

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

# THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

*"And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"*

APRIL 27, 2014

## **"NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH"**

*by Jim Stauffer*

**2 Pet. 3:9** *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* This passage exposes a major flaw in the concept of Calvinism. The third chapter of this epistle is clearly identified by Peter as an effort to remind those saints of something they knew but may be inclined to forget.

He first speaks of the argument of the "scoffers of these last days" by pointing out their incredulous response to the concept of Christ coming in judgment. He tells them the scoffers "*willingly are ignorant of*" God's judgment rendered in the past with the great flood of Noah's day. He further states the world as it now exists is held together by the same word of the same God who sent the flood in the past. And this world is reserved for a destructive fire that will come from the same powerful God who sent the flood.

Next, he offers the explanation for any perceived delay in this judgment. First, God is not limited or affected by time. "*One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" In addition to that the Lord is a long suffering God and is "*not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*" He completes his warning by saying the Lord will come as surprisingly as a thief in the night, but come He will, and in that day He will destroy both heaven and earth with the fervent heat of the fire He brings.

It is concerning the willingness or will of God as defined by the Calvinist we write. The Calvinist defines God's will as any and all that he desires. If God wills or wishes something to be it will come to pass. Their claim is that if God is sovereign all things He desires must be. They reject the idea of a loving God who offers salvation to all and then is saddened when man invokes his own will and rejects that salvation. You see they reject entirely the idea that man has any free will in the matter. Their position is explained in Calvin's definition of predestination: "*Predestination we call the eternal decree of God, by which He has determined in Himself, what would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is foreordained for some and eternal death for others. Every man,*

*therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say he is predestinated either to life or to death.*"

No one disagrees with God's power to enforce His will. No one disagrees that God has willed certain things to take place that cannot be revoked by man, such as this very judgment of which Peter speaks. When God has decreed certain things such as the judgment to come, man is without power to prevent that day from coming to pass. But clearly there are also things God has willed that allow man a choice in the matter. For instance: **John 3:16** *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Two things are clear here. 1) God's will is that if man believes in His Son he may have everlasting life. 2) Man must choose to believe in order to receive that everlasting life. Whosoever, indicates some will and some will not.

When I recently brought up **2 Pet. 3:9** to a Calvinist friend as an example of God having a will that man can reject, we had the following exchange. I explained according to his position that God's will is always enforced, this passage teaches God will ultimately save all men. He denied that by saying only the elect are under consideration in the word **any** and therefore those who are not elect are already condemned to destruction and repentance does not apply to them.

Of course, this argument indicates one is understanding this passage in light of Calvin's position rather than hearing what God says independent of Calvin or any other man.

Just a quick perusal of scripture will reveal to us that Paul says, **Rom. 3:23** *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* Consider this in light of **Luke 19:10** *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* All are lost, therefore Jesus came to save **ALL** men.

Look again at the text and see what it says, then evaluate it in light of the clear biblical teaching above. Peter is writing to saints. He is writing to remind them of things they had been taught by the prophets and apostles of the Lord.

*continued on page 2*

He warns them to dismiss the ideas of the scoffers who say Christ is not coming in judgment as they have been taught. (**Acts 17:31**) Don't forget God's judgment in the past. Remember God is not slack concerning His promises.

Here is the thrust of his reminder. God will definitely come in judgment. He waits to allow men to repent. If you forget this as the scoffers have you will not be prepared to meet Him when He comes. He is *"not willing that any should perish."* According to Calvin's explanation of the predestination of God, if He were not willing that any should perish, all would be saved. Further complication for the Calvinist is this. If God has already chosen those who would be saved and those who would be lost, there would be no need to remind the elect to prepare themselves for the judgment. Their security would be unchangeable anyway.

