

Breaking Our Little Boxes!

For years the Lord has been crying out to his people to **'Prepare'!!**

While leadership have consistently *'assured us'* that we are already in the *place of safety...* that this *'preparing'* is speaking of *'spreading the gospel'* to the unsaved. Without missing a beat, the Word of the Lord is *minimized* to meeting the status quo of religious interpretation. What God sent forth to draw his own into a deeper, personal relationship with himself, man has nullified to keep the people in bondage to their own programs and agenda's.

It is interesting to look at what 'prepare' means: (Encarta Dictionary)

- 1. Make something ready; to take the necessary action to put something into a state where it is fit for use or action, or for a particular event or purpose.*
- 2. Make somebody ready; to put somebody or yourself into a suitable physical or mental state to do or experience something.*
- 3. Equip somebody; to provide somebody or something with the necessary equipment for an activity.*

When the Lord tells us to prepare, He has a good reason for doing so. And since it is written that He sees our heart condition, and he knows every thought we think, then this is one time when it is safe to *assume* that we are NOT as prepared as we have been told, or He wouldn't be telling us to prepare.

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" Proverbs 16:25. The way that seemeth right to man, is the way of the world, *'what seems right in our own eyes.'* Religion, Theology, the accumulation of knowledge, all contribute to the furthering of our perception that we are already wise and fully prepared for whatever may happen. What happens when we do *what seems right to us*, is that we inevitably come to the place where we must create a way of storing the information we gather. Knowledge does indeed 'puff-us-up'. In short, we try to put God in a box.



We stack up the evidence of our 'rightness'... from which we can retrieve at will whatever we need to 'justify' our position on any given issue. This is simply the way the human mind works. The greater the intellect, the larger the warehouse needed to contain the knowledge accumulated. And when it comes to 'Religion'... then the gloves come off, and the robes of self-righteousness are donned. History gives us more than ample evidence of the atrocious lengths men will go to in the name of their religion, from the days of the Roman coliseum, to the Great Crusades of old, to the ethnic cleansings and fundamental Islamic attacks against the 'infidels' taking place around the world today.



Yes, religion is something all right. (*The dictionary defines the system of religion as: an institutionalized or personal system of beliefs and practices relating to the divine*).

We worship it, we exalt and lift up its leaders, we will lay down our lives for it, all the while being fully convinced that we are in fact, '*doing God great service.*' We look upon the pomp and ceremony, all the fine trappings devised to impress the eye, and think that God must surely be equally impressed by our fine efforts. So we take the boxes we have created to contain God in our thoughts, and make them really pretty. Then we can sit back and rest from all of our efforts, confident in the assurances from our chosen religion, that we are most definitely in '*the way, the truth and the life,*' after all, this many people couldn't be wrong!

It is pretty much a given today, that there is little appreciation for those who go around spreading gloom and doom, harping on '*repentance,*' '*dying to the flesh,*' '*carrying our own cross.*' After all, we are in a '*new time*'... '*change is coming,*' and no one wants to hear about '*dying to their flesh*' anymore... we have gone beyond the need for that kind of talk. Today there is a new message in the air, one of tolerance and compromise, so that we can all live together in peaceful co-existence. O Really? Are you willing to bet eternity on that? Many of today's top leaders are.

What exactly do we have stored away in our pretty, well-organized boxes? Why, we have all the teachings that have been handed down over the centuries. The accumulated knowledge of the best and brightest; the doctrines and traditions of our forefathers. They are the

mainstay of all that we hold dear to our hearts, and we will defend them to the death if need be. Regardless of what religious affiliation is actually held... everyone is equally convinced that they are the holder of 'truth,' while those of a different opinion or interpretation are the ones in error... and yes, we are in fact '*staking our lives on it.*' This is pretty much the case across the denominational spectrum. People tend to cling to the religious training they grew up under, with usually minor variations. But it is all still just religion!

In 1 Corinthians 8:1-2, we can apply what Paul said to us today...
"NOW ABOUT food offered to idols: of course we know that all of us possess knowledge [concerning these matters. Yet mere] knowledge causes people to be puffed up (to bear themselves loftily and be proud), but love (affection and goodwill and benevolence) edifies and builds up and encourages one to grow [to his full stature]. If anyone imagines that he has come to know and understand much [of divine things, without love], he does not yet perceive and recognize and understand as strongly and clearly, nor has he become as intimately acquainted with anything as he ought or as is necessary."

"Therefore speak to them and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Every man of the house of Israel who takes his idols [of self-will and unsubmissiveness] into his heart and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity [idols of silver and gold] before his face, and yet comes to the prophet [to inquire of him], I the Lord will answer him, answer him according to the multitude of his idols" Ezekiel 14:4.

Knowledge puffs us up, makes us proud. If we are operating from our knowledge regarding spiritual matters, *without love*, we are lacking far more than we realize. Man can make an 'idol' out of anything, including knowledge. In Hannah's prayer to the Lord, she said something very profound... *"Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed"* 1 Samuel 2:3. This same prayer should be upon all of our lips. For we will all be judged by our words and by our actions.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding" Proverbs 9:10. We are very adept at deceiving ourselves. We have no trouble seeing the error or problem with '*the other guy*'... but are blind to our own shortcomings. The more we depend on what we think we have '*learned*'... the greater becomes the likelihood that we are operating from our '*flesh*' and not from the '*Spirit of God.*' Our flesh cannot impart life! Or wisdom! Or

the knowledge of the Lord! Only the Holy Spirit can give us understanding in the knowledge of the Lord.

