

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 15, 2018

## *The Challenges of Love*

Warren E. Berkley

*We will present articles written by bro. Warren Berkley over the next few weeks. He will preach a series of lessons for the Lenexa church of Christ in May. There will be announcements in the coming weeks of dates, topics and times.*

**You can love someone, even if you don't approve of their conduct.** Challenging? Yes. But if you have really taken the attitude of Christ to heart, you can love someone even if you don't approve of their actions.

There is no higher model of this than God himself, who loved people who were ruining their lives by their sin.

*"While we were still sinners,"* God's love for us took redemptive direction. Yes, we can love those who are living in sin. (And, we will never reach them and help them without love.)

**You can love someone, even if they hate you.** Now, we go beyond just generic sin. When you are hated by someone, the devil wants to use that conflict – to pull you down into the pit of bitterness. When you discover someone hates you, the devil also discovers it and the devil will seek to pull you down into the pit of bitterness. In that pit, there is nothing good for you. There is no real satisfaction. There is no sweet revenge. There is only the ruin of bitterness and malice. Read **Matthew 5:43-47**. Jesus makes it clear, and all of Scripture makes it clear: hating people doesn't change people, but it certainly changes us. Hate is the plaque of the brain. And the only surgery to remove it is repentance. Hate doesn't really make you feel better. It doesn't help anyone. It brings no benefit. Jesus said – just don't do it.

**You can love someone, even if they are better than you.** There is something called Envy. Now, look back on that familiar page (**1 Corinthians 13**). **Love does not envy**. Socrates said, "Envy is the daughter of pride, the author of murder and revenge, the begetter of secret sedition, the perpetual tormenter of virtue. Envy is the filthy slime of the soul; a venom, a poison,

a quick-silver, which consumeth the flesh and drieth up the marrow of the bones." Webster says that envy is "chagrin or discontent at the excellence or good fortune of another; resentful, begrudging." The Bible says, *"A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones"* (**Proverbs 14:30**). The writer of Proverbs also said envy is worse than wrath and anger (**Proverbs 27:4**). You cannot have envy in you, alongside the love, the agape, of **1 Corinthians 13**.

**You can love someone, even if they are different from you.** A different color, different culture, different background, different economic status, different education, different looks, habits and interests. The earlier we learn this, the better – as Christians, together in the body of Christ – we are not all the same! Same faith. Same hope. Same allegiance to the same Savior. God wants us to love each other anyway. Read the chapter that comes right before **1 Cor. 13** (see **1 Cor. 12:12-26**).

**You can love someone, even if you are better.** Now, comparing yourself to someone, with a competitive spirit – *is not a recommended mode of thought*. If you look at people, and immediately think comparatively – and focus on how much better you are ... that isn't a spiritually healthy mode of thinking. I can't recommend you develop that habit of thought – where you compare yourself to others, and then think highly of yourself, because you are better. In the New Testament – that kind of immature perspective is described and condemned (**Romans 12:3-8,16**). it is written to instill in us, humility and patience and – to see ourselves, not in comparison to others. But rather, in proportion to our faith. *"Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight."* The challenge here is – even if you think you are better than someone, don't be haughty and let that thought keep you from loving "the inferior." The self-interests of a

comparative and competitive view of people can hinder your capacity to love people.

If I'm actually better than someone, hate will only make me worse, not better. **1 Corinthians 13** tells me, love is not arrogant; is not rude; is patient. When I apply **1 Corinthians 13** to my heart – and when I imitate my Father – I'm able to love people, even if, in fact, I am better.

*“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hope all things, endures all things.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).*

*~via Cyfair Family Notes & News; Cypress, Texas..  
Taken from the Market Street Messenger*

## No One Like You

Isn't it interesting how God can continue to create unique individuals. No two people are just alike...as far as I know, never has there been two identical people. Even twins are somewhat different. Out of the 5 billion people on earth right now, no two are just alike! Then go back through the whole history of mankind and you find that God makes every single person born different than any other human ever born. And when will it ever stop? Surely He will have to duplicate someone, somewhere...won't He? No. For this is a great God we serve. His ability to create different types of persons is limitless.

A practical thought: No one has ever walked the earth like you. You are unique, special...a one of a kind. There are things you can do, things you can say, things you can be, unlike anyone else possible. There is a place in history that ONLY you can fill. Be sure you do your best.

**Whit Sasser**

*Taken from the Lincoln Bible Reader*

## FORGIVENESS

*“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses” (Mark 11:25-26).*

Prayer is important throughout Mark's gospel. Jesus, evidently an early riser, prayed alone (**Mark 1:35**). Then, sending His disciples away, Jesus *“departed to the mountain to pray”* (**Mark 6:46**). Finally, the prayers of Gethsemane (**Mark 14:32-40**) speak about faith in and commitment to the Father. Surely, Jesus' prayer life encourages us. And prayer should strengthen our faith. Prayer is not magic, or voodoo, and it should not be just wishful thinking.

A culture of prayer comes from God and His forgiveness. When we pray, we do so knowing that we can ask for forgiveness; we also should know that forgiving others will make our prayers real and meaningful. Refusing to forgive will destroy the strength and even the desire to pray. While standing to pray is common in the Bible (**Psalms 134:1**), even that posture means nothing if we are unwilling to forgive. Praying to God should flow from a heart attuned to Him, His glory, and His willingness to forgive; prayer that avails before God is prayer from the heart. Prayer brings God into our lives, whatever the situation may be.

