

Stopping at the Boundary of Revelation

Assumptions versus Faith

The *Bible* does not give us answers for everything. As a result, we should be very leery of those who seemingly have answers for everything because if we blindly accept what anyone tells us we risk stunting or perverting our faith based on errors and misrepresentations. For we have been clearly told and warned:

Do not go beyond what is written. ^{1Co 4:6}

Many people have themselves been misinformed (and have misled others) by extrapolating from what God has revealed (“what is written”) to what they assume (based on what is written) is right. Instead, we must stop at what is written, confident, in faith, that this is enough until God chooses to reveal more to us.

History is replete with stories of church splits resulting from people going beyond “what is written:” the Catholic Church with purgatory, indulgences . . . , Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses . . . those who teach certain gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit are no longer valid, that God supposedly no longer speaks to us individually and personally . . . on and on and on which is why we need to understand teachers can be helpful, but in the end we are personally responsible for reading God’s Word, praying His Word and being confident God will reveal to us, from it, what we need to know NOW, today.

The following are just a few common examples of people dangerously going beyond what is written:

- Trying to explain what heaven is like and what we will do in eternity. Yet, the *Bible* tells us very little about heaven because even if God tried to describe it to us we would not comprehend it. And, in any case, the current heaven and earth are not what we will experience in the new heaven and earth promised to God’s children in the *Bible*.
- Sadly, many preachers go “beyond what is written,” twisting what is written, in an effort to ensure unsaved people do not accuse God of not being “fair,” for example, denying God loves and saves some people and not others and telling people (making blanket statements) that “God loves everybody” in clear contrast to “what is written” in many places and ways in the *Bible*. This is not faith, but a lack of faith! Faith is believing “what is written” and, where we do not/cannot understand it, having faith God is both right and beyond fair.

Adam and Eve believed a lie in contrast to God’s Word to them. As examples of the key theme of the *Bible* that we are personally responsible for seeking God for truth versus being led astray by false voices all around us – most dangerously in the church:

This is what the LORD Almighty says:

“Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you;
they fill you with false hopes.

They speak visions from their own minds,
not from the mouth of the LORD.

They keep saying to those who despise me,
“The LORD says: You will have peace.”

And to all who follow the stubbornness of their hearts
they say, ‘No harm will come to you.’ ^{Jer 23:16-17}

This ought to sound very familiar since the “peace” message has been the leading lie of history as it certainly is today:

You have wearied the LORD with your words.

“How have we wearied him?” you ask.

By saying, “All who do evil are good in the eyes of the LORD, and he is pleased with them” ^{Mal 2:17}
Jesus continues these warnings:

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.” ^{Mt 7:15}

“Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.” ^{Mt 24:11}

Thus, we are told we must:

Test everything. Hold on to the good. ^{1Th 5:21}

And even given an example as guidance and encouragement to emulate:

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. ^{Ac 17:11}

The *Bible* does not give us answers for everything. As a result, we should be very leery of those who seemingly have answers for everything rather than humbly admitting they don’t know it all – nobody understands much about God because as He warns:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD.

“As the heavens are higher than the earth,

so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” ^{Isa 55:8 - 9}

And no matter how sincere, well-educated and smart anyone seems, anything they say “beyond what is written” is assumption, not faith on which we can or should depend – an ounce of faith is worth far more than anyone’s thousand pounds of assumptions!

The *Bible* does not give us answers for everything. If it did, there would be no reason for the four times repeated warning verse:

Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts. ^{Ps 95:7-8, Heb 3:7-8, Heb 3:15, Heb 4:7}

We are told, for all those saved:

We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ^{Eph 2:10}

As a result, God must give us personal and specific guidance (answers) for these good works and He does this in multiple ways – through prayer, feelings, counsel of others . . . We are to act by faith on what we hear knowing, in all cases and at all times, these voices must be tested against the *Bible* because God will not tell us anything contrary to the *Bible*. Yes, beyond *Bible* revelation is God’s personal instruction to His children.

Jesus said, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” ^{Jn 6:29}

An obvious double entendre: Our work by and through God’s Grace (His work through us).

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

^{1Co 12:4 -6}

So, is it God's work or ours? Yes!

And we will only find God's Grace as we "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness"^{Mt 6:33} and act on the Grace-faith He provides along the way consistent with His revealed written Word. It is written (in several places in the *Bible*):

"The righteous will live by faith."

not by assumptions – when we must make decisions, they should be based on faith in what we have been told (what is written combined and consistent with God's Word to us personally to know what we are to do, the good works He planned specifically for each of us to do), not what we (or others) assume "beyond what is written."

Do not go beyond what is written.^{1Co 4:6}

And we must take care that we, likewise, not let others lead us beyond what is written.