



## ***Giving Weight Where Weight is Due***

*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (2 Ti. 2:15)*

*A just balance and scales belong to the LORD;  
All the weights of the bag are His concern. (Prov. 16:11)*

I fully realize that the prime and literal meaning of Proverbs 16:11 has to do with our fair and honest dealings with others, but I have wondered lately if it has an application to our “*accurately handling the word of truth*”. Could the “*balance and scales*” characterize our entire handling of God’s Word and each of the weights the various doctrines and teachings presented throughout Scripture? Each of these doctrinal weights “*are His concern*”, but in our pursuit to accurately handle the Word do we properly balance the scales as a whole? While there are out-and-out false teachers whose assertions contradict the plain truth of God’s Word, there are faithful brethren in Christ we come across who are generally right the vast majority of the time, but can be found clinging to an error or two here and there. They are not heretics or false teachers and therefore do not warrant treatment as such, but the question persists, “How can those who are doctrinally secure biblically in most areas be found to be in error in some other area?” I think it often has to do with how they balance **some** of the weights without full regard to **all** of the weights.

The term I have heard used to describe this phenomena is “over-realize”. It describes what happens when we take **A** truth and emphasize it, giving it undue priority over other truth. It is one thing to “realize” the importance of a truth of God’s Word, but quite another thing to “over-realize” it to the degree that it overshadows, begins to diminish, or in some cases actually invalidates a subsequent truth of God. The doctrinal weights as provided by God never cancel another one out but are held in spiritual tension so as to compliment and support each other; it is when **man** assigns a greater value to one over another the scale tips out of balance, the picture of what it means to “over-realize” a truth. A sure sign of doctrinal error is when a truth is over-realized to the point that it produces something at the expense of another truth.

We see an extreme example of this in things such as hyper-Calvinism where terms such as “election” and “foreordained” are over-realized to the point that they result in the contra-scriptural belief that whether someone lives a life pursuing sin or pursuing righteousness does not matter; everyone’s fate is thought by

*“Giving Weight Where Weight Is Due”, Page 1 of 5*

them to be predetermined so that behavior therefore (as a subsequent devaluation of a different truth of God's Word) does not matter. Or we see this in Messianic Christians who insist on giving undue weight to the priority of the Sabbath or the Torah over every other aspect of God's Word. Such begin with truth which they lift up and give extraordinary priority to the degree that it changes the weight given to subsequent truth. In such examples it leads to more than just a mere doctrinal error but someone beginning to walk down the wrong path entirely. We see this time and again at the heart of patently false teaching, but it is likewise found in lesser errors among Believers. And I would suggest that it is nowhere more commonly found than in eschatology, one's beliefs about the End Times. We glom onto a word or interpretation so dogmatically that it re-shapes our view of related scriptural truth to the point that we begin to ignore, devalue, or sometimes even outright reinterpret some other fundamental truth of God.

I have come to believe that this explains why although God's people in the 1<sup>st</sup> century who were schooled in His Word were expecting the Messiah, so many of them could not accept Him at His first coming. They over-realized things which in and of themselves were truths provided in God's Word not only about the identity of the Messiah and the works He would do, but the timing of His arrival, and ultimately found themselves in serious error. I believe history is repeating itself as we are approaching the final events leading up to His Second Coming.

*So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill? Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they? However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from." (Jn. 7:25-27)*

Where did they get this notion that where the Messiah is concerned, "no one knows where He is from"? Much of this had to do with the rabbinical teaching of the day concerning Esther. She was rightly recognized as a rare female type of the Messiah in Scripture. Many of her attributes taught about the Messiah such as intervening on behalf of her people, but there was a curious aspect about Esther, the fact that "she had no father or mother" and was raised by her Uncle Mordecai. (Est. 3:7) Yes, the truth in Esther's life that **something** was different about her parentage reflected an aspect of **something** that would be different about Jesus' parentage. But what happened when this truth was over-realized to the exclusion of other truths in God's Word about the birth of the Messiah? Other Scripture **plainly** stated when and how He would be born: He would be born of a virgin (Is. 7:14) and He would be born in Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2) How could they come to the conclusion, "but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from"? One truth is over-realized to the point that it overshadows other truths and does not merely diminish them, but outright ignores them so as to ultimately hold to an error. The rabbis may have been well-intentioned, but they were not "accurately handling the word of truth" (2 Ti. 2:15) because the scales of doctrine on the whole for them did not balance. (There are examples aplenty

"Giving Weight Where Weight Is Due", Page 2 of 5

throughout the Gospels of this very same mistake repeated over and over again where their notion of such non-End Times doctrines were concerned such as the Sabbath.)

