

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 22, 2018

## LOCAL CHURCH: DEAD OR ALIVE

Warren E. Berkley

While the New Testament says that a local church can die (**Rev. 3:1**), we should not be rash in expressing that judgment. First, we do not enjoy the insight and authority of the One who gave the verdict against Sardis. Further, there are some things easy to overlook in our haste.

1. Before you get too far into evaluating a group, be certain you evaluate yourself (**Matt. 7:1-6**). The Lord hasn't called us to walk into churches and pronounce them dead. He has called us to evaluate ourselves by the highest standard, be patient, avoid grumbling and pitch in and help. Judgment from a distance and without self-examination is often flawed.

2. Most of the spiritual life of a local church will not be visible when the church is assembled. There are members helping needy members privately; preachers and elders encouraging and studying with members and other events private in nature (**Matt. 6:1-18**). There are members living righteously against the struggles of life, praying, talking to people about the Lord and raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Much of this may not be announced, publicized or obvious between 9:30 and noon Sunday morning.

3. Scriptural leadership is critical to the life of a local church. But there are cases where some resist good oversight. An entire congregation and/or the elders should not be adversely judged by the misconduct of some.

4. The consistent preaching and teaching of the Word of God is essential. If the Word is being presented (even if not in a style or venue you prefer), you should be capable of taking the Word and the lessons from it out of the building and into your life.

5. The care of the members for each other is a sign of life. This care must run far deeper and practical than just the shaking of hands and the smiling of faces. Your judgment about the “emotional tenor” of the group is personal, preferential and subjective. Quick criticism based on “what I want” can express more about me than the group.

6. The life of a local church must never be dismissed based on money, numbers or building. While it is true that faithful members will give to best of their ability, seek to convert people and make the best provision they can for assembling, these three things are not the primary signs of spiritual life. {Many churches pass the test of money, numbers and physical building – but fail to meet the test of submission to Christ.}

7. The key to the life of any local church is, honoring Christ. Poor people and old people can honor Christ can't they? They may not seem to be lively to the eyes of some. God knows.

***There is great value in this article. Far too often we make determinations based on our personal happiness which is judged by our personal opinions of how things should be.***

***As a result there seems, at least in the view of this writer, an unusual number of people in urban communities who jump from one congregation to another based on such unhappiness with the preacher, the elders or some members they deem to be less than they should.***

***It should be the goal of each member to “stick with it” and do their best to have a positive influence on the congregation as a whole and specifically in areas they deem to be deficient.***

***Let each of us vow to truly serve the Lord and not just our personal preferences in the local church.***

Jim Stauffer

# GOSPEL MEETING

MAY 6-9

with

**Warren Berkley**

## Who Will Follow Jesus?

Sunday Class, 9:30

**Why Follow Jesus, Jno. 1**

Sunday 10:20

**How To Follow Jesus, Acts**

Sunday 5:00 pm

**To His Church, Matt. 16:13-18**

Monday, 7 pm

**With Your Family, Mal. 4:6; Lk. 1:17**

Tuesday, 7 pm

**Taking Others With You, Jno. 1:35-45**

Wednesday, 7 pm

**Following Jesus To Heaven**

**Jno. 5:28,29**

We invite the public to join us as bro. Berkley presents lessons from the Scriptures in an effort to help us understand our need to become disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the Son of God.

## **A Brief Look at Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks**

Paul told the young preacher Timothy to *"preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."* (2 Timothy 4:2) Since there is much misinformation and just plain false teaching in the religious word concerning **Daniel chapter nine** it is necessary to take a good, hard look at the scriptures themselves and see what this prophecy truly says and note what it does NOT say and come to a better understanding of God's message for us there.

First, always consider the context of the passage under consideration. A wise preacher once said, "A Text, Taken Out of Context, Is a Pretext." Truer words were never spoken! A verse ripped from where God planted it in scripture is a flimsy excuse (pretext) for teaching a *"damnable heresy"* (2 Peter 2:1, KJV). The context here is that Daniel, the godly prophet, has been reading the words of another godly prophet, **Jeremiah (25:11f)**,

and understood that the time of Babylonian Exile was ending. He then set his face to seek the Lord in prayer and confession of national sin. He is involved in this for the first nineteen verses of this chapter. It is interesting to note that Daniel never personally committed any of the sins which he confessed. As a member of the Jewish nation, however, he shared in the suffering brought about by those sins. The lesson for us today as Christians in America today is very simple: We may neither condone nor participate in the National Sins of America, but as members of the nation we will share in the suffering brought about to the nation by those sins.

Daniel was seeking God's mercy on a thoroughly punished and now penitent Israel.

