

# THE PLEASANT VIEW PLUMB LINE

"...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel..." (Amos 7:8)

## WORDS FITLY SPOKEN

*"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprov-er upon an obedient ear. As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters" (Proverbs 25:11-13).*

A word fitly spoken would be the right thing said at the right time, in the right place, to the right person, in the right way, and for the right purpose. Such a word is as beautiful as a group of golden apples in a basket made of silver.

My wife and I laughed at something which occurred on television some time ago. Hurricane Ivan or "Ivan the Terrible" was approaching the Gulf Coast. Mandatory evacuations had been ordered. Interstates were devoting all four lanes to people heading north. They were seeking to get away from the hurricane force winds, the storm surges, the power outages, the tornadoes, the flooding, and other terrible effects that were possible with this hurricane and that we now know sadly came to pass. It was 7:20 P.M. on Tuesday, September 14th, 2004. The eye of the hurricane would make landfall around six hours later. The news show we were watching went to their scheduled commercial. What we saw next was both funny, shocking, amazing, and sobering all at the same time. The commercial said, "What worries? What clock? What a way to get away. Call now to get your free fun times Gulf Coast Vacation Guide." Here was a commercial advertising the merits of the Gulf Coast as a vacation getaway. Ordinarily, the sales pitch would have been effective. "What worries?" If you are troubled with a lot of worries, the idea was you need a vacation from your worries on the Gulf Coast. "What clock?" If you are hounded by the busyness of life and living by the clock, the idea was that you need a vacation from living and working by the clock. If you need to get away, what a way to get away. Just come to the Gulf Coast.

Obviously, that commercial was money down the drain at the time it was aired. The reality was that most people on the Gulf Coast were as worried as anyone in the world at 7:20 P.M. that night. The reality was that most people there were watching their clocks in anticipation of when the eye of the hurricane would make landfall. The reality was that people were not wishing to get away TO the Gulf Coast. People were trying to get away FROM the Gulf Coast.

The McDaniels vacationed along the Gulf Coast this summer and had a wonderful getaway. We have friends there, and were concerned for them. Fortunately, they were able to evacuate to safety. Nothing was more evident at that time than the need to get away from the getaway destination of the Gulf Coast. Here are a few spiritual applications. Perhaps you can things of others.

### Sometimes Our Words Are Ill-Timed

That is, sometimes words that are good in normal circumstances are said at inappropriate times or are ineffective due to the present bad circumstances. That commercial at that precise time was not "**a word fitly spoken**" because it was not utilized at the right time and for the right purpose. Are our words ever ill-timed? The words of Job's friends certainly fit into that category. "*Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man*" (Colossians 4:6).

### We Must Not Fail To Heed The Warnings

Many heeded the warnings and the evacuation orders and as a result, surely many lives were saved. How many will heed the warnings of God to repent? Jesus said in Luke 13:3, "*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*" In September, 1938, a man who lived on Long Island, New York bought a high quality ba-

**JESUS CHRIST: THE HOPE OF GLORY**

Text: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Hope—\_\_\_\_\_?

Notes:

II. Hope—\_\_\_\_\_?

Notes:

III. Hope—\_\_\_\_\_?

Notes:

IV. Hope—\_\_\_\_\_?

Notes:

**POWER EVIDENTLY SET FORTH**

Text: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Christ Showed Power Over \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

II. Christ Showed Power Over \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

III. Christ Showed Power Over \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

IV. Christ Showed Power Over \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

rometer. When it was delivered to his home, the arrow appeared to be stuck, pointing to the section marked "HURRICANE." The man shook the barometer, but the indicator stayed the same. So the man sat down and wrote a scorching letter to the store where he had bought it. The following morning on the way to his office in New York City, he mailed the letter. Later that day a hurricane struck the East Coast. That evening the man returned to Long Island to find that his barometer was missing—AND SO WAS HIS HOUSE! In the word of God, we have a clearer indicator of our spiritual future which is more dependable than any barometer. But often, we do not take it seriously!

