

On The Frontier

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

In A New York Minute

by Linus A. Mathis III

New York is preceded by its reputation. Famous for being the "financial capital" of the world, pizza, bagels, Broadway, the Statue of Liberty and much more. Glamorized on the Silver Screen from Fifth Avenue to Hell's Kitchen. Who doesn't know where the "Gorilla Building" is? Both in our Nation and world wide New York is mimicked. I've had Coney Island hot dogs in Ohio and New York steak in Alaska. I've even had New York bagels in Florida.

Some of New York's fame is warranted and some of it is not. This is also true of its infamy. Much of that is exaggerated. But, some of the better known characteristics describe her to a tee. Being born and raised there, I can assure you that it is the epitome of hustle and bustle. Rush, rush, rush does not begin to describe the pace known to most New Yorkers. Things move at such high velocity that language had to be adapted. For instance, a brief pause in service, at say McDonald's, can elicit a verbal response such as, "today, alright!" Or, "while I'm still young, okay!" Waiting for a hamburger you might hear, "what, are we waiting for the cow to die of old age?"

In any case, fast food is really *FAST!* I'm reminded of a diner I used to frequent (the type of eatery, called a diner, that I'm thinking of is peculiar to the east coast) where the waiter, who was also the short order cook,

would put the coffee cup on the table before I was actually seated. This he did while rehearsing the days specials and handing me a menu. It was called the Golden Egg and it was run (as most New York diners are) by a Greek family each of whom spoke broken English. It was neat, you could be in and out of there in a "New York Minute."

Yes, New York runs on such high octane that anywhere things occur rapidly they are said to happen in a "New York Minute." Interestingly enough, this concept of wanting it yesterday has really caught on. But, I'm sad to say, it isn't the best possible way to live. You see, it doesn't leave much room for patience and makes it next to impossible to maintain a peaceful mind-set. But, that is where people are headed. I want it now, no, I want it last week. This attitude of impatience also builds for itself un-thankfulness and lust. Where did we ever get the idea that we must immediately have everything that we see? Not from God, that's for sure! How about trying this on for size?

Hebrews 13:5

Let your conversation [manner of life] be without covetousness [not loving money]; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

If I believe this, that He will never leave nor forsake me, then I will not be concerned with the immediate acquisition of material goods. Life insists we be impatient, but trust in

the Lord builds solidarity and peace.

Psalms 37:34-40

Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it*.

I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.

Yet he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man *is* peace.

But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

But the salvation of the righteous *is* of the LORD: *he is* their strength in the time of trouble.

And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

Philippians tells us HOW to exchange anxiety for peace.

Philippians 4:6,7

Be careful [anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall

keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

These two verses contain the best possible treatment for anxiety and stress available to man. Imagine what would happen if the medical profession endorsed and prescribed them! This is wonderful but don't you still have an itch for the instantaneous? Would you like to scratch it? I present to you that which causes the "New York Minute" to pale. This event described in Corinthians will occur at a speed inexpressible by the aforementioned phrase.

I Corinthians 15:51-58

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

In a moment [*atomos* - that which is so small it cannot be cut in two, indivisible. Folks that's very small!], in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Talk about your "New York Minute!" Look what happens when our Lord returns! The dead will be made alive and the living made immortal while being caught up to the clouds (I Thessalonians 4:13-ff). This entire event will be take but an *atomos*, the smallest measurable amount of time. His Return will occur in the twinkling of an eye. How many times do you think you've twinkled your eyes reading this paragraph?

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

This is tailor made for those of us who favor LIFE in the fast lane! I'm enthusiastic about this! How about you? Our gathering together unto him is REALLY worth the wait. Savor and anticipate this event in your heart now, because when it happens, it will be quick, really quick. Given all that, I can be (are you ready for this?) very patient. In fact, without the Hope of Christ's Return alive in your heart, you will lack patience AND endurance.

James 5:6,7

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the

Lord draweth nigh.

In a "New York Minute?" NAHH! In an *atomos*! In the twinkling of an eye!!! Now you're talking my language.

The Counselor's Corner

With Rev. Linus A. Mathis III

"The End Of All Confusion"

Our current time period has been referred to by many as the information age. Really, there's no need to remain ignorant, the tools for learning are at hand. Yet, from all appearances there is more confusion today than ever before. How can this be? We have so much at our disposal. Just think of it! We can get updated on current affairs and world events any time we like. Some news channels are even aired 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The private lives of public figures are openly examined and debated. Self-proclaimed pundits invite the participation of the viewing audience via telephone, the Internet, or census (that would be where an arrangement is made with the telephone company charging the caller for the call, e.g. 1-888-thumbs-up or 1-888-thumbs-down.).

The catastrophic becomes more absorbing with the utilization of computer enhanced graphics, animated titles, theme music and the like. More details are brought forth daily, each carefully scrutinized and elaborated upon. The television producers have become masters at converting the mundane into the intriguing. Every diverse opinion and scenario is entreated. But, you must admit, we are informed!

