

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"

JUNE 29, 2014

OUR STRENGTH IS IN HIM

Jim Stauffer

Phil. 4:13 *I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.* Easy to understand but difficult for one who lives in this world. David said, **Psa. 142:5** *I cried unto thee, O Jehovah; I said, Thou art my refuge, My portion in the land of the living. 6 Attend unto my cry; For I am brought very low: Deliver me from my persecutors; For they are stronger than I.* In this statement he acknowledges God's strength and his own weakness in the face of his enemies. This is the perfect illustration of why Paul said what he did.

Of course the Lord can only be our refuge, that is we can only turn to and access His strength if we stay close to Him. Proximity both physically and in the heart and mind was a constant message of Moses to God's people under the Old Law. **Deut. 4:7** *For what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him?* If we are near to Him in heart and mind, He will be there for us. **Psa. 145:18** *Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon him, To all that call upon him in truth.* The Hebrew writer tells us if we can divorce ourselves from dependence upon the material things such as money, etc., God will never fail us. (**Heb. 13:5**)

In light of these obvious statements of Scripture, it is not at all surprising to see the unfaithfulness of Israel. Jeroboam refused to allow them to return to Jerusalem to offer their worship at the Temple, The House of God. Because of the political struggle between Jeroboam and Rehoboam the people were divided and the northern 10 tribes were no longer "near" to God in that they physically no longer came to His House. It was not long until they began serving other gods in heart and mind.

While it is pleasant to focus on the promises of God and His love toward us, it is far beyond question He will call everyone into judgment. (**2 Cor. 5:10; Acts 17:31**) When that day comes we will witness the wrath and terror of God toward "those who know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. (**2 Th. 1:8**) This is the reason Paul gives for "persuading men" (**2 Cor. 5:11**)

Paul gives additional insight in **Romans 11:22** when he says, *Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity; but toward thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.* The picture of Jesus walking

among the candlesticks in **Rev. 1** illustrates the comfort He gives to the faithful and the terror He brings to those who reject Him. Paul then persuades men to develop a close relationship with God by answering His call to holiness. (**1 Pet. 1:15,16**)

God has the power to support us in our weakness. **2 Cor. 12:9** *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.* He has the power to "deliver the godly out of temptation and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment." (**2 Pet. 2:9**)

If we are then to be holy as He is holy and to be godly rather than unrighteous, it is all about seeking to please **Him**, and not man. (**Gal. 1:10**) While teaching His disciples to pray, Jesus emphasized the attitude of submission to God, thus pleasing Him in worship. He taught them to praise and adore their heavenly Father, to pray for deliverance from temptation while recognizing their dependence upon His power. (**Mat. 6:9-13**)

Knowing He will never forsake us, James advises us on the value of closeness with God. **James 4:7** *Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded.*

Developing an appreciation for a close relationship with God will help us realize our need to separate ourselves from the world. *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but of the world. 91* **John 2:16**) God and the world are not compatible. We cannot serve both. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." **Matt. 12:30** *He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. Josh. 24:15* *And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.*

Drawing near to God is an active choice that demands we turn away from this world and its lure.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP

by Wilson Adams

The Community church of Christ in Hendersonville, Tennessee began using it on special occasions -- via a CD recording. The Norway Avenue congregation in Huntington, West Virginia first started using praise teams to "capture the attention and imagination of young people" but has now moved to the use of instruments in order to "adapt appropriately to culture." The Max Lacado-led Oak Hills church in San Antonio refrains from the use of instruments on Sunday morning because of "the absence of instruments in New Testament churches," said Vic King, church minister of missions. Oak Hills, however, uses instruments on Sunday nights and other occasions.

These three congregations are indicative of a trend among progressive churches catering to cultural demands. It is not limited to these three or only to those seeking membership in trendy groups. I would encourage every gospel preacher to re-study this important question and address the subject with seriousness and resolve. It is not going to disappear but will become an issue that will disturb and divide brethren all over again. Could it be that we see a generation bearing the fruit of weak convictions because of a failure to sow the truth on this important subject?

