



On The Frontier



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

Vol XV No.3

May/June 2007

Editors Note#

For the present “On The Frontier” will consist of a compilation of articles previously written for a column in “The Frontiersman,” our local newspaper. 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 Mother’s Day!

I’d like to wish a happy Mother’s Day to all of our precious mothers. They are the ones who bound up our wounds, cleaned up our messes, did our laundry, cooked our meals, checked our schoolwork and sat with us when we fell ill. As we grew and explored our social boundaries, mom sacrificed many a night of sleep. Every mother knows this doesn’t end until she passes on. Our wonderful dads do the same thing but none can deny the centrality of mom’s role. It would be a tragedy indeed to relegate our display of appreciation to only one day a year. We need to show our indebtedness daily, not annually.

I am denied this privilege as my mom fell asleep many years ago. I will never forget who she was and what she did for me. After becoming a minister my mom wrote me a letter and in it told me that God had answered yet another prayer for her. You see, when I was yet a little boy she prayed that someday I would serve God. What could be more

beautiful, tender and powerful than a mother’s prayer for her child? I long for our Lord’s Return when I shall once again see her face-to-face. What a day that will be!

That we honor our mothers is a commandment of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:2-3
honour thy father and mother,

The above verse is reiterating one of the ten commandments, making this a primary directive. As we continue reading we find this command has a wonderful promise attached to it.

Verse 3:
which is the first command with a promise, ‘That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live a long time upon the land. (1898 Young’s Literal Translation)

Who among us doesn’t desire a long and fruitful life?

Genesis 3:20
And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. (1769 Authorized Version)

Eve certainly wasn’t perfect, seduced by the serpent she and Adam sinned, thus creating a “chasm” between God and man. To close this breach, God would have to provide a redeemer. Since the problem came from man, the solution would have to come from man also (I Corinthians 15:21,22; Romans 5:12-17).

Genesis 3:14-16

And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

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.

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow [labor] and thy conception; in sorrow [labor] thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. (1769 Authorized Version)

Not long after, Eve thought she had the promised seed (Genesis 4:1). Sadly, this proved to be Cain. Eve knew all women would have the physiological potential to bear the “seed” (Jesus the Christ). But it wasn’t until many, many years later that a woman did in fact receive. That woman was Mary the mother of our Lord. God had to wait all those years for a suitable mother for His Son. But why? What set Mary apart? That answer is found in Mary’s response to Gabriel’s announcement regarding her first pregnancy (Jesus had half brothers and sisters, same mom different dad (Matthew 13:55,56; Mark 6:3).

Luke 1:38a

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. . . . (1769 Authorized Version)

Mary was bound to serve the Lord and said . . . “be it unto me according to thy word”! A servant willing to make God’s Word her will. God does nothing without honoring man’s free-will. He had to wait all those years for a woman who would make her will subservient to His Word. In doing this she gave birth to the Saviour, God’s only begotten Son the Prince of Peace.

The origins of Mother’s Day are mixed based on culture. Ours is fashioned after Juliet Ward Howe’s vision of a holiday celebrating peacemaking.

Having said that, true peace is only available to those who accept the Prince of Peace!

Happy Mother’s Day to all and peace upon those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

May 13, 2007

Happy Birthday Church!

This weekend we Americans will be remembering the many heroes who gave their lives in defense of freedom.

Memorial Day was instituted initially to honor Union soldiers killed during the Civil War and expanded after World War I to include all the dead or missing from any military action or war. Originally called Decoration Day, due to the observance of visiting and decorating the graves of our

fallen heroes, Memorial Day is a day to give thanks for America’s brave sons and daughters.

Freedom is not free and must never be taken for granted. Here are some quotes I find inspirational and poignant, perhaps you will too:

The patriot's blood is the seed of Freedom's tree. - Thomas Campbell (Scottish poet 1777-1844).

Freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, the spirit of men and so it must be daily earned and refreshed - else like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die. - Dwight D. Eisenhower (34th President of the U.S.A., American soldier and Supreme Commander of the Allied forces during WWII 1890-1969).

