

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

John 8:32 And  
ye shall know  
the truth and  
the truth shall  
make you free.

# THE LENEXA EDIFIER

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## SPIRITUAL GROWTH BRINGS EVANGELISM

Jim Stauffer

There are so many who have written articles and books on personal evangelism. In most cases some very good advice has been given. However, teaching someone the truths regarding salvation revealed in the word of God is not the same as selling them a useful household product.

One reason is the household product is not needed by everyone. Salvation is. Second, the household product is not a life or death issue but salvation is.

As a result of both the need and the ultimate value, salvation must be presented in a much more rational and stable atmosphere than the high energy presentation of the household product.

There is a very natural process of growth for the child of God and the local church as well. Paul says the Lord, *"gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."* He says this is *"for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ."* According to Paul, this enables the child of God to grow in faith and knowledge *"unto a full grown man."* Now, notice what results from such growth. They are *"no longer tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men."* Instead they are found *"speaking the truth in love."* (Eph. 4:11-16)

The result of this internal growth in the child of God is he now becomes an influence in the world around him. When Jesus taught the principles of godliness and righteousness in His Sermon on the Mount, He said, **Matt. 5:14** *Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. 16 Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.* Paul makes the same point here, **Phil. 2:14** *Do all things without murmurings and questionings: 15 that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world.*

When we see New Testament examples of what we should do and be, we must understand this spiritual growth is the basis for such conduct.

It is both amazing and inspiring to us to read of New Testament Christians conducting themselves with such maturity as those following stoning of Stephen. **Acts 8:4** *They therefore that were scattered abroad, went about preaching the word.* This is not the conduct of disciples who were not "full grown" and ill equipped to demonstrate in word and deed this glorious message that had saved their souls. Quite the contrary.

When Paul was carrying the collection for the needy saints in Jerusalem, he relates the story of the churches in Macedonia. He says of them, *"how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."* He further states they contributed of their own accord beyond their power or ability. We call this giving until it hurts. Paul says they accomplished this because, *"first they gave their own selves to the Lord."* (2 Cor. 8:1-5) We see brethren practicing the love for one another that John says we must have if we indeed possess the love of God. (1 John 3:17,18) This only happens after one achieves his "full grown" status as a child of God.

Christ promises a crown of life to those who are faithful unto death in **Rev. 2:10**. However, in the case of those in Smyrna, He tells them some will be cast into prison and shall suffer tribulation. It is not a lesson presented as a theory but is conducted as a fact of their lives. This can be achieved by the "full grown" child of God. At some point in our lives just such injustice will occur and cause us to endure it just as Christ did the injustice of the cross. Peter makes this point, **1 Pet. 2:20** *For what glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted for it, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*

To have a proper influence on the world around us and gain opportunities to teach the truth of the gospel, we will need to endure injustice and demonstrate our maturity as children of God.

To endure such injustice and have that influence we must first seek to grow in faith and knowledge of the word of God.

There are some who have a greater talent than others for such communication, but all of us will enhance our opportunities and success when we mature in Christ.

# How We Learn From The Bible

## Part Four

### The Silence of Scripture

*by Dudley Ross Spears*

There are many popular religious practices and doctrines, not specifically mentioned in the Bible that are justified on the principle of silence. Since the practice or doctrine is not even mentioned, or alluded to, many feel perfectly free to teach and practice what pleases them. The one proviso is that it must not be specifically forbidden by inspiration.

Such an attitude is quite presumptuous. To presume something is to speak or act without warrant or proudly. It presumes to know the mind of God. Such an attitude seeks to make up God's mind for him. No mere man has the power or right to invade the secret precincts of God's mind and declare what God approves or disapproves. Sadly, many do.

One hallmark of the Lord's church has been the slogan, "We speak where the Bible speaks and where the Bible is silent, we are silent." Whatever comes next is presumption. Whether God approves counting beads, using candles and incense to aid prayer cannot be learned by direct statement, approved apostolic example, or necessary inference. The only authority for it is what God hasn't revealed. It can only be "authorized" by human wisdom and human tradition.

