

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 28, 2015

## PRAYER PROVIDES PEACE

*Jim Stauffer*

**Psa. 19:14** *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in thy sight, O Jehovah, my rock, and my redeemer. 1 Pet. 5:6* *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; 7 casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you.* There is indeed great value in the relationship of the child of God with his Father in heaven. The great preventive approach to daily living is to set the tone for each day by beginning with a consideration of God's word. You can find many schedules for daily Bible reading. I recommend them highly. Your day begins with spiritual thoughts. Your actions are then guided by the leadership of your heavenly Father and His Son, the Savior of mankind.

But prayer serves well in times of trouble also. Often times we are confused and troubled by the course of events in our own lives or those of others. Even the direction of the world as a whole gives us pause. These are events beyond our control and can bring anguish and sorrow to our hearts. How then do we deal with such? The answer is prayer and meditation.

Daniel, when he was in consternation over the vision God showed him, responded by praying. **Dan. 9:20** *And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before Jehovah my God for the holy mountain of my God; 21 yea, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22 And he instructed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee wisdom and understanding.* His prayer to God was for understanding. The one thing that can bring peace to the mind of man is understanding. Our anxiety is fueled by a lack of understanding.

Solomon requested understanding from God in order to rule and judge God's people with wisdom. **1 Kings 3:9** *Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people? A reverence for the knowledge God provides is the*

pathway to His wisdom. **Prov. 1:7** *The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge; But the foolish despise wisdom and instruction.* Paul told the young preacher Timothy, *the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things.* **(2 Tim. 2:7)** Then, of course, the words of James are and encouragement to seek wisdom from God and not this world. **James 1:5** *But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.* A very obvious point made in this chapter is when man allows the ideas of the world equal footing with God's word, he becomes a *double minded man, unstable in all his ways.* **(James 1:8)**

The wisdom of God is freely provided through the revelation of the mind of God. Jesus said, **John 14:26** *But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.* Paul then assures us this Holy Spirit revealed the mind of God. **(1 Cor. 2:10)** The obvious conclusion for the child of God is to look to His word for guidance.

Yet it is clear His servants have always sought peace in times of trouble by appealing to God for understanding. As noted, He recommends this in His word. The writer of Hebrews recognized some vacillation in their faith in Christ. The book deals with the superiority of Christ as the mediator of a new covenant to Moses and the old law. In his instruction he encourages them to be faithful to receive the ultimate rest rather than be denied due to unbelief as their ancestors had been regarding the land of Canaan. **(Heb. 3:12-19)** It is with this in mind he promises God will not forsake them. **Heb. 13:5** *Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. 6 So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me? 7 Remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith.*

There are those who reject the ideas promoted in scripture than one can pray to God for wisdom and

*continued on page 2*

depend upon God's providence as He watches over him and does not forsake him. In general they claim this makes God a *respector of persons*. A close examination of that phrase in scripture will show it to have reference to God's offer of justice to all men, salvation from sin. In this regard we also note that many suffer greater persecution than others and yet this in no way means God has forsaken the one who suffers greater. He is indeed no *respector of persons*.

God has promised all things will work together for those who love the Lord. (**Rom. 8:28**) While we may debate whether this is limited to the context of **Romans 8** or is a general promise in all things, it in no way promises equal blessing or suffering to all. What it does promise is that all things will work together for the eventual good of God's child and His cause. We know that we are to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, who suffered for all mankind. (**1 Pet. 2:21**) We also realize suffering for the cause of Christ brings growth and strength to the servant of the Lord. **1 Pet. 5:8** *Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, 9 whom withstand stedfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world. Rom. 5:3 And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness; 4 and stedfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope: 5 and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us.* Even armed with this knowledge our flesh will cry out over suffering. Because of this, God has promised to grant wisdom and strength to His children when they seek it in the midst of trials and difficulties in this life. With such power at our disposal, let us give ourselves over to meditation and prayer, especially in our times of need.

## Do You Really Think You Are the First One to Think of That?

You won't believe my latest invention. I call it 'the internal combustion engine'. I'm very excited about all the possible applications of this unique discovery of mine. What? You mean someone thought of that before me!?! Oh, well, I'll just pursue some other 'new thing'.

