

THE LEXIA EDIFIER

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

DECEMBER 30, 2012

THE MOTIVE TRULY MATTERS

Jim Stauffer

Phil. 1:15 *Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: 16 the one do it of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel; 17 but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds. 18 What then? only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*

When Paul pens these words he acknowledges men have different motives for preaching the gospel. He is not, however, condoning preaching out of envy, strife, faction or pretense.

What he does acknowledge is that whatever the motive of the preacher is, the one who hears the gospel will always have access to "the power of God unto salvation." (**Rom. 1:16**) In that fact Paul rejoices.

He speaks to the value of motive or attitude later in this epistle when he says, **Phil. 2:3** *doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind*

each counting other better than himself; 4 not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.

Paul did not preach out of envy, strife, faction or pretense himself. Not to those in Corinth. **1 Cor. 4:14** *I write not these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15 For though ye have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel.* Nor did he have those attitudes when he preached to the Ephesians.

Acts 20:31 *Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears.* His heart was purified by allowing Christ to live in him. (**Gal. 2:20**)

Paul did not teach Timothy to preach from an improper attitude. **1Tim. 4:13** *Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching. 14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15 Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be*

manifest unto all. *16 Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.* He recommended Timothy to the Philippians as the man he most trusted to, “care truly for your state.” **(Phil. 2:19-22)**

Jesus said the greatest commandment involved the commitment of our entire being.

Matt. 22:37 *And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

In His Sermon on the Mount, He addressed the attitudes of the heart. He admonished His disciples to be poor in spirit, they that mourn, meek, merciful, pure in heart and peacemakers; all conditions of the heart. Once the heart is conditioned, the proper actions follow.

Jesus identified this fact in the following statements. **Matt. 6:19** *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also. Matt. 15:18* *But the things which proceed out of the mouth come forth out of the heart; and they defile the man.*

Jesus teaches us to confess Him before men in order to have Him confess us before the Father in heaven. He teaches this in the context of not fearing persecution or physical threats. **(Matt. 10:28-32)** *If we are to be successful at this it will be because we truly believe in Him in our hearts as Paul teaches. Rom. 10:9* *because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: 10 for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

The clear lesson for all is whether in our preaching or our everyday living, we must act out of pure hearts in order to truly submit to the Lord. Our motive determines whether we are serving God or serving our own personal goals and ambitions. All the more reason we should heed the admonition of **James 4:8** *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your*

hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded.

EPITAPH

The epitaph, and dozens of others in the cemetery, reads *RIP. Rest in peace.* That has always struck me as odd. I don't mean the desire for loved ones to escape from the difficulties and pain of this life to something better; obviously I get that. I mean the implication that our say-so has anything to do with it.

Yes, this is going to be one of those articles where Hal picks apart a phrase that people say without thinking, and some people say, “Hal, lighten up. It doesn't mean anything.” And I respond, “That's my point. It *should* mean something.” So brace yourselves.

If the people of the world want to believe loved ones reach heaven's rest simply by virtue of dying and not being some sort of serial killer, that's their prerogative. Christians should know better, though. Rest is only for believers — and consistent, persistent believers at that.

Hebrews 4:1 reads, *“Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.”* Even Christians can come up short. And the faithless have no hope at all. **Revelation 14:11** tells us the wicked are tormented; *“they have no rest day and night.”*

An encouraging epitaph on the grave of a sinner may give some comfort to the living, but it is grounded in falsehood. It perpetuates the lie that “good people” (however we may define it) are acceptable to God based on their works. Even if we do not mean it that way, others take it that way.

“There is no peace for the wicked,” God tells us in **Isaiah 48:22**. Maybe we don't find that to be a comfort. But sometimes we need instruction and warning more.

by Hal Hammons, The Final Word

ALL MEN ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD

by Kent Heaton

To understand the character of man and his relationship with the Creator, it must first be established how he is accountable to God for his actions. The majority of men reject any responsibility to God and serve their own designs with no fear of consequence. How is it that all men are amenable to the judgment of God? From what basis can we find justice in God ascribing guilt or innocence to the character of man? Why must all men come to the truth? What law does man find himself responsible for and answerable to the Creator? The answer lies within the context of man's beginning - the Creation.

