

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 30, 2017

THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL

Jim Stauffer

In **Acts chapter 13** Paul preaches one of the greatest sermons of all time. What comprises a good sermon? First and foremost it needs to be the word of God truthfully represented. Second, it needs to be a portion of that word that is applicable to the audience.

In a synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia, he is asked if he has some words of exhortation for the people.

With that invitation he begins his speech by identifying the God of whom he will speak. **Acts 13:16** *Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: 17 "The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it.* As he discusses this God, he reminds an audience of the Jewish faith of all the things this God did for their ancestors.

He led them ultimately to the Promised Land and anointed David, *a man after My heart*, King over them. He then says God has brought to Israel a descendant of this King David, a man called Jesus, to be their Savior (**vss.22,23 cf. Lk. 1:32,33**).

He reminds them of the work of John the Baptizer, who was the designated forerunner of Jesus (**Isa. 40:3**). This John verified when asked who he was and about his role (**John 1:20-23**).

Up to this point he is identifying all the people of their history who played a major role in the pathway of the coming Messiah.

Now comes the part of the lesson that is both applicable and painful for the hearers. This often happens when the sermon is something the hearers are in need of.

He addresses them as sons of Abraham and those who have in their lives feared God. Then he tells them the salvation that comes from this Savior Jesus has been sent to them.

However, those in Jerusalem did not recognize this Jesus, the Messiah, nor did they remember the words

of the prophets read to them every Sabbath. They rejected Him as He indicated while on earth they would and without proper cause called for Pilate to put Him to death (**vss. 27-29**).

He then reminds them God raised Him from the grave. Those in Jerusalem were so opposed to this Savior Jesus, they lied about His resurrection (**Mat. 28:12-15**). Paul then explains Jesus' resurrection is the very thing spoken of by the Psalmist, *that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children, in that he raised up Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.* (**Acts 13:33,34**)

He then tells them Jesus offers forgiveness that could not be achieved under the Law of Moses. He warns them by way of a prophecy of Habakkuk, *Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; For I work a work in your days, A work which ye shall in no wise believe, if one declare it unto you.* (**Hab. 1:5; Acts 13:40,41**)

In this sermon on this occasion, Paul explains the promise of the Messiah to a people who had seen a work done in their day and yet despised the very Savior God sent to them. Paul makes the application.

But the Jews out of jealousy contradicted and blasphemed the word spoken rejecting the personal responsibility to repent and accept the Messiah of God. This led Paul and Barnabas to leave the city saying this, *And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* (**Acts 13:46**)

Let us realize the word of God is profitable for us, not harmful (**2 Tim. 3:16,17**). Painful, yes. Harmful, no.

Unequally Yoked

L.A. Stauffer

Jehovah, in His covenant with Israel, strictly ordered them to avoid joining, blending, and mixing things that are different (**see Lev 19:19; Deut 22:9-11**). God forbade yoking an ox with a donkey, weaving flax and wool into the same cloth, and sowing two kinds of seed in the same field. We may not know fully why God issued these laws, but most agree that, in part, it illustrated the need to keep the nation holy—separate from heathens and their unholy practices.

The apostle Paul may allude to this ordinance when writing to brethren who had been known for their unholy alliances with idolatry and immoral practices. To the church at Corinth in his second letter, the apostle wrote: *“Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers”* (**2 Cor 6:14**).

Paul clarifies his thought with a series of questions: *“For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? Or what communion has light and darkness? And what concord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has a temple of God with idols?”* (**2 Cor 6:14-16**). Christians, Paul is saying, are to separate themselves from the world of sin and touch no unclean thing (**2 Cor 6:17**).

The expression *“unequally yoked”* is one word in the Greek language and combines the words “different” and “yoke.” Its precise meaning denotes the tying or binding together of dissimilar things. This occurs when righteousness participates with iniquity, light shares things in common with darkness, and believers engage in the lifestyle of unbelievers. An unequal yoke results when Christians compromise with sin and partake in evil deeds.

Business. This occurs when Christians become partners with non-Christians in business and operate with them on dishonest principles. The “yoke” is not unequal and the partnership is not wrong unless the bond ties the believer to an unclean practice of the unbeliever.

Marriage. Unequal yokes develop in marriages when believers bound to unbelievers join their mates in unrighteous behavior. The Christian may sign a deceitful income tax return, drink a few beers at a New Year’s Eve party, engage in a night of dancing with friends, or don immodest apparel for a beach party. The “yoke” of marriage is not of itself unequal—for marriage is sacred, joined by God, and each is sanctified in the other (**see 1 Cor 7:14**).

Denominationalism. A disciple may for a legitimate reason choose to visit services of a religious group that teaches and practices false doctrine. Even Paul attended the synagogues. And when invited the person, as I have done, might speak the truth. This Paul did. But to blend our voices in unscriptural singing or to contribute money to support false teachers and

unauthorized practices is to yoke oneself unequally by endorsing and having fellowship with sin. To give them greeting in bidding them Godspeed is to share in their evil deeds (**see 2 John 10-11**).

