

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 3, 2013

WHERE IS MY HARDHIP, MY PERSECUTION? **Jim Stauffer**

1 Cor. 4:11 *Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; 12 and we toil, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; 13 being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things, even until now.* Paul describes conditions under which he lives in order to preach the gospel. His great concern for the souls of the lost allowed him to focus his attention on their needs rather than his own discomfort. He was so focused he always tried to put himself in the other man's shoes when teaching him about Christ. **(1 Cor. 9:19-22)** What a commitment! What a devotion to the cause! How do I measure up?

Matt. 5:11 *Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.*

Jesus teaches me that if the principles he sets forth in the beatitudes (**Matt. 5:3-10**) become a way of life with me, I will be persecuted by men and blessed by God. The question before me is, am I living each day by those principles?

2 Tim. 3:10 *But thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience, 11 persecutions, sufferings; what things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: and out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* Paul, again reminds Timothy and each of us of the persecution and suffering he endured on a regular basis as he preached the gospel of Christ. He says if I live a godly life in Christ Jesus I will suffer persecution. Does this mean if I am not being persecuted as he was I am not living a godly life? The short answer is yes, but there needs to be some clarification.

Just what does Paul mean by a godly life? Just how certain is Jesus' promise of persecution to His disciples? And does it

follow that all who preach the gospel will suffer the same deprivation Paul did?

To provide contrast and clarification between Paul's life and ours we must understand we live under completely different circumstances in relation to the governmental authorities we are commanded to obey. He lived in a time when Jewish hatred for Christians carried much influence with the Roman authorities. As a result he not only suffered at the hands of individuals but also the government who was pressured by the Jewish influence in communities throughout the world. It was also true that individuals had much greater freedom to do evil against Christians without governmental intervention then than now. As a result Paul suffered greater physical and mental abuse for standing for the truth than we will today.

It is imperative for us to realize while conditions in which we live are different, the commitment of the Christian, who represents the gospel daily in his life can be no less. We will suffer persecution if we live godly in Christ Jesus. We must today as he did then deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Jesus. We cannot busy ourselves with the cares of this life and seek the wealth of this world. We must devote ourselves to living and teaching the gospel of Christ. And when we do we must accept any hardship that befalls us or blessing that comes our way as Paul did. **Phil. 4:12** *I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want.*

We cannot love father, mother, brother or sister more than the Lord if we want to be His disciple. And our lives must be guided by the principles He sets forth in His Sermon on the Mount. When we do that we will be blessed in suffering the persecution that is sure to come, however severe it may be.

The one thing we can rely on is the support of our Lord. He has encouraged us to trust Him and pray for the government to provide all the saints a tranquil life in our service to Him. **(1 Tim. 2:2)** He has promised to be with us *"always, even unto the end of the world."*

There is laid up for us as there was for Paul, a crown of righteousness the Lord shall give to us at that day. But we must maintain our devotion to His will as the Apostle did and trust in the Lord concerning any hardship or persecution it may bring. **(2 Tim. 4:7,8)**

HOW MANY CHURCHES DID CHRIST BUILD?

by Lowell Head

"How many churches did Christ build?" is a question in some circles with as many answers as man has been able to devise. Man is not always the best source of information. Man may be called upon to testify to most anything. However, here is one witness on whom we may rely: God, His Word. Just how many churches does God's Word say he built?

Jesus said, *"Upon this rock I will build my church."* **(Matt. 16:18)** The Jews, when speaking of the same thing, referred to it as a sect. *"For as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against."* **(Acts 8:22)** A sect is a body of persons adhering to a particular religious faith, sometimes a party regarded as deviating from the general religious traditions. His church is a body of people banded together by a common belief: the divinity of Jesus, that He is the Son of God. The great body of Jews rejected the divinity of Jesus, thus referred to His church, His body of disciples, as a sect.

"So we being many, are one body in Christ." **(Rom. 12:5)** And *"he is the head of the body, the church."* **(Col. 1:18)** These statements were made to those who believe in the divinity of Jesus.

