

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.

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28
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TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH

Jim Stauffer

Rev. 2:12 *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; 13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. 14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. 15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. 16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

The church at Pergamum seems to have been very similar in its make up to many churches today. the fact that mankind has not changed significantly over the years, that he continues to battle the temptations offered by Satan and his world. In that battle that all men face, some win and some lose.

Some had resisted temptation and held His name. He commends them for having done this virtually in the den of iniquity. Some had succumbed to the doctrine of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. It is good to note at this point that those who held the false doctrines were doing the same regarding those doctrines as those who held His name. The same word describes them both. We conclude they were each practicing that which they held.

What instruction is the local church of the Lord to receive from this passage? The instruction to repent seems to be the key to understanding the responsibility of the church. Is the command to repent to the church as a whole or to those who held the false doctrines? Let us deal with the obvious first. It is imperative those who hold false doctrine must repent. But how does the church bear responsibility in this matter? Is there something they must do to be a part of those who overcome?

It is easy for some to misunderstand this by overemphasizing some portions of the passage and drawing erroneous conclusions. The command to

repent brings responsibility to the church. If those who hold His name truly desire to be those who overcome, they must conduct themselves honorably in the face of sin. Whether in a congregation or our private lives the failure to condemn sin and refuse to give silent approval is tantamount to becoming a partaker in his sins. **1 Tim. 5:22** *Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.* Congregations are responsible for disciplinary action against brethren who will not repent of sin. **2 Th. 3:6** *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.*

The command to repent is given to those who are holding the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. The Lord promised to deliver judgment to them unless they repent. The metaphor for the weapon for destruction is the sword of His mouth. He will keep His word against those who love and practice evil. **John 5:28** *Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

There remains the necessary distinction between "holding" a doctrine and the normal changes in one's understanding of scripture as he grows and *attains unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* The holding of the false doctrine in this text is the same holding as those who held fast His name. Those who held fast His name practiced the faith they had not denied. In the same way, those who held the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans were practicing and teaching those things. This is when failing to understand and respect the word of God leads to sin. The church at Pergamum had those who were clearly practicing sinful activities. This is reminiscent of Corinth where they became puffed up concerning the sinner in their midst. Paul told them, **1 Cor. 5:3** *For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 4 In the*

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name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

It is imperative we hold fast, that is practice, the principles taught in this letter to Pergamum. We must hold His name and demand repentance from those who hold fast to false doctrines.

WORLDLINESS. # 2.

By Jim Sasser

The worldly church is looked upon with disfavor by God. It is not His will that sin should have any place in the lives of her members. He desires the church which is His habitation through the Spirit to be holy and spotless as a fit place for Him to abide. God has spoken too plainly upon the matter for there to be any doubt as to His attitude toward the modern encroachment of sin in the form of entertainment and recreation.

It is in this field of entertainment, recreation, and amusement, that worldliness has fastened its deadly tentacles upon the church. Forms of recreation that are contrary to the spirit of Christ and must rest entirely under His condemnation, are looked upon with favor by many who are church members, for they love the world and the things of the world regardless of the influence such may have upon them. Forms of entertainment and recreation are tolerated among the members of the church in most places, which should be censured without reservation. We hope to make the readers awake to the dangers of such and arouse within each one the determination to give such up forever and then help to rescue others therefrom. We need to "cry aloud and spare not" as never before. Preachers need to do more preaching along these lines.

Let us again suggest a caution in the use of the word "world" as it is found in the Bible. Remember that we noticed in the outset two different ways that the word is used. Notice the following scriptures:

A. "I chose you out of the world." **Jno. 15:19.**

B. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world." **Jno. 17:15.**

These passages are dealing with different things. In **Jno. 15:9**, it is clear that the life of the Lord's disciples was to be different from standards accepted by the peoples of the world. But in **Jno. 17:15**, Jesus is praying that the disciples should not be taken from among the peoples of the world. The Lord does not want his disciples to be hermits, but He does want them to follow the law of the kingdom -- not the ways of the world. Let us consider two more scriptures in order to emphasize the need for caution in studying the meaning of "worldliness".