Everyone would regard a person making such a claim as a true lunatic. How could one possibly imagine to have invented something that has been around for 150 years or more and is known and used throughout the world? We would view that fella with extreme suspicion and caution.

Sadly, religious discussions tend to attract this sort of outrageous claim. Frequently we talk to people who suggest that they have come up with something in the Bible that no one ever thought of before. Really? This ancient book has been around for thousands of years, and you want us to believe that you have discovered a truth that no one else ever found? Not likely.

The apostle Paul dealt with some folks who "spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing" (**Acts 17:21**). The problem was, of

course, that when he confronted them with the truth they mocked him and discounted his message (**vs. 32**). The same danger exists today for those who are always looking for "some new thing."

Many highly intelligent people have devoted their whole lives to the study of God's Word. Their written discourses are preserved for us to read and research. Within our own lifetimes we have been surrounded by faithful brethren who have diligently applied themselves to the Scriptures. Now, of course, they are not the absolute standard of what is true and right, but we should not quickly discount their scholarship in favor of our own 'latter day' discoveries. Think!

- by Greg Gwin

## LEARNING TO MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS

As disciples, there is no doubt that Jesus expects us to be distinguished for good works, for fruit-bearing (**see Jno. 15:8**). Not only is it obligatory by virtue of our creation in Christ (**Eph. 2:10**), it is a prescribed way of living for which we must be enthusiastic and eager. Paul explains that the people for whom Christ gave Himself and purified for Himself are to be a people *zealous for good works* and *ready for every good work* (**Titus 2:14; 3:1**). But this substantial duty of evidential discipleship does not come innately, it is learned.

In Paul's letter to Titus, some might cast Paul as burdening his text with the attention he gives to the subject of good works. But he's not so much burdening his text as he is stressing the great importance of good works in the lives of those who belong to Christ. And he instructs Titus to do no differently from his pulpit. After explaining that the grace of God teaches us how to live, and that we are to be *zealous for good works*, Paul instructs Titus to *speak (teach/preach) these things* (**2:15**). Almost within the same breath Paul said, *Remind them to be ready for good works* (**3:1**). In other words, preach it again! And just a few verses later Paul said, *I want you to affirm constantly, that those who believe in God should be careful to maintain good works* (**3:8**). In other words, preach it again and again and again...you can't say enough about it. Then at the close of this epistle Paul writes, *let our people learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful*" (**3:14**).

This learning to maintain (care for, give attention to) good works, is three-fold.

First, the responsibility/duty must be put into the mind of brethren through hearing. This is why Paul was so assertive in telling Titus to make sure the brethren heard it over and over and over again. The purpose of such repetitive preaching was that the brethren might *be careful to maintain good works* (**3:8**). The phrase, *be careful* literally means "to think, to exercise thought" (Thayer). In other words, they were to make it a study in their minds.

Secondly, this learning would come through observation. We learn as "on-lookers." Paul told Titus, who played a leading role in the congregation, that he was to *in all things show (himself) to be a pattern of good works (2:7)*. By observing Titus, these brethren would see this principle in the flesh, how it worked in other's lives and flesh it out in their own. Paul told the Philippian brethren, *these things which you...saw in me, these do (4:9)*. He told the Corinthian brethren, *imitate me, as I also imitate Christ (1 Cor. 11:1)*. John told Gaius to *imitate...what is good (3 Jno. 11)*.

Finally, this best teacher in learning to do good works is experience. We learn by doing. We learn by use. We learn by the practice of something. It is the way Paul said he learned contentment, *I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content*. How? Because he had experienced *both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need (Phil. 4:11,12)*. Paul used the word *learn* in this context of *doing 1 Tim. 5:13*. In Paul's instruction regarding the church taking care of widows, he mentioned that younger widows *learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle, but gossips and busybodies...* They learn to be idle by being idle. They learn to gossip and be busybodies by *saying things which they ought not (5: 13b)*. This is an example of learning bad behavior by doing badly, but the same thing is true in learning good behavior - by doing good! And the more we do, the more natural it becomes and the better we get at it. Experience is the highest form of learning.

