enthusiastically with all readiness to put into practice that which is heard.

**I Thessalonians 2:13**

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

God’s testimony regarding the saints at Thessalonica is indeed striking. Yet, when we consider the Bereans we find there is more than simply believing what one hears. There is, as they say, the extra mile to go.

**Acts 17:11**

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

The Bereans were considered more noble even than the wonderful saints at Thessalonica. Why? Because they searched the scriptures daily. This is something we all should be doing.

**II Timothy 2:15**

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

How else would you know if what you are being taught is true? Those who choose to be spoon fed all their days are subject to the diet choices of those who feed them. This is not to say that we are to reject the teachings of those who stand and speak for God. On the contrary, we prove the veracity of what we are taught by searching the scriptures. If what we are being taught agrees with God’s Word, HALLELUJAH! If not, we will know. Either way, we are the better for our searching.

To accept the doctrines set before us based on the size of the auditorium or the number in attendance is folly and a dereliction of Christian duty.

As for those that teach:

**James 3:1**

Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment. (ASV 1901)

It is advisable not to rush into the position of a teacher. That is, not without understanding the greater implications and responsibilities.

While we are all responsible for what we believe, those who teach are under far greater scrutiny. As well they should be, for the one can affect the many.

Therefore, we teachers need to be very diligent to teach the Word of God and ONLY the Word of God. This pertains to all who purport to be teachers, pastors, priests, bishops, cardinals, rabbi’s, etc. .

All true ministers of God teach His Word and nothing else. Those who do have earned tribute. Those who do not, condemnation. For, it is God they are to represent (by virtue of His Word) and NOT themselves.

**Romans 13:1-7**

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the

power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

[A side note here: This passage is often bastardized. Some Bible versions substitute minister and its related concepts with policeman, government and taxes. I often check the value of a given Bible version by going to Romans 13, it's a dead "give-away" regarding the honesty and value of the version.]

If we aren't familiar with God's Word how can we ascertain the soundness of the doctrines presented to us? For that matter, how else can we know if our hearts are right before God? That is, if we do not know what His Word says.

**Psalms 119:11**

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Should we be left to our own devices deceit would soon have its way with us.

**Proverbs 16:2**

All the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

**Jeremiah 17:9**

The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

The truth is, we cannot know our own hearts, not without God to cleanse and guide us.

**Jeremiah 10:23**

O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Thanks be to God that He has given us His Word, His Son and His spirit. Imagine where we would be if He hadn't!

This lack of ability on the part of mankind is why many are led to look at outward appearances. Large numbers and big buildings make a bigger impression on most than does the magnificent Word of God. These things ought not to be so. But they are and we must be aware of it.

Consider the gift you received for your birthday. Were you content with the wrapping paper alone? Or were you more interested in the

contents? Why then, would an ornate building hold a greater importance than a simple one? Or why is an event judged by the number in attendance? Do either of these truly make a difference in our relationship with the Almighty?

The solutions are simple, yet frustrating as this speaks to our fleshly old-man nature.

The spiritual man however, seeks content and does not confuse popular opinion with truth.

**Matthew 7:13,14**

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

The above was spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ. The things he spoke of were wrapped in the manners and customs of the day.

The cities in the lands and times of the Bible were surrounded by a high wall. This wall was intended to protect the inhabitants from their enemies. During the day the main gates would be open for commerce and the like. Through these gates the multitudes would pass. At night the main gates would be closed for reasons of security. However, there would always be a very small gate left open for the select few permitted the use of it.

Every Eastern man and woman understood that Jesus rejected public opinion and general consensus. He warned that they were no assurance for truth. Rather, a certain path to destruction.

The Way of Truth is by far “the road less traveled”. Nevertheless, it is the only one that leads to life.

So it is today. The major beliefs held by the many are not based upon the Bible. Most are based upon the doctrines and traditions of men, i.e., denominational creeds and dogmas.

To be sure, the largest denominations hold to the least amount of biblical truths. Yet, they are the far and away more “popular” than the sole individual holding forth the Bible in a one-on-one setting.

Many reject this notion because they simply cannot believe such large assemblies can be so wrong or that so many people can be deceived. But deceived they are.

Others simply choose appearance over truth. Among these are those who continue to confuse activity with accomplishment.