Of course that is in direct conflict with what Paul told the Galatians, **Gal. 5:4** *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*

You can now see they have concocted a disfigured analysis of this passage, when Peter is seen reminding saints of the patience of God who is waiting for people to repent who do not have the will to repent anyway. And then to explain away that contradiction, they say he is only speaking of the elect when he says God is not willing that any should perish. But that is a contradiction also because the elect are already taken care of in the repentance department.

Allow me one more illustration of the fact that man has a free will that determines his acceptance or rejection of the will of God. Look at the scene of the death of Christ. He clearly lays claim to His own will being submitted to the will of God in the following verses. **Luke 22:42** *Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.* **John 10:17** *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.* These verses are supported by the claim of Jesus to have the resources to save Him from this death if He so chose. **Matt. 26:53** *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?* Clearly, Jesus submitted to the will of God the Father, just as He implores us to do by **choosing** to submit **our will** in obedience as He did. **Heb. 5:8** *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.*

Finally, let us look at two verses that reflect clearly the choice man is given concerning his salvation. **James 4:4** *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.* **Rev. 22:17** *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

Both texts employ the word will as indicative of man's choice of the world or the Lord.

You see, the choice is ours to make. It is our will that determines if we accept the will of God.

What choice will you make?

## Making The Choice

The moment that God pronounced to Adam and Eve that they could eat of any fruit of the Garden except for one tree, God gave man a choice. Man has had that choice from the beginning up until now. We each have the choice of obeying God or not. We have the choice of meeting God's standards or not. We have the choice to sin.

God, not only gave us a choice, but God told us the results of our choices. Take time to read **Deuteronomy 28. Verses 1-14** inform us of the blessings the children of Israel would realize if they obeyed God. Verses 15-68 warns them of the consequence of turning their backs on God.

Even though we are under a different system of grace, and not under the Mosaic law, there are still blessings made available to those who obey God, and curses fall upon those who sin before God. The result of sin is death, and the eventual destiny of all sinners is Hell. God warns us of the consequences of disobedience.

But God does not want us to perish, so He provided His grace to provide the atonement we need to come to God and have a pure relationship with Him. Jesus died on the cross so that we could be spared the penalty of Death.

But just because we are under grace, we still have choices. We must choose to follow Christ and God's commandments, or we can choose not to be obedient to God. Following Christ will bring blessings, and not following God will bring eternal torment.

The great thing about this grace is that God has given each one of us the ability to make the right choice. God even helps us because in **1 Corinthians 10:13**, He protects us from any temptation that might overpower us. The bottom line is that if we choose to sin, it is all on us. We cannot blame Satan or the world or our parents or any living creature. If we succumb to temptation, we are guilty ourselves. We cannot blame God for our short-comings.

Some people want to teach that Satan is powerful and we cannot help sinning if we fall under his spell. Well that is so easy. Lay the blame on Satan. But everyone has the power to control Satan. We have that assurance from God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

To become a Christian is the greatest choice you can make in this life. You have the ability to choose to serve Christ and God. Stop blaming Satan and others for your failures, and make the choice to serve God. If you do, you have the right to enter Heaven if you continue in faithfulness.

What can we do to help you find the Lord, and become one of His children?

**By Carey Scott**

# THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

by David Cox

The second coming of Christ is a central theme in the New Testament. According to statistics, the second coming is mentioned 318 times in the 260 chapters of the New Testament. In our religious world there is much debate and many questions concerning the second coming of Christ. Because of all the misconceptions that are taught about the second coming of Christ, let us look to the Bible to see what it has to say about the second coming and the end of time.

**When Will The Time Be?:** -- This question has intrigued some to the point that predictions have been made as to when the return of Christ would be. Dates such as 1833, 1914, 1919, 1945, 1975 and 1988, just to name a few, have been predicted and this list is not a complete one at all. Of course, these years have long since come and gone and Christ has not yet returned, but this does not diminish from the fact of the certainty of His return. Notice what the Bible says about the time of the second coming of Christ: *"For yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night" (1 Thes. 5:2). "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..." (2 Pet. 3:10). "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Matt. 24:36).* It is clear from these passages that the second coming of Christ will be unannounced, so it is needless for anyone to try to predict the time or an approximation of Christ's return. We should not put our faith in any prediction that comes from man.