Brethren, let us "learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that (we) may not be unfruitful." The idea has been planted by the Word, let us never grow weary of hearing it. Let us daily exercise our thoughts toward it, take note of it in the lives of others who do good works, but experience the hundred-fold increase that only comes by repeatedly doing good works ourselves!

**By Mark R. Wadlington in Items, Vol. 17, No. 21, July 13, 2003**

## The Jonah Syndrome

The inhabitants of the ancient city of Nineveh were living in wickedness and in need of the message that Jehovah charged His prophet Jonah to preach (**Jonah 1:2**). But where was Jonah? He was *"fast asleep"* on board the ship that he desperately wanted to carry him *"from the presence of the Lord"* (**Jonah 1:3-5**).

He was asleep on the job! God had commanded him to go preach in Nineveh, but Jonah had other plans. Today, the world is lost in sin and headed to eternal condemnation with the devil and his angels (**Matthew 25:41**). Jesus has commanded us to teach the soul-saving gospel to every person in the world (**Mark 16:15**). Could it be that some, as Jonah was, are *"fast asleep"* on the job and giving no real attention to what they can do to more effectively get the gospel to those who are lost? If so, then like Jonah of old, we need to heed the message, *"Awake thou that sleepest..." Ephesians*

**5:14; cf. Jonah 1:6).**

Finally, after being swallowed by the great fish, Jonah did go to Nineveh and preached God's message. The people repented, and as a result God did not destroy the city (**Jonah 3:5-10**). Yet, amazingly, Jonah was *"exceedingly"* displeased and angry (**Jonah 4:1**). Can you imagine? A prophet of the living God being upset because people had turned from their wickedness to their Creator and thus escaped His wrath!

What about you and me? Do we really join with the angels of heaven and rejoice when men and women, regardless of their racial or cultural background, turn away from sin and turn to the living God (**Luke 15:10?**) We must! If our greatest joy in life is something other than hearing of or seeing people come to Christ via the gospel for salvation, then we need to adjust our thinking. We must possess the spirit of the apostle Paul, who declared that his *"heart's desire and prayer to God"* was for Israel to be saved (**Romans 10:1**). A love for lost souls must first burn in our hearts before we will ever go forth to teach God's word to them.

The one thing that made Jonah *"exceeding glad"* was the gourd that God prepared to cover his head from the hot sun (**Jonah 4:6**). To Jonah's disgust and bitter anger, the next day a God-prepared worm ate the gourd. Jonah's "air conditioner" was gone, and he was one upset fellow! Sounds silly, does it not? A man of God more concerned about keeping himself cool than he was for the souls of those who he had taught? Yet, if we are not careful, we just might find ourselves giving more attention to the building's air conditioner than to preaching to the lost! What would upset us more - our air conditioner "going out", or a friend or neighbor "going out" of this world in a lost condition?

A number of years ago the leadership of a well-known congregation informed a preacher that they would be unable to assist him in his efforts to preach the gospel to the lost of Southeast Asia. Their reason? Several of the members had complained that they were getting wet when they walked from the main part of the building to the "fellowship hall" when it rained. Thus, the church was going to "have to" spend \$5000 to build a covered walkway to keep the members dry (and happy) during bad weather when they made their way to their feasts. Being more disturbed over a little rain on one's head than for lost souls sounds like Jonah, don't you think?

May God help us to set our desires on things above (**Colossians 3:2**), keeping our priorities straight, and manifesting a genuine compassion for those that are lost. There are 6 billion souls just outside the door.

**By Roger Campbell**

**Mark 16:15** *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.*

**2 Tim. 2:15** *Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.*

**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](http://thelenexaedifier.com)

[facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist](https://facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist)

[lenexachurchofchrist.org](http://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 UNDERGOING TREATMENTS FOR ESOPHAGEAL CANCER. (A STENT THAT IS VERY UNCOMFORTABLE) GRANT CLOTHIER HAS SUFFERED FROM MULTIPLE FALLS.

ANN HURD IS RECOVERING FROM KNEE SURGERY.

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS: GOSPEL OF JOHN

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS: PREMILLENNIALISM



## **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