The Key Issue: -- Have you tried to buy a gift for someone but had no idea what to purchase? You have two options: 1) you can pick something you like (no guarantee they will like it) or, 2) you can seek the advice of others with insight into the expressed will of the recipient. There is a big difference in the two approaches. We either buy what we want or we buy what they want. The same principle works when we offer gifts of praise to God. What is it that God wants?

After having read much of the current lines of argumentation justifying the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship, it is apparent to me that it comes down to the age-old issue of selfishness. As one person said, "I want it because I like it." The me-first generation has spoken.

Six Essential Scriptures: -- **1 Cor. 2:9-13.** It is impossible for you to know the mind of God unless it has been revealed. All of which means we must dispense with the "I think..." and focus on what the Author has expressed.

Eph. 3:1-4. God spoke, the apostles wrote, and we can read and understand. All of which means: if the apostles didn't write it and we can't read it, God doesn't want it. That's true whether you are discussing infant baptism or instrumental music.

1 Cor. 14:15. Written in the context of a worship assembly, Paul addresses two important parts of man's worship: praying and singing.

Eph. 5:17-19. Paul addresses the WHO: "speaking to one another" -- everyone is involved, the WHAT "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" -- not popular and pop songs, and the WHERE: "singing and making melody with your heart" -- the melody making instrument is specified.

Col. 3:16. We are to lift up our voices and sing with thankfulness.

Heb. 13:15. God tells us what He wants -- "the sacrifice of praise...the fruit of lips that give thanks..."

How anyone can read these verses and conclude that music in the early church was anything other than congregational and vocal is beyond my understanding. Did Paul make a mistake by not saying we should play with the understanding? Or did he accurately convey what God wanted?

The Principle Of Silence: -- I believe religiously minded people understand the principle of silence -- when they want to. If I propose to a nearby Christian Church that they add fish to the Lord's Supper because 1) the fish symbol reminds people of Jesus, 2) there is nothing inherently wrong with fish, and 3) the Bible doesn't specifically prohibit it, the arguments they would make against adding fish would be the same arguments I would make against adding play to sing. It is not any different. If you can "add" play to sing, I can "add" fish to the Lord's Supper.

Those who argue in favor of its use via Old Testament teaching display a Sadducean misunderstanding of Scripture (**Matt. 22:29**). By what authority (not to speak of logic) does one choose flutes and harps (electric guitars and drums?) to the neglect of animal sacrifices and incense burning? Who gives you the right to pick and choose--unless...it really is all about me?

There is no instrument like the human voice. When saints gather and sing, as they ought, it produces a sound unequaled by any symphony. Shall we bring forth a mechanical reproduction or the real thing that God desires to hear? Will we worship as we will or as He wills?

Our God given duty to both ourselves and those we meet is to represent His will and not ours.

Gal. 1:10 *For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.*

1 Th. 2:4 *but even as we have been approved of God to be intrusted with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God who proveth our hearts.*

Can You Handle The Truth?

by Glenn Young

A young preacher in Kentucky wanted to make his first sermon memorable, so he preached a fiery denunciation of horse racing. After the sermon, one of the deacons called him aside and reminded him that he was now living in a neighborhood noted for fine horses, and that many of his members enjoyed the races.

The preacher took the hint and next Sunday thundered and stomped against tobacco. Whereupon, the same deacon reminded him that the weed was a major item in the economy of the region. The deacon pointed out that part of his salary would come from the tobacco growers.

The following Sunday, the preacher took out after whiskey and again stirred the deacon to remind him that the church building was in the shadow of distilleries. In fact, some of the members worked at the distilleries.

Frustrated by this time, the young preacher asked the deacon, "What can I preach on?" The deacon replied, "Why not preach against heathen witch doctors? There isn't one of them in a thousand miles of here."

It is not our aim to be insensitive with what I shall say in this article. I have heard, and must say I have been guilty of preaching lessons that were insensitive to the hearer's feelings. I am in total agreement that the TRUTH must be preached in love (**Ephesians 4:15**). However, any attempt to soft-soap a message because it steps on the hearer's toes, is unacceptable to those who love and preach the WORD.

