

THE LEXIA EDIFIER

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

AUGUST 25, 2013

ZEAL FOR THE LORD **Jim Stauffer**

No doubt material success and possessions are the primary reason for spiritual complacency. This has clearly caused many to forget those "spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ".

We see people who are zealous for many things. Sports fans are as their name suggests, often fanatical about their teams. Some people zealously pursue hobbies that require much time and energy.

Somehow society has convinced people today that faith in God should not be so openly and zealously pursued. We must respect the zeal of the early Christians as they suffered persecution following the stoning of Stephen. **Acts 8:4** *They therefore that were scattered abroad, went about preaching the word.* Yet, the question remains as to why it is not so today.

Old timers question why gospel meetings today are 3-6 day affairs when they used to last 2 weeks or more. The simple answer is a lack of zeal for the Lord. The solution would be for people to switch their allegiance from worldly pursuits to zeal for the

Lord. The process to achieve that will take some commitment and effort.

The Psalmist prophesied of Christ when he said, **Psa. 69:9** *For the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up; And the reproaches of them that reproach thee are fallen upon me.* The Apostles remembered this when He drove the money changers from the Temple. **John 2:17** *His disciples remembered that it was written, Zeal for thy house shall eat me up.*

The Apostle Paul commended the Corinthians for their zeal in the discipline of a sinful brother. **2 Cor. 7:11** *For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging! In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter.* Through his teaching he transformed them from being puffed up over his sin and ignoring it to taking the recommended action and "delivering such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh

that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

On the other side of the equation, Paul lamented the fact his Jewish brethren had a zeal but not according to knowledge.

It should be embarrassing for brethren who read, know and understand the truth to see men pursuing erroneous doctrines with more zeal than they.

Let me encourage you and me to reconsider what the death of Christ on the cross will do for the person who has a genuine zeal for the Lord.

We cannot force or fake it. It must come from the heart. What we must do is feed our heart a steady diet of the message of God and we then will zealously share that with others.

When we do, the church will become lively, a place where brethren of “like precious faith” will want to be.

Our zeal for the Lord has been killed by feeding on a worldly message rather than the word of God. Study your Bible for as many hours as you watch TV and you will notice a change in what your heart desires.

Do you want to go to heaven when you die? If so, begin to plan for it by developing a genuine zeal for the Lord.

Narrow-Mindedness

Do not feel insulted when someone tells you that your religion is narrow. Maybe he is right. If he is right, you should feel complimented. Your critic may be confusing narrowness with bigotry, in which case he is the one out of step, not you. Bigotry the Lord condemned; narrowness (in the scriptural use of the term) he commended: “...*narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be which find it.*”

The Narrowness of Truth

Truth is always narrow. Five plus five equals ten; this is true from kindergarten to college and everywhere else in the world. It isn't ten because the arithmetic book says so, but it is ten because it cannot be anything else. If in a class of 100 students, only one gave ten as the answer to five plus five and all the other 99 agreed on a different answer, the one would be right and all the others wrong.

Historical truth is narrow. The Battle of San Jacinto was fought in Texas; Valley Forge was in Pennsylvania. These are facts which are understood alike by all students of history. If a student in a history class gave any other answer concerning the location of these spots, he would be incorrect. No one would think the teacher was “narrow” in telling him so.

There are twelve inches in a foot, three feet in a yard all over the world. It doesn't matter whether the one doing the measuring is a president or a preacher, an illiterate hill-billy or a college professor. To fail to recognize these facts would throw the world into hopeless confusion.

Religious Truth

Since truth in every other field is narrow and dogmatic, why should we suppose that divine truth is so flexible as to be susceptible of any interpretation man wants to place upon it? “We just can't see it alike,” someone answers. But we see other things alike. Is man more able to make himself understood than is God? We may misunderstand the meaning of a passage of scripture, but does our misunderstanding of it change the meaning of the passage? Does its meaning change and shift to suit our various understandings of it? If the writer of the passage meant to teach something when he wrote the passage, is not that something that he intended still in the passage?

