

Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



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What Is Written

If we genuinely want to know the will of God, we must go to the primary source through which He has made it known: The Scriptures.

“And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, ‘Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘*What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?*’” (Lk. 10:25-26).

“Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn *not to exceed what is written*, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other” (1 Cor. 4:6, NASV).

When God brought Israel out of Egypt and molded them into a new nation, one of the first things He did was give them a written Law. From that time forward, God’s preferred means of communicating His will to His people was through writing. Over the next millennium and a half, His prophets recorded numerous works of history, wisdom, rebuke, and encouragement, all as a means of providing a definitive source of guidance for His people.

The value of written revelation is not hard to understand. A written message provides a uniform standard that is

accessible to a wide audience. It can be copied, distributed, and translated, then read by individuals or to a large group. And because it is written, there is a reduced risk of corruption compared to oral communication.

This written revelation can be inspiring (think of the courage of Job in the face of his trials), exciting (David taking on Goliath with his slingshot), and even entertaining (Haman’s blundering efforts to destroy the Jews in the book of Esther). But above all, the Scriptures are intended to be *authoritative*. When the lawyer asked Jesus “what shall I do?” Jesus did not give him the answer; instead, He directed him to an existing body of instruction: “What is written in the law?” (To his credit, the lawyer was familiar with the source documents and gave a correct response, quoting Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18).

In the same manner, Paul’s approach to the problems plaguing the church at Corinth was to train them “not to exceed what was written.” God had already revealed and recorded the attitudes and behaviors that were necessary

for His people to work together in harmony. The Corinthians had been ignoring that testimony, and were paying a terrible price for their ignorance.

Historically, that has always been the problem. “I have written for him the great things of My law,” God once told an earlier generation, “but they were considered a strange thing” (Hos. 8:12). If people don’t bother to read or listen to what God has revealed, they aren’t going to be knowledgeable of what He wants them to do. And ignorance of what is written always leads to disaster.

When we face questions and issues today, either in our personal lives or as a body of believers, our response should always be that of Jesus to the lawyer: “What is written in the law?” It may take a lot of study and careful sifting and sorting of material to properly interpret the message, but there is no alternative. Relying on feelings, popular opinion, or human “experts” for quick answers will inevitably get us in trouble.

God has expended great effort to give us His word for our benefit. In turn, we must respect what He has written.

– David King