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"From the Pastor's Desk..."

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FINDING THE ACCEPTABLE WORDS

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." Eccl. 12:10

Whenever we who are writers attempt to put pen to paper for our target audience it is most often challenging to find the best appropriate words to convey what we are trying to say to our readers. We do not always succeed in writing the sentence, paragraph, or even the entire article the way that we originally had in mind when we started. I am always happy to have my wife, and on occasions my office secretaries and staff, help me in the proof reading of these articles. They have saved me on various occasions from not only errors in my grammar and English, but also in producing a better way of saying what I was attempting to convey to my audience.

Our articles, as a minister of the Gospel, most often make use of the Holy Scriptures. Who can improve on the Holy Scriptures? However, not everyone is heavenly or Spiritually minded so we try from time to time to put something in our writing like a fisherman does with his bait to attract a fish that may be swimming by. If a person can be captured by one nugget either from God's word, or something of that nature, maybe, just maybe we will reach someone for the Kingdom of God. So we find ourselves doing what the preacher of Ecclesiastes searched *"to find out acceptable words...words of truth."*

Back in the sixties a man named John Wanamaker, who was known to be very successful in business related that when he was only eleven years of age he purchased a Bible in a little mission Sunday School for \$2.75 which he paid for in small installments. In the later years of his life he is known to have said this of his purchase: *"Looking back at my life I see that it was that little red Book that was the foundation on which my life has been built, and the thing that has made possible all that has counted in my life. I know now that it was the greatest investment, the most important and far reaching purchase I ever made."*

Therefore, knowing what **John Wanamaker** found to be true for his life, as well as that of most of my readers, the question I want address is: *Why is it that so many, both in the church and out of the church seem to avoid reading this book as well as avoid hearing from God's Word?* I am growing more and more concerned with so many who prefer to hear a twenty minute motivational talk over a Bible based message from the Word of God. Is because our teachers of the Word of God are lack the gift of persuasion and interest? Or is there something in people's hearts that resist hearing from God's Word? When we prefer music, even religious music, over the Word there is surely something missing in a person's person growth in God.

But I feel that there is more to this than what meets the eye. I feel that people more and more are closing their minds as well as their hearts to anything outside the scope of their own person interests. I believe that humankind has become so obsessed with self: me, myself, and I, that they are becoming unwilling to listen to anything adverse or out of touch with their own self obsessions.

*Just this week the Wall Street Journal carried an article about the closing of the liberal mind...speaking of the students on the campus at Rutgers University when in 2014 they protested the planned commencement speech of **Condoleezza Rice**, the first black woman to serve as Secretary of State, National Security Adviser and a Stanford University provost. The reason: because she served under the George W. Bush administration. Two years later, the same group also refused to hear from a democrat, **Madeleine Albright**. Reason: they charged her for being a "war criminal" and a "genocide enabler". Some 28 professors signed a letter saying they wouldn't attend the ceremony if she spoke. And the intellectuals want to call this a day of enlightenment? We will never learn much as long as we close both our minds and ears to even what the opposition has to say, much less those who we make claims we agree with.*

THE CLOSING OF THE MIND

What I feel is happening is that this “closing of the mind” is getting out of hand to the point that it is leading this nation down the path of “totalitarianism” which relies on government to force humans to behave a certain way. We are already seeing it when the Supreme Court, against the will of most people, forced the public acceptance of “same-sex marriage.” Woe be anyone who speaks out against it in the work place.

No sooner was that passed, when our President orders the public schools to form a new policy for the “*trans-gender*” population, which if the data I received is correct, only affects .03% of the population. Of course, that does not include those who have embraced a “*mental trans-gender*” mind set for the day of some perverted individuals in our society who wants to use this political correctness concept to their advantage to fulfill some evil scheme of their wicked hearts.

Now, a large portion of the Democrat party is seriously considering making Mr. Bernie Sanders, a known socialist, their presidential candidate. When one of Hillary Clinton’s supporters for her election attacked Mr. Sanders in a speech, Mr. Sanders said, “*They were trying to link me to a dead communist dictator.*” Well, he is linked when his idea of what government should be like, cut from the same cloth. Socialism, whether it is Chavez in Venezuela, Castro in Cuba, Putin in Russia, or Sanders it is nothing more than legalized theft in the name of the people against the vilified few. Socialism has failed throughout the world. I have been where it has been practiced, and let me tell you, it is a complete failure.

What our people need to hear is more than just what are acceptable words; they need to hear the truth. I know that I will be accused of supporting Mr. Donald Trump. Let it be clear. I am not advocating that we support or not support any of the candidates that are now on the ballot. That, I will not do. In all honesty I am very unhappy the place this election has taken with both parties. Only a miracle from God can save us now as a nation. The America we have known and loved in the past has changed. We are dealing with more than a candidate’s personal life, we are dealing with a nation that is being held hostage by the fact that our leaders, our schools, and the business world has left God, the Bible, and the local church out of any consideration as to how this country should be governed.

When we look back in the 90’s the American voter decided that a candidate’s personal life was none of our business. They forget that it could have something to do with honor, integrity, and morality. We have seen our largest corporations fail because their CEO’s were not men of honor and integrity. Think of how many of them are now in prison because things like “truth” didn’t matter. The sports world is now infected with this evil disease and we are seeing some of the leading sports figures, who were great on the playing field, lose the respect of their admirers (as well as millions of dollars from their corporate sponsors) because things like morality didn’t matter as long as they didn’t get caught. You see, they all have closed their minds to anyone and any teaching that challenged that argument.

I remember upon the graduation of our daughter, Sheri, I had promised her that I would take her to Europe. Didn’t that cost a lot of money? Yes, it did, but the future of my daughter was more important to Ginny and me than our bank account. What I really wanted to do was take her inside East Germany, which I did. I did this because I knew back then what the professors of her college would hit her with once they found out she was a preacher’s daughter.

I *did not* want her to have that knowledge so she would argue with her professor. I just did not want her to be led astray from what they would try. I am glad I did, because she did survive and most of you know she is this day not only serving the Lord, but is partners with me in conveying the truth to our community and to the generations to come. I wanted her to have “*acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.*” You see, *if we who know the truth fail to share that truth, what chance does this generation, and the one to come, have to survive?*

Now if this article seems for some to be too political, or over dramatized, then probably I will ask of you to be understanding. I am concerned for our nation, our youth, and for the families of our community. I really have been looking for “*acceptable words*” but I just cannot always guarantee you that they will be dipped in honey. Sometimes, if we want to be healed, we must swallow that worst tasting pill a doctor ever gave us. Maybe next month, I can make it sound easier to digest. Amen.