

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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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

Man's Reason vs. Obedience

by Jim Stauffer

1 Sam. 15:22 *And Samuel said, "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. Saul had failed to obey God's command to utterly destroy the Amalekites and Samuel called it to his attention. He further tells him in the next verse that, "he hath rejected thee from being king."*

It seemed good to Saul, after reasoning with others in his army, to bring back the best of the livestock and the king. Of course this was not what God had requested.

Men always displease God when they reason within themselves before they choose a course of action. We can perform the commands of God for many reasons. There could be pressure from our friends or family, but when we perform those commands for these reasons, it is not obedience. It may be we believe the command of God to be reasonable. In other words, we agree with Him. Yet, when we do His commands for this reason, we have not obeyed. And, of course, when we fail to do what He has commanded for any reason we have not obeyed.

Obedience is the humble submission of our will to His because we love Him. **John 14:15** *If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*

It is "from the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (**Rom. 10:10**), and God demands our service to Him come from the heart. **1 Pet. 3:15** *but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.*

Obedience demands allegiance. We cannot claim to be on the side of God versus Satan if we do not submit to His will. Jesus says we are forced to choose. We must take one side or the other. **Matt. 12:30** *Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.* He then set the example for us by being obedient unto the death on the cross. (**Heb. 5:8,9; Phil. 2:8**)

Man has been making this choice from time immemorial. Adam and Eve first chose to reason they could enjoy the fruit and become as wise as God. Jeremiah said man does not have the wisdom in himself to direct his own steps. (**Jer. 10:23**) Paul teaches us this choice is a decision to obey from the heart, either unto sin and death or unto righteousness. (**Rom. 6:16-18**) We may find it hard to believe, but when we fail to submit completely unto God and Christ, we find we have become just as Adam and Eve in the garden.



WE HAVE BECOME STOIC

One of the characteristics of the ancient Stoics (**Acts 17: 18**) was ataraxia -- meaning "freedom from emotions." The word, "Stoic," means "unmoved by joy or grief." The Stoics strove to master their feelings in order not to be affected by even personal tragedies. Their personalities, therefore, were cold and lifeless.

In over-reacting to emotionalism, some of us have taken on the spirit of stoicism. This is obvious in the atmosphere of worship in many places. From beginning to end it is bland, stereotyped and formal, with the environment of a morgue. Worship should be a joyous occasion where the spirit is lifted up and the heart is satisfied. Like David, we should be able to say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go to the house of the Lord" (**Psa. 122:1**).

Stoical Singing: -- The leader stands like a statue, head buried in the songbook, dragging along a song that has been worn out by over-exposure. The singing is atrocious! But he works his way through the first song and the second one goes about the same way. After the singing of two songs (routine for years), it is time to stand for prayer.

The third song has an "Amen" at the close, but, no, you cannot sing that as it would show emotion or is too sectarian. I do not know what we are going to do with all the "Amens" in the Bible. The song is finished and the leader retreats to the back of the auditorium where he sits until the invitation song, and then there is a fifteen-second lull between the time the preacher stops and the song begins.

Brethren, song leaders can make or break a service. How uplifting is worship when there is good singing -- songs that warm the heart and brighten our hope. But brethren will allow anyone to lead singing, frequently dressed in untidy clothes, and we wonder why people are getting turned off.

In meetings, some brethren use a different song leader each night, and some are not ready. Churches send hundreds of miles and pay a lot of money to have a good meeting only to hinder it by not having the best man available to lead the singing. Some places would be wise to bring in a song leader for the meeting and do some extra singing. What great meetings could be had if such were done.

Stoical Prayers: -- Sometimes prayers are uttered in rote -- empty sayings that are used over and over (**Matt. 6:7**). Spontaneity is lacking as phrases are used over and over. We need to ask, "Lord, teach us to pray" (**Lk. 11:1**). The brother leading the prayer should speak loudly enough to be heard and when he finishes, there should be some "Amens." Paul said an "Amen" is in order at the giving of thanks, provided we understand what is said (**1 Cor. 14:16**).

Stoical Observance Of The Lord's Supper: -- At a given moment men come from all directions and line up at the table. A brother, without explanation, gives thanks and the bread is passed. The fruit of the vine is treated similarly. After the Supper, they grab the collection plates, also without explanation, and start down the aisles. By habit the members know what is happening but the visitors are unprepared. Brethren, the greatness of Jesus and his unspeakable love at Calvary deserves more from us than a hurry-up appearance at the table.

