

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 8, 2018

ABRAHAM OUR FATHER

by Jim Stauffer

Gal. 3:29 *And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.* Just earlier, we find these verses, **Gal. 3:26** *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*

One of the things we learn in life is the consistency of the human race through heredity. We use expressions like, "He is a chip off the old block", to reference the similarity in physical appearance as well as attitude and demeanor of a son to his father.

If we then, are descendants of Abraham, what are those hereditary similarities that exist? Our knowledge of Abraham comes from the Old Testament that teaches us God made him promises in three separate areas. **Gen. 12:1-3** and subsequent references in Genesis, tell us God promised to give Abraham a land and to make of him a nation and also to bless all nations of the earth through his seed. Joshua tells us He fulfilled all of those promises that pertained to Israel (**Josh. 23:14**). The promise that all nations of the earth would be blessed through his seed was to be fulfilled later.

This, of course, was the promise our text has reference to as the source of our inheritance through Abraham. Paul also tells us how that comes about. He tells us that seed is Jesus Christ, **Gal. 3:16** *Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.* That is followed up in the other passages we have cited above so we understand we put on Christ in baptism as a result of our faith. A faith that is the identifying characteristic of the descendants of Abraham.

Paul defines the faith of Abraham as enabling him to trust in God's promise of a son to him and Sarah in their old age. This faith defines all those who would belong to Christ through faith and therefore be considered the spiritual descendants of Abraham.

Listen to how the apostle words it here, **Rom. 4:19** *Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; 20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. 22 Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. 23 Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, 24 but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification. 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.*

If we choose to belong to Christ, we must exhibit a faith like that of Abraham. That will involve us doing what Abraham did, the commands of God. In **Genesis 22**, God tested Abraham by commanding him to take his son, this son of promise through whom a nation would come and offer him as a sacrifice to God. What a difficult thing this would be. How many of us could even consider such a thing, even in obedience to God? Abraham did, because he believed even if he did offer Isaac up, God could still accomplish what He had promised him (**Heb. 11:17-19**). His faith led him to obedience. It is a similar faith that will lead us to put on Christ in baptism and become *Abraham's descendants, heirs according to the promise.*

Being *an heir according to the promise* is equivalent with being *sons of God through faith in Christ* and that is the equivalent of being *....children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ if indeed we suffer with Him so that*

we may also be glorified with Him. (Rom. 8:16,17)

There is a problem in the religious world concerning the faith of Abraham. Far too many people have been led to believe God rewards us with the inheritance of the promise when we have faith only. There is a very destructive doctrine in religion called salvation by faith only. It is a primary tenet of the Westminster Confession to which many adhere. James goes into great detail in clarification with the illustration of helping the needy. He says if someone comes to you in need of food or clothes and you tell them to go and have plenty to eat and enough to stay warm, you have proven faith without works is dead. You have done nothing to help their situation. He follows this with his illustration of Abraham's faith that was proven when he took Isaac to the mountain and attempted to offer him to God as instructed. He says this kind of faith is that which leaves a man justified before God. He closes his argumentation on this point with these verses, **James 2:24** *You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.* **James 2:26** *For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.*

If we wish to be descendants of Abraham, that is, sons of God through faith, we must act on our faith in obedience to the commands God has given. Those who were sons of God through faith, also put on Christ in baptism. It wasn't that baptism was some meritorious deed on their part that made them sons of God, it was that they had obeyed what He commanded and He justified them according to their faith when they obeyed.

Where our Captain bids us go,
'Tis not ours to murmur no;
He that gives the sword and shield
Chooses too the battlefield
Where we are to fight the foe.

Source Unknown.

BLIND BARTIMAEUS

"Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, Son of David, have mercy on me! So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you. And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. So Jesus answered and said to him, What do you want Me to do for you? The blind man said to Him, Rabboni, that I may receive my sight. Then Jesus said to him, Go your way; your faith has made you well. And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road"

(Mark 10:46-52).

Bible students remember the significance of the ancient site of Jericho, the place where the Israelites landed after crossing the Jordan. Jericho's lower elevation of 800 feet below sea level meant that travelers to Jerusalem would "go up," ascending 3300 feet into the holy city. Jesus and His disciples would soon make that journey of 15 miles; now, though, Jesus works another miracle, His last, as recorded by Mark. Then, Jesus encountered a blind beggar named Bartimaeus.

Beggars would naturally sit by the road; most often, they would sit in tandem, jockeying for a strategic place in order to attract those passing by (**Acts 3:2**). What real choice did they have? Somehow, Bartimaeus knew who was coming—Jesus, the Son of David! Somehow, Bartimaeus knew that He who was coming had the ability to restore sight. The cry for mercy rang forth, not once, but twice. The crowds tried to hush the beggar; he cried louder. *Son of David* is a title laden with great Christological tones. The Messiah of God was the Son of David. The Messiah the Son of David, would sit on David's throne forever (**2 Samuel 7:11-18**). David was king of the Jews; now, the ultimate King of Kings was present. Prophets anticipated this time. *"Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called"* (**Jeremiah 23:5-6; Isaiah 11:1**). Did the Jews who were traveling to Jerusalem for Passover recognize this title? What were their Messianic expectations?

