



Missionary Messenger

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L6PLNGA

Is Truth in the Eye of the Beholder?

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.

~ 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (BSB)

The phrase “beauty is in the eye of the beholder” means that beauty is subjective and it depends on one’s perspective of what beauty is or is not. I am reminded of this when I watch the news in our generation. The reason for the connection to this common phrase is because we live in an age in which truth has become something subjective, something that is in the eye of the beholder. I am convinced that one of the reasons for this is the erosion of our foundation for what differentiates between truth and error. Americans had historically held that the Holy Scripture was our basis for such truth.

Something that I have been trying to reinforce among those who attend our church is that it is important that Scripture be our baseline for truth. In my 35 years of ordained ministry I frequently encounter Christians who only use their upbringing as their source for truth. Often, when encountered with what God’s word actually says and what they have been taught, they will lean toward their upbringing rather than the immutable truth of God’s word. I am convinced that this view is partially responsible for the tribal view that we have in America today.

It doesn’t take long watching senate hearings or courtroom trials to see that this is true. I really want to see this change. I desire that it start with me and my family. I have been trying to get back to the basics of God’s word. The passage that I started this article with states that God’s word is breathed from God. It doesn’t have its basis in human philosophy or reason. The four-fold uses of God’s word are: instruction, conviction, correction, and training in the goal of our righteousness. When this goal is met we become what we were meant to be and have fulfilling lives doing good works for the right reasons.

I want all of us to step back from our tribes. Whether you vote R, D or even I, look at what God’s word says. Not what we were raised to believe but what it actually says. If it is not specifically mentioned in Scripture do not make it an absolute. The art of agreeing to disagree on disputable matters has got to become important to us once again. I have discovered that by listening to the opinions of others I can weed out what my tribe says and see another perspective on the issue. Again, it all must be founded in what God’s word says.

In Christ, Pastor Ken

Memory Verse of the Month!



*Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, bless His name; proclaim His salvation day after day.*



~ Psalm 96:1-2 (BSB) ~



CONNECTION NOTES:

"He Did What??? Oh, No He Didn't!"

Last Sunday, 1/26/25, Pastor Ken touched on how he has developed a method for telling people about how God changed his life and how God continues to work. The process really is useful to bring the gospel into conversations with friends and families.

But a stumbling block to this approach, besides fear and anxiety, is that it can be "ancient news". If you believe that God hasn't been doing anything new in your life, it is a little hard to "brag" on God, especially to someone who knows you well. I have been thinking about this issue recently. My faithful Father reminded me of a truth.

Ephesians 2:4 is one of my dearest "But God" statements in the New Testament. "BUT because of his great love for us, GOD, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions...."

This verse is powerful for the retelling of our story. Every time I think back to what I was like, especially inside, I am amazed. I know how I was, and without change I know where I was headed. But God....

I also know what I struggled with, even 5 years ago.... But God....

I know ways that He is working on me, even today.... But God....

As we head into February, the "love" month, let's take a look at what God did, has done, is doing, and will do. If we do, then we will have a story to tell! And a reason to tell it!

Let's prepare to tell our story,

Sue

Sue's "New" Story

Just this morning I was reading my devotional. I was facing my big picture window. The sun was streaming in. I looked across the street and saw the big maple with the sun lighting up its bare branches and I

thanked God. Out loud. I told Him how much His creation and its beauty lifted my spirit.

Suddenly the song, "I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy" came to my mind. So I started singing. Out loud. Of course, I added the "And I'm so happy, so very happy. I've got the love of Jesus in my heart. And I'm so happy, so very happy. I've got the love of Jesus in my heart." Well if that didn't make my happy, I'd be lying. So I sang it a couple more times even louder!

Well, this exuberant singing excited my kitten! She took a flying leap into my chest!!! I guess it goes to show that I need to express my joy a little more often so my cat is not surprised. Oh the wonderful ways God gives us what we need and shows us how to enjoy it!

"And I'm so happy, so very happy. I've got the love of Jesus...."

Sue



CONNECTION ACTIVITIES:

**Showering Teachers with Love
Sunday February 16th**



On Monday, the 17th, we are taking morning snacks to the Manchester Administration Offices. All teachers will be present for a professional development training day. So we have the wonderful opportunity to shower them with our (and Christ's) love. If you wish to help, please bring some snacks on Sunday, February 16th.

Remember: "Any task done for our Father becomes a thread extending into eternity." Tim Gustafson. May we become master seamers and seamstresses!!!

**Lunch n Craft: Welcome Door Signs
February 22nd @ noon**

Come for a bowl of hot soup, fellowship, and fun. Then stay and make a stenciled sign.

Bring a side dish or dessert to share. Invite a friend or two.

We have loads of different stencils, ribbons, and greenery. However, if you have a specific color or greenery choice, please bring those with you. We really have plenty of the supplies so come and bring someone.



PRAYER

FOCUS



Last fall a few of us went to the Prayer Awakening Conference in Fort Wayne. One of the things that they suggested doing was to do 10 second prayers. Don't ask if you can pray for the person, just start praying out loud. Keep it short otherwise it starts to get weird. In 10 seconds about all you get out is bless this person, keep them safe, and help them grow closer to you, or something like that. They said if you did that for a few people every Sunday that the whole church would be prayed for in a few weeks. If enough people do it, it could be every Sunday everyone has gotten prayed for. That sounds pretty easy, but it can still be intimidating.

I am reminded of the book by John Ortberg called "If You Want to Walk on Water You've Got to Get Out of the Boat". The title pretty much says it all (but is still a good read). If you want to be more Christ-like and grow in your relationship with Him, you have to stretch past your comfort zones. I did this study in a ladies' group several years ago. To help encourage each other to stretch, we called it taking "baby steps". We would congratulate each other for each step they took no matter how small. Once you have stretched a little bit, you can go a little farther. You put that foot over the side of the boat until eventually it touches the water.

I say all this to confess I haven't been good at doing this. At Walmart a few months ago I was talking to one of the workers who collects groceries for people. She started sharing something that was going on in her life. I felt God was saying to pray out loud, put what we just learned into practice. Alas, I chickened out and felt awful.

Last week, I was shopping later in the evening and was talking to the cashier since there was no one in line behind me. God said pray for her and this time I did. I just started praying out loud, didn't ask even though I was tempted to. She thanked me and was glad to know there was another praying person.

I did it, but I can't stay there. I need to do it again and again. It should become easier each time especially since I know I can.

Let's stretch a little out of our comfort zone and pray short prayers over others.

~Joanne

Who Are We?

Pastor: Ken Sistrunk 260-229-5949 (cell)

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Elders: Dave Jackson (vice-chairman),

Tim Baker, Jon Gnagy

Directors:

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Aha!!! Aha!!! Aha!!!
I Get It!!!

We have been asking people to share their "Aha" moments. Here are a couple.

In James 2: 12 & 13 it says, "speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment." NIV I tend to get caught up on "the law", and our government needs to do that, but on a personal level, I am not the judge who measures out the judgment and punishment. I need to practice Mercy triumphs over Judgment.

In the "Faith" chapter, Hebrews 11:7 says, "By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent (Holy) fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household...." ESV We learn in Job, Psalms and Proverbs that Fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, but Hebrews 11:7 puts it in a perspective that brings it to life in a way that leads to action. That's a perspective that I can understand more clearly and put my actions behind.