

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"

APRIL 23, 2017

WHOSE DISCIPLE ARE YOU?

Jim Stauffer

Matt. 15:8 *'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. :9 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'* Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites because they altered the Law and practiced what was convenient to them. While He was on earth He taught discipleship to mean following the footsteps of the Master (**Luke 9:23-25**).

Jesus' disciples were asked why they along with the Lord were dining with tax collectors and sinners. Jesus answered for them, *"But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."* (**Mat. 9:13**) One of Jesus' disciples asked to be temporarily excused to go bury his father. *But Jesus *said to him, "Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."* (**Mat. 8:22**)

Jesus taught His disciples they would not be respected more than He. *A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master* (**Mat. 10:24,25**).

These things, of course, are only true of those who actually follow in the footsteps of Jesus (**Eph. 5:1,2; 1 Pet. 2:21**). He taught His disciples to be servants in the kingdom. He washed their feet explaining, *"If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. (Joh.13:14,15)*

Jesus realized the difficulty He would face in His work on earth but enunciated clearly the mission held in His heart. **Matt. 20:28** *just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

Jesus further explained their need of Him as the vine who gives life to the branches (**John 15:6**).

So, the question and the challenge comes to each of us. Whose disciple are we? Are we servants of our brethren? Have we learned to seek and save the lost as He did (**Luke 19:10**)?

The thrust of these thoughts today is whether we have become complacent with some measurable growth in the local congregations? Some introspection may indicate to us we are not those who have put the Lord and His mission first. That we are not truly giving up our lives in order to follow Him.

It may well be we are creating comfort zones for ourselves where we pat each other on the back and then go our very comfortable ways instead of embracing the difficulties of following the Lord.

Is he pleased or disappointed as He looks down from the right hand of God and views His kingdom and its servants? We haven't forgotten all things are manifest before Him, have we (**Heb. 4:13**)?

Whose approval do we seek and why? Do we recognize certain men and look for their approval or do we follow the Master regardless of what others around us do? When we achieve this level of approval among men, have we done exactly what Jesus warns against (**Mat. 23:8-12**).

It is difficult to have the same mind as the suffering Savior, but it is required of those who would be His disciples and be faithful to His cause (**1 Pet. 4:1; 1 Cor. 4:2**).

It will never be easy to speak the truth of the gospel to the world. Yes, the world. They are those who need it most. We can become very comfortable communicating the narrow way to our brethren who have already accepted it, but those who need it most are already on the pathway that is broad, headed for destruction (**Mat. 7:13,14**).

The gospel preacher and all those who claim to be disciples of Jesus, the Christ, Who died for our sins, need to relish opportunities to defend the truth to an unbelieving world. **2 Cor. 5:14** *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.*

Treasures on Earth

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:19-24).

A devotional life (prayer, fasting) is an important component of our life as kingdom citizens. A private, inner disposition to talk to our heavenly Father, an attitude of introspection, a heart flowing with gratitude that helps others—these and other acts of righteousness can only help us become what we can be—namely, people who are truly devoted to the Master. We would never lie or steal or curse; but what about our treasures? What about “things?” What do we truly value? And do we worry about the things we value?

From *Vine's Expository Dictionary* we learn that mammon is a “common Aramaic word for “riches,” akin to a Hebrew word signifying “to be firm, steadfast” (whence “Amen”), hence, “that which is to be trusted.” “Gesenius regards it as derived from a Heb. word signifying “treasure” (**Gen 43:23**); it is personified in **Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:9, 11, 13.**” In Greek mythology mammon was often associated with deities who were thought to be the source of wealth or blessings or favor. The result was that people put their faith, their trust in these deities.

The challenge Jesus gives us is this: We cannot trust in God AND mammon. We cannot trust in two things. Trying to do so results in divided loyalties. We think we can hide our wealth (money) in places that are hidden from the thieves. We think that moth and rust cannot consume what we have worked so hard for. In the endless quest for mammon our hearts are turned away from the ultimate source of our blessings, namely, Almighty God. On the other hand our treasures can be secure when we give all we have to our Father. When we have freely given back to God, the source of all things, we cannot lose; our things will never wear out, and our possessions can never be eroded. Treasures in heaven are always safe.

Now the question is: What kind of eye do you have? The eye of jealousy, resentment, greed, and lust will alter your vision. The single eye is generous and warm; the dark eye is miserly. When we get our spiritual vision tuned right, we can then begin to look at life in all its facets with the attitude of kingdom citizens. God has entrusted us with much. Let us entrust our riches to God

for safekeeping. It is a matter of faith.

Randy Harshbarger

Bible Baptism Vs. Baptist Baptism

Baptists generally believe and teach that water baptism is not necessary for the remission of sins. This statement is qualified because this writer knows of a Baptist preacher who believes that it is necessary. But generally speaking, we do not misrepresent Baptist doctrine when we say it teaches that baptism “...represents in an outward symbol the inward work of the Spirit, and shows how ‘according to his mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit,’ a work already performed on the heart of the candidate by an application of the cleansing blood of Christ” (Hiscox, *The Baptist Church Directory*, 1911, page 32). In other words, “*Baptists believe that no one is a scriptural subject for baptism till he is already saved* [italics mine—AT]” (J.G. Bow, *What Baptists Believe and Why They Believe It*, Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, pages 36-37).

