

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 7, 2015

CONTENTMENT IN SERVING

Jim Stauffer

One of life's greatest challenges is finding one's niche, recognizing its value and holding it dear throughout life. Many people work for years at a job they grow to hate. Because of retirement plans and such they stick it out enduring the misery as they feel trapped.

Finding contentment is a real challenge for most. We hear about the Peter Principle. It describes people who are motivated to succeed and do so beyond their capabilities. The best auto mechanic is not always the right man to manage the entire shop. He therefore, needs to recognize that and be content plying his trade at a higher level than most are able.

The thing that enables the child of God to endure the unavoidable persecution (**2 Tim. 3:12**) and conflict with the world (**Jas. 4:4**) is his ability to be content as a servant of God. (**Phil. 4:11**)

Jesus became the Servant of God. In that role He had a purpose that exceeded all else in His role as the Son of God. Not only was that purpose supreme but the manner in which it was to be accomplished was unique. In prophecy it was reported this way. **Is. 42:1** *Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. 2 He will not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench: he will bring forth justice in truth. 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.* In reality of His life on earth it is stated this way. **Phil. 2:5** *Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; 8 and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.* He was the Son of God. All authority in heaven and on earth had been given to Him. (**Mat. 28:18**) Yet He was content to achieve the purpose God designed for Him. A role that brought humiliation and suffering. The fulfillment of that role satisfied Him.

We are taught to serve one another. A husband serves his wife as Christ did the church by loving her and giving himself for her. Wives serve husbands by submitting to their leadership in honor of the role God has designed for each. (**Eph. 5:23-25**) Parents serve children by bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (**Eph. 6:1-4**) Children serve their parents by honoring them even to the point of requiting them in their day of need. (**Mat. 15:4; 1 Tim. 5:4**)

Peter admonishes us to humble ourselves in service to each other. **1 Pet. 5:5** *Likewise, ye younger, be subject unto the elder. Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* This is the niche the Christian searches to find. It is that imitation of Christ the Servant for which we strive. (**Eph. 5:1,2**) It is, after all, what distinguishes the servant of the Lord from citizens of earthly kingdoms.

Jesus illustrates this aspect of discipleship clearly in His depiction of the judgment scene in **Mat. 25: 34-46** when he praises the service His disciples provided for Him. When they questioned when they had done such, His answer was they did it when they provided the necessities of life to their brethren. Those necessities included food, clothing, hospitality, assistance to the sick, etc. In essence serving the needs of their brethren. He tells them they will be blessed by inheriting eternal life. He then turns to those on His left hand and tells them they will be condemned to eternal punishment because they had not served Him in those ways.

Jesus taught those of His day and us today as well, it is not enough to just keep the law by dotting our i's and crossing our t's. There is a spirit to the words of the law and that spirit leads one to service. We will truly achieve contentment when we learn the lesson of giving and service. Paul says, **Acts 20:35** *In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

True contentment in this life is achieved by serving God. It is just an added benefit that society receives when its citizens find contentment in God's law.

How to See "Eye To Eye" Religiously

Why do some people not see religious things the way we see them? Why is there so much difference between what we teach and what the denominations profess? Do we not all have the same Bible? Are we not all trying to serve the same God? Do we not all believe in the same Savior? These are perplexing questions, and they are not easily answered to everyone's satisfaction.

Basically, our understanding of the Scriptures differs from the majority of the religious world because we operate on a different principle of interpretation. To most religious people "truth" is relative, adjusting freely to different times and circumstances. For us, however, truth is truth. It is unalterable, unchangeable, and everlasting. But did "we" just arbitrarily decide this would be our regard for truth? Not at all. God's own word boldly claims *"thy word is truth"* (John 17:17) and *"the word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth."* (Psalm 33:4) While there are scoffers at the idea of absolute truth, we accept Bible teaching that such does exist, and we are determined to know it. Pilate's piercing question, *"What is truth?"* (John 18:38) was prompted by these words from Jesus: *"I have come into the world that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."*

This then, is the basis upon which we may come to see religious matters alike. There must be a commitment to the same standard of truth. No one would ever attempt to use differing standards of measurement if building a house, marking off a football field, or sewing a garment. This would guarantee error and disaster. Twelve inches must equal one foot on all our rulers if we desire uniformity. There must be a healthy regard and respect for the Bible on the part of every religious person in order for understanding to occur. Without this common devotion to God's word, all efforts to see things the same will fail. In order to come to agreement on matters essential to salvation, we must begin where we agree. From this point we must study the Scriptures, resolving differences as we go along. Major problems of difference are solved in small steps, and then we can be united in Christ. But we will never see things the same if we cannot agree on the existence, necessity, and location of the truth.