Friends. “Friends of the world” is not equivalent to *“friendship of the world”* (**see James 4:4**). Paul accepts association or company with fornicators, covetous, idolaters, etc. that are of the world (**1 Cor 5:9-10**). But to engage with them in their sins is friendship with the world itself and it creates *“enmity with God”* (**Jas. 4:4**). Evil companions can corrupt good morals and when they do our company with them has become an unequal yoke and must cease. Both young and old need to be reminded not to walk in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat of scoffers (**see Psa 1:1**).

Christians are in the midst of the world to let their lights shine before the world of ungodly and wicked men. They are to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul and are to be seen as lights in a crooked and perverse age (**Matt 5:16; 1 Pet 2:11; Phil 2:15**). And we cannot do this when we yoke ourselves unequally to the world in perverse practices.

WORRY

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (**Matthew 6:25-34**).

Kingdom citizens are challenged not to worry. We should not worry about money. Our treasures are always safe with God. Yet, isn’t it true that the more money we have the more we worry about our money? Can I keep my money? How will I spend it? Is someone trying to take it from me? How can I get more? We forget that life is more than just what we eat, drink, and wear. Kingdom citizens recognize the facts of life (need for food, shelter, etc); kingdom citizens, though, are not

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consumed by worry. Jesus says do not worry or *take thought*. Taking thought for something is more than simply thinking about whatever the matter is. Taking thought is being anxious or troubled; it is being distracted by your concerns.

Birds work hard don't they? They don't worry do they? No, the Father looks after them. Does worry do any good? Can we live longer, even one hour longer, by worrying? The past is gone, the future is not here. Worry blinds us. In our worry we forget about God, His power, His providence. Flowers, grass, and birds, while short-lived, are taken care of aren't they? Failing to trust in God is wrong; it is a lack of faith. Do we or do we not trust God? Are we going to put God first? Is our ambition to let God rule in our hearts? Or will we allow the mammon of this world to control our lives?

Some might demur. If God is taking care of us, why do we have so many problems? It is true that believers do have hardships. Those reading these words, though, rarely lack the basic necessities of life. We speak of hardships in rather sterile terms: We don't get what we want, we feel mistreated, etc. Yet, first century Christians faced not only the daily challenges of existing, but also the threat of persecution because of their faith. What would they do? What will we do? Jesus said: Seek Me and My kingdom. Then whatever may come, it will be OK.

Randy Harshbarger

You and Your Old Testament

If there is one common thread of shortcoming across all the many churches today, it is an immense imbalance in Biblical understanding. By that I mean that many believers spend almost their whole time in the New Testament and study the Old Testament rarely if at all. This is a terrible and completely inexcusable mistake! True, we live under the terms of the New Testament and NOT the Old but it is almost as if they think that the God of the Old Testament doesn't exist any longer and has been replaced by a newer, more convenient, more benevolent God in the person of Jesus Christ. Let us disabuse ourselves of such a notion.

The Apostle Paul said in **Romans 15:4**, *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope."* He was referring specifically to the Old Testament scriptures of the Jews. He says there is knowledge in the Old Testament that we Christians need, as well as comfort and encouragement. To ignore the Old Testament in our studies is to ignore the main course at dinner – you've skipped the satisfying portion of the knowledge of God while it was staring you right in the face!

So many questions are answered in a satisfying way by the Old Testament. For example: "How did the universe come into being?" This question is answered definitively in **Genesis 1:1** where we are told *"In the*

beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The five basics of existence are treated here: Time, Space, Power, Movement and Mass. No physicist ever did a more complete job.

Next week we will begin looking at other questions that are originally answered in God's Word, the Old Testament.

Cleveland Reddinger

The Mormon 'Approach' Is Wrong

Have you ever studied with any of the Mormon 'missionaries' that come calling at your door? Most of these young men carry the title "elder", and they have devoted themselves to a two year period of spreading their message door-to-door. Their zeal and dedication are commendable, but their message is full of error (**Romans 10:1-3**).

Not only is the message that the Mormons teach wrong, so is their approach. As you probably know, the Mormons base their religion heavily upon the teachings of Joseph Smith. He was a man who lived in New York during the first half of the 19th century. He claimed to have received a special revelation from God. The details of how he supposedly received this revelation are all very strange. Smith proceeded to write several books. The most famous of these is the Book of Mormon. While the Mormons claim to believe the Bible, they argue that it has been corrupted over the centuries, and that the writings of Joseph Smith represent a more accurate "latter day" revelation from God.

It seems obvious that there is a huge burden of proof that accompanies these claims. If the Book of Mormon and its companion writings are from God, then those who believe in them ought to be able to provide compelling evidence of their authenticity. After all, this is what we do when we meet someone who does not believe the Bible. In fact, we put a good deal of emphasis on studying 'evidences' so that we can answer those who question us about our faith (2 Peter 3:15).

The Mormons typically refuse to engage in such a study. Their standard response is to ask us to pray to God, promising that He will give an answer by way of a "warm feeling" in the heart. This is the wrong approach. If the Mormons won't supply their 'evidence', we have no 'common ground' upon which to study with them.

Greg Gwin

Gal. 1:6 *I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; 7 which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. 9 As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.*

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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FOLLOWING THE MESSIAH - RON
PECK

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS -
FORGIVENESS - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:

THE APPROPRIATE SOURCE OF
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