**Ancient Landmarks**

*Proverbs 22:28*

**Introduction**

1. **Proverbs 22:28** – boundary line defining allotted portion of the Promise Land given by God.
   1. **Deuteronomy 19:14** – given from the Lord.
   2. **Deuteronomy 27:17** – to move such is to be cursed.
   3. Removing such was an act of dishonesty, deceitfulness, covetousness, and was injurious to a neighbor.
      1. Often how the less fortunate were mistreated – **Proverbs 23:10-11** (Fatherless without protector – as well as widows – **Proverbs 15:25**)
   4. Going beyond allotted portion and taking what belongs to another.
2. God’s use of such imagery to condemn rebellious Judah – **Hosea 5:10-12**
   1. When God sets a spiritual landmark with His law it is to be respected, and unmoved.
   2. To move such ancient landmarks of divine origin was to incur the wrath of God.
   3. Jeremiah called the people of God back to these ancient ways, i.e. back to faithfulness – **Jeremiah 6:16**
3. We must acknowledge the boundaries God has set in scripture, and never move them.
4. Ancient Landmarks of the Church
5. The Church is a Kingdom with Borders
   1. Peter’s Confession and Jesus’ Statement – **Matthew 16:16-19**
      1. **(vv. 17-18)** – the very foundation is God revealed – Jesus’ deity/messiahship.
      2. **(v. 19)** – apostles given keys of the kingdom.
         1. Keys – they are the instrument of opening the door for all – **cf. John 20:22-23** – i.e. via the Spirit’s instruction.
         2. “and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.” (NASB)
   2. Apostolic doctrine is the foundation – **Ephesians 2:20** – Christ as cornerstone.
   3. **1 John 1:3; 2 John 9** – Christ’s doctrine for the kingdom’s entrance (Fellowship with God) preached by apostles, and the borders set. To transgress is to not have God.
6. These Borders Regard
   1. Interpretation of Revealed Law – **2 Peter 1:20-21** – the origin of scripture is God, and we must seek the meaning He put into it – **cf. 1 Corinthians 2:13** – “combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words” (NASB).
      1. Revealed to Understand
         1. It is sad that this is even a discussion, but some have moved the borders to state that God’s word is not fully understandable.
         2. Some claim gray areas in scripture – “Yes, we have to be unified, but what about those passages that are less clear?”
            1. Blame is placed – 1) God did not reveal all His word sufficiently to be understood. 2) God did not create us sufficiently to understand all He revealed.
            2. Either way we blame God.
         3. **Ephesians 5:17** – commanded to be understood.
         4. **Ephesians 3:3-4** – revelation means TO MAKE KNOWN – such is accomplished by reading/studying – WE CAN KNOW – that’s the whole point of revelation (**cf. Deuteronomy 29:29** – that we may do)
         5. Any can understand and walk this path – **Isaiah 35:8** (kingdom prophecy) (Fools – the simple – **cf. Acts 4:13** – like the apostles)
         6. The problem – **Matthew 13:10-11, 14-17** – the key is dull hearts, their self-hardened ears and self-closed eyes, and lack of desire (**v. 17**).
            1. Seek to find – **Matthew 7:7-8** – requires desire.
            2. Asking in faith – **James 1:6** – in interest of true faith – i.e. following God’s wisdom. **(v. 21** – receive God’s word with meekness.)
      2. Revealed How to Understand
         1. We must realize that scripture not only CAN be understood, but in it are the principles of HOW to understand it.
         2. “We forget something sometimes, we forget that while truth is absolute, our understanding of truth is relative.” (Idea that we can understand scripture, but we can’t understand it alike.)
            1. This is an illogical statement. To understand something is to comprehend its objective meaning, which for scripture there is only one.
         3. The will of God is communicated and understood through command/direct statement, necessary inference, and approved example.
         4. Example of Jesus:
            1. Command/direct statement – **Matthew 4:4, 7** (Tempted by Satan)
            2. Example – **John 13:14** (Washing disciples’ feet)
            3. Necessary inference – **Matthew 22:29-33** (Answering Sadducees)
         5. Method of Hebrew writer – Hebrews quotes the OT numerous times and uses these methods.
         6. Some disdain this approach – claim we’re being too systematic.
            1. Very much as system of faith – **2 Timothy 1:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:15** – pattern, divine traditions.
            2. New Hermeneutic? – Focus on grace, finished work of Jesus, less on letter of the law.

