

Romans 14:19 - ...Let us pursue the things which make for peace & the things by which one may edify another

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

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THE LENEXA CHURCH OF CHRIST
7845 Cottonwood Drive
Lenexa, Kansas 66216

TELEPHONE
913-764-9170

EDITOR:
Jim Stauffer

God is longsuffering but....

by Jim Stauffer

Meeting Times:

Sunday Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:20 am
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Classes	7:00 pm

2 Pet. 3:9 *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

Peter explains this as completely logical rather than as an oxymoron.

He was responding to such statements as **2 Pet. 3:3** *knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, 4 and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. Prior to verses 9 and 10 he reminds them of the judgment of God on mankind by way of the great flood to prepare them to understand the principle of His limited patience.*

Peter assures those of his day as well as us today that God's patience, while longsuffering, has its limits. The day will come when *"all who are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment. (John 5:28,29)*

The Scriptures properly categorize any fear we should have in view of the judgment. Jesus says, **Luke 12:5** *But I will warn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. We couple this with the promise of the author of **Hebrews** in chapter **13:6**, *So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?* Combining these two enables us to truly understand the Apostle Paul when he says, **Rom. 8:31** *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?**

This fear demands we pledge our loyalty to God and Christ. The only demonstration of that loyalty is obedience. **Heb. 5:8** *though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation;* The very result of that obedience is exactly that for which we strive.

Thus when we revere God and His word above all others, we have everything in its proper order and confidence should replace terror in our hearts.

“Holiness not Happiness”

Do you remember when you first got married? You probably thought marriage was going to bring you happiness that simply wouldn't end. You had met the one single person in the world who fills your heart with joy. And then they started leaving the cap off the toothpaste, putting the toilet paper on the spindle backwards, leaving dishes around the house, complaining about your music being too loud, comparing your cooking to their mother's, comparing your house maintenance to their father's. Or perhaps it was worse; they started spending too much time at the office, complaining when you walked through the door, arguing with you every decision, criticizing your every move, taking frustrations out on you, being interested in you only for sex, controlling every aspect of your life, yelling at you when you didn't do what they wanted, blaming you for every problem.

To some degree or another, just about everyone who is married comes to a moment when they wonder why their marriage isn't all they expected. It promised only happiness, but also delivered grief. After all it hurts when the person you have committed yourself to and opened yourself up to is the same person who takes you for granted and mistreats you. Didn't the movies promise if you met the right prince or princess you would live happily ever after? What happened?

The problem here is misunderstanding the purpose of marriage. Certainly, when you work at your marriage, it will be a source of great happiness. But while Hollywood's goal for marriage may be happiness, God's goal for marriage is holiness.

Consider what Paul says in **Ephesians 5:22-33**. We know the code. Wives respect your husbands, submitting to them. Husbands love your wives as yourselves. But why? Because this is how Christ and the church are to behave. Your marriage is a microcosmic expression of Christ's relationship with

us, His church. What is the purpose of Christ's relationship with the church? “So that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish” (**Ephesians 5:27, ESV**). Just as the relationship between Christ and the church is about holiness, so is the relationship between husbands and wives.

The real purpose in marriage is to help you become more like Jesus. I love what Gary Thomas said in “Sacred Marriage” when his brother asked him about marriage. He said, “If you want to be free to serve Jesus, there's no question—stay single... But if you want to be more like Jesus, I can't imagine any better thing to do than get married.” I absolutely agree. Where else can we better learn to love someone who is completely different from us? Where else can we better learn to forgive someone who has hurt us? Where else can we better learn to sacrifice ourselves for someone who doesn't deserve it? Where else can we better learn to be like Jesus?

This week, don't be bitter if your marriage isn't fulfilling you with amazing happiness yet; take joy that it is challenging you to pursue holiness.

--Edwin L. Crozier

What Prayer Does for the Pray-er

It seems to me significant that our English word “prayer” indicates, by its very nature, someone who does it. A prayer is something prayed by a pray-er.

Have you ever stopped to think about what prayer does for us? It's interesting.

Prayer makes us like Him whom we adore. People who associate closely begin to adopt one another's characteristics, personality, demeanor. When you keep in touch with God, you will become more and more like Him. Peter says, “*Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the*

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divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (**2 Pet. 1:4**). How exciting to think it possible to take part in the divine nature—to be holy, to be full of love, to be considerate of others—and the multitude of other characteristics inherent in the Divine One. If you want to be like God, meditate on His promises and pray for His goodness and it will come to pass—you will be more like Him.

Prayer exercises our spiritual senses. A lack of exercise results in flaccid muscles. A lack of spiritual exercise produces the same flaccidity—only it's much more serious. You become disinterested, irregular in attendance, unconcerned about spiritual matters. Regular prayer keeps us in good shape, makes us stronger, more able to function in difficult situations, more able to perform in hard places. *“Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you”* (**1 Thess. 5:17-18**).

Prayer humbles our elevated spirits. We live in a world so comfortable that it's easy to forget from whence our blessings come. We get so caught up in our multitude of blessings that we forget their source. You can't have a spirit of pride and thank God for His blessings at the same time. You have to humble yourself somewhat to give thanks; it places you in a proper position when you pray. The condemnation given the Gentile nations by Paul in Romans 1 says, *“Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”* (**Rom. 1:21-22**). Prayer and humility are connected. No humility, no prayer.

Prayer elevates our broken spirits. Life is filled with unexpected down times. We must face difficult situations at times. No matter how unfaithful people are, when death comes, or a serious operation is in the offing, they pray. How sad that it is reserved only for

such a time. Prayer, for the faithful, enhances his ability to endure by connecting him to the immutable Father, but giving him assurance that Jesus has been there, *“For,”* we are told, *“we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”* (**Heb. 4:15-16**).

And finally, prayer is our lifeline to spiritual energy. To be constantly in touch with God is to be connected to His strength, to share His power, to imbibe of His energy. *“I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,”* He said, *so that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me”* (**Heb. 13:6-7**). How encouraging is that! How absolutely consoling! How totally comforting.

“Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray”

Dee Bowman

I asked for strength that I might achieve;
 He made me weak that I might obey.
 I asked for health that I might do great things;
 He gave me grace that I might do better things.
 I asked for riches that I might be happy;
 He gave me poverty that I might be wise.
 I asked for power that I might have the praise of men;
 He gave me weakness that I might feel a need of God.
 I asked for all things that I might enjoy life;
 He gave me life that I might enjoy all things.
 I received nothing I had asked for;
 He gave me all that I had hoped for.

Anonymous

2 Cor. 12:7 *And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch. 8 Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

News & Notes

by Jim Stauffer

Eph. 2:19-21 “So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 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 1:1-6 “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; but his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 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. The wicked are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish.”

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.”

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).

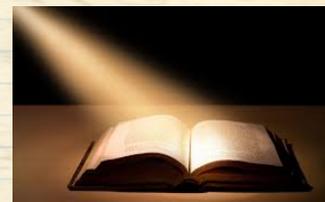
As a result of this justification we have been “delivered out of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13-14).

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).

EVANGELIST & EDITOR:
Jim Stauffer

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The Lenexa Church of Christ
7845 Cottonwood Drive
Lenexa, Kansas 66216
913-764-9170



WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

- **HEAR** the gospel, Romans 10:17
- **BELIEVE** in Jesus Christ, Hebrews 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