It is easy to take liberty for granted, when you have never had it taken from you. - Dick Cheney (sitting Vice President of the U.S.A., born 1941)

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it. - Thomas Paine (pamphleteer, revolutionary, radical intellectual, and deist 1737-1809).

THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing

its value. - Thomas Paine (a pamphleteer, revolutionary, radical, intellectual and voice of the common man. 1737-1809)

They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety. - Benjamin Franklin, Historical Review of Pennsylvania, 1759 (author, political theorist, politician, printer, scientist, inventor, civic activist, diplomat and Founding Father 1706-1790).

There are many other quotes we could recognize, I chose the above to magnify American patriotism and bravery. It is, after all, Memorial Day weekend!

That being said there’s yet another celebration to acknowledge, the birth of Christianity and the Christian Church! No bravery nor sacrifice exceeds our Lord’s without which none of us would know freedom at any price! Consequently, this Sunday we will be recognizing what’s known among Christians as Pentecost. This event marks the original outpouring of God’s gift of holy spirit. Many people think Christianity was founded during Christ’s earthly ministry but you cannot be a Christian until you have Christ in you.

Colossians 1:27

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (1769 Authorized Version)

This is a spiritual reality! The Lord referred to God’s gift of holy spirit as the comforter and spirit of truth (John 15:26). He also called it the promise of the Father (Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4), power from on

high (Luke 24:49) and holy spirit (Acts 1:5).

The original recipients of holy spirit on the day of Pentecost were the twelve Apostles. Who, upon receiving, spoke in tongues.

Acts 2:1-4

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (the twelve) were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they (the twelve) were sitting.

And there appeared to them (the twelve) cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them (the twelve).

And they (the twelve) were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them (the twelve) utterance. (1995 Revised Webster)

That day, fifty days after the resurrection of Christ, marked the birth of the Christian Church. Jesus accomplished all that was required to make possible the reinstatement of God's spirit within man. What Adam lost, Jesus regained. That and much, much more! You see, to have a Christian Church you must have Christians and to be a Christian you must be spirit filled.

All the devout were gathered in Jerusalem that day in recognition of the day of the firstfruits, the fiftieth day of commemorating the feast of harvest, i.e., Pentecost the fiftieth day. What they witnessed was phenomenal! The birth of twelve righteous sons and the

beginning of the Christian Church. Not all believed then even as now, but truth needs no defense only a witness.

Happy birthday Church!

May 27, 2007

Enjoying Guilt-free Summer Barbeques

How many of each kind of animal did Noah take aboard the Ark with him?

Genesis 7:1-3

And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that *are* not clean by two, the male and his female.

Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. (1769 Authorized Version)

Upon reading the body of the context we find he took two of the "unclean" animals and seven of the "clean." This may be a revelation to some folks while serving to teach others the importance of reading the context. Too many (especially "Bible" teachers) arrest verses from their context in order to substantiate religious doctrine. An honest handling of Scripture demands complete acknowledgment of the context, remote as well as immediate.

The "clean" beasts were those suitable for sacrifice and, as we shall see later, consumption. Consequently, God commanded Noah to take them seven by seven. Whereas, those not "clean," two by two, male and female exclusively for the preservation of the species (Darwinism being yet a fallacious non-issue for future imbeciles to adulate). Seven of each giving latitude for procreation as well as sacrifice and consumption.

The blood of the clean animals would need to be shed for remission of sin.

Hebrews 9:22b

... without shedding of blood is no remission. (1769 Authorized Version)

Animal sacrifice would have to do until the spilling of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Hebrews 9:13-14

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (1769 Authorized Version)

Today, praise God, no further sacrifices are ever required! But as for Noah, the time for that was yet future.

The Great Flood obliterated all life not in the Ark and greatly changed the complexion of Earth's surface. The relationship between man and beast also experienced drastic change (God judged the world by

water then but the next time it will be by fire).