Still under law – **Romans 6:14** (not merely, but especially) – **cf. Galatians 6:2** (law of Christ)

Jesus – “have you not read” (x5); “it is written” (x12); quotes OT 45x

NT writers do even more.

**1 Peter 3:15** – always prepared with an answer/defense.

* + - * 1. Book, Chapter, Verse approach to scripture is not only acceptable, but NECESSARY!
  1. The Proclamation of God’s Will – **1 Peter 4:11** – speak as oracles of God.
     1. The Whole Counsel – **Acts 20:26-27** – like Paul.
        1. Some are moving the ancient landmarks by only preaching some of God’s word, and not all.
        2. May not be preaching error, but they aren’t preaching it ALL.
     2. The Exposure of All Sin and Error in Specificity
        1. The whole counsel of God is not simply saying, “Do good, and avoid bad,” but addressing specific matters.
        2. Expose sin – **Ephesians 5:11-13** – requires not only the general consideration of sin, but the specific sins. (EX: lewdness – but what is lewdness? Modesty, dancing, etc.)
        3. Expose error – **1 John 4:1** – testing the spirits requires an examination of the specific spirits. (**cf. 1 Timothy 4:1-5** – apostasy coming, and here is what it looks like.)
  2. Applying Revealed Law
     1. Work, Worship, Organization of the Church
        1. Work – Evangelism, Edification, Benevolence to need saints.
        2. Worship – Singing, Lords Supper, Contribution, Praying, Preaching.
        3. Local church, Autonomy (what it is, what it isn’t – does not provide a safe haven for sin and error, but prevents its spread), Elders, Deacons, Men and Women in the church.
     2. Morality – what is God’s moral standard for the church? Contrasted with the world. (Modesty, social drinking, MDR, etc.)
     3. Fellowship – who can we fellowship? When is fellowship broken? What to do when fellowship is broken?

1. Ancient Landmarks of Society
2. God is the Builder of Society and Sets the Borders
   1. God is the only one without beginning – **Genesis 1:1**
      1. **Isaiah 44:6; Revelation 1:8** – None other are eternal like the Lord.
      2. **Hebrews 3:4** – All things and people come from someone – God. But God always was.
         1. Includes all of society.
         2. All human beings, homes, governments, races, etc. (**cf. Acts 17:26-27** – one blood every nation)
      3. **Psalm 127:1** – the construction of God is with eternal wisdom and is the only successful way. This includes the landmarks He has set.
   2. Society will answer for whether they have acknowledged God and the ancient landmarks He has set:
      1. David in distress – **Psalm 11:1-7** – these foundations may be destroyed, but God will uphold them in the end.
      2. God will allow men to exercise their free will even by moving His boundaries, but they will experience His wrath in judgment – **cf. Hebrews 9:27**
3. These Borders Include
   1. Origins
      1. Objective Truth
         1. We live in a society that has largely bought into the idea of relative truth. (Yet, the idea of truth has always had its opposition – **cf. John 18:38**)
            1. Truth is whatever you believe it to be.
            2. Your truth is your truth, and my truth is my truth.
         2. “Relative truth” is a self-contradictory term:
            1. Truth – (a) (1) the body of real things, events, and facts; (2) the state of being the case; (3) a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality.
            2. By classic definition truth is OBJECTIVE – i.e. it has the transcendent quality (see #3) of being unaltered by the opinions of anyone outside of it.
            3. Someone might say, “Truth is relative,” but they show that such is not the case by the very statement which they claim to be objective, or true.
         3. Ultimately, God has revealed the nature of truth:
            1. God always was and is – **Genesis 1:1** – God is truth. (**cf. John 14:6** – Jesus is the truth – **John 1:1** – word in the beginning)
            2. Light and Darkness figure – **Genesis 1:3-5** – light is light and darkness is darkness.

All know the light to be day, and the darkness to be night.

Continues to today – EVERYONE CAN UNDERSTAND THIS.

* + - * 1. Idea taken forward – **1 John 1:5** – God is light.

**John 1:1-5, 9** – the word is light giving light to all men – i.e. those who accept Him.

**John 3:18-21** – the struggle with comprehending truth today comes from the rejection of God.

They have removed the Landmarks – **Isaiah 5:20**

ESPECIALLY REGARDING MORALITY – GOD IS THE ONE WHO SETS THE MORAL BOUNDARIES, BUT MEN HAVE REJECTED THEM AND MOVED THEM.

