

consequence to someone else. In Christ there is a sense in which the Christian takes an interest in the affairs of all men, everywhere, at all times out of a love for their eternal souls.

The Lord told the Apostles – “...Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Paul claimed – “...I have become all things to all men that I might by all means save some” (I Corinthians 9:22). It is...

**V. To Obtain New Companionship – the Lord’s Church.** The American novelist Thomas Wolfe wrote – “The whole conviction of my life now rests upon the belief that loneliness, far from being a rare and curious phenomenon, peculiar to myself and to a few other solitary

men, is the central and inevitable fact of human existence.” The great English poet John Milton observed from Genesis 2:18 that – “Loneliness is the first thing which God’s eye nam’d not good.” Coming to Christ guarantees the faithful convert lifelong companionship with God’s people.

John wrote – “That which we have seen and heard we declare to you that you may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (I John 1:3). Not only does a Christian have the constant companionship of the Lord, but a relationship of fellowship with the Lord’s people.

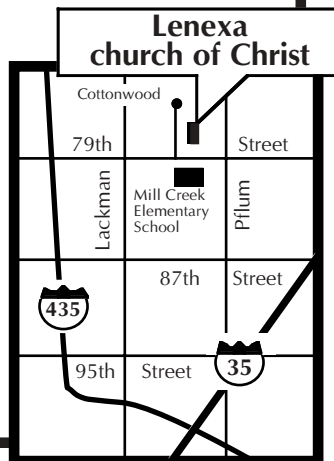


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**MEETING TIMES**  
Sunday – Bible Classes 9:30 AM  
Worship Services 10:20 AM & 6:00  
Wednesday – Bible Classes 7:00 PM



# 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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## Balancing Duty and Devotion

By Kyle Pope

**Q**uestion: “Why do you worship God?”  
Acceptable answer: “Because I love God and want to please Him.”  
Unacceptable answer: “Because it is my duty as a child of God.”

Sometimes we tend to view it that things done out of duty and obligation are less sincere. Yet, deeds done from devotion and affection we think of as genuine. On the surface this sounds valid but when it comes down to the application of this thinking it may not hold true.

Who is truly the devoted father? The man who lavishes attention upon his children when he feels tender kindness towards them, yet refuses to provide for their needs during times of weariness and frustration? Or, the man who struggles to give them what is needed both in times of tenderness and times of frustration?

Who is the faithful employee? The one who is productive and responsible when they find joy and satisfaction in their work, yet slothful and negligent during times of “burnout”? Or, the worker whose commitment to his or her task is

consistent during “up” times and “down” times?

The Bible teaches both duty and devotion as valid motivations for our service to God. The greatest commandment is to —“...love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength...” (Mark 12:30). This is devotion! Yet, notice how the wise man ends the book of Ecclesiastes — “...hear the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments for this is the whole duty of man” (12:13). Certainly, we could not say that this fearful obedience is only acceptable when it comes from the stirrings of tender love within our heart. Rather, does it not surely please our heavenly Father when we choose to do His will both when we feel moved to obedience and when we do not?

Jesus is set forth as our example of how life is to be lived. What do we learn from His service to God? Certainly He is the perfect example of devotion to God. However, there were clearly times when He acted out of a sense of duty rather

than joyful obedience. John 12:27 relates Jesus' dread of the cross. The text reads — **"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour."** No devotion is seen here, unless we realize the fact that it was devotion to God that led Him to deny His own wishes in order to fulfill the Father's. Remember, Jesus didn't want to go to the cross, but He submitted to what the Father wanted nevertheless (Matthew 26:39).

This tendency to devalue good deeds done out of duty is a sign of our times. The ungodly rationalize ending their marriages by claiming they don't "feel" what they once did. Mothers collaborate with doctors to execute their unborn children appealing to the defense that they are not "ready" to take care a child.

When it comes to our service to God we must avoid justifying our failure to obey the Lord's

instructions with our lack of the proper devotion. Brethren over the years have allowed this kind of thinking to keep them from giving as they should, observing the Lord's Supper, sharing the gospel with others, worshiping faithfully, being constant in prayer and serving others. While we should always strive to have a strong joy and devotion in our service to God we mustn't fall into the snare of thinking that when we don't feel as we should it is better not to act at all.

Perhaps those times we do what we should regardless of our personal feelings are the times the Lord is the most pleased with us. It is at those times we are giving up ourselves, and giving over to God. True worship requires balancing both duty and devotion in our approach to God. Let's remember — **"...This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments..."** (I John 5:3).



## Choosing Jesus Christ as Our Leader

By Kyle Pope

Every four years the people of the United States take part in an activity which is a privilege of citizenship in a democracy: casting their vote to elect the nation's leader. While we watch with interest and anticipation regarding the outcome as Christians we must recognize another election going on each and every day which is much more important — choosing or rejecting Jesus as our personal leader. Choosing Jesus as leader is...

**I. To Gain a New Motive of Conduct — His Will.** The aching desire of any young person under the direction of their parents is to "run their own life". We want children to grow to take care of themselves and make their own decisions. Yet, the irony of this maturity of will is that it is inevitably deceptive. The mature adult must submit their will to their employer, their government, their physical needs, their family and their comrades. No one is ever truly in control of

their own life. Either they submit themselves to the will of an omnipotent all-loving Messiah, or they are in submission to the will of Satan.

Jesus teaches us both by word and example that those who look to Him as their leader must forfeit their own will in controlling their lives and submit wholly to Him as Lord and Master. In Luke 8:34 Jesus said — **"...Whoever desires to come after Me, let Him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"** (NKJV). In the garden before His trial and ultimate death, the suffering Savior pled with the Father — **"...O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will"** (Matthew 26:39). It is...

**II. To Obtain a New Purpose for Effort — Eternal Life.** During the early days of the Soviet Union a staunch Communist novelist named Aleksandr Fadeyev wrote a number of works praising the Communist way of life. His final work, a novel called *Happiness* sought to explain that true happiness was found in working tirelessly for Communism. In 1956 after the completion of the novel Fadeyev committed suicide by shooting himself. When material life serves as the only reason for human effort enthusiastic perseverance becomes meaningless.

In Christ effort takes on meaning! Paul told the Philippian brethren to **"...Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure"** (Philippians

2:12,13). The Colossians were told — **"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ"** (Colossians 3:23,24). It is...

**III. To Receive a New Spirit of Life — Humility and Love.** The human heart is a strange paradox. It is capable of "super-human" selfless sacrifice and horrifying mindless brutality. Consider two cases on the news in the same week years ago. In a sign factory fire in Alabama a brave young artist gave his very life going back and forth helping others. That same week a North Carolina mother was cold-blooded enough to roll her car into the lake with her two young boys strapped in the back seat!

Choosing Christ as leader involves changing our heart, mind and attitude that it might be "Christlike". Philippians 2:5 admonishes the believer — **"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"**. The humility and love of Jesus Himself becomes our pattern for life. It is...

**IV. To Discover a New Field of Interest — the Whole World.** We are all very different people. What interests one person may be totally boring to another person. While their passion is a matter of no



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