Jesus didn't tell Bartimaeus to be quiet. Jesus asked: What do you want? The reply: *"Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."* I want to see and I know you can make it happen. I know you are the teacher; you are the Lord. Bartimaeus came in faith; his faith made him whole. That wasn't the end, though. Luke tells us that after receiving his sight, Bartimaeus followed Jesus and was *"glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God"* (**Luke 18:43**). Bartimaeus was blind; he was a beggar; after he met Jesus, he could see. Jesus would soon enter Jerusalem for the last time; there He would encounter other blind people. His cross loomed nearby. Jesus would stand before those who could see but refused to see. Do we stand with them? Aren't we all blind beggars? If we are not, shouldn't we be?

Randy Harshbarger

How to Pick a Wife

Long ago and far away I read an article about marital happiness and it contained the following piece of advice: If you are considering a young lady for marriage, take a good long look at her mother, because

over the years that's most likely who she's going to become. Now, no proverb such as this is ironclad, but how often have we looked at the offspring and said to others, "Well, THAT apple didn't fall too far from the tree!" The same is to be said of young men. If you as a young lady are considering marriage, take a good look at his father. If you can't stand his father now, then you probably need to look elsewhere for a husband.

The scriptures teach us that the first consideration in a mate must be whether or not they love the Lord.

"Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; But a woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised." (Proverbs 31:30) Does the family love the Lord? If there is genuine love for the Lord and His will then that is always a good sign.

How do they treat their spouse? It's a good bet that the young man will treat his wife similarly to how his father treats his mother, **1 Peter 3:7**. Does he show her consideration and admiration? Does she treat her husband with respect, or does she make remarks about him when he leaves the room? (**Ephesians 5:33**)

How are they when they are not in a crowd? Are they pleasant to be around or do they tend to give you anxiety? The Proverb writer said, *"A continual dropping in a very rainy day And a contentious woman are alike"*. (**27:15**) A contentious man is just as bad!

By the way, I love my Mother-in-Law, Barb Sutton.

Cleveland Reddinger

While not recommending the opinions of men as the determining factor in the interpretation of Scripture, it is noteworthy to recognize even men of denominational background understood the innovations of men when they occurred

A Bit of Methodist History Concerning Instrumental Music

In a book called: HYMN STUDIES - ANNOTATED METHODIST HYMNAL by Charles S. Nutter, published in 1884, there was hymn no. 27, "Praise The Lord." We give the first and fourth stanzas:

1. "Praise the Lord! his glories show, Saints within his courts below, Angels round his throne above, All that see and share his love.

4. Strings and voices, hands and hearts in the concert bear your parts; all that breathe, your Lord adore, Praise him, praise him evermore!"

What interested us particularly was the comment which followed the above hymn. Mr. Nutter, author of this Methodist Hymnal, said: "The fourth stanza would not have been admitted into any hymn book by the early Methodist. Instruments of music in the church, and especially those with strings were an abomination to them."

"Dr. Adam Clarke [noted Methodist commentator] said, 'Music as a science I admire; but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor.'

"John Wesley ["founder" of Methodism] said, 'I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen.'"

Readers of church history are familiar with these "quotes" - but in a Methodist Hymnal??? Hummmmm!!
by Robert F. Turner; Taken from The Beacon Electronic Edition

Be Willing to Change

"God grant that I may always be right," said a Scottish Theologian, "for I never change." One of his Calvinistic brethren declared, "I am always open for conviction, but I'd like to see the color of a man's eyes who could convict me."

Each used different words, but both came out at the same destination. Neither one entertained the idea of change. Both were stubborn, prejudiced, self-satisfied. They had closed their eyes, ears, and heart to the truth, *"lest haply they should perceive with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart, and should turn again and I should heal them"* (**Matthew 13:15**).

The person who is always right and never changes is usually wrong on many things and always wrong in spirit. The Christian's life begins with a fundamental transformation, the new birth, continues with constant change. The born again creature (**John 3:5**) feeds on spiritual milk that he may grow thereby unto salvation (**1 Peter 2:1- 2**). God's children are to press on unto perfection, that is, full growth, maturity (**Hebrews 6:1-2**). The person who thinks he has reached the top of Pisgah, beyond which no progress can be made, is *"dead while he liveth."*

It is necessary to have definite ideals and strong convictions. God hates a wishy-washy, namby-pamby, unsteadfast person (**1 Corinthians 15:58, Ephesians 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:1-8**). Truly, *"a double minded man is unstable in all of his ways"* (**James 1:8**). But we must make sure that our ideals and convictions coincide with those of heaven. Strong convictions may degenerate into stubborn opinions. Jesus said, *"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"* (**John 8:32**). Our desire should be to know his will and then do it.

Paul Southern; Taken from the Lincoln Bible Reader

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.*

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RON PECK TEACHER

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS:
ANGELS AND DEMONS
JIM STAUFFER TEACHER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:
OUR COMMON SALVATION



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