

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.

November
13
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LIVING IN THE WORLD

Jim Stauffer

1 Cor. 5:9 *I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; 10 I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world.*

Sometimes we, as children of God, lose the perspective Paul calls for in this text and suddenly begin to talk like we do not live among the unredeemed. When we do that we begin to expect things that are simply unrealistic.

I recently read a comment by a very well respected gospel preacher that had just such a misplaced understanding of the real world in which we live. In essence he said anyone who voted for Donald Trump for President of our country should realize he is not conducting himself as a child of God should. Voting for a man generally considered to be crassly immoral is contradictory to all a Christian should do.

My simple response was, "Should one then stay home or should one vote for the other immoral candidate?"

Rom. 13 makes it plain there is no earthly power but that given by God. Further it indicates if we are to resist those God ordained powers, we are withstanding the ordinance of God. Am I to believe God ordains a person to be President of the United States but I cannot vote for them? Am I to understand that even if I vote for one of these candidates and he/she is not elected, thus not ordained of God, that I have sinned because I chose the wrong immoral person to vote for? How can we with clear minds come to such a conclusion? There is no rational way to conclude that we who live in a country where we have the opportunity to vote for our leadership, should be intimidated to vote for anyone other than the person we think will rule the country in the best way. How many redeemed men have governed our nation anyway?

The system in which we function as we select our leaders is imperfect to say the least. The voter is limited in how much he can know about each candidate in the time allowed. We only have access to information

others put up for public access and therefore we decide based information we believe to be factual.

Brethren take orders every day in their chosen fields of endeavor from immoral men and women. Are they obligated to choose somewhere else to work when they learn of such immorality?

Perspective please! We live in an ungodly world. We are here for a reason. We are to be the *salt of the earth* and *the light of the world*. Our role in affecting the immorality of the world is to be an example in word and deed. We are to show them the true values one should seek rather than the *treasures on earth* (**Mat. 5:13-16; 6:19-21**).

The respect the apostle Paul showed first to Felix, then Festus and finally to Agrippa in his defense prior to imprisonment in Rome is clearly seen. Yet Paul knew everyone of them was living an immoral life. What was his response? He attempted to teach them the truth. **Acts 24:24** *But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. 25 But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you."* He presented the gospel to both Festus and Agrippa as his defense for his conduct among the Jews. He did not grovel before them as a man concerned for his own welfare, but rather defended his actions as one who was being obedient to *the heavenly vision*. Festus concluded Paul was a madman. Paul then turned to Agrippa and questioned him about his belief in the story Paul had related. Agrippa's response is well known as a typical response of one whose lifestyle has been chosen and who does not possess the will to repent. When asked if he believed, he responded, *"In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian."* (**Acts 26:28**)

Our role as citizens is to participate to the best of our knowledge and ability while continuing our effort to communicate the truth of God's plan for redemption to any and all we can reach.

No, Christians are NOT perfect people!

It would be amusing, were it not so deadly serious, to listen to anti-Christian activists describe what their view of the claims of Christianity are.

“These people claim to be so perfect!” “These people claim to have an ‘inside track’ to God.” “You folks think you’re so much better than anyone else that God just had to take you to heaven!”

Now, we have to admit, if there is a shred of honesty in our bones, that we believers have not always been the most charitable of folk. We have too often looked down our noses at those whose sins were less socially acceptable than our own. There are also some who, certainly not in their words but in their actions, seem to think that God is so fortunate to have them on His side. Of course, all this proves is that we are all sinners in need of redeeming grace through the blood of Jesus Christ. You see, none of the criticisms of the skeptics really have anything to do with the claims of Christianity, just the shortcomings of individual Christians. Those things ought to be admitted and condemned anyway!