Genesis 1:1 states: *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* From this verse we have unfolded the power of creation in six days. As God spoke, the world took form and order began to rule. Day and night were established to reign in the firmament as dry land appeared and the gathering together of the waters became the seas. Grass and herbs appeared and trees to bask in the glory of the lights in the firmament of the heavens. The waters filled with the abundance of living creatures and the face of the firmament abounded with winged birds of every kind. The earth brought forth the living creatures to roam upon the face of the earth and to fill its borders with every kind of beast.

Then God said, *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* (**Genesis 1:27**) In all of creation, these words had never been uttered. At each moment of God's creative power and the formation of all living things, no expression was given in the magnitude of creating something in the image of God. An intelligent being speaks and has design and purpose in His plan. He desires to make man but the creation of man is much different from the creation of the animals of the sea or birds of the air. The likeness of

man is to be unlike the creation of the beasts of the field. This creation - the nature of man - would be in the likeness of the Creator.

The Creator made man like Himself. Though God is an uncreated spirit, man is a created spirit. Man is created to be a rational, thinking creature who is accountable for his actions. When God made man, He made him holy and without shame. (**Genesis 2:25**) Man is made in the image of God to be righteous as God created him to do right. Inherent in the creation of man is the recognition that all men are accountable to the Creator.

This accountability spans the millenniums of man's existence. Every man of every race and from all time, to all time, finds themselves accountable to God. Because of this relationship of God and man, a duty is enjoined for man to be responsible for his actions. Murder is wrong - not because Christ condemned it in His law - but rather this breaks the relationship of man being made in the image of God. (**Genesis 9:5,6**)

In the home, adultery and fornication is immoral because God ordained the relationship of man and woman in creation. (**Genesis 2:24,25**) All men are accountable to God in the marriage relationship, not because of the law of Christ but because man is made in the image of God. Jesus affirmed this in **Matthew 19:3-6**. All men are accountable to the bounds of marriage because all men are made in the image of God. All men have marred the image of God and that is why God sent His Son into the world. (John 3:16; Romans 5:18) All men are accountable to God and all men will stand before the Creator and be held accountable for the deeds done in the body. (**Romans 14:10; Revelation 20:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10**)

Ed. note: We are also dependent upon Him:
Jer. 10:23 *O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*

Prov. 14:12 *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; But the end thereof are the ways of death.*

Eph. 2:19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, **20** being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; **21** in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

1 Pet. 2:9 But ye are an elect race, royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Psalms 1: 1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scoffers; **2** But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. **3** And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also doth not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. **4** The wicked are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. **5** Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. **6** For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish.

News and Notes: Let us remember the instruction of our Lord by visiting in whatever way we can, **Jan Patrick, Mary Czirr, Terry Czirr and Candiss Cason.**

Matt. 25:40 *And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.*

**This bulletin produced by:
The Lenexa Church of Christ
7845 Cottonwood Dr
Lenexa, Kansas 66216
913-764-9170**

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

We recommend to you the following websites:

***facebook.comlenexachurchofchrist/
thelenexaedifier.com
lenexachurchofchrist.org***

Our Meeting times are:

Sunday Bible Classes: 9:30 AM
Worship Services 10:20 AM&5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes 7:00 PM

The Church at Lenexa is a congregation of brethren who have been "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (**Romans 3:24**)

As a result of this justification we have been "delivered out of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (**Colossians 1:13,14**)

We therefore respect the inspired word of God that will completely furnish us unto every good work by speaking only as the oracles of God. (**2 Timothy 3:16,17; 1 Peter 4:11**)

What must one do to be saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Christ - Heb. 11:6

Repent of sin - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be baptized for the remission of sins - Acts 2:38