

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

July  
12  
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## HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE CALL?

Jim Stauffer

Without a lengthy discussion of the etymological history of the word church let us acknowledge it is in scripture the house of God. **(1 Tim. 3:15)**

The very word in the Greek most often translated church is *ekklesia*. The definition of this word is, a *calling out, a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation, assembly, church.* **(Strong's Dictionary of Bible Words)** While it can be used to describe secular gatherings **(Acts 19:39)**, it is used, someone has counted, 109 times out of 114 in the New Testament to refer to a body of disciples called Christians. **(Acts 11:26)**

The accurate conclusion of this information is the church is made up of those who respond to the "calling out" Paul mentions to Timothy. **2 Tim. 1:9** *who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal.* This call had its origin in the limited commission of **Matthew 10**, when Jesus sent His disciples to preach to *the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* **(Mat. 10:5)** It continued when He sent those same disciples to *make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.* **(Mat. 28:19)**

This message preached by His disciples then and now is the gospel message of salvation. **(2 Thess. 2:13,14; Rom. 1:16)** You may ask, "salvation from what?" First, know John defines sin as a transgression of law. **(1 John 3:4)** Paul tells us all men have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. **(Rom. 3:23)** He further states sin will lead to death if we do not answer the call of the gospel through which Jesus Christ offers eternal life. **(Rom. 6:23)**

When Jesus says, *and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it,* **(Mat. 16:18)** He refers not to a physical structure such as the Jewish temple of His time but rather the collection of those who have answered the call He issues through His word disseminated by His disciples who received it from the Holy Spirit. Jesus is defined by Peter as the, *stone set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner.* **(Acts 4:11)** As such He is the foundation upon which this church was to

be built. **(1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:19-22)** His word is to be the foundation upon which each of us builds our lives. **(Mat. 7:24ff)**

Let us be reminded then of how and when the building of this church began. Those disciples were told in **Acts 1:4,5** to wait in Jerusalem to be *baptized in the Holy Spirit.* That event took place in the first 4 verses of **Acts 2**. Following that the disciples began to preach this gospel of salvation that very day. We have a record of at least a portion of the sermon Peter preached on that day. He made clear that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified was raised from the grave and had ascended into heaven to be at the right hand of God. **(Acts 2:22-35)** He then identified this individual as *both Lord and Christ.* **(Acts 2:36)** It was at this point they responded to the call and asked, *what shall we do?* **(Acts 2:37)** *And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* **(Acts 2:38)** This is Peter's answer telling them and us how to answer the call. We answer it by obeying its message. **Acts 2:41** *They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.* When they had obeyed the message to repent and be baptized they were added to the collection of the saved. **(Acts 2:47)**

Finally, let us recognize further the sameness of the church and the eternal kingdom promised by the prophet Daniel. **(Dan. 2:44)** It is the house of God Isaiah prophesied of **(Isa. 2:2-4)** and that Paul was teaching Timothy about in **1 Tim. 3:15**.

It therefore is the only house God has built and is the only temple of God in which His Spirit dwells. **(1 Cor. 3:16)**

Now, the question was and is, have you considered the call? If not, you are not a part of the house Jesus built. If you have not entered as he requested through repentance and baptism, you are not a part of the house he built.

Many speak of being called as if it is an individual thing such as a small voice in the night to them. But scripture teaches us it is a universal call to all mankind and each of us are required to obey the same message

in the same way in response to that call.

Please take the time to consider the call.

## PROTECTING CHURCHES AGAINST ERROR

Recent events at the Richland Hills church in Fort Worth, Texas (said to be the largest church of Christ in the country) have focused attention on the question as to how congregations can protect themselves from digression. This congregation, which has been aligned with the institutional movement, has recently begun serving the Lord's supper on Saturday night and using mechanical instruments of music in some of their services. Rich Atchley, the "senior minister," has defended these changes and claimed that ten years earlier he received a revelation from the Holy Spirit that this should be done. His arguments in defense of mechanical instruments of music are the same ones which gospel preachers have refuted again and again for many years. They may appear new to a younger generation of preachers. The April issue of **The Spiritual Sword** has a thorough expose of this whole episode with a complete refutation of the arguments made in defense of mechanical instruments of music. Alan E. Highers, editor of **The Spiritual Sword**, detailed the change from the restrictive clauses in the deed in 1967 to an amended deed in 1994 which still prohibited the use of any mechanical instruments of music on the premises, to the most recent change on November 16, 2006 when another amendment was filed which deleted the prohibition against mechanical instruments of music. Within three days of this new amendment, it was announced that there would be a service with the Lord's Supper and mechanical instruments of music on Saturday nights.