**The Glorious Appearing Of The Great God:** -- When Christ returns, the Bible tells us that it will be glorious. As Paul tells Titus about the grace of God that teaches us how we should live says, *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Ti. 2:13).* The appearing will be glorious because when Jesus returns in the clouds everyone will see Him. **1 Thes. 4:16,17**, describing the events of the second coming of Christ, says, *"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."* This glorious appearing will be announced with a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. Also, the Lord will return in the clouds. The clouds have always been symbolic of nobility and grandeur. Again, in **Rev. 1:7** we read, *"Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him."* Notice that this second appearing of Jesus will be known to all. It will not be a secret appearance that is unknown to people, but it will be observed by all.

**What About Christ Coming Back To Earth?:** -- The second coming of Christ does not include Christ setting

His foot back upon the earth and setting up His kingdom on the earth. As **1 Thes. 4** and **Rev. 1** mentions, Christ's return will be in the clouds. We are also told that those still living on earth will be *"caught up...in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:16).* The second coming of Christ is not for Christ to set up His kingdom on earth. In **1 Cor. 15**, Paul, discussing the fact that Christians will be raised to be with Christ, says, *"then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:24).* This verse does not mention anything about setting up a kingdom on earth, but says that Christ will give the kingdom to the Father. Christ will lay down all rule and authority which the Father has given to Him (**Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:22,23**).

When Christ returns, the dead in Christ will be raised first and given immortal bodies (**1 Cor. 15:50-53**). Then those that are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the air and so shall they ever be with the Lord (where? in the air, not on this earth). Our hope and desire for Christ's return is not for something to happen on earth, but for that which is beyond this life and beyond this earth. Peter writes concerning our hope in Christ's second coming and says, *"Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God wherein that heavens being on fire shall melt with fervent heat! Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."* Peter then gives the reason of the great expectation of Christ's return is for our eternal home.

We do not know when Christ will return, but it will be a glorious day if we are prepared and are in Christ where all spiritual blessings are to be found. On the other hand, how fearful will the return of Christ be for those outside of Christ. Knowing this, it should move each one of us to look at our life and compare it to the Word of God. If we find that we have not obeyed the gospel of Christ according to the Scriptures, then we are still in our sins and outside of Christ. In that condition, we would not enjoy that home in heaven that Christ has prepared. Let us look seriously at our lives and prepare for the second coming of Christ, so that it will be a glorious blessing for us.

## How Sweet the Victory in Christ

**Psa. 18:1** *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. 2 The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. 3 I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.*

**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;

**1Pet. 2:9** But ye are an elect race, a 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:

**Psa. 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 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 the 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.

## HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

**Visitors welcome**

**We conduct in home Bible Studies**

**We offer Correspondence Courses**

**Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer**

## OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

**Check out the following websites**

[thelenexaedifier.com](http://thelenexaedifier.com)

[facebook.com/lenexachurchofchrist/](https://facebook.com/lenexachurchofchrist/)

[lenexachurchofchrist.org](http://lenexachurchofchrist.org)

## NEWS AND NOTES:

SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

IRENE HURD, J.R. DANIEL,  
LILLIE KEECH AND PAT  
CLOTHIER.

OUR GOSPEL MEETING  
CONCLUDED WEDNESDAY. ALL  
WHO ATTENDED WERE  
ENCOURAGED TOWARD  
FAITHFULNESS.

OUR BIBLE CLASS ON SUNDAY  
AND WEDNESDAY IS  
CURRENTLY IN ZECHARIAH AS  
WE TAKE THE MINOR  
PROPHETS IN ORDER.



## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

**Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be Baptized** for remission of sins

Acts 2:38

**Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10