As we have seen, Baptists are quite open about what they believe concerning baptism, and although it is not difficult to understand what they believe, it is hard to understand why they believe it. Clearly, they ignore, or do not understand, many Bible passages relative to baptism (**e.g., Acts 2:38 & 22:16; Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:26-27; and 1 Peter 3:21**). A simple reading of these passages enables one to understand why they have consistently tried to either ignore, explain away, or change the scriptures to fit their doctrine. The purpose of this article is to demonstrate a very serious mistake some of our Baptist friends have made in their attempt to change the word of God so as to conform to their teaching on the subject of baptism.

Obviously, **Acts 2:38** is a passage that has “stuck in the craw” of many Baptist debaters. But now some of them are claiming that the passage is “really theirs after all.” These allege the Greek preposition *eis*, which is translated “for” in the King James Version should actually be translated “because of.” They claim the passage should read, “...Repent, and be baptized...because of the remission of sins....” In other words, they think this passage teaches that one ought to repent and be baptized because one has already received the remission of sins when he believed. They attempt to bolster this rendering by pointing out that the English preposition “for” sometimes means “because of.” Although this is true, it really has nothing to do with the Greek preposition *eis*, which no reputable Greek scholar has ever thought should be translated “because of.”

Those who try to twist the scriptures to justify their wrong position on baptism are defeated by the very book they seek to pervert. In **Acts 2:38**, we find not just the preposition *eis*, but the entire prepositional phrase *eis*

aphesin harmartion, which is rendered “*for the remission of sins*” by the translators. Fortunately, and to the downfall of those who would assert their particular doctrine above that which is written, the Holy Spirit has unquestionably fixed the use of eis apheresin harmartion by allowing it to be used in a passage in which its use cannot be doubted. In **Matthew 26:28**, Jesus made the statement, “*For this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins* [emphasis mine—AT].” This is the same prepositional phrase that is used in **Acts 2:38**. Therefore, those who support the “because of” argument in **Acts 2:38** would, in order to be consistent, have to make **Matthew 26:28** to be saying that Jesus shed His blood “because of” the remission of sins, which would, in essence, have the Lord saying His blood would be shed for something already accomplished. Who can believe it? Was the Lord’s blood shed “for,” “unto,” or “for the purpose of” the remission of sins; or was it shed because the remission of sins had already occurred? If it was shed “for,” “unto,” or “for the purpose of” the remission of sins, as **Matthew 26:28** clearly teaches, then what justification do our Baptist friends have for translating the same prepositional phrase as “because of” in **Acts 2:38**? The only reason I can think of is the justification of their erroneous doctrine.

Does the Bible contradict itself? Certainly not! Although Baptists seem to think that **Acts 2:38** and **Matthew 26:28** are contradictory if allowed to stand as they appear in the Bible, the truth of the matter is that Baptism is “for,” “unto,” or “for the purpose of” the same thing Jesus’ blood was shed “for.” Just as the Bible teaches that there can be no remission of sins without Christ’s blood, for Christ’s blood was shed *for the remission of sins*, it just as clearly teaches that there can be no remission of sins without baptism. This relationship between Christ’s blood and baptism is explained by the apostle Paul in **Romans chapter 6**. He said that as many as had been baptized *into* Christ had been baptized “*into His death*”. Of course, the Messiah shed His blood in His death (viz., on the cross), and we, by faith, are baptized “*into His death*” (**Romans 6:3**). Could it be any more simple? Could we not all see this if we really wanted to?

In conclusion, the Holy Spirit bears witness that Christ shed His blood for the remission of sins. He also bears witness that water baptism is for the remission of sins. Consequently, it does not surprise us to hear the Bible say, “*There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one* [emphasis mine—AT]” (1 John 5:8).
Allan Turner at allanturner.com

THE ABSOLUTE

One of the things buzzing about in my mind for the last several weeks is what I call “The Absolute Nature” of God.

In Genesis God told Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, *Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*” (**3:16f**). To men today this looks like a drastic penalty for such a small thing but that is failing to appreciate the gravity of the situation. God had but finished speaking the Universe into existence, an act of Absolute Power. He had but breathed into man the breath of life, an Act of Absolute Charity. He was setting down the Basis of Rule for the Whole of Time, an act of Absolute Necessity, by making an Absolute Prohibition and decreeing a Penalty for Sin of Equal Absoluteness. When in the New Testament God speaks of Heaven and Hell in **Matthew 25:46**, “*And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.*” He is simply reflecting the nature of the offense, Absolute Rebellion against God, and the Fact that the Blood of Christ makes possible the Absolute Forgiveness of Sin. It is the Absolute nature of this Forgiveness which men so fail to understand and truly appreciate. It perfectly reflects God!

Cleveland Reddinger

Easy, Or Right?

If a friend or family member is known to drink alcoholic beverages and then drive his or her car, would you say anything about this, preventing a disaster? Or, would you keep silent for fear of hurting their feelings?

If a friend or family member is harming and abusing a child, would you speak up about it, or would you keep silent because you didn’t want the trouble it could bring to you?

If a friend or family member is teaching false doctrine which results in someone being led away from the truth (and thus, lost eternally) would you keep silent because it is the easier thing to do, or would you confront the false teacher and try to correct him?

If a friend or family member is making a spiritual choice which leads him or her into unfaithfulness, would you say something about this, or would you keep quiet because you fear the wrath of the erring brother or sister?

“Easy” is seldom “right,” is it?

**by Mark White Taken from the Beacon
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John 6:60 *Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, “This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?”*

John 6:66 *As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” 68 Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.*

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

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SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:
WHY DO WE NEED AUTHORITY?



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