Today even the simplest lay person can read the latest medical findings and even view surgical procedures in the comfort of their home and may I add, on a regular basis. In fact, just recently thousands logged onto the Internet to witness the birth of a child. Are we making progress or what? Speaking of the Internet, think of the potential that represents. Pick a topic, any topic, do a net search and you will likely find thousands, perhaps millions of web-sites bristling with information.

So why are we so confused? Why in the midst of all this information do we lack the ability to make logical decisions? Why do so many questions linger and nag at us? One would think that such an abundance of information would bring peace to us and not discord. However, the evidence is irrefutable. Things are more complex and people are more confused. Life has not become easier, it has in fact, become more difficult. Today's homeowner may have more gadgets but they also have more turmoil and stress. A modern housewife may have a microwave oven, dish washer, ice cube making self-defrosting refrigerator, self-cleaning oven, central vacuum cleaner and no wax flooring, but she doesn't have more tranquility in her life. What she does have are more family problems and less satisfying solutions. She is inundated by the confusion that is brought into her life daily from numerous resources. She is often overwhelmed and flustered by the things that life introduces, as are her husband and children. Each of them may be affected differently but none of them escape. Need I mention that the unmarried suffer the same rigors? None of us are exempt!

So then, what is the answer? Well, I'd like to offer one solution. Though this may not be the absolute final word, I am confident that you can see an end to all confusion. It's simple really. You see, confusion is the result of consulting multiple reference centers. If you would like to terminate confusion in your life, limit yourself to one reference center per topic. Let me give you an example of confusion. Diet and nutrition! Oh yes, you know that's confusing. One source says that you shouldn't eat fat and that you should only ingest moderate amounts of protein. Another swears that fat and protein should comprise the largest portion of your intake. One directs you to eat carbohydrates another warns against it. One test result blames animal protein for cholesterol another source insists that the lack of minerals is the real culprit. There are those who advise against eating carbohydrates and proteins in the same meal but allow for the consumption of both if they are not taken together. Some demand water with the meal others forbid it. Some count calories others scoff and count carbs. There are vegetarians and vegans. Those who propound that you eat nothing but fruit in the morning. Much attention has been given supplements, that is, only if they are the *RIGHT* ones. What about vitamins? Exercise? What kind should I do? The list is long and I can't possibly cover it in all in this article. But I imagine that by now you are getting the picture.

As if all the confusion regarding diet, health and nutrition weren't bad enough, enter the medical profession. Just about the time you think you know what they said is good for you and what is bad, they change their minds. I even heard it said recently

that cigarette smoking might possibly limit the risk for breast cancer, but not for lung. ARGGHH!!!! PLEASE GIVE ME A BREAK! It reminds me of the Corinthian church addressed by God via the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

I Corinthians 14:26

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

They ALL had something to contribute. But, it wasn't edifying, it didn't build up the hearer. God reminds them in this same record:

I Corinthians 14:33

For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

If you read the record in its entirety you will find that they were directed to do things ONE AT A TIME and do them decently and in order. Why? To avoid confusion and build up those present.

If you want to eliminate confusion, eliminate multiple reference centers. If you ask ten equally intelligent folks the same question you will likely get ten different answers. The result in that equation will be confusion. Picking one source as your authority goes a very long way to eliminating confusion. Whatever the subject, stick to one center of reference. That is, until that source proves itself unqualified or faulty. Inaccuracies will arise if they exist and if they do, get another center of reference. Not to worry, there are plenty available! Even if you pick the wrong one, guess what, you will not be confused. You

may be wrong, but at least you will be clear in your decision making. It could be worse, and often is, you could be wrong AND confused.

I made up my mind well over 20 years ago, that for me, my sole source for truth would be the Bible. The Bible is my ONLY rule for faith and practice. So, if the Bible is right, I'm right, if it's wrong I'm wrong. But it isn't wrong, it's always right because it's God's Word and He's never wrong. But, either way, I haven't been confused since I made that decision. Now you may not believe the Bible and that's your choice, but you should limit your sources. Even if you choose something other than the Bible for your daily decision making, you should stick to the single source as much as possible. If you prefer Dr. Spock (or Mr.) for guidance in child rearing, so be it. But, stick with him. If you mix in other centers for reference then I can guarantee you that when it comes to child rearing, you are going to be confused.

I suggest that you make your center of reference the Word of God but if you don't, I encourage you to apply this principle in your life. You will not regret it. Don't let anyone talk you out of it once you have or you'll be right back where you started, confused.

Since I have chosen the Scriptures you can rest assured that as a counselor I don't offer my opinion. I offer Biblical solutions in counseling, one and only one reference center for truth. So, if ever you ask me for counsel, and I invite you to, be warned, I don't give opinions.

-The Counselor's Corner also appears in Alaska Parenting Magazine-

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