

Get Ready!

Your Audience Awaits You!

"God has reserved a people to hear only your voice!" – Bible Teacher, Malcolm Smith

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Guest Speaker

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Preface

I have a friend who is a very successful businessman, an excellent author, and a highly popular public speaker. He tells the story of when he started his first company in his early twenties. He was very ambitious. "Early on," he says, "my mantra was *Perspective!* Everything was about *perspective*. The right *perspective* could close any deal and settle every argument. Having a proper *perspective* on things could make you healthy, wealthy and wise ... and let's not forget successful. *Perspective is everything!*"

It didn't take long on his first day on the job of his new company at his new office for his world view to be tested. From behind his desk, he saw a gentleman approach his see-through front office door. As the man knocked on the door, my friend waved him in, while simultaneously answering the phone.

As he signals his visitor to have a seat in his office, my friend engages the caller in a high-energy sales pitch which lasts but a few moments, concluding in a sale over the phone. Closing his first sale and hanging up the phone, he enthusiastically welcomes the visitor sitting across from him.

"WOW! That was very impressive," the visitor said. "Most impressive! I must say that I have never heard such a compelling and convincing sales pitch in all my days as the one you just gave. WOW! That was really good!"

Feigning a little humility, my friend thanked the visitor for his kind words, and then asked him how he could be of help. Without hesitation, the visitor said, "Well, you can help me by stepping out from behind your desk so I can connect your phone. I'm with the phone company."

"Perspective went right out the window at that moment," my friend says.

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*“Perspective”!* That is the business we are in as professionals in the Creative Arts industry. We create *perspective* in what we do, and we design it and craft it in such a way as to make it persuasive before our audiences. We create in our craft an environment of engagement, then we escort our guests through that environment down paths of myriad emotions intended to create a compelling experience that is, hopefully, not soon forgotten. In that time frame, our audience is exposed and educated to our point-of-view. If we have done our part in this process well, the audience leaves impressed and convinced that our perspective is both valuable and correct ... and they become converts to (supporters of) our perspective.

That, my dear friends and peers, is what we do in the world of Media & Entertainment. Our goal is to convert people to our point-of-view. Plain and simple. It makes no difference what our given talent is in this field – whether it be writing, broadcasting, producing, directing or distributing the product – whatever our point-of-entry into the project may be, the endgame in the project is always the same ... *to win the hearts of the people!*

And, why is that so? Because *that* is what **HE** does ... and that is how **HE** does it!

We, who have been made in HIS image and after HIS likeness, can do it no differently than He does, regardless of whether or not we are believers.

**Ps. 66:3** – *Say unto the Lord, “How awesome are Your works, O God! Because of the greatness of Your power, even the heathen feigns obedience to Your will.”*

I’ve been asked to speak on the subject of “The Future” and its impact upon our trade of media and entertainment. Well, in all honesty, that is a pretty tall order for the short window of time we have tonight. What I will attempt to do, however, is to weave that thought into this event’s general theme: *“Get Ready!”* That theme, on its own merit, takes us into the future as it leads to the deeper question: *Get ready for what?*

The title of my message tonight is: “Get Ready! Your Audience Awaits You.”

## **Introduction**

Let me begin by giving you a brief personal background into my interest in studying the future and why I have been invited to speak here tonight.

*My head has been stuck in the future since I was 8 years old!*

My family and I were church-goers. I grew up in the church. I’m one of those rare, strange cats who do not have, what is called, a “Conversion Story.” There’s never been a time in my life when I did not know the Lord. When I was water baptized in my junior high school years, it wasn’t to save me from a life of drugs, sex or crime. It was in response to my attending the Billy Graham Crusade at the Astrodome here in Houston. To me at the time, I was simply obeying the

Word and following my Lord's example. It was a formality to me ... a necessary formality so that, in Jesus' words, "*fitting to fulfill all righteousness*" (**Mat. 3:15 NAS**).

Now, I share this not for the purpose of boast, but rather for the fact that, when I was eight years old, my dad read to us, for the first time, out of the Book of Revelation. He explained to us many of the passages and what they meant, including Revelation 13 having to do with the Antichrist.

I was so intrigued by it all ... and so curious about this character referred to as *the beast*, that I prayed a prayer that would prove to be the course of my life from that point forward. I prayed: "*Lord, teach me about the Antichrist ... and cause me to understand how the world will one day worship a man as a god!*"

That was my prayer in 1958. Of course, I did not know at the time the passage in **Phil. 2:13** that reads: "*For it is God Who is at work within you both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*" That tells me that God is the Author of our prayers. I didn't know that, as I prayed that prayer as a child, He was setting my course in the study and the work of end-time Bible prophecy in my lifespan.