Stoical Preaching: -- Preaching, with not a few, has become "talks." There is not much preaching to it. The audience is asleep in five minutes from a monotone and maybe a topic that is as irrelevant as the Pony Express. Preachers need to put some "fire" and enthusiasm in their sermons instead of acting like a Harvard theologian. We are preaching to common people with common problems, hence we need to gear our preaching to common needs, and preach with all the vim and vitality we can muster.

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Have you noticed how gospel preachers are introduced anymore? It's usually, "After the next song, George will bring us a lesson." With such an exuberant introduction, dull singing, a stereotypical prayer and ritualistic communion, the audience is comatose by the time the preacher is ready to preach. What has happened to the affectionate designation of "brother?" And, has the word, "sermon" become obsolete, or the expression "preach to us," antiquated?

From the pulpit the preacher sees stone-faced zombies who sit emotionless. There is no response, no "Amens," no expression of approval when the truth is preached. We have become too austere! Hearing Christ preached should excite us with jubilation and joy.

Thank God for vibrant churches and vigorous Christians who sing with tears of happiness, who pray with fervency, who are touched with gratitude when the Supper is taken, and who appreciate gospel preaching and show it. Give us live, active, caring, Spirit-filled (**Eph. 5:18**) churches that endeavor to serve the Lord in a world of sin.

By Weldon Warnock

The Preacher and the Atheistic Barber

A preacher and an atheistic barber were once walking through the city slums. Said the barber to the preacher; "This is why I cannot believe in a God of love. If God was as kind as you say, He would not permit all this poverty, disease, and squalor. He would not allow these poor bums to be addicted to dope and other character-destroying habits. No, I cannot believe in a God who permits these things."

The preacher was silent until they met a man who was especially unkempt and filthy. His hair was hanging down his neck and he had a half-inch of stubble on his face. Said the preacher to the barber; "You can't be a very good barber or

you wouldn't permit a man like that to continue living in this neighborhood without a haircut and a shave."

Indignantly the barber answered; "Why blame me for that man's condition? I can't help it that he is like that. He has never come in my shop; I could fix him up and make him look like a gentleman!"

Giving the barber a penetrating look, the preacher said; "Then don't blame God for allowing the people to continue in their evil ways when He is constantly inviting them to come and be saved. The reason these people are slaves to sin and evil habits is that they refuse the ONE who died to save and deliver them."

The Barber saw the point. Do you?

Author Unknown

ITS NOT SAFE BEING IGNORANT

A story was told to me that supposedly, was true of a man who had driven around in his car for over a week only to discover a rattlesnake had gotten into his car and was hiding under the seat. Luckily the snake was discovered and all ended well. All the time he was unaware he and his family were in grave danger of being bitten. Obviously the man was upset, but only after the snake was discovered!

This was a physical danger, but spiritual ignorance can be just as deadly. In **Acts 17:23** Paul told the Athenians even though they were religious people, they were worshipping God in ignorance. He told the Ephesians (**Eph.4:18**) their ignorance had alienated them from God. In the seventh chapter of Matthew, Jesus warned false prophets would come claiming to be from him. He said in the 21st verse, **'not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my father.'** He goes on to say, in the judgment there will be those who thought they were worshipping God in an acceptable manner, but weren't. Their ignorance of God and his laws had cost them their lives. The tragedy of all of this is, they could have learned, but preferred to remain the way they were, loving their traditions better than God's word. One is not born knowing what to do in order to be saved nor can one's feelings or emotions be relied upon. Christianity is a taught religion. And ignorant people simply cannot worship God while remaining so, but must be properly taught. The good news is God has made his word so plain anyone who wishes to learn may do so.

By J.D.Williams

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, J.R. Daniel** had successful hip surgery and is recuperating in V.A. Hospital, K.C., Mo.

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**).

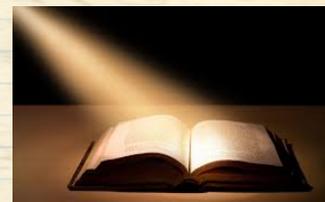
As a result of this justification we have been “delivered out of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (**Colossians 1:13-14**).

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**).

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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**