No Bible discussion is profitable unless every participant is a truth seeker. If everyone concerned really wants the truth, then coming to an agreement and an understanding of truth will be achievable. Believe it or not, it is possible to discuss religious differences without becoming rude or creating hurt feelings. People who love the truth are not concerned with who is right, but with what is right. Every truth seeker is willing to surrender any position if it is false. There is no other honorable course for an honest man. An honest man will seek the truth, and when he finds it he will believe it. *"Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding."* (Proverbs 23:23).
Mark W. White, The electronic Beacon 8/12/08

FAMILY TIME TOGETHER IS ESSENTIAL

Time together is the bonding mortar that binds family members together before God in love. *"Hear, my son, and accept My sayings and the years of your life will be many. I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths"* (Prov. 4:10,11). The book of Proverbs is a manual for parents for instructing their children with pithy sayings to encourage wise behavior in their children. Besides verbal instruction, parents lead by example in how they interact with their children. It's been rightly said, "For the child to be a chip off the old block, the old block must be around to be chipped on!"

1. The Distraction Of The American Family.

Americans have hectic schedules, yet the distraction of the American family of not spending time together is directly related to deviant teen behavior. A recent article, "The Importance Of Family Dinners," reports: "The number of teens who have regular family dinners drops by 50 percent as their substance abuse risk increases sevenfold, according to a survey of 12 to 17 year olds released by Columbia University."

It continues: "The survey finds that the more often children have dinner with their parents, the less likely they are to smoke, drink or use illegal drugs," said Joseph A. Califano, Jr., President of The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. "It is a tragedy that family dinners decline as teens get older."

Other family experts decry the lack of family time together: "It is vital that frequent family dinners become a permanent fixture for children, not only when they are young, but throughout their teenage years," said Dr. Wade Horn, Assistant Secretary for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "The frequency of family dinners decreases significantly as children enter and go through high school -- and that's just when the benefits of family dinners may be needed most." A survey showed: Compared to teens that have family dinners twice a week or less, teens that have dinner with their families five or more nights a week are: (32 percent likelier never to have tried cigarettes. (45 percent likelier never to have tried alcohol. (24 percent likelier never to have smoked pot.

Parents will wisely invest time to be with their children to positively influence them. *"Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes delight in my ways"* (Prov. 23:26). So, it is important for children to know that the family has to spend some time together. If they know this is required to enjoy other privileges, they can grow to accept it and even like it.

2. God-Centered Home Life. In creating a strong family life centered on God, there must be shared time together. Moses commanded Israel: *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up"* (Deut. 6:5-8). Moses' timeless advice is the

foundation for Biblical spirituality in the home. Time together is the bonding mortar that brings us together before God in love. You never know when you are making a memory with your children.

Deuteronomy repeatedly emphasizes the need for parents to heartily "love" God, to avoid another lost generation as in the wilderness wandering (**Deut. 10:12 - 11:32**). For God to be first in our lives, His will must be regularly discussed and applied in our daily home life. What we truly love most of all will show up in our priorities, what we talk about, and how we use our time.

To communicate the priority of loving God, we must spend time together. The daily "family hour" needs to be kept in homes that glorify God. Family traditions and shared activities need to be instituted and kept. Working at such togetherness can be memorable and enjoyable!

In **Deut. 6**, Moses urges us to discuss God's will "*when you lie down.*" This refers to daily bedtime. Kiss your children goodnight. Read to them or listen to them read from the Bible or a Bible devotional. Ask them, "How did things go today?"