A. "Go ye into all the world." **Mk. 16:15.**

B. "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate." **2 Cor. 6:17.**

The first scripture teaches that the disciples were to preach the gospel to all the peoples of the earth; the second one shows that they were not to be like the peoples of the world in their lives.

The ancient landmarks of Christian living have been removed. They have been set back to take in nearly everything. Too many preachers are afraid to cry out against ungodliness from within. They are afraid they will lose their "job", their popularity, etc. or else they are so guilty of such practices they cannot speak against it. The church needs, as never before, elders, the shepherds and overseers of the flock, who are proper examples along this line. The elders need to have the conviction and courage necessary to stand behind proper teaching against worldliness. If the proper teaching doesn't correct the situation they need to have a "housecleaning." A "housecleaning" is badly needed in some places. Elders, awaken to your responsibility. Almost daily souls are going back into the world to be lost forever because you failed to see after them. Their blood will be upon your hands. Demand that the preacher preach against ungodliness and sin, not just in general and vague terms, but in plain, specific language. Only this kind of preaching will do good. Let us clean up the church and keep it clean -- beginning with ourselves.

John says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." **1 Jno. 2:15-17.** Thus God voices His displeasure with the things that are of the world and every child of His should flee "the fleshly lusts which war against the soul."

Through James, the Lord has spoken His will in regard to these matters when He said: "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." **Jas. 4:4.** How then can anyone think that they shall be pleasing to God if they continue to indulge in the various forms of sin that are before them in the field of recreation and amusement? Just think of being listed in heaven as God's enemy.

In order for us to understand what is meant by the love of the "world", we must have a full understanding of the meaning of the term "world", as it is used in **1 Jno. 2:15**. We will study a little to try and comprehend some of the things involved.

A. Notice how the devil attempted to entice Jesus by the flesh's love of wealth, power, and glory: "Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." **Matt. 4:8,9.** If our supreme desire in

this life is for earthly possessions, power and glory we may rest assured that we are worldly.

SOME MANIFESTATIONS OF GRACE

Wherever God has supplied man's needs, that is God's favor, God's grace to man. God supplied man's greatest need when he sent his Son to die for man. Without this, man's estate was utterly hopeless. He could provide no means of escape from his own sins and their consequences. But man needed to know of God's love and his wonderful sacrifice, and he needed to know how to appropriate the benefits of this sacrifice. And as *"it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* he needed to know how to live so as to escape the follies and sins about him, and finally to enter in through the gates into the city of God. In the church God has supplied man's need of a spiritual home. Here his need for spiritual training, growth and development is met.

In the Bible we have revelation of all these things. Thus the Bible, supplying some of man's urgent needs, is itself a manifestation of God's grace. In it God reveals himself and the origin and nature of man, gives man the true philosophy of life, shows him how to be saved from his sins, and points the way to life eternal.

The world is too much inclined to regard the Bible as something that God has imposed upon the world. This is because we fail to realize man's condition and real needs. No greater favor could be bestowed on a lost man than to show him the way out. Man was hopelessly lost in the wilderness of sin, and God's commands point the way out. Hence, God's commands meet man's need for guidance, and are manifestation of his favor towards man.

Of course, the greatest exhibition of God's grace is seen in the gift of his Son, Jesus Christ; but, next to that, his greatest favor to man is seen in the very command he has given for man's guidance.

God's commands grow out of man's needs, and every command of God is full of God's grace. Therefore, to set aside God's commands as of no consequence is to repudiate a part of God's grace.