Everyone today is an authority, just ask them. I have been as guilty of this as anyone out there. When it came to being self-righteous, I wore the crown and carried the scepter. It is not something I am proud of, but because of the change that God wrought in me, I know what it is like to be on both sides of the issue. Almost 20 years ago now, (it seems like yesterday), something happened that I never could have anticipated, even in my wildest dreams. I had been out of church since the mid 1970's, when the Lord put me in a small church for a period of three years. He did a work in me during that time, taught me many things, and just before taking me out, this happened:

I was home alone, reading the Word, when suddenly it was as if I could see inside my own head. Not anatomically, but in the spirit. The best comparison I can come up with would be like being inside one of the big Quonset type barns that are common in Montana. Inside this vast domed room, was row after row of exceedingly tall filing cabinets, all very neatly arranged. I knew that they held all the accumulated '*knowledge*' that I had gathered during my life. Then, just as suddenly, a huge bulldozer came in from one side and pushed them all out the other side, leaving the room swept completely clean. I was just trying to come to grips with the shock of having just lost all that I thought I knew in one fell swoop, when the roof lifted off and now the room was open to the limitless 'big sky.'



I was in a state of shock, that all I knew was all gone and swept clean. And I was somewhat scared. It didn't help that the first thought that came to mind was the parable in Matthew 12, about the spirit wandering about and then finding the house swept clean went and brought seven worse spirits back with him. Believe me, I was afraid to think or speak, not knowing why this had just happened. However,

as time went by, I came to understand that it was necessary, for whatever reason, to remove all that '*I thought I knew*'... so that God could teach me what HE wanted me to know. Another 10 years was to pass before He had me start writing. I have often wondered why the

Lord doesn't do this for other people. It makes it so easy to 'let go' when God 'takes away.'

I shared this only because I know whereof I speak. We all do this. It is how our brains function. We try to assimilate spiritual realities with our fleshly understanding, and a lot gets lost or muddled in the translation. We are not called to operate by our carnal understanding. It is not God's desire to improve on what we are in our own strength. **"For in him we live, and move, and have our being..."** Act 17:28, by the power of HIS SPIRIT. There is no provision for this flesh, it has to be made 100% subservient to the Spirit of God. How and when He does this is up to Him. We need to grasp the fact that it is **all God**, we can't even die to this flesh on our own. Jesus, the pattern Son, said in John 5:30 **"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."** We are to walk the very same way!!

As long as we are keeping 'God in a box,' we are failing to enter in to the reality of knowing HIM. We may have all kinds of things operating in our life; the approval of others, super-natural manifestations, whatever it is that fits into the concept we hold concerning God and His approval of us. But the sad truth is that we are not in possession of as much as we think we are. It's for sure our flesh wants to keep God 'boxed-up'. Our flesh doesn't want to give up any control. It has no problem with a god that is predictable, and can be manipulated and controlled by the exercising of our 'knowledge' of HIS Word. Which is pretty much what all of our religious efforts boil down to.

O, that we might be willing to lay down all that we think we know, and learn of Him. Then we would cry out just as Isaiah did... **"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts"** Isaiah 6:5. We can come to grips with the reality that all of our righteousness is as filthy rags now, or not, the choice is ours. Just be aware, that when we keep God in a box, we are guilty of **limiting the Holy One of Israel**.

From: **Some Cautions to Consider** by Steve Bray
<http://www.authenticchristianity.net/>

Nothing from this world, or even the world of evil spirits can touch our soul while we are reckoning ourselves dead to our own will and

depending on Christ to be the source of everything we do. The victory is maintained as we permit Christ to live through the vessel of our body with His overcoming life. As slaves of God, we do nothing on our own. "And having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness." (Rom. 6:22)

Jesus instructs us to abide in Him. "He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5) That implies resting from our own works and peacefully trusting in Him. He will provide the guidance we need, the spiritual sustenance that our soul requires, and the divine fruit that others will need to see if they are to be drawn into the true kingdom of God.

The Two Covenants – Andrew Murray

From Chapter 6 – Notes

<http://lovestthoume.com/Books/2Covenant6.html>

*My brethren, the great sin of Israel under the Old Covenant, that by which they greatly grieved Him, was this: **"they limited the Holy One of Israel."** Under the New Covenant there is no less danger of this sin. It makes it impossible for God to fulfil His promises. Let us seek, above everything, for the Holy Spirit's teaching, to show us exactly what God has established the New Covenant for, that we may honour Him by believing all that His love has prepared for us.*

May we have the courage to believe, to trust, in God alone... without placing any restrictions of any kind on HIM, and what He would and would not do. He is the potter, we are the clay. Let us not place our confidence and security in our 'knowledge'... our tried and true 'methods' and 'formulas'... even our doctrines. There is one way, and that one way is to be filled with God Himself. Paul warned us in 1 Timothy 6:3-5 **"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."** The problem we face is that of taking the words of Christ, and using them to club one another with, rather than to edify.

Theologians have proven that we can have sound doctrine, but still not have life. Christ's words are LIFE, and we must partake of them beyond mental agreement. We must allow the Holy Spirit to renew our minds, to dwell within us... **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,**

that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" Romans 12:2.

Romans 8:14 ***"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."*** Know that having the right doctrines and theology is not the same thing as being led by the Spirit of God. It is entirely possible to be in agreement with God's words, without coming under His Lordship.

The work is the LORD'S... ***"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father"*** Galatians 4:6.

When we are 'daily crucifying our flesh... by the power of His Spirit within us,' then we can no longer put any kind of limitations upon God. Praise God, He will shatter our 'little boxes' to smithereens.

Romans 11:33-36 ***"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."***

Amen & Amen

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2/05/2009