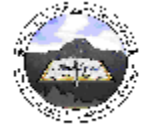




On The Frontier



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

Vol XIV No.2

July/August 2006

Editors Note#

This issue of “On The Frontier” contains a compilation of articles written for our local newspaper “The Frontiersman.” By doing this we wish to give you, the reader, an idea of how news-media may be utilized to further the Gospel. Hopefully this will inspire you to pursue your local resources for the same purpose.

Happy Father’s Day To My Three Fathers

The genesis of Father’s Day began in the heart of a woman listening to a Mother’s Day sermon in a Spokane, Washington church in 1910. The sacrifices of motherhood being ennobled, Sonora Smart Dodd came to appreciate her father for the hero that he truly was. William Jackson Smart was a Civil War veteran widowed at an early age, his young wife leaving him to fend for their six children. When Sonora realized the depth of her father’s selfless commitment, she also became mindful of the unsung efforts of fathers everywhere. Consequently, June 5th (her father’s birthday) was chosen for a local observation of Father’s Day. The town’s ministers as well as the Spokane YMCA wholeheartedly endorsing this celebration which was soon noted in newspapers across the country. Although this idea was widely commended for national observance it was not made official until 1966 when then President

Lyndon Johnson proclaimed the third Sunday in June as Father’s Day. And finally in 1972 then President Richard Nixon established its permanence.

I loved my biological father and sorely miss him. It would be grand to honor him (and I do) at every remembrance. However, there are two other fathers that must also be acknowledged and demand mentioning. Prominence belonging to God, my Heavenly Father and gratitude for Abraham my father of faith. You see, each and every Christian has three fathers.

Regarding Abraham the appellation of father is figurative and suggests origin or source. Some other examples of this type of usage are as follows:

Genesis 4:20,21
And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.

And his brother’s name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

I Chronicles 4:14
And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of the valley of Charashim; for they were craftsmen.

This should not seem odd to us as both historical and modern usage remain popular. For instance, Thomas Jefferson is known as the father of invention and Alexander Graham Bell the father of the telephone. In fact, Wikipedia has a huge list of those who are considered to be the father OR mother of something.

Abraham is:

Genesis 17:4b . . . father of many nations.

Romans 4:11b . . . the father of all them that believe,

Romans 4:12a . . . the father of circumcision . . .

Abraham’s uncompromising faith earned him the unique distinction of “father” both to the circumcision (Jew) and the uncircumcision (Gentile).

Romans 4:16
Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

As spirit, God has not a gender as we humans know it. But as the Origin and Source of creation itself, He is Father! However, when it comes to mankind, He is only the Father of those He has fathered. The first to present God as Father being Jesus.

Matthew 6:9
After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

This is literal for the believer, not figurative.

I John 3:2a ASV Beloved, now are we children of God, . . .

God is also the Father of Jesus Christ!

I Peter 1:3a Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . .

This makes Jesus our brother! Talk about a BIG brother! Wow! Spiritually linked to Jesus Christ and God for all eternity! That gives you a fantastic heritage and plenty to cheer about!

God is also:

Ephesians 1:17b . . . the Father of glory . . .

Hebrews 12:9c . . . the Father of spirits . . .

James 1:17b . . . the Father of lights

Of course God is so much more than I could even know, much less list. Nevertheless, He is my Father! How thankful I am to have such a wonderful Father! How thankful we all should be for all of our fathers.

Some of us may not have had solid relationships with our biological fathers but God understands this and compensates.

Psalms 68:5a A father of the fatherless, . . .

As a Christian you have three fathers and you can have a rock solid relationship with at least one of them.

Ephesians 1:3

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

When it comes to our Heavenly Father, every day is Father's Day.

June 18, 2006

The Truth, The Whole Truth And Nothing But The Truth

A wise consumer usually looks for products that are full strength. This depends on the product but generally speaking, that which is diluted is weakened. Having said that, some things need to be diluted. Commodities such as anti-freeze, insecticides, medicines, bleach, solvents, dyes, paint, etc.. All need some thinning or watering down to be useful. You need to know which to weaken and how much. For instance, a weed trimmer with a two cycle engine operates on a 40 to 1 gasoline/oil mix. Too much oil will foul the sparkplug, too little will burn out the engine. Notwithstanding, many things need to be used full strength for effectiveness. To mix or not to mix, that is the question. But when it comes to truth it must be full strength with nothing mixed in.

II Corinthians 2:17 (YLT)

for we are not as the many, adulterating the word of God, but as of sincerity—but as of God; in the presence of God, in Christ we do speak.

To adulterate is to make impure by adding extraneous, improper, or inferior ingredients.