The claims of true Christianity are not to be found in the criticisms of the skeptics or the shortcomings of its followers but on the pages of the New Testament. There we see the apostle Peter, the preacher of the first Gospel Sermon following the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, in **Acts 2**, being rebuked for sinful hypocrisy in **Galatians 2** by another apostle, Paul. If Peter the inspired Apostle was not sinless as a Christian then certainly no other Christian ought to act as though he were. This being pointed out to the skeptics ought to also show who is interested in truth and who just wants to criticize.

Cleveland Reddinger

Still A Threat *Russ Bowman*

The world and our society have changed markedly in the last forty years. The challenges that face disciples of Jesus now were not unknown when I was a child. Yet, the degree of sexual immorality, divorce, violence, dishonesty, profanity, selfishness, and materialism in the year 2006 far exceeds the degree of those problems in 1966.

I grew up in a time not far removed from Mayberry. I could ride my bike all over Slaton, Texas with no fear of being abducted. I doubt that my folks worried about my teachers making sexual advances toward my sister or me. I never participated in “Drug Prevention Week” in elementary school. But now, I think about all of those things in regard to my daughters, and I’m frankly hesitant to let them play outside of our own fenced yard.

Accordingly, the sermons I heard growing up dealt with issues that are seldom discussed presently. Please

don’t misunderstand – I heard many lessons on the home, immorality, materialism, dishonesty, divorce, etc. Yet, society in general seemed more religiously inclined and less immoral than it is currently. Many people had strong religious ties. Denominational loyalty was fierce, and people actually debated doctrinal differences between various religious organizations. The lines that separated assorted “churches” were often distinct, and people defended their convictions. There was less emphasis upon the ecumenical philosophy of our day – the “it doesn’t matter what you believe, let’s forget our differences, what’s doctrine have to do with it” battle cry of the modern “all faiths” mega-churches.

Most of the sermons of my youth revolved around authority, doctrinal error, and Biblical accuracy. Christians were confronted with abuses involving the work, organization, and nature of Christ’s church. Many churches were funding secular organizations such as colleges and children’s homes. Others were forming networks in order to do missionary work or establish preaching schools. And still others were pursuing the denominational trend toward social emphasis and reaction as tools to attract visitors. Institutionalism, doctrinal perversion, and the social gospel were among the greatest threats of the day. Yet few people appear concerned about those matters anymore. Many Christians today - and particularly those under thirty years old – have little understanding of institutionalism. Doctrinal issues are rarely considered by most “religious” people in our day, as there is little emphasis upon God’s instructions concerning worship or the home or godliness in many modern religious organizations. Everything seems to revolve around “praise,” entertainment, “community,” and temporal concerns. The mantra of our religious age is simple - “God Loves You. Feel good about yourself. Let’s just praise the Lord!” And so, Christians who are serious about discipleship have focused our attention upon the increasingly wicked culture in which we must live, work, raise our children, and uphold the truth.

I will be the first to admit that our concerns about immorality, dishonesty, divorce, materialism, etc., are well founded. We need Christians with the courage to stand as lights in this darkening world. We need strong preaching. We must teach our children God’s standard, regardless of the political incorrectness of what He deems as sin. But there remains another consideration that must not be overlooked. Matters of previous concern, such as institutionalism, doctrinal perversion, and the social gospel, remain serious threats. This is particularly true for young people who have not been exposed to such perversions and who probably have not been adequately instructed concerning the dangers. Young Christians are being solicited by social activities, “progressive” worship, campus ministries, and institutional programs. They seem unconcerned that

churches are participating in activities for which they have no Biblical authority. They appear unafraid that such congregations are funding and supporting secular organizations, or institutions other than the local congregation that are ostensibly performing “spiritual” work. They seem to have disregarded the truth about the work of the local church, congregational autonomy, or scriptural worship. And they are, as a result, being led to a simple compromise of God’s truth and their own faith.

We must not forget that Satan is quite effective in his efforts to tempt those who would be godly. We must not become tunnel – visioned concerning the threats to our faith and to the spiritual well being of our children. We cannot neglect to teach about authority, the nature of God’s truth, the need for doctrinal accuracy, the nature of God’s truth, the error of institutional allegiance, the nature and work of the church, and the fallacy of a social gospel.