For the past several years I have assisted Jacob Prasch of [Moriel Ministries](#) in writing his last two books (and a current forthcoming third) which have all had very strong End Times themes. This issue of not over-realizing one truth at the expense of another has been on my mind for quite some time, mainly because I have seen how painfully meticulous Jacob is personally where this is concerned. [The Dilemma of Laodicea](#) provides a wonderful and needed lesson in Church history, but the inescapable conclusion of Jacob's book is the End Times assertion we are living in the final phase of the Church Age characterized by the church of Laodicea. [Shadows of the Beast](#) has tremendous value in teaching how Satan operates during any age of history, but it all points to what the faithful need to know in order to identify the ultimate satanically-possessed person of the Antichrist who is soon to publicly debut. The current book in progress deals specifically with not just the timing but the doctrine of the Resurrection and Rapture of the Church. And in lending my meager assistance to Jacob these pursuits have caused me to revisit many books, authors and websites where fellow Believers' handling of End Times Scripture is on display. It is not the heretics and false teachers who have been able to regularly get a rise of emotion or passion from me where their crazy, nonsensical assertions are concerned, but the differences between myself and those whom I absolutely believe are my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

What I have observed often mimics the behavior of the hyper-Calvinists mentioned earlier. Just as they take single words, phrases, or individual Scriptures and elevate them to extraordinary heights above all other truths of God's Word, the "good guys" uncharacteristically do the same kinds of thing when it comes to End Times doctrine or events. Time and time again I have seen even the most otherwise respected and much published scholar violate his own rules for handling Scripture where something concerning the End Times is concerned, which he never does for any other point of theology, and for which he would surely thoroughly rebuke if not excoriate someone else for doing the very same thing. They handle the Greek language in exactly the same, consistent manner *until* they get to a verse in which the Greek in that particular instance does not conform perfectly with their End Times assertion. Or they insist on never over-realizing single words in Scripture but that everything must be studied in the context of the surrounding paragraphs and chapters—*until* they come across a word or verse which does not conform perfectly with their End Times assertion. Or their regular teaching of the working and character of the Holy Spirit (or some likewise important doctrine) is given an inexplicable "exception" because it does not conform perfectly with a particular End Times interpretation. Ultimately, most often without realizing it, they make an exception for one truth at the expense of another within their very own framework.

"Giving Weight Where Weight Is Due", Page 3 of 5

Frankly, this has had no bigger impact for me personally than laser-like scrutiny of my own personal walk with Christ. Having identified this behavior in so many others who I admire and love in the Lord, I cannot possibly be the arrogant Pharisee praying, “*God, I thank You I am not like other people*”. (Lk. 18:10) I wrestle to this very hour with the notion that I might be doing the same thing in some aspect of my own faith. Am I rightly dividing the Word of God so that the scale and respective weights are all as God has certified them and in balance with each other, or have I brought something of my own to the table which over-realizes one truth at the expense of another?

Just as the people of Jesus’ time thought themselves to be well-versed in God’s Word, so today’s generation finds themselves likewise as well. Are we repeating the same mistake?

*in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. (Dan. 9:2-3)*

Here is our ultimate, saving example of what to do in this situation. Daniel recognized from Scripture, just as we do for our present situation, that fulfillment was imminent. What did he do? “*So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes*”. What would happen if this was our own first inclination? We often miss the repeated teaching in the Book of Daniel that in the Last Days knowledge is equated with faithfulness. Daniel is identified as one of the wisest and most knowledgeable to ever live, but it is of even greater significance that God identifies him as one of the three most **righteous** men to ever live. (Eze. 14:14, 20) I cannot help but wonder to what degree we do not accurately handle the whole counsel of God where His Word is concerned as a direct result of not first earnestly seeking “*Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes*”. I cannot help but theorize if a prophecy conference elicited the right response from God’s people based on the information provided if the result would not be a very large, spontaneous revival dedicated to prayer and repentance.

No, I have no earth-shattering “new” insight for you today. To address a hitting slump, a professional ball player simply spends more time in the batting cage and engages their coach regarding the basic mechanics of their swing; to improve on their time the cyclist takes the daily training regimen more seriously; to prevent over-realizing one truth of God’s Word at the expense of another, the End Times Christian commits their self even more deeply to prayer and fasting and personal repentance—you know, “faithfulness”. We cannot forsake the pursuit of putting each basic truth into practice in the name of attaining something “bigger” which will ultimately undermine them when we look back from where we arrived.

“Giving Weight Where Weight Is Due”, Page 4 of 5

What I am proposing is that visible errors in our beliefs probably have more to do with the priority of our personal relationship with Christ. The difference between those in the 1<sup>st</sup> century who accepted Christ instead of rejecting Him was a heart for keeping God's Word rather than an attitude things in it could be by-passed for something over-realized which overshadowed it. So many rejected Him because He did not come in the way their over-realized eschatology demanded. Let us humbly seek the whole counsel of God in the spirit and example of Daniel that this last generation might not repeat the same mistake as the first.

In Him,

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