Take, for example, the much discussed passage, “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*” (Mark 16:16). The question about this passage is whether Jesus did, or did not, make baptism necessary to salvation. He either did, or he didn't. Some of us believe that he did; others vehemently deny it. It must be apparent to all that somebody is teaching false doctrine on this point. Is it broadminded to ignore these contradictions and pretend they do not exist? Baptists and Presbyterians teach that a child of God cannot fall away from the favor of God and be lost; Methodists teach that he can fall away and be lost. Does the Bible teach both?

Some denominations teach hereditary depravity, that infants are born totally depraved as a result of Adam's sin. Others deny this, and teach that everyone is born sinless and only becomes sinful by his own transgressions. Now

if we are to escape the stigma of being called "narrow," we must cooperate with and encourage the man who is teaching the very opposite of what we believe to be the truth. Is this honesty? If one preacher preached four conflicting doctrines, people would call him a hypocrite; but if four preachers preach these conflicting doctrines, they are all teaching the truth!

How Broad Should We Be?

The Unitarian believes that Jesus of Nazareth was a great man and a great teacher, but that he was not the Son of God. The Orthodox Jew worships God, but denies the divinity of Jesus. Shall we have these men in our fellowship? If honesty and sincerity are the only criteria, why not? Who will say they are not as honest as we are? Some denominational preachers are already taking this position. They swap pulpits with Jewish rabbis right along. This shocks the religious sensibilities in the world but is the legitimate and inevitable fruit of that namby-pamby, stand-for-nothing, anything-and-anybody-is-right attitude that we are talking about.

Most members of denominations are not ready yet to take in the Jews and the Unitarians on their broadminded position. They narrow it down a bit. We must believe in Christ, they say; we must see alike on those scriptures that teach that Jesus was the Son of God; that he was born of a virgin; that he suffered vicariously; that he arose from the dead; that he ascended into heaven, where he intercedes for us. But why must we see alike on those particular passages, but have unbounded liberty to differ on nearly everything else connected with the religion of Christ? Are not the passages pertaining to the organization of the church, baptism, apostasy, worship, church membership, discipline, authority, etc., inspired of God as much as are the other passages? Are not these things a part of the Lord's plan? Have they not a place with divine truth? How much truth is essential, and how much is non-essential? How much of the Bible is important, and how much is unimportant?

We feel no personal animosity, of course, toward those who teach things we do not believe; but we cannot, with a good conscience, bid them Godspeed. John said, *"If there come*

any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house; neither bid him Godspeed: For he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10). Paul said, *"If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:9).* These apostles thought it was a matter of much import what a man believed and taught.

We are not infallible, and we are open to any truth that may be presented to us; we will change when convinced we are wrong. But two things we do know, and of them we are certain: (1) truth does not contradict truth, and (2) we will not learn by hiding our heads in the sand and refusing to admit that religious divisions exist, or that such are wrong.

By Luther Blackmon

There'll be no TSA's in heaven
No gropings or pat downs are known
For when we reach the celestial airport
W'll be fitted with wings of our own

There'll be no brush fires in heaven
No homes lost to embers' red glow
But those who have no fire insurance
Will be housed in poor dwellings below

Grant Clothier

A haughty spirit does go before a fall

In the summer of 1986, two ships collided in the Black Sea off the coast of Russia. Hundreds of passengers died as they were hurled into the icy waters below. News of the disaster was further darkened when an investigation revealed the cause of the accident. It wasn't a technology problem like radar malfunction--or even thick fog. The cause was human stubbornness. Each captain was aware of the other ship's presence nearby. Both could have steered clear, but according to news reports, neither captain wanted to give way to the other. Each was too proud to yield first. By the time they came to their senses, it was too late.

Experience comes from what we have done. Wisdom comes from what we have done badly.

Theodore Levitt, Harvard Business School

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, Candiss Cason and Grant Clothier.**

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