**cf. 2 Corinthians 4:4** – blinded by Satan

* + - 1. This sets the foundation for all else – GOD ESTABLISHES THE LANDMARKS OF SOCIETY BECAUSE GOD IS TRUTH. IT ALL COMES BACK TO HIM.
    1. Life
       1. Manasseh, king of Judah – **2 Kings 21:6** – made sons pass through the fire – reference to sacrifice to Molech.
          1. **Leviticus 18:21** – specifically mentioned as prohibited.
          2. Such a heinous act sadly exists today.
       2. Abortion – the children aren’t passed through the fire but ripped from the womb.
          1. This is not sacrifice to Molech, but to the idol of self, and of pleasure.
       3. Naturally, the morality of this shameful act has been questioned.
          1. Not a life – not a human – the only way those who are “pro-choice” can justify the action.
          2. The claim is that the “fetus” is not a human being, but a lump of cells.
       4. The ultimate question – WHEN DOES LIFE BEGIN?
          1. The proponents of abortion have gone as far as post-birth to suggest it is moral to “terminate the fetus.”
          2. This is allowed by the arbitrary nature of the suggestions of life’s beginning.
       5. What does the Bible say?
          1. Baby in utero is a live person – **Exodus 21:22-25** – life for life if harm follows.
          2. John the Baptist leaps in Elizabeth’s womb – **Luke 1:39-41**

Babe – brephos – an unborn child; a newborn child, or infant still older. (Vine)

***“Childhood” (2 Timothy 3:15)***.

* + - * 1. **Psalm 139:13-16** – description of God’s creation of a human life in the womb.
        2. Presumptuous to act as though we understand life to suggest it begins anytime after conception – **Ecclesiastes 11:5**
    1. Gender
       1. Gender has even become a landmark that society has moved.
          1. There is a myriad of suggested genders.
          2. FACEBOOK gives 58 “Gender Options” for its users to choose from.
          3. People are offended if you do not use the proper pronouns which subscribe to their self-identified gender.
       2. This is not a harmless matter:
          1. Mental health is jeopardized.
          2. Ultimately, GOD’S DESIGN, AND ASSIGNMENT OF INDIVIDUAL LIFE IS IGNORED/REJECTED.
       3. Jesus looks to the beginning – **Matthew 19:4-6** – made them male and female.
       4. If God created you male or female you are to submit to that assigned role to the best of your ability. It is not something we can forfeit.
       5. NO AMOUNT OF REDEFINING WORDS, OR MAKING UP ENTIRELY NEW WORDS WILL CHANGE GOD’S ANCIENT LANDMARK OF GENDER – IT WILL BE THE STANDARD OF JUDGMENT IN THE END.
  1. The Home
     1. Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage
        1. Landmarks moved:
           1. Candidates – no longer just male and female.
           2. Duration – no longer till death parts.
           3. Monogamy – no longer a closed relationship.
           4. Number – unlimited divorces and remarriages.
        2. Jesus’ plain and clear doctrine – **Matthew 19:3-10**
           1. One man, one woman for life with ONE exception – not the rule, but an exception.
           2. Bound for life – **Romans 7:2-3**
           3. **(v. 10)** – if we can’t accept it we should remain unmarried.
        3. All will be judged by Christ’s marriage law – do not move the ancient landmark!
     2. Child Rearing
        1. Landmarks moved:
           1. Goal – not to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
           2. Methods – not with God’s word, and by sparing the rod.
           3. Guides – philosophy, psychology, not the Bible.
        2. God has laid landmarks for raising children:
           1. There is a way they should go – **Proverbs 22:6** – i.e. to fear God serve Him – **Ecclesiastes 12:13**
           2. Instruction and training should come from God’s word – **Ephesians 6:4**
           3. God has provided a way for training – **Proverbs 13:24; 19:18; 23:13-14; Hebrews 12:11**
  2. The Nation
     1. God rules in the kingdoms of men – **Daniel 5:21** – Daniel to Belshazzar about his father Nebuchadnezzar.
     2. Governing authorities appointed by God – **Romans 13:1-7** – God’s minister to punish evil and uphold good. (Standard is God’s word ultimately)
     3. The effects of righteousness and sin on a nation – **Proverbs 14:34**
        1. The changes of laws in a land do not change God’s law, nor His perception of that nation.
        2. Each nation is called to be subject to the principles of God’s word.

**Conclusion**

1. God has created, and in creation He established ancient landmarks to be respected.
2. Whether it be in the church or society we must always acknowledge the boundaries God has set – we will be judged by them.
3. We must not move the ancient landmarks! – **Deuteronomy 27:17** – to do so is to be cursed.