Sincere Bible students never deny that the knowledge of God's mind is possible. Some are mixed up on how to find where God has revealed his mind. Paul wrote, *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God"* - **1 Cor. 2:9-10**.

Only what is revealed is the basis of authorized teaching and practice. All else is not only presumptuous; it amounts to going beyond the teaching of our Lord - **2 John 9-11**. No mere man knows the mind of God outside what the Lord reveals in scripture - **Rom. 11:33-36**. His mind is revealed to us through apostolic authority - **Eph. 3:1-5**.

The ancient prophet cried out, *"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"* - **Jer. 10:23**. Solomon wrote, *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"* - **Prov. 14:12**.

God's silence didn't authorize Nadab and Abihu to offer any other fire than what the Lord authorized. They paid for their presumption - **Lev. 10:1-2**. **Hebrews 7:14** reads: *"For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."* Only those of the specified tribe of Levi could scripturally perform priestly duties. The Lord didn't specifically say none could be priests from other tribes. He simply specified the one tribe from which priests could legitimately serve.

The scriptures are divinely revealed and tell

mankind what pleases God. There is no other source of such information. The only way to please God, to have the unity the Bible requires, and to glorify and honor God is to confine all teaching and religious activity to that which is revealed. There is also a slogan that still rings true: "In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; and in all things love."

Next, but what about Bible classes, multiple communion cups, meeting houses, etc." That comes in the next installment.

## TROUBLED OVER IMMORALITY?

*by Connie Adams*

Nothing can create more havoc in a home or a congregation than immoral behavior on the part of Christians or their children. Webster defines immoral as "Inconsistent with purity or good morals." Immorality is defined by Webster as "the quality or state of being immoral: wickedness, esp. unchastity." It is immoral to steal, lie, cheat and a host of other things opposed to righteousness. But the term is often used of illicit sexual intercourse, including incest (**1 Cor. 5:1**), adultery (**Matt. 5:32; 19:9**), homosexuality (**Jude 7**), and cohabitation of the unmarried (**1 Cor. 7:2**).

Immorality was a common problem in the first century, especially among Gentiles. *"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries"* (**1 Pet. 4:3**). This had been a pattern of life among some of the Corinthians before their conversion. *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God"* (**1 Cor. 6:9-11**).

Our bodies belong to God who made us, *"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"* (**1 Cor. 6:19,20**). Paul said that sin is not to rule over us. *"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God"* (**Rom. 6:12,13**).

Troubled Over Immoral Mates: -- Jesus said that fornication is the only reason one can put away a spouse and marry another (**Matt. 19:9**). It is the ultimate betrayal of trust and vows made before God and man. The husband's body belongs to his wife and to nobody else. The wife's body belongs to her husband and only to him (**1 Cor. 7:3,4**). How many hearts have been broken and how many tears have been shed over this sin? This immoral act causes great trouble for the

*continued on page 3*



*continued from page 2*

innocent party in marriage. Even if the guilty is penitent, it is a fact that trust has been betrayed and the question arises as to whether you can ever fully trust again. The problem is compounded when there are children involved and agony arises over what is best for them.

But there is also trouble for the guilty one. Should the innocent exercise his/her right to put that one away, then the guilty has now forfeited the right to marriage. Some think that is too heavy a price to pay. But the Lord said, *"Whosoever marrieth her that is put away commiteth adultery"* (**Matt. 5:32; 19:9**). The worst problem of all is that God is offended. A soul is at stake. God made His marriage laws strict on purpose. Marriage is ordained of God for the good of the human family. It is the basic unit of all orderly society. While present culture tends to treat adultery as a normal (even expected) thing, God does not view it so. And neither should we.

But must the innocent exercise the right to put away the guilty when repentance is evident? Some think that unless the innocent remains in this marriage, now betrayed by fornication, that forgiveness has not been granted. Of course, unless we forgive those who sin against us, we cannot expect God to forgive us either (**Matt. 6:14,15**). But actions have consequences. It is God's law that the innocent may put away the guilty. Some are able to reestablish the relationship and make the best of it. Others have difficulty. Those on the outside do not know how many times the innocent has been wronged. Was it a one-time fling? Or a part of a pattern of infidelity? It does not take long to betray your vows, but it might take a long time to restore trust and rebuild credibility. What trouble would be avoided if people would just do right.