II Corinthians 4:1-2 (KJV)

Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of

God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

Weymouth Version - Nay, we have renounced the secrecy which marks a feeling of shame. We practice no cunning tricks, nor do we adulterate God's Message. But by a full clear statement of the truth we strive to commend ourselves in the presence of God to every human conscience.

This conveys the idea of adulterating for the sake of making a profit by the process. Merchants at the time were in the habit of adulterating their commodities for the sake of gain. A modern example would be the barkeep who tops off his liquor bottles with water so as to swindle his inebriated clientele.

The Apostle Paul by Divine revelation declared that neither he nor Timothy watered down the Word of God! This is a requirement for all Christian ministers.

II Corinthians 4:3-5

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

They didn't preach themselves or their opinions, just the Word.

When I go to the local filling station I expect gasoline to come out of the

pump. If the pump is always empty, I go elsewhere. I'm not interested in the personality, opinion, political commentary or personal experience of the proprietor as that will not run my vehicle. Why then, when it comes to God's Word, do we not notice the many empty "filling stations"?

Today, far too many "ministers" use a verse or two as a spring board for their political and religious views. They begin with, "This is the text for today . . ." and launch into ideologies which have no biblical basis whatever. I don't know about you, but if I want political commentary I don't go to Church for it. It's hypocritical for those who are such avid proponents of "separation" of Church and State to find room for politics on their podiums. God forbid that a biblical tenant should be found in government (though our founding documents were based on Scripture) but it's a-okay for the "minister" to give political annotation. What arrogance! This is along the lines of, "do what I say, not what I do."

I also don't want to open a book only to find that the author has used the title to lure me in and expose me to his personal ideologies and agendas. An individual seeking biblical truth is not interested in current events or a skewed take on administrative figures. The Bible is not to be used as bait. The Bible is not an aid to religious devotion either. It is the Word of Life and to mix superfluous information with it is to handle the Word of God deceitfully and adulterate His message! Personal opinion, experience, politics, situation ethics, religion and current events are all impure, extraneous, improper and inferior. They should never be mixed with the Word of God!

II Timothy 4:2
Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

July 2, 2006

Don't Take My Word For It, Read If For Yourself

When studying Paul's journeys we cannot help but notice the accolades given the Bereans.

Acts 17:10-11
And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews.

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.

What were the Thessalonians like?

I Thessalonians 1:2,3
We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

I Thessalonians 1:6,7
And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

So that ye were ensamples [examples or patterns] to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

The Thessalonians were examples to ALL the believers in the region! What made the Bereans more noble?

For starters, ". . . they received the word with all readiness of mind." Their fundamental attitude was an eager welcoming of God's Word to which they gave serious attention. Therefore, God saw them as noble. They weren't interested in opinions, experience, religion or politics. No! The Word was their sole interest which is exactly what Paul gave them!

Regarding God's Word, it's vital that anyone alleging to declare it document their assertions. Anyone can state what they "think" the Bible says. But if you respect the intelligence of your audience you will prove your statements. This is why I display the Bible version with the reference. Far too many "ministers" misquote scripture. Furthermore, it's misleading to have people think that one "version" is THE preferred text. It's also fallacious to declare the more "modern" versions as most accurate. In fact, the opposite is generally true. A careful study of God's Word may include comparative readings from numerous versions. This develops a more comprehensive understanding and protects the reader from the potential religious bias of the writer. In other words, they can read it for themselves.

Which brings us to the second great reason God esteemed the Bereans more noble than their contemporaries. They, ". . . searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." They didn't take Paul's word for it, they went to the scriptures to see if his teachings corroborated or contradicted the Word. They were

thrilled to receive the Word and they searched the scripture DAILY for verification. They did this because they yearned for truth and were willing to accept personal responsibility for their beliefs. This doesn't mean they were skeptical or critical of Paul's teachings. No indeed! They welcomed the Word eagerly. Notwithstanding, they recognized the importance of reading the Scripture for themselves. The burden of teaching may be on the teacher but the burden of learning is on the student. Those who follow blindly are as guilty of their plight as those who've misled them.

Jesus said:

Luke 6:39,40 WEY . . . "Can a blind man lead a blind man?" He asked; "would not both fall into the ditch?"

There is no disciple who is superior to his teacher; but every one whose instruction is complete will be like his teacher."

If you follow the teaching completely, you will be like the teacher. The object of teaching is action! Therefore, it behooves us to be certain the teaching is accurate. This is how you grow. Baby starts with milk and then proceeds to solid food. The first solid food is simple and yet baby has a chore mastering it.