My question is, would they choose an empty filling station? How many times would anyone frequent a petrol station that failed to have product? Why then attend a church that teaches for doctrines the commandments, opinions and experiences of men? Can a mega-church save someone based upon its size and attendance? Are we saved

by a good music program? Is emotion a sufficient replacement for scripture? Frankly speaking, without God’s Word, any rock concert will do just as well. In fact, we might as well all have dinner and a movie, either would have just as much value as regards salvation.

Here’s what Jesus had to say about appearances:

Matthew 23:25-28

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

*Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men’s* bones, and of all uncleanness.

Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

He certainly disregarded appearance. Didn’t he?

The Pharisees were the religious leaders of the time. They looked the part. They dressed in the proper religious garb and spoke the correct religious jargon. They looked right but they were wrong. All wrong! So evil were they that Jesus compared them to whited

sepulchres. Clearly, no amount of care given the outward appearance of a grave purifies or gives life to the rotting corpses within.

Matthew 7:15

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

A false prophet is one who pretends to be sent by God. Consequently, the agenda of that “prophet” tends toward personal gain usually emerging in scandal.

False prophets are not a new thing, nor have they been done away with. Consider this dire warning:

I John 4:1-6

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Many false prophets! They’re all around us.

Verses 2-5

Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in

you, than he that is in the world.

They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

They = the false prophets.

We have overcome the false prophets because we know what God's Word says and we also have His spirit. It is the spirit and the Word that insulate us from these false prophets. When they speak of the world we know it because we know God's Word. And where we do not know the specifics of His Word, His spirit within lets us know something's not right.

Therefore, we are without excuse. We decide who we listen to and where we do it. No Word and we should leave. It's that simple.

Verse 6:

We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Romans 16:17-20

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Take note of who it is that causes divisions and teaches doctrines that are different from God's Word and spend your time elsewhere.

Verse 18:

For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their

own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

Everything they do is for their own advantage and this they do deceitfully.

Verses 19,20:

For your obedience is come abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

In the days ahead let us be as the Bereans. They received the Word with eagerness and daily searched the scriptures authenticating what was being taught. I trust after you read this article you will do likewise.

Proverbs 14:15

The simple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going.

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## Sue's News

This summer will mark 15 years since we left New York. When I see the City in TV shows and movies, I am taken aback by the immensity of the place. Even though I lived there for so many years, it seems so much bigger than life. There is nothing that comes close to that here in Alaska. Although Alaska is

huge, the cities are like small towns in comparison to New York.

I love living here, it's one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen. In the winter when the snow falls, it's so quiet and soft. I enjoy going out to our pasture and standing in the snowfall. If you hold your gloves out (mine are black), you can see the tiny, individual snowflakes that fall on them. Each one is work of art. Amazing!

On clear days, the sky is immense and can be colors of blue that are impossible to describe. There are so many stars in the sky at night that constellations are easily identified. The Big and Little Dippers are visible over our house all winter.

Because we live in a valley, we are surrounded by mountains. The view is something I will never tire of. Looking at the mountainous scenery as I drive pretty much anywhere, I am awed by the magnificence of God's creation.

Here, the snow is whiter (and deeper), the greens are greener and the colors are more vibrant than any place I have ever lived. If you haven't already, check out the photo albums on our website.

Our family is blessed and happy. Lydia is still with us but is planning a visit to the east coast sometime this year. She has some friends in the Boston area and will start out there. If things work out for a job and apartment, she just might stay there. We'll miss her but she is ready to make her own way. Linus IV and his boys are

doing great. The boys like their school and Arin tells me he is the smartest kid in his class. I don't doubt it. Malachi is growing up so fast. He's getting tall and is a very handsome kid. Of course, as Grandmom, I am just a little biased. - Love Sue

Email me anytime at [sjm@mtaonline.net](mailto:sjm@mtaonline.net). I'd love to hear from you.

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The Anvil of God's Word

Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door,  
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;  
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,  
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,  
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"  
"Just one," said he, and then, with twinkling eye,

"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."  
"And so," I thought, "the Anvil of God's Word

For ages skeptic blows have beat upon,  
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,  
The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone."

-- John Clifford

Hammer away, ye rebel bands!  
Your hammers break, God's anvil stands!

**One Man Awake**

One man awake awakens another,  
The second awakens his next-door neighbor,  
And three awake can rouse the town,  
And turn the whole place upside down.  
And many awake can raise such a fuss  
That it finally awakens the rest of us.  
One man up with dawn in his eyes, multiplies.

-- Author Unknown