



On The Frontier



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

Vol XVII No.3

Summer/Fall 2009

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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One Thing Is Needful

Have you ever asked yourself what is truly essential to life? No doubt most would say food or water. Some perhaps might think of health or safety. But what did Jesus Christ have to say on the subject?

Matthew 4:4b

... It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

This was in response to the devil tempting him to question his identity through manipulation of man's God-given motivation toward self-preservation. Consider the situation:

Matthew 4:1-4

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing; and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

Certainly food depravation over a 40 day period would not only make one hungry but would also threaten health and well-being. In such a state it would be easy to question your purposes and do whatever it would take to acquire sustenance.

Self-preservation and recognition are very strong motivators which a fast of such duration could only intensify.

How marvelous that the Lord Jesus was able not only to maintain his purpose and direction, but also the proper (and only acceptable) attitude toward God and His Word. Obviously the importance of "It is written" was paramount in his life. Ought it not to be in ours?

He garnered the response he gave the devil that day from an account recorded in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 8:1-3

All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers.

And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

God provided manna (literally bread from heaven) for the children of Israel to eat. However, He put stipulations as to how much they were to gather each day. This He did so as to teach them to trust His Word. Thus, the daily collection of manna proved to be an exercise in learning. In this they were expected to learn that it is more important to trust God than attend to daily nourishment. Incredible? Yes, but true none the less.

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Exodus 16:14-19;22,23

And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness *there lay* a small round thing, *as small* as the hoar frost on the ground.

And when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said one to another, *It is manna*: for they wist not what it *was*. And Moses said unto them, *This is* the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat.

This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man *according to* his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for *them* which *are* in his tents.

And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.

And when they did mete *it* with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.

And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.

Simply put, they were only to take what they needed for the day consideration for the sabbath notwithstanding.

Verses 22,23

And it came to pass, *that* on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one *man*: and all the rulers of the

congregation came and told Moses.

And he said unto them, *This is that* which the LORD hath said, To morrow *is* the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake *that* which ye will bake *to day*, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.

The purpose of having them do this: “. . . that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.”

Some, however, did not do as commanded and so the “excess” manna became wormy and stank. They had a hard time seeing the Word as more important than their desire to be fed.

Of course we all can see the importance of daily sustenance. Without physical food to nourish us we would quickly become weak and sickly. And if deprived long enough, die. Nevertheless, the lesson here is that the Word of God is far more vital to our well being even than our necessary food.

Even amid his torment Job acknowledged this.

Job 23:12

Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary *food*.

Much like the Israelites, we all confuse life's priorities at times.

Luke 10:38-ff

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

But Martha was cumbered [*perispao* = overly occupied] about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Priorities, priorities, priorities! It seems Martha had misplaced hers.

The Greek word *perispao* translated cumbered, is a compound word literally meaning drawn away or distracted.

Remarkably, she was distracted by serving! Few of us fall prey to that kind of distraction. Oh that it were true! If this was the main reason for Christians being distracted, we could reasonably justify and rectify such situations.

Luke 10:38-ff

As they pursued their journey
He came to a certain village,
where a woman named Martha
welcomed Him to her house.

She had a sister called Mary,
who seated herself at the Lord's
feet and listened to His teaching.

Martha meanwhile was busy
and distracted in waiting at
table, and she came and said,
"Master, do you not care that
my sister is leaving me to do all
the waiting? Tell her to assist
me."

"Martha, Martha," replied
Jesus, "you are anxious and
worried about a multitude of
things;

and yet only one thing is really
necessary. Mary has chosen the
good portion and she shall not
be deprived of it."

[1912 Weymouth NT Translation]

Mary seated herself at the Lord's
feet, listening to his teaching.
Martha on the other hand, was
drawn away and distracted from
the greatness of God's Word.

Martha was anxious while Mary
was blessed! Martha's portion
could be taken from her but not
Mary's. Once you have the Word,
no one can take it from you. To lose
it you have to willingly give it up.
This cannot be said about anything
else.