And that, my friends, is why I say that "my head has been stuck in the future since I was eight years old." *The Future* has captured and captivated my full attention for over five decades, and I'm here to tell you that we are now there! *The Future* has finally arrived. The "mandate" reserved for the so-called *last generation* is now upon us!

### **A Shift has now occurred**

A *Shift* is underway in the atmosphere ... do you feel it? It's a *shift* in the spiritual environment. Something is happening that is changing the status quo as we know it. Have you sensed it?

The world would call it an evolution. But we are acknowledging it as a *shift!* A change. The way things have been will never be the same again.

As you study the prophetic word, you come to the realization (or, at least, I have) that there had to come a point in history when the prophesied "last" generation would show up. It would be into this generation that the antichrist would come – and, not just the antichrist, but all the signs that are pre-emptive to the return of Jesus would all be in play. They would all begin to happen en masse at the very same time.

Jesus said it would happen – all at once – in the lifetime of that one generation.

**Mat. 24: 33-34** – "*Even so you, when you see all these things, know that My coming is near, even at the door! Truly I say to you, this generation shall not pass away (cease to exist) until all these things take place (which included His return).*"

(Amp) --<sup>33</sup> *So also when you see these signs, all taken together, coming to pass, you may know of a surety that He is near, at the very doors.* <sup>34</sup> *Truly I tell you, this generation (the whole multitude of people living at the same time, in a definite, given period) will not pass away till all these things taken together take place.*

**2 Peter 3:11-12** – *Since all these things are to happen in this manner, what sort of people ought we to be in holy conduct and godliness, as we look for and hasten the coming of the day of our Lord?*

That “LAST” generation will be one under a mandate different from all previous generations. Why? Simply because, being the “last” generation, they would be the ones that would “usher in” the Lord’s return. That last generation would be known by the signs of its times ... signs that would be a conglomeration of all signs in previous generations. It would be a “*summation generation*” ... a “wrap-up” generation!

GET READY! The *Shift* has begun! Our “mandate” for what remains of the prophetic hours of our day has changed. Our pursuits are to be no longer focused on building a career, but rather the fulfillment of a commission ... a commission so great that it takes us farther into the world faster and more successfully than our careers could ever do (**Mark 16:15-16**)..

### **Wrap**

So ... what does this all have to do with us in the media and entertainment industry and this flash gathering today? Consider this familiar passage in the context of this gathering:

**Phil. 2:13**, *“For it is God which worketh within you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”*

The Amplified version reads this way: *“for it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight.”*

The message of the hour is this:

GOD IS ON THE MOVE!! Get ready to move through this shift in the heavenlies as God works in us and through us, fully utilizing the gifts and talents He has invested in us to go to an audience specially prepared by Him to hear our words! Jesus is coming ... and His coming is sooner than most have prepared for!

**Lu. 21:15** – *I will give you A MOUTH and WISDOM, which all your adversaries shall not be able to [resist] nor rebuke.*

As practitioners in this industry of “Communication Arts,” we have been gifted with mouths anointed with wisdom. Let us dedicate and consecrate ourselves to the development and distribution of that anointing. Through our craft as writers, journalists, broadcasters and film

makers, we produce God's creative works through us, inviting the world to "come and see" what He is all about through the variety of message types, styles and formats that we utilize.

We love the God we serve ... and as we minister to Him in that love, we administer that love through the craft in which we have been anointed by Him to the world. Not for our glory, you understand, but for His, for He must be pre-eminent in all things. We must *decrease*, allowing Him to *increase* His presence in us and through us – for His purposes and His pleasure in the times He dictates.

**1 Cor. 10:31** -- *So then, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you may be doing, do **ALL** for the honor and glory of God.*

We, who work in this industry of communication, are like those who were the singers and worshipers in ancient Israel, who went before the people into battle, bearing within themselves the mighty praise and worship of a majestic and victorious God. They ministered unto God and led the people into victorious battle in turbulent and threatening times.

In like manner, we bear that same anointing, expressed through our crafts of creativity and communication. We are the modern day "heralds" of His glory, His majesty and His power before a fear-ridden world that is looking the other way. We have the assignment to get their attention in such a way that the Spirit may capture their hearts so as to persuade them to convert to the beauty of Christ.

### **CLOSING: Drawing a Straight Line**

Let me bring all of this together by relaying a true story that I, myself, was a part of ---

It's an experience I had with a fellow worker back in the early '90s, as I recall. This friend was, in those early years of his now illustrious career, quite an accomplished and gifted artist. He was the very best I had ever known at the time.