I'll never forget how difficult it was for my daughter when she was fed her first solitary "Cheerio." But after a time she could consume mass quantities of the stuff. Clearly our ability to assimilate improves with maturity as does our competency with utensils. As we progress in maturity we also begin to make personal choices based upon fondness and appetite. So it is with Truth. At some point the "searcher" must discontinue

a spoon fed pre-digested regimen. Spiritual maturity begins with searching the scriptures daily, to see if the things we're told are so. This must be done from an eager (not cynical) and avid heart.

I Peter 2:2

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

Be sure to:

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.

July 16, 2002

War & Peace

My life has spanned all major conflicts from WWII to present. The former giving rise to an arms race known as the "Cold War." My childhood witnessed the fear of nuclear devastation. Civil defense drills were a regular occurrence, replete with sirens and media broadcast messages. In school we participated in bomb drills, being trained to seek cover under our desks. Imagine, a school desk providing protection from a nuclear blast! An absurd exercise in futility! Similar to an ostrich with its head stuck in the sand. Not unlike thinking peace may be had by acquiescing to our enemies.

Soon I learned what Jesus had to say about these things.

Matthew 24:6,7

And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

Notice also how he said, ". . . all [these things] must come to pass, . . ."

Believe me, if Jesus said these things must come to pass, then come to pass they must. However, he also said the end was not yet. Though no man knows the hour or day, it's obvious a number of events must take place first. Turmoil must first increase in intensity and frequency. I hope I'm not sounding like a "doomsday prophet" but the fact is, I didn't write the Book. I know there are those who discount the Book, but they do so to their own detriment. Jesus' words are substantiated historically and testified to by current events. Not to worry, there's nothing to fear, God will care for His own. Why then must there be war?

James 4:1-4

From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members?

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

War is a product of lust which begets the desire to kill so as to obtain (usually real estate).

As for world peace? That's not something the Scripture promises apart from the personal presence of the Lord Jesus. There will be peace, but not until the Lord brings it to pass.

Isaiah 2:2-4

And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

This certainly gives us a lot to look forward to! However, this shall not come to pass without there first being war. Why? Because many shall follow evil and rejecting the Lord will presume to defeat him.

Revelation 19:11

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Revelation 19:19

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war

against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

The good news? The Lord wins!

Lust and a rejection of God, His Word and His Son will continue until then as will war.

Matthew 10:34

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace, through him we have peace with God. In Jesus Christ we have peace, but in the world tribulation (John 16:33). One need only look around to see the urgency of the day. Read the Book for yourself!

August 6, 2006

Overcoming Evil With Good

The Lord Jesus said regarding good and evil:

Matthew 7:15-20

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

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

A man may profess godliness and by outward appearances seem pious. However, that which issues in the man's life is the only "litmus test." Jesus used trees to illustrate. A tree bearing fruit is easily identified. Surely an apple tree cannot produce peaches nor a peach tree apples. In like manner, an evil man cannot produce good fruit in his life.

Matthew 7:21

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

It's imperative that we learn to do God's Will! Simply saying "Lord, Lord" will not suffice.

Psalms 33:4

For the word of the LORD *is* right; and all his works *are done* in truth.

James 1:18-22

Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

Clearly, the Word of God is the Will of God!

You may hear folks say that “so and so” has a good heart. However, the contents not the container make for goodness.

Matthew 12:35

A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

You cannot take something out of the heart which has not previously been put in. If you want a chocolate chip cookie from the cookie jar you must first fill it with chocolate chip cookies.

Romans 12:19-21

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

At first glance the above passage seems contradictory. In truth it contains a wonderful Easternism (an idiomatic description of life in the East). One person rises early and starts a fire. A young boy then puts hot coals from the fire in earthen pottery and carrying this upon his head distributes warmth throughout the village. This joyous task warms the boy as he in turn brings warmth to others. In like fashion, even our enemies are warmed when we walk in love. Love is living on the higher plain. Love is the how of overcoming evil with good, despite the natural

tendency to respond to evil with evil. Love is the better way. Living love is God's Way!

Romans 12:17 WEY

Pay back to no man evil for evil. Take thought for what is right and seemly in every one's esteem.

This brings us to a very misunderstood verse in God's Word.

Matthew 5:39

But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

To resist evil is to pay back an evil with an evil, a curse for a curse, an insult for an insult, etc.. We are not to engage in evil grappling! Smiting an eastern man on the cheek was the greatest of insults. Consequently this verse is not speaking of self defense (which is acceptable and responsible) but rather the rejection of being baited by insults.

It's never the action of others that determines our living in love. It's our love for God and His Word.

I Peter 2:21

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

NOTES