For many years, congregations have sought to protect themselves from innovations by restrictive clauses in the deeds of the property. This came in the wake of the divisions which occurred in the early part of the twentieth century along with lawsuits over the property and who should maintain possession of the property. It was natural to try to prevent such from happening again. But when the will of the majority changes on various issues, then deeds can be rewritten, as this case in Fort Worth shows.

**WHAT IS THE BEST DEFENSE?:** -- The answer is simple, but the application requires firmness, diligence, and persistence. No congregation can ever be any more secure than the quality of the teaching it receives. *"They shall all be taught of God" (Jno. 6:45). "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Ti. 2:11,12).* Titus was charged, *"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority" (Ti. 2:15).* Timothy was instructed, *"These things teach and exhort"* and he was warned against those who *"teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of the Lord Jesus*

*Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness" (1 Tim. 6:2,3).* Paul said to Timothy, *"the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).* *"Preach the word...for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of the ministry" (2 Tim. 4:2-5).* Paul practiced what he preached. At Ephesus, he was evangelistic for *"all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:10).* But he also taught them publicly and from house to house, keeping back nothing that was profitable, and did not shun to *"declare unto them all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:20,27).*

**WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?:** -- Elders are charged to feed and guard the flock (1 Pet. 5:2,3; Heb. 13:17). They must keep a close watch on what is being taught, not only in the pulpit but in the Bible classes as well. They need to keep themselves informed as to currents of thought and practices among brethren. If they do not study and keep up, then they will be blindsided and trouble will follow. Some elders have their heads in the sand. They do not know what is going on and do not seem to care. Sometimes they try to fence in preachers to keep them from dealing with issues which churches need to know about. What is being studied in Bible classes? Do the young people know the difference between the New Testament church and denominations? Do they know why mechanical instruments of music are not used in the worship? Do they understand why the church does not provide entertainment and recreation? Are they really studying the Bible or watered down pabulum? If elders do not watch, then don't be surprised if a generation arises which do not know the Lord.

Preachers have a large role to play in this matter. Pretty little sermonettes filled with snappy one-liners, stories, stories sharply illustrated in living color with our Power Point displays, may get and hold attention, but where are the expository studies of books of the Bible? Where is the refutation of the religious error which is all around us and which some members are absorbing like sponges from the religious channels on cable TV? Where are sermons on the need for Bible authority and how to establish it? Where are the sermons on the nature, work, and organization of the church? Where is the exposure of false teaching on the plan of salvation? Too many churches are suffering from spiritual malnutrition because of pitifully weak preaching being heard from week to week. When you *"speak things that become sound doctrine" (Ti. 2:1)*, some in the pews will squirm and complain and some elders may get up and try to smooth it over. Worldly minded folks are not comfortable hearing sin plainly identified exposed, and condemned. Yes, we have to *"speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15)*, but we must be sure to speak the

truth. All of it.

Faithful Christians all bear responsibility in protecting the church against error. Informed Christians should insist that pulpits and classrooms echo with the sound of the old Jerusalem gospel. They should appoint men as elders who are unquestionably sound in the faith and committed to defend it. They should demand that the truth be taught, and then commend it and uphold it when it is done. Unless elders, preachers, and all Christians are committed to the truth, then all the restrictive clauses in deeds will not protect congregations from the shifting opinions of untaught and uncommitted members.

**By Connie Adams in Truth Magazine, Vol. 51, No. 8, August 2007.**

## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP

The Community church of Christ in Hendersonville, Tennessee began using it on special occasions -- via a CD recording. The Norway Avenue congregation in Huntingdon, 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?

**By Wilson Adams in Biblical Insights, Vol. 6, No. 7, July 2006.**

*There once was a man from Galilee,  
He lived and He died for His Father above,  
Dying for sins because of His love,  
Then said to us, "Please follow me"*

*Thoughts found in 1 Pet. 2:21-25*

**Jim Stauffer**

**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:

J.R. DANIEL, PAT AND GRANT CLOTHIER, JAN PATRICK AND IRENE HURD CONTINUE TO BATTLE HEALTH ISSUES.

JANIS LILLESTON PASSED AWAY FRIDAY MORNING. MORE DETAILS TO COME ON A MEMORIAL SERVICE IN NEXT WEEK'S BULLETIN

BIBLE CLASSES: SUNDAY, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN - RON PECK  
TEACHER - WEDNESDAY,  
PREMILLENNIALISM - JIM  
STAUFFER TEACHER

SUNDAY AM SERMON: WHEN THE LORD SAYS NOTHING



## 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