Matthew 6:19-21

Lay not up for yourselves
treasures upon earth, where
moth and rust doth corrupt, and

where thieves break through
and steal:

But lay up for yourselves
treasures in heaven, where
neither moth nor rust doth
corrupt, and where thieves do
not break through nor steal:

For where your treasure is,
there will your heart be also.

The most needful thing we can do is
"lay up" the treasure of God's
Word placing it deep within our
hearts.

Mark 8:31-36

And he began to teach them,
that the Son of man must suffer
many things, and be rejected of
the elders, and of the chief
priests, and scribes, and be
killed, and after three days rise
again.

And he spake that saying
openly. And Peter took him, and
began to rebuke him.

But when he had turned about
and looked on his disciples, he
rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee
behind me, Satan: for thou
savourest not the things that be
of God, but the things that be of
men.

And when he had called the
people *unto him* with his
disciples also, he said unto them,
Whosoever will come after me,
let him deny himself, and take
up his cross, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life
shall lose it; but whosoever shall

lose his life for my sake and the
gospel's, the same shall save it.
For what shall it profit a man,
if he shall gain the whole world,
and lose his own soul?

Truth is, you cannot take "it" with
you -- whatever "it" is.

I Timothy 6:6-12

But godliness with contentment
is great gain.

For we brought nothing into
this world, *and it is* certain we
can carry nothing out.

And having food and raiment
let us be therewith content.

But they that will be rich fall
into temptation and a snare,
and *into* many foolish and
hurtful lusts, which drown men
in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is the
root of all evil: which while
some coveted after, they have
erred from the faith, and
pierced themselves through
with many sorrows.

But thou, O man of God, flee
these things; and follow after
righteousness, godliness, faith,
love, patience, meekness.

Fight the good fight of faith, lay
hold on eternal life, whereunto
thou art also called, and hast
professed a good profession
before many witnesses.

Even without this magnificent
passage, life will teach us these
truths. But we do have the
aforementioned. Consequently the

aftermath of such behavior becomes evidently foolish to ignore.

Colossians 3:1-4

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

This then begs the question:

What do we seek in life? What is our aim or end goal? For a Christian these questions should be rhetorical. And if so, we needs be circumspect so as not to blunt life's greatest priorities.

I Peter 1:3-16

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need

be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls [*psuche* = breath life, physical life].

Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:

Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

The Old Testament prophets knew of these wonderful truths. But they

also knew that these things would come into fruition for us not them.

Verses 13-16

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

It is written is the one thing that is really necessary. Man can not live by bread alone, but and if he does, what kind of life will he be living?

We've reason for girding up the "loins" of our minds. We have the hope of Christ's Return! What better reason to remain focused? Why live for today when you can live for eternity?

Psalms 27:1-6

The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise

against me, in this *will I be* confident.

One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

The choice is ours to make. Shall the Word of God be central in our lives, or something else?

Psalms 119:30, 111, 173
I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid *before me*.

We choose to present ourselves as Mary did to the teaching of God's Word. Face it, the teaching will not present itself to you. You must of your own volition seek out a teacher of God's Word and present yourself to the teachings. I have chosen! Have you?

Verse 111:
Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage [inheritance, possession] for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

Have you taken His Word for an heritage, for ever! Is it the rejoicing of your heart?

Verse 173:
Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.

Choose His Word, His Hand will absolutely help you.

Isaiah 41:13
For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

Romans 8:28
And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

What is it to love God if not to love and obey His Word?

1John 5:3
For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

What a simple and yet so beautiful definition! But how can we keep His commandments if we do not know them? And how can we know them if we do not hear them?

We must take time out of our busy lives to present ourselves to a teaching of God's Word. We simply cannot allow the things of this life to draw us away. To do so would be folly and regardless of what we were drawn away by we would be no different than Martha.

