

THE LEXIA EDIFIER

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

MARCH 10, 2013

“COME UNTO ME”

Jim Stauffer

Jesus said in **Matt. 11:28-30**, *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* When He uttered these words an offer was made from the power vested in Him by the Father to relieve all in the world of an enormous burden.

Now we know from the teaching of Christ this burden is the bondage of sin. **John 8:32** *and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Paul made this point clearly when he distinguished between the Law of God and the choice of the flesh. **Rom. 7:22** *For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then I of myself with the*

mind, indeed, serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. Isaiah lets us know when we yield to the flesh our *“iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you so that he will not hear.” (Isa. 59:2)*

Why then do so many quibble over obedience to the commands of our Savior? It seems nearly everyone has something they object to that Jesus is demanding.

This situation begs the question; “Why would anyone reject the offer of the Lord?” Our sin has left us carrying a burden, the Lord has promised to relieve and yet we risk His eternal judgment because of what ‘we think is another way’? **2 Th. 1:8** *rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: 9 who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might.*

The answer may well be in the general response of mankind to success in any venture. Many choose to follow the path of least resistance spiritually. Jesus describes

the path of least resistance as the “*broad way that leadeth to destruction*” in **Matt. 7:13**.

But that should not be too surprising since that is often the case in secular ventures as well. Why do athletes choose failure or mediocrity over the discipline to follow fundamentals instilled by a coaching staff?

When Bo Jackson played for the Kansas City Royals they assigned a special coach to help him master the fundamentals to go along with his enormous talent. Most experts believed he could be one of the greatest ever to play the game. However, it was so easy for him to be “good”, he eschewed the rigors of being “great”.

Many others have done the same thing in other secular ventures. Many could have reached the pinnacle of success in their profession but would not submit to the rigors of discipline necessary.

It seems mankind is looking for the shortcut. Unfortunately, there is no shortcut to being a disciple of the Lord. Jesus warns us to count the cost, **Luke 14:27** *Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. 28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have wherewith to complete it? 29 Lest haply, when he hath laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all that behold begin to mock him, 30 saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.*

Those who submit to the Lord will achieve relief from the burden of sin and those who do not will not. How much clearer can it be?

Has Hell Disappeared?

According to a 2003 study by the Barna Group, 81% of Americans believe in an afterlife of some sort. Although there was not necessarily a common definition, over 70% believed in the existence of both heaven and hell. The study found that a large number (64%) of Americans believe they will go to heaven while only one-half of 1% fully expect that hell will be their eternal destiny. Further, many who label themselves as “born-again Christians” believe that people have multiple options for gaining entrance to heaven. Barna concluded that they were saying, “Personally, I am trusting Jesus Christ as my means of gaining God’s permanent favor and a place in

Heaven - but someone else could get to Heaven based upon living an exemplary life.” Another finding was that, “Millions of Americans have redefined grace to mean that God is so eager to save people from Hell that He will change His nature and universal principles for their individual benefit.”

An article in the March 25, 1991, issue of U.S. News and World Report was devoted to the subject of hell. An interesting observation in the article was, “By most accounts hell has all but disappeared from the pulpit rhetoric of mainline Protestantism”. A Fordham University professor noted that sermons are primarily focused on God’s love and mercy. He said, “Hell is there and ready to receive anyone who meets the conditions for falling into it, but it’s quite possible that no one will really go there”. A professor from the University of Chicago added, “Hell has disappeared and no one noticed...if people really believed in hell, they would not be watching TV preachers, they would be out rescuing the lost.”

Why do you think that sermons about hell have all but disappeared in many denominations? Is it because such teaching is no longer ‘politically correct’? Or is it because it is uncomfortable to hear? Is it perhaps because the ‘churched’ feel that it doesn’t apply to them since they are bound for the promised land? Maybe it is because of the belief of unconditional election and perseverance of the saints. “For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths” (**II Tim 4:3-4**).