The power of prayer is seen in the fact that we are to pray in Jesus' name. Ending a prayer “In the name of Jesus” is perfectly OK. But do we remember that when we say those words at the end of our prayers, we are recognizing the authority of Jesus? It is His will that must be done; it is His will that will be done. We need to go far beyond simply mouthing words that reflect little or no forethought in this act of worship, whether public or private. Jesus *“ever lives to make intercession for us.”* He can do so; He is enthroned at the Father's right hand. He was here before us; He knows and understands far better than we.

Forgiving others is also a common theme in the Bible. Kingdom citizens, those who walk hand in hand with Jesus, in a covenant relationship with Him, are people who need forgiveness. They are people who should be willing to forgive. Jesus says that we have been forgiven much; how can we then refuse to forgive a little? Could it be that we want God's mercy, but are unwilling to extend mercy to others? The right attitude about prayer, however, can change the climate of prayer; right attitudes reflect changed hearts. What kind of heart does God have? God's heart is seen in a myriad of ways. But surely, we can see the heart of God when we see His Son hanging on the cross. God's heart hates sin. In fact, God hates sin so much that, in love, in forgiveness, He was willing for His Son to die.

“The only basis on which God can forgive us is the tremendous tragedy of the Cross of Christ. To base our forgiveness on any other ground is unconscious blasphemy. The only ground on which God can forgive our sin and reinstate us to His favor is through the Cross of Christ. There is no other way! Forgiveness, which is so easy for us to accept, cost the agony at Calvary” (Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*). Aren't we thankful that we have a God above, a God to whom we can pray?

**Randy Harshbarger**

## Our Liberties

I came across a quote this morning that I think is extremely perceptive. It was said by Thomas Jefferson

over two hundred years ago and is incredibly relevant to America now in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. He said: God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; That His justice cannot sleep forever.

So much for Jefferson being either an atheist or a secularist. Did you know that there were church services held in the rotunda of the US Capitol building for many years after it was built? But I digress.

Jefferson read the Old Testament with profit. He understood that there was a moral standard to which God held nations. That's why Amos wrote, *"Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."* (4:12)

God told Nebuchadnezzar in **Daniel 4:17**, *"The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will, and sets up over it the lowest of men."* Daniel then gave the meaning: Nebuchadnezzar needed to repent! Read the whole chapter.

If America continues purging God and morality out of any discussion then the Old Testament makes it perfectly clear that she will be judged.

**Cleveland Reddinger**

"Our government rests on religion. It is from that source that we derive our reverence for truth and justice, for equality and liberty, and for the rights of mankind. Unless the people believe in these principles, they cannot believe in our Government"

**Calvin Coolidge**

**Taken from the Lincoln Bible Reader**

## **A CHALLENGE TO US ALL**

With a Gospel Meeting in the near future it is imperative for all of us to begin our preparations well in advance. No last minute thoughts will have much effect on its success.

There is a list of things we should do each and every time such an event occurs. Here is a reminder of some of those things.

1. First and foremost plan to be there at each and every meeting. What will occur in your life that will be more important than worshiping and studying with your brethren during those few days? What an encouragement you will be to others just by your presence and participation.
2. We must pray for the success of the meeting. We should pray for success in specific areas. Areas in

which we have extended effort.

Pray for those with whom you have worked and encouraged.

Pray for the safety of our speaker as he travels a considerable distance.

Pray for your brethren locally that they may also place an emphasis on this meeting and give it 100% participation.

3. Make a special effort to personally invite those precious souls you have prayed for over the years. Lead them to an occasion to hear what the Savior has to say to them about their souls. Let them know they will be received warmly and with all consideration to their comfort. We will not embarrass them or make demands of them. We only desire for them to have the opportunity to hear the singular truth of the gospel.

4. Make personal contact with those brethren you know who often neglect some of the services of a Gospel Meeting. We have members who do not attend every service of the local church. Take the time to personally invite those folks to come to the meeting. See if there is any hindrance to their attendance you can eliminate for them.

5. We have members who are shut in due to health issues. These are brethren we should never neglect. Now, especially when such a spiritual feast is upon us, be sure to visit them personally or by phone to encourage and comfort them.

6. Finally, recognize the value of your **personal** effort in all of these areas. It will engender both the participation of others but also the elevated spirit with which they participate. As a result, we will have an excellent meeting where all are encouraged and strengthened in the faith.

**Jim Stauffer**

*Flatter me, and I may not believe you. Criticize me, and I may not like you. Ignore me, and I may not forgive you. Encourage me, and I will not forget you.*

**William Arthur Ward**

*One morning I opened the door to get the newspaper and was surprised to see a strange little dog with our paper in his mouth. Delighted with this unexpected "delivery service," I fed him some treats. The following morning I was horrified to see the same dog sitting in front of our door, wagging his tail, surrounded by eight newspapers. I spent the rest of that morning returning the papers to their owners.*

**Marion Gilbert in Reminisce, Reader's Digest, February, 1994, p. 12.**



**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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**Bill Miller**

**Brandon Jimison**

**Casey Dent**

**Joe Hurd**

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

[lenexachurchofchrist.org](http://lenexachurchofchrist.org)

## **NEWS AND NOTES:**

**SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:**

JAN PATRICK, STEPHEN KIMKER,  
STEVE WIMP AND THE MOTHER  
OF ALMA BAUMGARTNER

**SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS:**  
**CHRISTIAN PARENTING PART 2 -**  
**RON PECK TEACHER**

**WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS:**  
**ANGELS AND DEMONS**  
**JIM STAUFFER TEACHER**

**SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:**  
**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT**  
**BAPTISM**



## ***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