Two things that a preacher must do to be effective. One, he must preach to the people who are present. It does no good to present a truth, if those who need it are not going to hear it. Secondly, that which he presents must be the TRUTH regardless of whose ears tingle (**1 Samuel 3:11**). The preacher who omits certain subjects from his repertoire of sermons, does not deserve to be called preacher (**Acts 20:27**). A preacher must never let friendship, or the fear of losing a job, influence him to fail in his responsibility to, "preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (**2 Timothy 4:2**).

Truth, by its very nature, has a bite to it. Truth is singular. There is no other way and no compromise. Those who want to embrace doubt or shades of gray in the face of obvious truth, are going to be pricked in their hearts (**Acts 2:37**). Truth then becomes the agent that illuminates the heart of the hearer. If the heart is good ground, the seed of truth will bring forth fruit a hundred-fold (**Luke 8:5-15**).

There is a quote going around that comes from a movie in which a Marine colonel says, "The truth, you can't handle the truth!" It is sad when people of the world cannot deal with the truth from God's word. It is disastrous when those who call themselves New Testament Christians cannot handle the truth.

Can you handle the truth?!

Hiding In A Cave

by Carey Scott

More and more people are hiding out these days. That is a reference to a man-cave, mom-cave, etc-cave. These are areas where everything you need is close at hand in one room or area. A man cave may have his gaming console, computer, stereo, music, along with a refrigerator and plenty of food and drinks and a bathroom is not far away. In the Bible, we read of some wayward individuals who ran away and hid in a cave.

There is a story in Joshua about five kings running away from the Israelites and hiding in a cave. Joshua trapped them then later executed them and threw their bodies into the cave and covered its opening up.

Young David was being pursued by Saul and his soldiers and he hid in a cave. It just so happened that Saul went into that same cave to relieve himself. After Saul came out and departed some distance, David came out and yelled at Saul that the Lord had given Saul's life into the hand of David, and David had shown Saul mercy.

In **1 Kings 19**, we read of Elijah running away from Jezebel and eventually ending up in a cave. God asked him what he was doing in that cave. Elijah said: "*I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, torn down Thine altars and killed Thy prophets with the sword, and I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away*" (**1 Kings 19:10**).

The reason Elijah hid in the cave is because he was afraid for his life. Rather than put his trust in God, he decided to remove himself from everything else. Don't we do that also, sometimes? Notice back in verse 4 that Elijah requested for himself that he might die. He said "*O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers*" How often do we feel that life is too hard to bear and ask God to just take our lives? Elijah found out that God still had things for him to do, so the LORD would not honor such a request. Perhaps we get a little upset when we ask God for this last favor and He says NO! You see, God has a plan for us and a usefulness that we are to do. Failing to do what God wants from us is not pleasing to Him. We may be going along and we are tired and it seems like we have been preaching to rocks, so we get depressed and consider that we have been wasting our time. Yet we do not know how God works through us. God may need you to give someone else some encouragement. God may ask you to assist someone no matter what that involves.

One thing is for sure; God does not want you hiding in caves (and that includes our man/woman caves we construct) thinking that you are useless and no longer able to do any good. It may be difficult to get out and contact people, but that is what God wants you to do. God wants you to set an example for others by letting your light shine, and if you stay in your cave, you cannot do this. One aspect of Elijah's story is that God had seven thousand faithful ones at His disposal, and neither are you alone in His service.

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

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist/

lenexachurchofchrist.org

NEWS AND NOTES:

SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

J.R. DANIEL REMAINS AT HOME.
LILLIE KEECH HAS MOVED IN
WITH HER DAUGHTER. PAT
CLOTHIER IS PREPARING BY WAY
OF THERAPY FOR SURGERY IN
ABOUT ONE MONTH. JAN
PATRICK IS RECOVERING FROM
AN INFECTION IN HER FOOT.

WE ARE NOW STUDYING THE
CHURCH (GIVING ANSWERS) ON
SUNDAY AND JEREMIAH ON
WEDNESDAYS.

SUNDAY SERMON: ROMANS
CHAPTER 11 - SUNDAY EVENING:
CONGREGATIONAL SINGING



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