These believers are referred to as a building. **(1 Cor. 3:9)**, the reason being *"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* **(1 Cor. 3:10,11)**

Paul said again, *"For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."* **(1 Cor. 2:2)** As long as this is preached, men believe it, and are obedient unto His commands, they are builded on that foundation, or constitute the building. The house of God is the church. **(1 Tim. 3:15)**

When nothing else is preached there can be but one body, as the apostle says in **Eph. 4:4**. We have noticed that the body is the church, and Christ is its head. For there to be more than one body there must be something else preached, believed and obeyed. As long as Christ is preached, men believe it and obey His law of induction into that body they are one body, and it would be impossible to be more.

Belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ gives us hope in the promises which He made. We have only one hope. That hope is anchored in that which is within the veil, into heaven itself. We have only one hope, a hope of life after awhile. *“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of or calling.”* There can be no more bodies than hopes.

True, there are many churches in the world today. There are many different seeds being planted. Each seed brings forth after its kind. Christ gave only one seed, the Word of God. When something other than the church is produced some seed other than the Word of God has been planted. Jesus said, *“I will build my church,”* not churches. All of His followers are in one body.

There is but one house, one body, or one church, which was built by Jesus. He only promised to build one. *“Upon this rock I will build my church.”* It's His body, His bride, and as the church is subject unto Christ, so must the wife be to her husband. Christ is not a bigamist. He has only one bride. John the Baptist said in **Joh. 3:29**, *“He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy is fulfilled.”*

Friends, do not be deceived, the Lord built only one church.

Semantical Subterfuge **by James Wallace Adams**

Practitioners of error in religion often sugar-coat their practices with innocuous terminology. Conversely, fanatics often indict perfectly scriptural practices with prejudicial epithets. Shakespeare addressed himself to this problem when he said, *“A rose by any other name will smell just as sweet.”* We might add in reference to the practitioner of error that calling a skunk “kitty” will not change its smell. It has been noted that status cannot be

changed by adopting a high-sounding name. For instance, consider the garbage collector who hung a sign on his truck which read, *“Used Vitamin Convoy Service.”*

Call church-sponsored entertainment “fellowship” and it is still a party. Call an eleemosynary institution a “home” and it is still a human, institutional benevolent society. Put an evangelistic cooperation of many churches under the eldership of a local congregation and call it a “sponsoring church,” and it continues to be a camouflaged missionary society.

There'll be no snow storms in heaven
No blizzards to darken our days
For we'll dwell in eternal springtime
Singing hymns of perpetual praise
by **Grant Clothier**

STUFF ABOUT THINGS

Robert F. Turner

I see by the papers that one of our local “pastors” has been made a “priest”. Interesting, if true. It is my pleasure to recall the making of many priests--kings and priests, in fact. (**Rev. 1:6**)

There was the case of the trucker--ex-fighter and rodeo rider. He laid aside his sinful life and put on a robe-- of righteousness, that is. The great King and High Priest, Jesus Christ, made this possible by forgiving his sins, and accepting him as a follower. Made a fine priest too, as I recall. Presented his body a living sacrifice, and offered up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. (**1 Pet. 2:5**)

I don't recall his wearing his collar backwards-- fact is, I doubt that he owned a collar. He was just one of the “brethren” and perfectly satisfied with this. (**Matt. 23;5-12**)

Of course he wasn't one of the denominational “clergy”--nor a priest after their order. One inspired writer said the Lord Himself would not be such a priest on earth (**Heb. 8:4**); and the whole idea of an earthly hierarchy is contrary to our King's wishes. (**Matt. 20:25ff.; Rom. 12:1-5**)

Seems to me this local “pastor” has a lot of adjustments to make before he can be a faithful priest according to the Word of God. Let's hope he makes them.

Several years ago a friend and I had a business appointment with a prominent Roman Catholic. We went to his office, but the secretary refused to announce us because we asked to see “Mr. _____”.

You must ask for **Father _____**,” she insisted.

Well, we were just independent enough not to do it, so we had a stalemate until a kindly gentleman appeared at the door and invited us in. With the door closed, he removed his robe, and we had an enjoyable visit. Sat on the floor, as I remember, and listened to a wire-recorded Harvard debate.

Which proves something or other about the bull of the woods, and the yearlings that are just acting big.

A tall man doesn't have to wear elevator shoes.

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 what ways we can, **Jan Patrick, Mary Czirr, Terry Czirr, Candiss Cason, Irene Hurd, Wendy Taylor and Rachel Peck.**

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.*

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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