

**Bearing Grudges** (Cont. from pg. 3) flesh, as life was slipping away from His body, considered those who had torn His body to shreds, slammed a thorny crown on His head and pierced His hands and feet with nails, appeals to heaven - **“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.”** (Luke 23:34). If Jesus could ask for the forgiveness of those who carried out His crucifixion, what wrong could anyone ever do to us that would justify bearing a grudge against them?

Bearing a grudge requires that we maintain a disposition and an attitude towards the other person that can hinder our very wor-

ship of God. Before the model prayer, in the same sermon Jesus taught first, that harbouring anger towards our brother can place us in danger of judgement, and then that looking down on them can place us in danger of hell fire (Matthew 5:22). Jesus then went on to teach that before we bring our “gift to the altar” we must first do what we can to make things right in our relationships with others (Matthew 5:23-24). If we hold on to a grudge it may be that the very spiritual sacrifices we offer in worship to God become unacceptable. Let’s strive together to prevent this from happening to our relationship with God.



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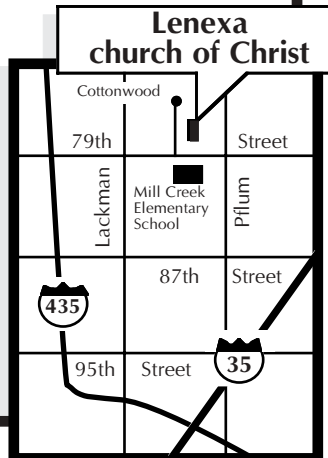
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**Evangelists:**  
Kyle Pope  
Jim Stauffer

**MEETING TIMES**  
Sunday – Bible Classes 9:30 AM  
Worship Services 10:20 AM & 6:00  
Wednesday – Bible Classes 7:00 PM



# The Lenexa EDIFIER

...Let us pursue the things *which* make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.  
– Romans 14:19

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## What is the Repentance of the Bible?

By Jim Stauffer

**W**hen Paul gave his defense before King Agrippa he attempted to explain why the Jews were so infuriated with his teaching. He spoke of how the prophets of old, who were respected by Jews throughout their history, and how Moses, who was considered to be the greatest deliverer in the nation’s history, all spoke of Christ and His sufferings and its impact upon all the world including the Gentiles. However, something that he spoke of just prior to that must have resonated loud and clear with Paul. He says in Acts 26:20 that he taught both Jew and Gentile that they should repent and turn to God doing works worthy of repentance. we all know Paul’s personal history in Judaism and how he persecuted the Church. The story of his conversion in Acts 9 tells us he was on his way to persecute the Church in Damascus when the Lord appeared

to him in the way. Later, while writing to Timothy, Paul described himself as the “Chief of Sinners” (I Timothy 1:15). We can see through his own words just how painful it was for him to recall his past days of opposition to God’s plan for the redemption of all mankind. He felt this way even though he would state in Acts 23:1, in his defense before the Sanhedrin, that he did so with a clear conscience. In other words he had believed it was the right thing to persecute the church before his conversion and his repentance.

In Paul we have such a good example of repentance in that once obedient to Christ he turns his life 180 degrees and began to preach the Gospel so rigorously that he became the target of persecution. He recounts many of the personal incidents in his life in II Corinthians 11:24-27. Paul (Cont. on pg. 2)

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
**What is the Repentance of the Bible?** (Cont. from pg. 1) was, by preaching the Gospel in such a clear and uncompromising way, doing works worthy of repentance. When one goes from persecuting those who are followers of Christ to proclaiming the testimony of God, knowing nothing save Jesus Christ as he spoke in I Corinthians 2:1,2, we begin to comprehend the change that is involved in one who repents.

When Paul makes his statement to Agrippa, he says when one repents he should *turn to God* doing works worthy of repentance. The Bible on only rare occasions uses any form of the word repentance with general application. Rather, it almost always discusses repentance in the context of turning away from sin. If we are to turn away from sin, we must turn to God. The two are opposites. This short phrase, *turn to God* is the very essence of repentance and helps us to understand ourselves better. We can determine if we have repented by observing whether we have turned to God.

John the Baptist had some very graphic illustrations for his listeners regarding the subject of repentance in Luke 3:8-14. First, he tells them to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. Secondly; they were not to say to themselves “we have Abraham as our father” because God can from stones raise up children to Abraham. He is telling them, everyone must repent and bring

forth fruits that are indicative of such. As we would say today, no one gets a “free pass.” He emphasizes his point by the analogy of an unfruitful tree that is hewn down and cast into the fire. This is God’s approach to those who do not repent and bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.

John then replies to their questions with some specific applications that were pertinent and specific to them. First, he tells them to be compassionate to the needy. Second, he told the publicans they should not charge any more than what was appointed for them. Third, he told the soldiers to extort from no man by violence, not to accuse anyone wrongfully and to be content with their wages. These all represented a change from what they were doing to what God would have them do. As we can see, John was asking them to *turn to God* by his request to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.

The obvious lesson to us is that repentance is not something to be taken lightly. Rather, it is the indication of whether we have heard God and turned to Him. It is very simple. We are either serving God, or we have not repented. Ultimately we must each decide for ourselves but we must be sure to use the same criteria that God does if we plan to please Him. 



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## Bearing Grudges

by Kyle Pope

**A**s I grow older I have noticed in myself a tendency that I wish I did not see: the tendency to very easily hold a grudge. When I was younger, if some one did something against me, or did something that hurt my feelings in some way, I found it relatively easy to let the matter “roll off my back” and forget about it. Perhaps now as an older man, with a few more hurt feelings “under my belt” and a few more situations that I wish I could forget, what once might have easily been viewed as “water under the bridge,” now tends to pool together, damn up and linger a little too long “under the bridge” (so to speak).

Understanding why something may happen doesn’t justify or excuse its occurrence. Bearing a grudge is wrong because it reflects a lack of forgiveness. Jesus taught in the model prayer and immediately after speaking it how important forgiveness is. He declared: **“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”** (Matthew 6:14, 15, NKJV). To some degree, this forgiveness is to occur whether the person who has “trespassed” against us ever repents of the wrong they have done. Jesus also taught: **“And whenever you stand praying, if you**

**have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.”** (Mark 11:25). Clearly, if we want to be forgiven by God we must have a spirit that is forgiving of others.

Bearing a grudge is a very unattractive quality. It is ugly to see in one’s self or in others. It makes the one who feels it bitter, resentful and distant. Forgiveness, on the other hand, and the sweet disposition that accompanies it are qualities that are appealing, admirable and approachable.

This past week the nation mourned the passing of its 40th president, Ronald Reagan. Among the many touching testimonials that were made about this man, one struck me more than any other. Shortly after he was shot in 1981, Reagan records in his diary that he found himself struggling with how he could go to God in prayer for himself while he harbored hatred in his heart for the disturbed man who had tried to kill him. To address this Reagan first prayed to God for the soul of the man who shot him, then he prayed for himself. Imagine, after having someone explode a weapon in your direction that lodged a bullet inches away from your heart taking the time to first pray for them!

As impressive as this example is, it is nothing compared to the example of our Lord. He, who was God in the (Cont. on pg. 4)