Sound Doctrine, Vol. 1, Pages 145,146, C.R. Nichol and R.L. Whiteside

THINGS INVOLVED IN SERVICE

Service is serving--sometimes voluntarily, sometime involuntarily. In service one is enslaved to someone or something--sometimes voluntarily, sometimes involuntarily. Slavery is not all bad. For instance, Paul, inspired by the Spirit, said, "being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Romans 6:18). One may be freed from one slavery, but he will inevitably be brought under the control of another slavery. The black people who were made free by The Emancipation Proclamation, were not free to do as they pleased. They ceased being mere chattel for their masters; but they were brought under the laws of the land. If one is free from righteousness, he is the slave of sin; if he is freed from sin, he becomes the servant of God. Everyone serves someone.

Service to God is a deliberate action. It is a choice made.

There is no force involved saving for the force of one's own intelligent reaction to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel forces one to this new slavery by imposing upon him a sense of righteousness and judgment and a sorrow for sin. It only forces one to serve because he comes to know and love God. This new yoke (Matthew 11:30) is easy to bear, its burden light compared to the imposing slavery of sin and the yoke it imposes.

Service to God is man's only way to glorify Him. There is no other. Mental assent may bring some satisfaction to the mind, but it brings little glory to God. Even pangs of conscience may well say something about where a man is headed, but it does not, by itself, glorify God. Only service glorifies God. Adopting the attitudes He recommends, bringing oneself deliberately under His control, performing, to the best of one's ability, His requirements and leaving off His prohibitions constitutes service. Without these things in their proper places, there is only admission, not service. True service brings the whole man into subservience to God.

To serve God one must put himself totally at God's disposal. There must be no room left in the heart for any god of any sort, but Him only. One must sanctify Him, give Him the high place He deserves. That speaks not only to faith, but to trust and confidence as well. It speaks to allowing Him complete control in one's life. Any less is double-minded devotion and such a mental division of affection is not acceptable to Him. Please note that such submission not only brings Him glory, but it brings glory to the person who submits as well. Man never operates at a higher level of efficiency, nor does he ever come closer to the fulfillment of his design for being, than when he is totally disposed to serve his Maker.

Service to God is eminently practical. It makes sense. It is practical because of what it does for man. Man is made better by serving God. His ideals are more substantive, his goals are more sensible, His labors more effective, his hope more lofty. It makes no sense at all to lay up treasures on earth when nature itself teaches that the earth eventually claims its patrons, leaving them penniless and powerless. It makes good sense to lay up treasures in heaven where God has assured that the investment will pay dividends so rich that our finite minds fail to accurately comprehend them. Such rewards are the result of service to God. Notice, I said the "result," of such service. These rewards are provided by the grace of God; but they are for those who choose to serve Him. There will be no such rewards for those who deliberately choose a life of service to the mundane.

In its purest sense, service is an offering. Service is a sacrifice of oneself to God. Paul indicates such in Romans 12:1, when he says, "present your bodies a living sacrifice to God." He speaks of such as "your reasonable service." It is reasonable because it makes sense; it makes sense because it is reasonable. This offering is a presentation- one presents himself to God to be used as He sees fit. "Here am I Lord, send me" is the mantra of the true servant. You give your life, you give your heart, you give your being to Him. He is yours and you are His. Beside Him there is no other. It is this giving in service that makes it a "living" sacrifice; it is alive, active.

Service is a measurement of one's love for God. If you serve Him faithfully, you love Him dearly. If you serve Him sporadically, you love him sporadically. You must measure your love yourself; and you measure your love by appraising your service to Him. Is it total? Is it unrestrained, unrestricted, unlimited? Choose you this day whom you will serve.

By Dee Bowman via the Southside Reminder, Pasadena, TX;

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

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NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS: GRANT CLOTHIER, J.R. DANIEL, MARY CZIRR, WHO IS CURRENTLY AT SWEET LIFE ASSISTED LIVING, AND JAN PATRICK.

NEWLY ADDED TO THIS LIST IS SUZANNE WIMP AS SHE AWAITS PLANNED SURGERY.

OUR CURRENT STUDIES ARE: SUNDAY MORNING: SOCIAL DRINKING AND WEDNESDAY, THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH



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