In **Matthew 23:23**, Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for majoring in minors – *“You pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith.”* A church is not necessarily sound simply because they do not support a human institution. We must still uphold *“the weightier matters.”* But Jesus continues, *“These ought you to have done, without leaving the others undone.”* Such issues that are so often considered “nit-picking, little, and unimportant” cannot be left *“undone.”* They have not ceased to be a threat.

~via Stanley Avenue; Andalusia, Alabama. Taken from Market Street Messenger

What Kind of Church?

A woman called recently, indicating she and her husband had just moved to town and were looking for a church to identify with. She asked if we had an attended nursery for her two-year-old. When I told her we did not, she thanked me and hung up.

I have thought a lot about what that woman did not ask. She did not ask if we had spirited singing. She did not want to know whether we had simple, truthful preaching. She expressed no interest in whether we had faithful overseers to watch for her soul. She did not inquire about our Bible study program, nor did she seem anxious to see what opportunities for work in the Lord's cause might be available. Apparently these things were not nearly as important as someone to relieve her maternal responsibilities during the worship hour.

Another woman told me recently, "I don't like a church that tells me what to do. It's none of their business." I agree that churches have no right to make their own rules. However, we do have a God-given obligation to uphold the truth (**1 Tim. 3:15**) and expose sin and error (**Eph. 5:11**). I confess that I do not know how to preach repentance without exposing sin and

warning people to turn from it.

What kind of church do you like? What features are important to you? A dynamic speaker, special activities for the kids, recreational programs, physical facilities, location, family ties, and a host of other things have been given as reasons for choosing a particular church. Whatever your taste, there is likely a church to suit. However, you should be asking another question: What kind of church does God like? He does not like them all. Some are so disgusting He spits them out (read Revelation 2 and 3, and notice that the rejected ones include some that are conservative in belief).

The only assurance of God's approval anyone can have is what He says in His revealed word. Will you submit your will to God's and become a member of the church of His choice?

by Frank Himmel

Why Didn't Jesus...

Jim Jonas

Jesus own fleshly brothers were skeptical of His claims: *“Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world” (John 7:3-4).*

Do you ever wonder what they did? Why didn't Jesus emit a divine glow? Why didn't He make Himself 100 feet tall, like the statue in Rio, so His divinity would be obvious? Why didn't He enter the Sanhedrin chambers and strike them blind?

Well, God had done similar things before – a towering pillar of cloud and re directing Israel; Moses entering the palace of Pharaoh to announce miraculous plagues; opening the ground and swallowing Korah and his rebel allies. Did overwhelming displays of power win people's hearts? No.

Also, such actions would have only been witnessed by that generation. Eons of time lay ahead where God wanted people to come to faith on a more solid basis than ancient events alone. God doesn't do things haphazardly; He provides the very thing needed for the outcome He desires. There is enough evidence to convince a seeker of God that Jesus was divine. To the heart that is resistant to God, no grand spectacle will overcome unbelief. Only God's character will do that. God has to be discovered, and He gives us clues in nature and Scripture. **~via The Centerville Journal; Centerville, Virginia, Taken from the Market Street Messenger**

“The society which scorns excellence in plumbing because plumbing is a humble activity, and tolerates shoddiness in philosophy because it is an exalted activity, will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy. Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water”

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

Elders: Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

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NEWS AND NOTES: REMEMBER THE SICK IN PRAYERS AND VISITS. J.R. DANIEL, JAN PATRICK, SUZANNE WIMP, L.A. STAUFFER AND CHIP MILES. THE FATHER OF EMALI PRICE, STEPHEN KIMKER, HAS CHRONIC ILLNESS THAT IS DEBILITATING AT TIMES. HE NEEDS OUR PRAYERS.

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS:
A STUDY IN PRAYER - RON PECK

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS: THE
BOOK OF ROMANS - J STAUFFER



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