"*When you rise up*" is beginning the day with God. Besides giving thanks at breakfast, give your child a Bible verse for the day, like from (**Prov. 9:10**) "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*"

The family meal time is a good way to be together "when you sit in your house." We thank God for our blessings (**1 Tim. 4:4,5**). We pray for our needs and cares (**Phil. 4:6**). By family prayer, it affirms that God is most important in our lives and central to our family's purpose. Turn the TV off!

We can read the Bible together and discuss its meaning and application to our lives. "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge...Hear my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching; Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head and ornaments about your neck*" (**Prov. 1;7-9**). Proverbs are pithy, memorable sound bites with spiritual punch that children can remember. The father, as the spiritual leader, can read a portion from Proverbs after the family meal. As this becomes part of the family routine to read God's Word together, you then become more comfortable in discussing the practical, specific applications of Scripture in the home. Why not begin this family habit together today!

By W. Frank Walton in Biblical Insights, Vol. 5, No. 8, August 2005.

WHAT ARE WE EXPECTING FROM OUR PRAYERS?

We pray because prayer works! **James** writes: "*The effectual prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much*" (**5:16**). If God never listened, or if God never answered our prayers "Yes," then why pray? There would be no motive to pray. We would say, "it just doesn't do any good." But we know better. All of us can be thankful for the numerous prayers answered in our lives. Prayer works! God is moved by the prayers of His people.

I wrote in the March issue of Biblical Insights about

meeting someone whose business was struggling and they needed to sell some equipment to survive. They asked me to pray that someone would buy their used equipment and thus save their business from impending financial disaster.

It gives rise to this important question. What are we expecting from our prayers? The simple answer would be, "We are expecting God to answer them." Thus, we pray in faith that He will respond.

Sometimes, however, I feel that some look at prayer as the "magical fix all" to our problems. We make a mess of our marriage and then in desperation pray about our home and think God will now make it right. We mess up our health by poor eating habits and a lack of exercise and then lay in a hospital bed praying for our health to return. We think the church will grow just because "we have prayed for that."

It seems that in all of this, we are expecting God to right all the wrongs, fix all the mistakes, and make everything fine simply because we have prayed about it. Now this is not questioning the power of God but it is essential that we understand our roles and responsibilities and our need to work with Him.

We Find Ourselves In A Mess Financially: -- because we spend instead of saving. It will take more than words to right the wrongs of unwise decisions.

We Find Ourselves In A Troubled Marriage: -- because of gossiping, nagging, dishonesty, and negativity. A change of hearts and a renewed dedication are essential to turning that relationship around. God will not "fix it" without the cooperation of those "in it."

We Find Ourselves In A Stagnant Church: -- because of indifference. Such a church cannot grow by the members merely saying a prayer and then waiting with arms folded for something to happen. Obviously, God expects cooperation from us.

Whether financial or familial, are we to expect that all one has to do to fix the mess is pray and everything will be fine? Absolutely not! There are consequences to our choices and responsibilities that rest upon our shoulders. God will do His part but... we must do ours!

By Roger Shouse, via. Words Of Life, Vol. 15, No. 1, Jan - Mar, 2008

In consideration of the immense amount of rain we and others in the country have experienced I thought we should turn our thoughts to eternal concepts with the following poem by our brother Grant Clothier

There'll be no flooding in heaven
The streams there will placidly flow
Past the dwellings of faithful believers
Immersed in "much water" below

1 Pet. 3:21 *which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ;*

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:

IRENE HURD, MARY CZIRR, JAN PATRICK, GRANT CLOTHIER, J.R. DANIEL AND JESSIE GIBSON. PAT CLOTHIER IS BEGINNING TREATMENTS FOR ESOPHAGEAL CANCER.

BERNICE WILLOUGHBY, A FORMER MEMBER HERE AND THE MOTHER OF JAN PATRICK PASSED AWAY THIS MORNING.

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS: GOSPEL OF JOHN

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS: PREMILLENNIALISM

SUNDAY SERMON: JESUS, THE ANSWER TO ORIGINAL SIN



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