

Monday, 30 April 2018 Deuteronomy 13:1-4

“If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ which you have not known, ‘and let us serve them,’ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him.

Translation to today when evaluating the preaching at church which claims to be faithful to the Scriptures. Is it a church which preaches Jesus Christ and Him crucified or is it preaching worldly wisdom that may or may not be true? Paul, in 1 Corinthians 2:1-2 brings this out very clearly, and I need to apply the same principle when I preach and when I listen.

Tuesday, 1 May 2018 Deuteronomy 18:20-22

But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.’ And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?’—when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

There are many who claim to be prophets, often self-declared as having the gift of prophecy, but we need to evaluate these proclamations against the Word and their accuracy. It is so easy to be caught up in the excitement of the moment as spectacular future events pour out. But we need to carefully record and date these prophecies, verifying them against the Word of God and checking as appropriate to see if they were truly words spoken at the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Wednesday, 2 May 2018 Deuteronomy 14:22-23

“You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the LORD your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.

It is not the custom that the church I attend returns a portion of my offering each Sunday morning. However, I've already deducted a significant fraction of my income and "eaten" it without acknowledging that all comes from the gracious bounty of the LORD. This passage suggests that I need to realize that

the firstfruits represent a tangible gift from the LORD, God the Almighty expressed in material form. I need to celebrate the feast with Him.

Thursday, 3 May 2018 Deuteronomy 13:6-11

“If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter or the wife you embrace or your friend who is as your own soul entices you secretly, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which neither you nor your fathers have known, some of the gods of the peoples who are around you, whether near you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth to the other, you shall not yield to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him, nor shall you conceal him. But you shall kill him. Your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. You shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. And all Israel shall hear and fear and never again do any such wickedness as this among you.

In this, the Day of Grace, I should not act so harshly against someone in my family who advocates for some other god. But I must be prepared at all times to explain the hope that lies within me and to do so with gentleness and respect. 1 Peter 3:15. I am not called to perform a societal equivalent of stoning upon a family member who does not worship the LORD, God, the Almighty. All my life, all my words, must reflect the transforming power of the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Friday, 4 May 2018 Deuteronomy 17:8-13

“If any case arises requiring decision between one kind of homicide and another, one kind of legal right and another, or one kind of assault and another, any case within your towns that is too difficult for you, then you shall arise and go up to the place that the LORD your God will choose. And you shall come to the Levitical priests and to the judge who is in office in those days, and you shall consult them, and they shall declare to you the decision. Then you shall do according to what they declare to you from that place that the LORD will choose. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they direct you. According to the instructions that they give you, and according to the decision which they pronounce to you, you shall do. You shall not turn aside from the verdict that they declare to you, either to the right hand or to the left. The man who acts presumptuously by not obeying the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear and fear and not act presumptuously again.

Is this passage one of the ones that Paul had in mind in 1 Corinthians 6:1-11? Should I not be guided by the wise and Biblical counsel of my spiritual leaders if I have a problem, of any sort, with a fellow believer? Shouldn't I be willing to suffer a loss of material possessions or pride rather than bring a lawsuit against a brother in Christ?

Saturday, 5 May 2018 Deuteronomy 17:18-20

“And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

Certainly for those who aspire, or more accurately, sense a call to leadership within the Body of Christ, must have sound spiritual practices, not only as an example to their flocks but to insure sound spiritual health.

It is so easy to let the demands of a ministry take precedence over my time with the LORD; so easy that it does not take long before I begin to slip and slight my time in the Word, cut corners with prayer and put off a time of meditation until tomorrow.

Brothers, who love me enough to hold me accountable to my Personal Rule, are absolutely mandatory.

Lord's Day, 6 May 2018 Psalm 119:97-104

Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts. I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

Ah, that beautiful, complete understanding. It gives me wisdom to combat the enemies that the Father of Lies throws against me; it gives me wisdom to progress in Kingdom work; it enables me to keep from straying into evil ways; it keeps me on the straight and narrow path that is life in communion with You; it provides a sweetness sweeter than honey to encourage and strengthen my soul; it reveals all that is not of You and instills revulsion in me. It is the Revealer of You.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



April 30-May 5, 2018

Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

May the LORD, God the Almighty, the God who signifies peace, grace, mercy and joy, cleanse us and bring us into a state of complete sanctification as we wait on the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Praise You, LORD, for You are faithful and will do this. *Amen*

To fear or not to fear, that is the question.

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

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