

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.

July
26
2015

GETTING BACK TO WHERE WE WERE

Jim Stauffer

One of the most deceiving and misleading pictures is to see men like Joel Osteen and Rick Warren and many other televangelists with their material prosperity attempting to represent the discipleship of Jesus Christ. Can you imagine anything less appropriate of a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ than a man with millions of dollars to his credit, achieved by supposedly teaching the message of Christ. This is the same Christ who sent a clear message about discipleship. **Matt.**

8:20 *And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

Every example we have in Scripture is of someone accepting the necessities of life, trusting in God, while he devotes himself to the will of God.

Let us look at a couple of examples. Gideon, in the Book of Judges, was called on by God to lead His people against the powerful army of Midian. He attempts to defer by suggesting he is from a poor family of which he is the least. Through several tests, God convinces Gideon to accept the challenge of leading His people in the military advance against the people who were oppressing them. In the process of the many exchanges between Gideon and God it is made clear to Gideon and the people that their current plight was due to their disobedience to the covenant God made with them following their deliverance from Egypt.

God asks Gideon to undertake an effort no man would have recommended. With 300 men he routed the Midian army along with the Amalekites who numbered as the *sand which is upon the seashore*. This he did because of his faith in God and his willingness to trust and follow God's plan.

Elijah prophesied of the 3 1/2 year drought to come upon Israel designed to show Ahab the source of his power and authority. As a result he was a marked man as Ahab and Jezebel sought to harm him. He lived his following years in various areas of seclusion with God caring for him. He was fed by the ravens and by the widow of Zarephath as he fled for his life from Ahab. When the time came God led him to Mt. Carmel to face the prophets of Baal in competition to prove the power of the gods they served. By God's power Elijah was vindicated and the people of Israel saw first hand the

impotence of Baal.

The Apostles of the New Testament were clearly not intellectually or financially dominant in their society. They were viewed as generally ignorant men. **Acts 4:13** *Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.* Neither the purpose nor the benefit of serving God has ever been to gain wealth or fame. It has always been about simple trust in God due to faith and humbling ourselves to live what life that calls for.

There is a clarity of thought and purpose necessary for the one who claims to follow Christ. **Matt. 6:22** *The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!* Jesus calls for complete focus on God's will and not ours in order to have success as a disciple. This, as he says in the previous verses calls for us to lay up treasures in heaven rather than on earth. Material wealth as a goal will produce darkness in the eye rather than light. Paul has a similar mantra for success as a disciple. **Phil. 3:13** *Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before. 14 I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* In Paul's formula, the things he has forgotten that are behind are the thoughts that Jesus says come from darkness to dim the light of one's spiritual vision. That vision is the things he stretches forward to. We cannot by our worldly talent and experience succeed spiritually. It must come from a trust in His word. No doubt He will use what talent we have in His service, but it is His use of our talent and His call for it we must heed rather than our vision of how we can best serve. When we learn this principle many problems are solved.

Much is said of the direction of our country. Supposedly the shooter in the Louisiana theater incident was obsessed with the idea that the United States was suffering great moral decay. Few would deny this

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conclusion. How did his tormented and twisted mind respond to this truth? He sought to eliminate the problem by killing people he assumed were contributors to the problem. A purely physical reaction to a spiritual problem. What the United States and the entire world needs in order to correct this problem is a return to trust in the word of God. Doing so will lead men to sacrifice what they view as value for what God deems is the true worth to be desired. **Matt. 16:24** *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?*

The reason for moral decay is man's insistence on solving spiritual problems with earthly solutions. We will always suffer in our lives on earth. Our mortality came with the removal of mankind from the tree of life. We will be restored to the tree of life when we meet the Lord in eternity. If we desire to meet Him there, we must trust Him here.

What both Christ and Paul were saying is there is something greater than this life. This life is to be used to prepare us for and to enable us to receive that better life eternally in the presence of God.

Men of the Bible, such as Gideon, Elijah and the Apostles of Christ demonstrate for us God has provided His word as a *lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.* (**Psa. 119:105**) And, *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?* (**Rom. 8:31**) We like the men of the Bible need to get our priorities straight.

Saving the Marriages of Our Unmarried Children

John R. Gibson

It is probably not the first thing parents think about at the birth of a child, but that child will still be quite small when they first think about him or her possibly getting married someday. Though hard to even think about when they are babies, most parents realize it is more likely than not to occur, so they end up spending a lot of time thinking about it as their children grow up. And along with the dreams for a beautiful wedding (it's mostly mothers who do this) and the thoughts of one day enjoying grandchildren (fathers share equally in this one), there are fears. Will they choose the right person? Will they be happy? Will it endure? With good reason, parents are concerned about the future marriages of their children.

Today's children will grow up in a culture where heterosexuals often treat marriage as optional. Approximately 40% of all babies are born to unwed mothers and begotten by fathers who were not married to the mother of their baby. Some of these out-of-wedlock births are to single mothers and others to

women who, though unmarried, cohabit with the baby's father. Television, movies, and the entertainment industry as a whole will continually portray this as the norm and belittle anyone who says otherwise, yet these attitudes toward sex and marriage are a complete rejection of all God has said on the subject. While we could cite **1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Eph. 3:3-5;** et al, we will allow **Heb. 13:4** to sum it up, *"Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge."*

While marriage is no longer seen as prerequisite to sexual activity, when marriage does take place it doesn't always last. Though an exact number cannot be obtained, evidence suggests that between 30 and 40% of first marriages will end in divorce. Though accepted by society and even promoted by some as "healthier" than remaining in an unhappy marriage, this too is a clear violation of God's standard. *"The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?'"* And He answered and said to them, *'Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning "made them male and female," and said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"?' So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate... And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.'* (**Matt. 19:3-6, 9**)

Then there is the irony of homosexuals clamoring for marriage privileges even as heterosexuals are spurning them. Today's children will grow up in a country in which men will marry men and women will marry women. They will see men "self-identify" as women and women as men, with some undergoing surgeries to complete the transformation. They will come to maturity in a society that has stood on its head God's usage of the words natural and shameful. *"For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due."* (**Rom. 1:26, 27**)

Yes, our children will come to maturity in a corrupted world that has rejected God's teaching, but discouragement is not the purpose of this article. I want to offer parents hope—hope for the future marriages of their children and though we could say more, these are three things that can and will make a difference in the lives of your children.