Genesis 9:1-3

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. (1769 Authorized Version)

Years later God made clear in writing (in the Mosaic Law) which animals could be eaten and which could not. He gave detailed commands to help man become ceremonially and sacrificially clean. However, with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ all ceremony and sacrifice were justified once and for all.

Hebrews 10:9-10

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (1769 Authorized Version)

His sacrifice changed everything, including what we can eat!

I Timothy 4:1-5

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter

times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. (1769 Authorized Version)

Cholesterol and saturated fat aside, if you're like me you want the main course to have parents and a face. Forget what the bean sprout eating fanatics have to say and enjoy your summer barbeque. All that nonsense about violence and animal protein has its roots (no pun intended) in Eastern religion. Some of those fellas will not kill an insect. Imagine living harmoniously amid the Alaskan mosquito population, how absurd!

Read your Bible and enjoy your steak!

June 10, 2007

Living Life As It Should Be, From The Inside Out

True principles responsible for bringing about change in one's life are sometimes alluded to yet rarely put into practice. Simply put, we live life from the inside out.

Proverbs 4:23

Keep thy heart [*natsar* = watch over and guard from danger] with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. (1769 Authorized Version)

We're told to guard our hearts with all diligence because it's from the heart that life's issues spring.

Jeremiah 31:6

For it is a day the watchmen [*natsar*] have proclaimed throughout the hill country of Ephraim,—Arise ye and let us go up to Zion, unto Yahweh our God. (1902 ROTHERHAM)

Watchmen in the land and times of the Bible would sit in a tower upon the walls of the city alerting the inhabitants of approaching enemies. They were responsible to be diligent in their observations and swift in their warnings. Failure in this regard would bring total liability for harm upon them. If the people ignored the watchmen then consequence for doing so would be theirs.

Ezekiel 33:2b-4, 6

. . . if the people of the land take a man from among their number and make him their watchman:

If, when he sees the sword coming on the land, by sounding the horn he gives the people news of their danger;

Then anyone who, hearing the sound of the horn, does not take note of it, will himself be responsible for his death, if the sword comes and takes him away.

But if the watchman sees the sword coming, and does not give a note on the horn, and the people have no word of the danger, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them; he will be taken away in his sin, but I will make the watchman responsible for his blood. (1965 Bible in Basic English)

Various renderings of Proverbs 4:23:

Keep thy heart more than anything that is guarded; for out of it are the issues of life. (1884 Darby Version)

Above all that must be guarded, keep thou thy heart, for, out of it, are the issues of life. (1902 Rotherham Version)

Above every charge keep thy heart, For out of it are the outgoings of life. (1898 Young's Literal Translation)

Guard the heart as the great citadel, for out of it are the source and outgoings of life E. W.. Bullinger, D. D.

The watchman's job was a matter of life and death, the retribution for negligence austere! We're urged to watch over our hearts with a measure of seriousness akin to a watchman. The responsibility for what's in our hearts is ours alone.

But what is the heart and how do you determine what goes in it? The heart is the center of your mind. It's what makes you who you are. It's the faculty of your brain that houses all your intents and convictions. It's the very deepest part of your mind.

Your mind filters what goes in the heart. It's only the thoughts you retain and incubate that go into your heart. Superficial ones don't go into the heart and nothing goes in without your approval. You may "hang" on to a thought or let it go. It's your choice. Either way, all change comes from within your heart. If you wish to change your life, you must change your heart.

Everything in life suggests we change the "outside." People pack up and move all thinking new surroundings will change their lives. But the reality of where you live remains the same, i.e., between your ears. To affect real change, that's where your efforts must be concentrated. It's okay to "start afresh" but if you really want your life to be where you want it, you must address the contents of your heart.

In like fashion, outward physical appearance will not change you as a person. You can have the best abdominal muscles in the gym and still be a miserable human being. Nothing wrong with fitness, I'm all for it, but the image you carry of yourself in your heart is the only one that counts towards change. I've known people who've lost massive amounts of weight and still thought of themselves as fat. Not until they addressed the heart did that change. The image held in one's heart, when negative, is often responsible for the development of eating disorders and other debilitating practices.

