

Do you know where you are going?

So how badly have we distorted God's concept of saved? How much cleaning up needs to be done? Let me illustrate from the world of art restoration with this thought in mind. Many great paintings are plagued by the good-intentioned efforts to preserve or restore their beauty.

This is what we have done and still do with many of God's masterpieces. Seeking to explain his words and forever concepts, we unwittingly paint over them to fit our lives and theology. We skew their meaning as our human varnish darkens God's concepts and brings them down to earth.

Our seemingly well-meaning efforts to preserve God's truth sometime actually distort his intent. So we need to allow God to remove our brush strokes so he can display his truth as he intended it to be seen. As an aside, it should be noted that we have two distinct advantages over scientists and artists who attempt to restore ancient paintings. One, we cannot actually destroy the original on which we are working. Two, our original is still pristine.

(Excerpt from Beyond Pretend: A Sheep's Guide to the Universe by David Lee Scott.)

1) *John gives us an old commandment that reaches all the way back to Moses, 1 John 2:7.*

- **Epochal:** of or relating to an epoch, uniquely or highly significant: momentous.
- **Epochal Moment:** Standing on the east side of the Jordan River, Moses delivers the message of Deuteronomy to the Israelites.
- **The message:** love and obey the LORD your God.
- **The subplot:** They were here once before because they did not believe God, 1:32, 9:23.
- **Reason for disbelief:** They looked at the darkness of the circumstances instead of walking in the light of the promise of God, 1:39, Numbers 14:3.

2) *John gives us a new commandment which shows itself to be true in Jesus Christ and in us, 1 John 2:8.*

- **Epochal Moment:** Christ leaves a new command as he prepares to leave and return to heaven, John 13:33-35.
- **The message:** Love your brother and walk in the light.
- **The subplot:** We have the opportunity to display the truth of the new command - "true in Him and in you" (v8).
- **Reason for disbelief:** Fearful of the times we live in. Living in view of what is "passing away" instead of "the true light."

3) *John gives us the teaching of the new, old commandment, vv9-11.*

- **Epochal Moment:** Right now in this building, we decide to trust God with our lives.
- **The message:** Love your brother, live in the light. Don't love your brother, stumble in darkness.
- **The subplot:** Some "say" they are in the light but they are actually in darkness.
- **Reason for disbelief:** Not trusting God.