Teach! It is vital that they know God's will for marriage and sexuality. Study carefully all the Lord has said on the subject and then speak often of these things with your children. *"Bring them up in the training and*

admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). Learn from **Deut. 6:6-9** to do this as you rise up and lie down, as you go in and go out.

Stay married! During tough times, your children need to see that you are going to keep your word (**Col. 3:9**) and not allow a rough patch to cause you to disobey God by separating what God has joined together (**Matt. 19:6**). Marriage is not just a trial to be endured, but the reality is that the best of marriages will have difficult times. There may be financial struggles, major health concerns, or simply differences of opinion, but with a commitment to God you will show your children that marriages can last.

Be a biblical husband or wife! If you develop the character of a Christian, you will be well on the way to being a good spouse, but you must also become the person described in **Eph. 5** and **1 Pet. 3**. If you provide the kind of loving leadership described in these passages you will help equip your sons to be husbands and at the same time help your daughters to see in marriage a blessing of protection and provision. If as a wife you will honor your husband and follow his lead, your daughters will be more likely to go against the feminist thinking of our day and view marriage as a blessing and not enslavement. Sons who are reared by these kinds of mothers and fathers will know that such a praiseworthy woman (**Prov. 31:28, 29**) makes marriage a blessing (**Prov. 18:22**) and is to be honored (**1 Pet. 3:7**).

If and when your children get married, you will have concerns, but if you wait until then to act, you will likely be too late. Now is the time to begin saving the marriages of your unmarried (and even unborn) children.

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IS JESUS THE ONLY WAY TO HEAVEN?

We could answer this question by saying: “Well, if you believe the Bible, then, yes, Jesus is the only way to heaven.” Peter declared: *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).* But what about all of the millions of people who do not believe what **Acts 4:12** says? While their lack of faith does not mitigate against the truth of Jesus’ claim to be *“the way, the truth, and the life,”* it is still true that just quoting a Bible passage does not always convince people that Jesus is the only way to heaven. A religiously pluralistic society says there are many ways to heaven, there is no such thing as absolute truth, and if you judge someone to be wrong in their faith, then you are simply a religious bigot. Let us start with a few statements of scripture that speak to who Jesus is and to what He did for us.

First, Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit of God and was born of a virgin. *“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).* This passage is quoted by **Matthew (1:18-25)** and applied to the birth of Christ. Who else in the history of

the world can make this same claim? Jesus alone qualifies to be our Savior.

Second, Christ alone is God incarnate. *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).* While Jesus was fully God, He was also fully man. The sacrifice of a mere man would not save anyone from sin. Yet, the humanity of Christ identifies Him with all of those for whom He died—the entire world (**Hebrews 2:14-16; 4:14-16**). But who in the world can say that he was/is both God and man? Christ alone qualifies to be our Savior.

Thirdly, Jesus understands us. *“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).* Christ alone lived a sinless life. The blood of animals could not atone for sin. But the perfect sacrifice of Christ did what the millions and millions of animal sacrifices could not do—His blood makes forgiveness possible. He alone can be our Savior.

Fourth, Jesus is our sacrifice. *“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).* Christ died for you and me. He did not sin; He died as though He had sinned. He bore our sins on the cross. He paid the price for sin we could not pay—death! He alone can be our Savior.

The only acceptable conclusion is that Jesus is the only acceptable Savior. We honor Him and what He did with our faith and commitment. –

Randy Harshbarger - July 6, 2008

Did You Know? . . .

That the apostles never used food, games or social activities to draw a crowd so they could preach to them? *Yet in many churches today, even some calling themselves “Church of Christ,” the social programs are so extensive that a social director or a “youth minister” must be hired to oversee the social planning.*

Although schools existed in the first century, and the apostle Paul even taught in one for 2 years (**Acts 19:9,10**), no churches ever supported them financially? *Yet in many churches today, even some calling themselves “Church of Christ,” the financial supporting of “Christian schools” or “Colleges” is a regular part of the budget.*

That the apostle Paul illustrated many of his epistles with analogies from sporting events (**1 Cor. 9:24,25**). Yet no church sponsored or had sporting teams? *Yet in many churches today, even some calling themselves “Church of Christ,” the sporting activities are so much a part of the work that full scale gyms have been built.*

If these things mentioned above were not a part of the early church and we do not find them in the Bible, WHY are churches doing them today? And who gave them the RIGHT to do it? These things ought not to be! *“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Col. 3:17).*

by Roger Shouse

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

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NEWS AND NOTES:

J.R. DANIEL, GRANT CLOTHIER, AND IRENE HURD CONTINUE ON THE PRAYER LIST. PAT CLOTHIER IS AT OVERLAND PARK REHAB, 75TH AND METCALF. JAN PATRICK HAS RETURNED HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL.

THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR JANIS LILLESTON WILL BE AUGUST 1, 3:00 PM AT THE BUILDING.

BIBLE CLASSES: SUNDAY: GOSPEL OF JOHN - RON PECK
WEDNESDAY: PREMILLENNIALISM - JIM STAUFFER
SUNDAY AM SERMON: INTENTIONS VS. PLANNING



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