**Cleveland Reddinger**

## **THE LITTLE APOCALYPSE**

*"Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answered and said to him, do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down. Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled? And Jesus, answering them, began to say: Take heed that no one deceives you" (Mark 13:1-5).*

The title of this article is found frequently in Bible commentaries and other Bible-based books, scholarly or otherwise. Too, writings about eschatology (the end times) often refer to *The Little Apocalypse*. It is applied to **Mark 13** (read **Luke 21** and **Matthew 24**, both *larger*) because Mark writes about the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of time (some believe Mark speaks only of the destruction of Jerusalem; read **Mark 13:30**, then decide). Apocalyptic literature was peculiar to ancient times. Parts of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation contain this type of writing; signs, symbols, and numbers conveyed messages that would encourage those being persecuted; because of the language used, their messages would not arouse the suspicions of hostile, human governments. The final destruction of this world will certainly be an apocalypse. And the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem was certainly catastrophic. The Jewish leaders should have known "something was up." The cleansing of the temple (**Mark 11:15**) and the fruitlessness of the fig tree (**Mark 11:20**) were preludes to God's judgment on the Jewish nation.

Privately, Jesus spoke to four of His disciples, telling them that the temple would be destroyed, and Jerusalem and the Jewish nation would be overrun by the Roman Empire. Jesus described in prophetic, apocalyptic, and symbolic language what was going to

happen (for this reason many conflate the destruction of the temple with the end of the world). How could this be? The temple's size, beauty, and significance were recognized by all, even the Romans. But now, the temple would come crashing down. Naturally, the disciples wanted to know when this would happen. In answering, Jesus posited any number of signs and events that would signal the encroachment of the Romans. Jesus was concerned about His followers, those who would see *"the abomination of desolation"* coming. Persecution, travail, betrayal, false religion, and imprisonment loomed on the horizon. Judgment was coming on God's chosen people. The sun would be darkened and the stars would fall from heaven (symbolic language from the OT). The Son of Man would come on the clouds in judgment. Why did Jesus tell these things? *"But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand"* (Mark 13:23). He said these things to warn and encourage His followers to persevere in the face of these great obstacles. Be on guard. Don't be caught by surprise.

But what about the second coming of Christ? What or where are the signs of His return? Why can't we know the precise day and hour of His coming? The signs for the destruction of Jerusalem were discernable. What about that final, last day? *"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father"* (Mark 13:32). If Jesus says we can't know, then we can't know. We can wake up and watch and be ready!

**Randy Harshbarger**

## Double Yellow Lines

Double yellow lines on the highway mean stay on your side. When we think about that, all that stands between the other person and us are two yellow lines. If one crosses over, there can be tragic consequences. Just two yellow lines and the other persons' willingness to heed the warning, protect us.

Spiritually, we have yellow lines as well. Yellow lines mean there is a restriction. We must stay on our side. Our side is strait and narrow (Matthew 7:13-14). We are bound by God's law and our willingness to obey His law. If we cross over the boundary there are serious consequences (1 John. 3:4). Our eternal soul's salvation hangs in the balance.

Consider, as in driving, when someone crosses over the yellow lines there is an accident and the innocent are hurt. So it is with sin. When we choose to sin someone who is innocent is hurt. For example, consider the person who commits adultery. Their innocent mate is destroyed. Also, when a man gets drunk and his family does without food because he spent all their money on the bottle, the innocent are hurt. Additionally, when a man gets drunk and he comes home and beats his wife and children, the innocent are hurt. By the same token,

when a drunk hits another head on, the innocent are hurt. Similarly, when a parent abuses a child, the innocent are hurt. Likewise, when a man beats his wife, the innocent are hurt. Therefore, the person crossing the yellow line may walk away from the accident but the innocent do not. It may take months, if not years, before the innocent are ever fully recovered. Some don't. No one escapes the hurt of sin, neither the guilty nor the innocent.

Further, just as the yellow lines were meant to keep us on our side of the road, therefore safe, so does God give us His law. His law is called the perfect law of liberty (James. 1:25). Liberty is the freedom to act within prescribed restraint. Today's thinking that liberty means we have permission to do what we want to do is false. That is license. For example, God gave us His marriage law for man's good. He who made us knows we operate best when one man is married to one woman for life. The only exception is when one crosses the yellow, that is, commits fornication. Then the innocent has the right to put away that guilty mate and thus remarry (Matt. 19:9). But again, sin, crossing the yellow line, caused the crash. God said, "Stay on your side of the road." Moreover, God has said drunkenness is sin. He did not make us to be drunk. Our bodies were not made that way.

Happiness does not come from crossing the yellow line; only sin, misery, death and destruction. In reality, our greatest happiness is when we are obedient to God's perfect law which gives us liberty.

It is important that we realize, that we not only must to be careful with our driving, we must to be careful with our soul. Stay on God's side.

**by Rickie Jenkins**

## The Evils of Sin

Sin is a blasting presence, and every fine power shrinks and withers in the destructive heat. Every spiritual delicacy succumbs to its malignant touch... Sin impairs the sight, and works toward blindness. Sin benumbs the hearing and tends to make men deaf.

Sin perverts the taste, causing men to confound the sweet with the bitter, and the bitter with the sweet. Sin hardens the touch, and eventually renders a man "past feeling."

All these are Scriptural analogies, and their common significance appears to be this--sin blocks and chokes the fine senses of the spirit; by sin we are desensitized, rendered imperceptive, and the range of our correspondence is diminished. Sin creates callosity. It hoofs the spirit, and so reduces the area of our exposure to pain.

**John Henry Jowett in The Grace Awakening.**

**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**

**Deacons:**

**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:**

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF  
ABRAHAM



## ***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