One day we got involved in what turned out to be a rather passionate conversation about God's involvement in the work we do. His position was that, although God had given to him his talent as an artist, God was no longer directly involved in the daily activities of that talent. He acknowledged that the talent was in him at birth, but he alone was operating fully in that talent without God's help. He got the training he needed to correctly apply that talent, and it was now upon him and him only to work that talent.

I asked him about these two scriptures we are discussing tonight about God being at work within you and that without Jesus, we can't do anything. My friend's response was simply, "Well, Wally, you know, one man's interpretation may be his alone. We can't say for sure what scriptures are really saying because, after all, they were written by different men down through the ages. How you interpret those scriptures may or may not be right."

As the conversation progressively digressed from there, I finally looked at him (in front of the other witnesses in the room who were equally caught up in the discussion) and said, “I’ll tell you what, to prove to you that those passages are saying exactly what they appear to be saying without the need for human interpretation, and that God means every word that He says to be taken at face value, I can tell you that the day will soon come when the Lord will simply lift a finger off of you, and you – being the highly trained professional artist that you are – will not be able to so much as draw a straight line!”

“That will never happen,” my friend fired back. “It can’t happen!”

“It will happen,” I fired back, “and that, very, very soon.”

As we all returned to work the next morning, our talented artist was found in a rather disheveled art room, which was not a normal state to find it in. Our guys were very organized and would normally straighten up the art room before leaving each evening. But, in this one instance, it was not. And our gifted artist did not look much better himself. He looked like he had not slept all night.

When asked what was going on, he replied that, after we had all left for home the night before, he stayed behind to do more work. As he sat at his drawing table to draw, he suddenly found that he *couldn’t draw a straight line!* Angered by this “unexpected” phenomenon, he spent the rest of the night trying to draw a straight line ... and could not!

Needless-to-say, he was not a happy camper by the time we all arrived that next morning. When I asked him his assessment of the matter, he glared at me and said, “You simply got to me, Wood! You hexed me, that’s all it was! You hexed me!!”

“Are you serious about that,” I asked, somewhat befuddled by his response.

“I tell you, that’s all it was, Wood. You got in my head and messed me up!”

“I’m sorry to hear you say that, my friend, because – if you are truly serious about this being nothing more than some magical, mystical trickery, then I can tell you that it will happen again, only this next time will be *twice as bad!* God will not be mocked, my friend, and He will prove Himself to you that His word reigns supreme above all!!” I said.

That was a Friday. When we all returned to work that following Monday, the art department looked as if a tornado had hit! Few things were in their rightful place. Our gifted artist was found at his desk with his head in his hands ... anything but the nicely dressed and clean-looking artist we knew him to be. His hair was uncombed. He had not shaved, it turned out, the entire weekend. His clothes were badly wrinkled. His bloodshot eyes had dark circles underneath. He was a mess!

In hushed tones, we asked him what had happened. Without even lifting his head from his hands, he spoke of having gone home on Friday and, after dinner, withdrew to his home studio to do some work. At his drawing table, *he could not draw a straight line!* After several frustrating attempts, he got mad. Storming out of his studio, he yelled out to his wife that he was headed back to the office to do some work. At the office – *he could not draw a straight line!*

His entire weekend was spent in anger ... hatred ... frustration ... despair ... trying to draw a single, simple straight line. And he could not!

A holy hush filled the environment of the art room as he relayed the story through a sleepless voice. As I lowered myself to his level at the desk, I asked quietly, “So, what do you think now?”

With tears in his eyes, he looked straight at me and replied: “I do not understand.”

“It’s not important that you understand,” I said. “What is important is that you know the God you claim to believe in ... and know that, without Him, you can do no thing. Whatever gifts and talents and abilities we have, they all belong to Him. They came from Him to us for the purpose of our being blessed and Him being glorified. They are also to be used as a blessing to others in ways that He will sanction and endorse through us.

“His gifts ... our hands ... their hearts ... His glory! That’s what’s important in all this.”

Today, this man has been mightily blessed of God to be a blessing in his craft that is known around the world!

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As we enter into this appointed time of prayer, let us see ourselves and offer ourselves as little more than willing vessels that are made ready and available for the Master’s use and pleasure. We have been designed and assigned for His glory to be made fully manifested in what we produce and distribute to an audience willing to be entertained and informed by way of what they have purchased from our inventory.

Jesus is coming in the lifetime of this generation, ladies and gentlemen!! Get ready to go forth to an audience that has been prepared by God to hear only your voice. Get ready to be part of a last revival that you will help to create as you make Him the center and focus of your craft as a Christian in Media & Entertainment ... *a saint in Caesar’s household!* (**Phil. 4:22**)

**ARE YOU READY? IT IS TIME!**