She was cumbered about with much serving. It is from this Middle

English word that we get the word encumbered. To be encumbered is to be burdened with a heavy load. One which, in this case, impedes you from hearing the Truth.

Romans 8:29-32
For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

It's no wonder that when asked by the disciples, as to the correct way to pray, Jesus included this in his answer and example:

Matthew 6:11, 13
Give us this day our daily bread.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

One not so obvious temptation is allowing the affairs of life to take center stage.

II Timothy 2:4

No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

I am reminded of the following beautiful Psalm:

Psalms 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

If we allow God to be our Shepherd we shall not want, He will take care of us.

Psalms 37:3-6

Trust in the LORD, and do good; *so* shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass.

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

These are promises. We can rely upon them and when we do He fulfills them. God is always true to His Word — ALWAYS!

Philippians 4:6,7

For nothing, be anxious, but, in everything, by your prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let, your petitions, be made known unto God;

And, the peace of God, which riseth above every mind, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.

[1902 Rotherham Bible]

And lest we forget, much as in when the Lord taught the disciples to pray "give us this day our daily bread":

Philippians 4:19

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

There is but one thing that is needful and that is the wonderful, matchless Word of God. Make hearing and living His Word your priority and He will take care of the rest!

Proverbs 30:8,9

Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

Lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

Sue's News

Our summer was short and sweet. We had some very beautiful days with blue skies and sunshine. We had just the right amount of rain so the wildfire danger was low. Now the leaves are turning yellow and falling like snow. We could have snow on the ground within a month! Ah! Life in Alaska.

Our visit with our niece, Melissa, was very nice. She is a wonderful kid and we enjoyed the time we got to spend with her. Two weeks didn't seem long enough. We didn't do a lot of the tourist things because Melissa has been here before and was happy to just hang out and do whatever we did. She loves our Malamutes so everyday we went out to our pasture with them and played. We went out a few times to eat and saw a couple of movies. All in all it was a good visit.

Lydia is doing well. All healed up from her slip down the stairs. I learned a lot about hospitals and doctors in the past six months. Did you know that the emergency room doctor is not included in emergency room charges! Geez!

The only reason you go to the emergency room is because you need to see a doctor!

My grandson Arin started kindergarten this year. He says he mostly he loves it. His favorite part of his school day is gym class. Malachi is in first grade and is happy to be the "upper classman" at his school. (Their school only houses kindergarten and first grade). So he is feeling like the big man on campus. Last year he said the first graders were bullies but he wasn't going to be like that. We'll see!

My sewing room has been calling me and a new quilt is in my thinking. I don't do much sewing in the summer because it's too nice outside to be inside. Once the winter sets in I am always blessed to have a big project indoors to work on. We will probably get some painting done this year as well. The living room, dining room and kitchen will be getting some color on the walls. I would also like to put a laminate floor in the dining room and kitchen. Linus IV has offered to help.

Linus and I are blessed. As usual, we continue to serve God's people the best we can. God continues to bless our lives.

On another note. In a recent conversation with a very dear friend of mine who was recently delivered from a very grave illness, she said she believed with all her heart it was the fervent prayer of the men who stood in the gap for her that led to her deliverance. That got me thinking. Who are these men who stand in the gap? Who are these men who pray with

all their hearts for us? Who are these men who teach us God's Word and help us whenever we ask? I'm pretty sure they are the men who God has called to be ministers. The prophets, apostles, teachers, pastors and evangelists that were given to us, His Church.

Let me ask you a question. Do you pray for yourself? I asked this of another friend of mine and she said she never actually thought about it. So who is it who prays for you? Who asks God everyday to bless your life? To keep you healthy and prosperous? To meet your every need? Think about this the next time something in your life is more important than going to hear a teaching that this man has prepared to teach you and to bless your life.

These are the men we should be very thankful for and not take for granted that they will be at our beck and call. They are faithful. Are we?

So until next time, stay happy and blessed!

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NOTES