Changing the contents of the heart isn't complicated but can be difficult. Consequently, we need God's help! Ask Him for it.

Psalms 139:23,24
Search me, O God, and know my heart: Try me, and know my thoughts;

And see if there be any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting. (1901 American Standard Version)

June 24, 2007

The Truth About Parables

A parable is the figure of speech Par-a-bol-a, an extended simile. A simile being a figurative resemblance by way of comparison often using the words "like" or "as," e.g., he runs like the wind, she competes like a tiger. It's important to note that the resemblance is in only one area, i.e., we don't expect "her" to have orange and black stripes or him to be drafty.

Consider the following simile:

II Peter 3:10a
But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; . . (1769 Authorized Version)

The above in no way infers that the Lord will ransack your home while wearing a mask. That's absurd! The emphasis is on the stealth and suddenness of the day. It will NOT be announced before hand! Clearly the resemblance in this figure is in one point only.

It's impossible to understand a parable (extended simile) without seeing the resemblance or likeness from the entire context. There will always be ONE great central truth, not numerous ones, and you will only find the resemblance in context, not in every single detail.

Parables are among the most difficult portions of God's Word to discern and demand deep spiritual perception and awareness on the part of the reader. The word "parable" is a compound word derived from the Greek para = beside or alongside and ballein = to throw or cast. A parable "throws or casts" a hidden meaning alongside of a narrative. It's a godly form of camouflage. You must have a true spiritual hunger and thirst to glean the understanding. I should not fail to mention, the story in a parable must be one that could happen. When the narrative is an impossibility it's not a parable it's a fable, e.g., talking animals, walking trees.

Many a preacher has thought of the parables of Jesus as simple teaching tools. Yet, nothing could be further from the truth. Parables are difficult and their meanings elude the uninstructed. This is exacerbated by misinformation and false teaching. As a figure of speech, you must understand that parables are a legitimate departure from the laws of language expressly for the purpose of emphasis. They are not designed to give simple rules by which to govern your life. On the contrary, they are designed to separate those who really want to know from those who think they already do. For the sake of your personal spirituality please don't allow anyone to send you in a false direction! Rather, consider the

Lord's explanation when queried by the disciples:

Matthew 13:10-16

And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. (1769 Authorized Version)

Interestingly, Young's Literal Translation renders parables as "similes" while Weymouth uses "figurative language." A comprehensive study will reveal the true nature and use of figures of speech in the Bible including

parables. The Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic all support these legitimate (yet rarely understood) aspects of language. Figures are never used but for the sake of emphasis and must therefore never be ignored. The failure to acknowledge them has led to the grossest of errors! Some from taking literally what is figurative, others from taking figuratively what is literal. Either way, error is error!

There are some 217 different figures of speech in the Bible with up to 40 variations and subdivisions in a single figure. How many do you know? How many does your teacher know?

How many can they illustrate from scripture alone?

Jesus gave the purpose for speaking in parables as:

Luke 8:10b

" . . . that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand".

(1769 Authorized Version)

I believe Jesus! Who do you believe?

Freedom Isn't Free

I watched the flag pass by one day.
It fluttered in the breeze.
A young Marine saluted it,
And then he stood at ease.

I looked at him in uniform
So young, so tall, so proud,
With hair cut square and eyes alert
He'd stand out in any crowd.

I thought how many men like him
Had fallen through the years.
How many died on foreign soil?
How many mothers' tears?

How many pilots' planes shot down?
How many died at sea?
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves?
No, freedom isn't free.

I heard the sound of taps one night,
When everything was still
I listened to the bugler play
And felt a sudden chill.

I wondered just how many times
That taps had meant "Amen,"
When a flag had draped a coffin
Of a brother or a friend.

I thought of all the children,
Of the mothers and the wives,
Of fathers, sons and husbands
With interrupted lives.

I thought about a graveyard
At the bottom of the sea
Of unmarked graves in Arlington.
No, freedom isn't free.

~ Unknown