Although it has been a few years since each of these studies. Satan’s tactics have not changed. “You go your way, and I’ll go mine. We’ll both get to heaven at the very same time.” “A Loving God would not condemn anyone. That would be against His nature.” “There may be a hell, but if anyone goes there at all, it will only be the vilest of sinners.”

Yes, God is a loving God. He is our Creator and the giver of every good and perfect gift (**Jam. 1:17**). The Lord is also our Judge. “There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy” (**Jam. 4:12**)

His holy nature requires the removal of sin from His presence for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (**I John 1:5**). He will take vengeance on those who are not obedient to His word (**II Thess 1:8**).

Hell is real, and it will last for eternity. It is an everlasting separation from the presence of the Lord (**II Thess 1:9**). It is eternal darkness where there will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (**Matt 13:41-42**). Few will find the narrow gate to heaven (**Matt 7:13-14**). In fact, many who are looking forward to a heavenly home will instead find themselves banished to eternal torment (**Matt 7:21-23**).

Brethren, let each of us continually examine our lives against the standard of God's word. Let us reach out to the lost souls around us, and let us tell them not only about the love of God but also about His vengeance. "For our God is a consuming fire" (**Heb 12:29**).

by Terry Bennett

HOPE -- ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL

I am a passionate student of U.S. History and could hardly contain my excitement when I stepped aboard the USS Lexington -- the gigantic aircraft carrier docked in Corpus Christi Bay. The Lexington (dubbed the "Gray Ghost" by Tokyo Rose due to premature broadcasts that the giant carrier had been sunk) served our nation well from WWII to Vietnam before being decommissioned.

The Lexington and other naval vessels of times past have given way to a more modern fleet of ships -- larger and more capable of meeting the needs of today's military. The USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, for example, is one of the largest ships in the world -- from keel to mast, it is the size of a 22 story building. Her flight deck comprises 4.5 acres; she weighs 95,000 tons, and carries a crew of 6,000 (that's 18,000 meals per day). She is a floating city!

The Eisenhower also has two anchors. Each anchor weighs 60,000 pounds, is attached to a chain weighing 665,000 pounds, and each individual link in the chain weighs 365 pounds. Now that's an anchor!

But every vessel, large or small, has one. And why? It is the anchor that keeps the ship where it needs to be. Question: What keeps YOU

where you need to be?

The Bible warns time and again about the danger of drifting. "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it" (**Heb. 2:1**). That is why it is essential that we set our anchor firm and deep. "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast." (**Heb. 6:19**)

HOPE: -- Is there anything that anchors our hearts in days filled with so much despair and despondency? Life is hard and some days it just gets harder. All of which means, without hope you're not going to make it. "I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (**Psa. 27:13**).

That's hope! "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (**Jno. 16:33**). That's hope! "Whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (**Rom. 15:4**) Hope again!

"How do people make it when they are not Christians?" The answer is: they don't. They deny it, fake it, use artificial means to escape it -- alcoholism, workaholism, recreational pursuits -- anything to keep them busy and fill the void in their lives. The one thing non-believers cannot do is face the tragedies of life with a calm, quiet, confident hope. Only God's child can do that. ("But I do not want you to be ignorant brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope." (**1 Thes. 4:13**).

"This hope we have..." It is something possessed by Christians. We have been born again to a living hope (**1 Pet. 1:3**) because we have a living Savior. As William Gaither states, "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, Because He lives, all fear is gone; Because I know -- I know -- He holds the future, And life is worth the living just because He lives."

Someone reading these words may be feeling that hope is lost. It isn't. Circumstances may be bleak, but if you will embrace the living Lord, you will find hope. Anchor deep in the hope of Jesus.

By Wilson Adams in Biblical Insights, Vol. 7, No. 8, Aug. 2007.

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, **Mary Czirr, Terry Czirr, Candiss Cason, Irene Hurd and Wendy Taylor.**

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