

THE LEXIA EDIFIER

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

AUGUST 11, 2013

WHAT IS YOUR DESIRE *Jim Stauffer*

The attitudes of people in the world range all the way from those who strive to be the best at what they do to those who have given up and no longer even try.

Most people fall into the middle of this range and try to find a moderate level of success that does not require extreme sacrifice. A modest lifestyle that allows them to enjoy family and friends leisurely. Their goal is to commit themselves sufficiently to enjoy the good things in life but not sacrifice all their free time and be unable to enjoy the fruits of their labors.

I am wondering if this attitude of moderation in temporal ventures has crept into the thinking of Christians and their commitment to discipleship today. As Christians we are indeed supposed to be followers of Christ. He is the Son of God whose commitment to the will of God was not moderate at all. He fully understood the price He would pay for this commitment but was comfortable trusting His ultimate outcome in the hand of a righteous God. **1 Pet. 2:21** *For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also*

suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Luke 23:46 *And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost.* Now these passages remind us we are called to this very same commitment as His followers.

Jesus taught His disciples to recognize the value of such a commitment versus the value of temporal success. **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.* Once we make the proper choice there will be no holding back.

Our conduct clearly speaks to the level

of our commitment. According to the Apostle Paul, the fruit of the Spirit is, *joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self control*; (**Gal. 5: 22,23**) Jesus says this fruit will be borne out in our daily lives if we abide in Him. **John 15:5** *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing.* However if we choose not to make the commitment this will not be the case as the very next verse makes clear. **John 15:6** *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*

The Apostle Paul described this commitment in an athletic analogy. His claim is we must make the commitment or we will certainly fail. **1 Cor. 9:24** *Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain. 25 And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air: 27 but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.*

Do we understand we are all running the race? Our entry is not optional. Do we consider and evaluate our commitment? Will the level of our commitment achieve the result Paul describes?

THE CHURCH THAT JESUS BUILT

Part 4

The Law of the Church

After indicating the kingdom aspect of the church, Jesus then spoke of the work of His apostles in binding and loosing. In this expression He referred to the giving of divine law for the welfare of His people. The apostles would serve in very significant positions in this matter, as the Lord showed in His picture of them on thrones during the time of regeneration (being born again) in **Matthew 19:28**. The authoritative quality of their teaching is here underscored, even as it is in a passage like

Acts 2:42, where their teaching was the guide of the early Christians.

Jesus did not mean that they would initiate law, but announce what heaven had decreed. That such is His meaning can be seen in the language employed: "whatever you bind on earth shall be, having been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be, having been loosed in heaven" (Marshall's interlinear translation of the Nestle text). Observe that their role as apostles in binding and loosing did not come first, but after heaven's decree. If such were the case, then God's eternal plan would be subject to apostolic interpretation, but the opposite is the case. Peter, the apostle here addressed, and the other ones, as seen in **Matthew 18:18**, shared in the work of binding and loosing. There was no primacy for Peter or any other apostle, in spite of Catholic doctrine to the contrary! The privilege in the work of revelation granted to Peter in **Matthew 16** was likewise given to the rest two chapters later.

In a practical sense, what does this concept mean to the church today? It places all in the church under authority to Christ in relation to apostolic teaching. What they taught was theirs by divine inspiration, as part of the process of revelation. Jesus made arrangement for the coming of the Spirit of truth to guide them, as earlier seen in this study. When they thus spoke, they were presenting the words of Christ, whether He personally spoke them while on earth or not. Because of this understanding, we then would make no difference between the words of Christ in red letters in some New Testaments and those of Christ in black, given to the apostles for delivery to earth. In fact, the entire New Testament could easily be printed in red letters for this reason.

This concept also means that the law of Christ relative to all matters addressed in the New Testament must be our authoritative guide. The following aspects of Christ's plan illustrate the application of that plan to the church today:

1. Law of Entrance: The teaching of Jesus and His apostles relative to becoming Christians is not merely suggestive that we should think along these broad lines, but they constitute the way of passage into the kingdom of God. It is

clearly the way of faith in Christ, repentance over sins, and baptism into Christ for the forgiveness of one's sins (**Mk. 16:15-16; Lk. 24:46-47; Acts 2:38**). Only those who conform themselves to the will of the Father will thus enter the kingdom (**Mt. 7:21**). That this became divine law is seen in the uniform expectations of those who turned to Christ in the cases of conversion in the Book of Acts.

2. Law of Worship: What Jesus taught concerning collective worship in **John 4:24** was later expanded in the various statements of Acts and the epistles (**Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11,14; Col. 3:16**). Worship is not acceptable merely because of some attitude that the worshipper has; God has always prescribed acceptable worship.

3. Law of Organization: The New Testament pictures local-church organization and nothing more (**Phil. 1:2; Acts 20:28; Tit. 1:5; 1 Pet. 5:1-4**). The current practice of joining local churches together to work in different fields is unknown in the New Testament. Local churches always operated under local elders to do their work.

4. Law of Mission (Work): The mission of Christ to seek and save the lost became the passion of His people, as seen in the examples of congregations dispatching preachers to preach and supporting preachers at home and at a distance. Local churches also edified saints to spiritual maturity and sometimes assisted with emergency needs among the saints. Modern concern with health projects, educational ventures, recreational programs, and social-action efforts is totally alien to the portrait found in the Scriptures.

5. Law of Life: Each Christian is individually related to Christ as his king and head. Matters of attitude, speech, and act come within this relationship. All that one does and is must conform to the example of Christ

The purpose of this brief presentation in this last section is not to provide exhaustive teaching/scriptures concerning these different matters of Christ's law, but to illustrate how His law applies in various areas. It is clear that the

local church (points 2-4) and the individual Christian (points 1 and 5) must submit to the will of the king. All purchased by His blood belong to Him and should glorify Him through lives of obedient service. In this way the church built by Jesus Christ will serve as His spiritual body to represent Him to the world.

By Bobby L. Graham

No Place to Stop

It was said of Julius Ceasar that he thought there was "nothing done while there remained anything to do." *Saurin* says, "By this marvelous secret, the Roman eagles flew to the utmost parts of Asia, rendered Gaul tributary, swelled the Rhine with German blood, subjugated Britain, pursued the shattered remains of Pompey's army into the deserts of Africa, and caused all the rivers that fell into the Adriatic Sea to roll along the sound of their victories.

A greater than Caesar has said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." (**John 9:4**) On the basis of this principle, Jesus redeemed the world and established a kingdom, without the sword, that has filled the earth "as the waters cover the sea" and ground into nothingness the empire of the Caesars. Success in both material and spiritual kingdoms lies in the recognition of the fact that while there remains anything to be done, there is no place to stop.

James W. Adams

There'll be no unemployment in heaven
No job losses there I am told
For those who worked in His vineyard
Live in mansions on streets of pure gold

There'll be no ragweed in heaven
For those who enjoy a new birth
'Cause Satan has used all his power
Creating our misery on earth

Grant Clothier

"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are." -

John Wooden

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, Candiss Cason,** and **Grant Clothier** as he recuperates at home.

Please clear your calendars for August 17, 2013 for Ladies Day at the Lenexa church of Christ 7845 Cottonwood Dr. Lenexa, Kansas 66216 - 9:00 A.M. - 11:45 A.M.

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