**We Must Heed The Warnings Despite Contrary Admonitions**

Despite the commercial for fun-filled times on the Gulf Coast, many disregarded the commercial and heeded the warnings. There are those who receive spiritual warnings. There are those who receive spiritual warnings and seek to leave their sinful lifestyles and turn to the path of righteousness. Yet all the while, the Devil is saying, "What worries? What clock? Just think about all the fun you are missing!" His "commercials" make everything sinful sound so appealing. Jesus said in Luke 8:12-14:

*"Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."*

**Thankful For Those Who Warn Us With Our Best Interests At Heart**

Sometimes the words fitly spoken are wise reproofs. It may be that the wise reproof of Proverbs 25:12 is the faithful messenger of verse 13. If so, the message or advice he gives, even though it may hurt at first, will prove to be as refreshing as the cold of snow in the time of harvest. Many believe this refers to their bringing down snow from Mt. Hermon and placing it in underground rooms for use in summer to cool drinks. As people returned to the Gulf Coast and saw the devastation, do you not think they were glad to have been warned? Now think about this...if you are standing on the right side of God on the day of Judgment, will you not be grateful to those who gave the warnings and for the fact that you heeded them?

-Mike McDaniel

THE BOOK OF THE GOSPEL—2

The second book in the New Testament, the book of Mark, is the shortest of the gospel accounts. Chronologically it begins with the events Matthew does not reveal until chapter four. However, its purpose and intended readers dictate a need to get to the point regarding certain matters and not included is some material to which little attention would have been paid.

As Matthew was written by a Jew and for the Jews to prove the Messiah-ship of Jesus, Mark's account is believed to have been written primarily for a Roman readership and to prove the Son-ship of Jesus, thus its style and material arrangement. This is widely believed for many reasons. Hochdorf wrote:

“Mark, does not assume that his readers are familiar with Jewish Scripture thus he only quotes one Old Testament passage (Mark 1:2-3). On a regular basis he explains the customs of the Jews alone with geography only the Jews might be familiar with (Mark 7:2-4; 13:3; 14:12)...In Matthew's account he records the Lord as saying ‘But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day’ (Matthew 24:20). This would be of special interest to the Jews because the gates of the city would be closed on the Sabbath thus hindering their escape. In Mark's account, however, he states ‘And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter’ (Mark 13:18). Roman readers need not be warned of the Sabbath since their place of abode was other than Jerusalem...There are no statements about the law after the manner of Matthew's recorded jot and tittle saying (Matthew 5:18). In fact, there are no fundamental discussions about the law as in Matthew.”

In addition to all of this, Mark explained many Jewish terms with which the Romans would not have necessarily been familiar such as “fasting (Mark 2:18), washings (Mark 7:3-4), the Passover (Mark 14:12), and the preparation which takes place the day prior to the Sabbath (Mark 15:42).” Thus the intended readership and purpose of Mark seemingly is that this account was written primarily for the benefit of the Romans and it was written to persuade them that Jesus was the Son of God.

Regarding the authorship, many attacks have been made in recent years upon practically all writers of the sacred book in an attempt to discredit the Bible and its truths. However, like Matthew, Mark from antiquity has been attributed the authorship of this book and there is no credible evidence to state otherwise. The earliest of writers, even dating to the time it was written claim Mark as its author.

Mark, unlike Matthew, was not an apostle of the Lord, thus the things he wrote were not of an eye-witness account. This, though, does not hinder the credibility of Mark's account but actually strengthens it. Since Mark would not have been an eyewitness of all he recorded, how is it that those things he records in his account are perfectly unified with the account of Matthew (as well as Luke and John)? Mark was inspired of the Holy Spirit to write as was all others. This is not the work of a mere man gathering information and reporting what others told him, but rather this is the work of a man as directed by the Spirit of God (II Timothy 3:16).

Though Mark was not an apostle, he was a Christian and was heavily involved with the evangelization of the world. When Paul embarked on his first missionary journey, with him he took Barnabas and John Mark (John was his Jewish name and Mark was his Roman surname); however, when Paul and Barnabas departed from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia, John Mark departed from them and went back to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). This apparently caused Paul to lose trust in Mark because when Paul and Barnabas were about to begin their second missionary journey Barnabas insisted that Mark be included, but Paul adamantly refused to bring him, thus causing Paul and Barnabas to separate (Acts 15:37-41). The scriptures, though, do bear out that amends must have been made years later because Mark was with Paul in Rome (Colossians 4:10—called Marcus) and then in his final letter to Timothy, Paul instructed him to bring Mark with him because “he is profitable to me for the ministry” (II Timothy 4:11).

Wherein Matthew began his account with the birth and early events of Christ's life, Mark does not begin his account until Christ's baptism and calling of his apostles. Throughout Mark emphasis is placed upon Christ's miraculous power and relevant teachings, leading up to the account of His arrest, trial, execution, and resurrection, finally closing with His ascension. Is Christ the Son of God? Mark proves it to be so to the Romans as well as to all mankind.

-Andy Brewer