Troubled Over Pornography: -- This is an age old problem. It is rampant in our culture in recent years. The viewing of pictures and images of people engaged in every form of sexual activity has spawned a huge industry in this country and around the world. "Adult" bookstores and video houses are springing up, not only in seedy neighborhoods, but up and down the interstate highways. The computer age has brought it into homes all across the world. Businessmen and women, housewives, husbands who stay up late and surf the web, children in their own bedrooms, or at the family computer when they are unsupervised, and sometimes preachers have been caught up in this immoral trade. Homes have been broken up because of it.

The works of the flesh include "fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness" (**Gal. 5:19,20**). Peter described those who have "eyes full of adultery" (**2 Pet. 2:14**). Can there be a more accurate description of this sin? Jude describes them as "filthy dreamers" (**Jude 8**). Jude also said, *"But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own lusts. These be that who separate themselves sensual, having not the Spirit"* (**Jude 17-19**). Paul warned Titus of those to whom nothing is pure "but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (**Ti. 1:15,16**).

If we could keep our minds thinking on the kind of

things Paul mentioned in **Phil. 4:8**, there would be no room or taste for pornography. *'Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true...honest...just...pure...lovely...of good report...of virtue and and worthy of praise';* then he added, *"Think on these things."*

In addition to violating what is taught in the foregoing passages, the trouble with pornography is that it arouses passion, distorts reality, creates false and unreasonable expectations in marriage, causes women to be seen as objects rather than persons of worth, and reduces people to the level of the brute. When you purchase such material, you help subsidize an evil which is contributing to the downfall of souls and our nation as well.

When a husband (or wife) is found to have such an attraction for pornography, it is time to sit down and have some soul searching talks. It is not a time to scream and yell and sharpen sarcastic tongues. Talk frankly about your sexual life. It may be that one has unrealistic expectations. Or that one has not been satisfying the other. The pressures of daily work and life may contribute to it. One may tend to be cold, prudish, or unresponsive. And sometimes there are much deeper problems. Some are just given to sensuality. They have allowed their minds and hearts to be corrupted.

When children are found to be caught up in this sin, it is time to have some no-nonsense education about sexuality, keeping it within the bounds of dignity and casting it in a context of what the Bible teaches on the subject. Children caught in this snare may have a hard time ever being realistic about their own expectations in marriage. Parents need to supervise what movies are seen, what television shows are watched and the use of computers must be monitored. Again, yelling will not solve the problem.

Like Job, we need to *"make a covenant with mine (our) eyes"* (**Job 31:1**). *"The lust of the eye"* (**1 Jno. 2:15-17**) is a powerful force leading us in the wrong direction. The images we see have a direct influence on what we think. and *"as he thinketh in his heart, so is he."* Pornography corrupts the heart and so corrupts the person, preventing him from being fashioned in the image of Christ.

**By Connie W. Adams in Truth Magazine, Vol. 49, No. 23, Dec. 1, 2005.**

There will be thanksgiving in heaven  
Tho' no turkey with dressing nor pies  
But there will be unhindered rejoicing  
And no clouds there will darken the skies  
**Grant Clothier**

**Psa. 136:1** *Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good; For his lovingkindness endureth for ever. 2 Oh give thanks unto the God of gods; For his lovingkindness endureth for ever. 3 Oh give thanks unto the Lord of lords; For his lovingkindness endureth for ever:*

**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

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### **NEWS AND NOTES:**

#### **SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:**

J.R. DANIEL, PAT CLOTHIER AND LILLIE KEECH CONTINUE THEIR RESPECTIVE RECOVERIES. JAN PATRICK AND IRENE HURD CONTINUE TO SUFFER POOR HEALTH. LINDA FOSTER IS HAVING TESTS AFTER WHAT APPEARED TO BE A MINI-STROKE. PLEASE REMEMBER OUR BELOVED FRIEND, LORETTA TAPP IN YOUR PRAYERS AS SHE UNDERGOES CHEMOTHERAPY.

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



## **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