

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”

March 24, 2019

“MANAGER OR SERVANT”

Jim Stauffer

When Jesus was confronted with His disciples quibbling over who should and would be greatest in His kingdom, he corrected their mindset with the following passage: **Matt. 20:26** *“It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”* As we listen to His words we are drawn to the message that we must become servants and not consider ourselves above the tasks of serving. There are ways we have failed to accept this role or at the very least to misunderstand what He desires of us. Many of our efforts have been misguided so let us take a moment here and view some of the failures we have experienced.

THE CORPORATE APPROACH - This to allow our influence upon the community to come through the church. After all, our building is located in a very obvious place in the community and all can see our sign and know when we meet if they are interested.

Next, we begin to develop programs through which mass amounts of material is sent by mail, internet or any other method in an attempt to tell as many as possible who we are and what we stand for.

THE CONGREGATIONAL EFFORT - This plan is executed when the local church gets together on a day selected and then goes throughout the neighborhood passing out information about the church and its particulars. When we meet. What we believe. We try to communicate the ideal of going to heaven and its connection to “coming to church”.

ACCEPTANCE OF FAILURE - After these efforts have produced little to no results, we fail to realize all such mass production is lacking any real personal touch and therefore has been ineffective. Rather than change our approach, we reason, “People are just not interested in spiritual matters these days.”

THE BIBLICAL APPROACH - We all claim to be

following the example of the New Testament church, the church Jesus purchased with His life’s blood on Calvary. And this we do in obedience to salvation. We obey His word by repenting of sin, confessing Christ as the Son of God and our Lord and being baptized into His death. We do so in worship by assembling on the first day of every week and observing the Lord’s death by the special Supper He instituted, giving of our means as commanded, singing songs of praise to His name, offering our prayers to Him and studying and teaching His word. All this we do just as they did in the first century.

The question becomes, why do we shy away from emulating their approach to spreading the gospel? What is there in the Great Commission that says we are to preach to the world as they are assembled for worship? After all, the New Testament Christians, the ones we claim to pattern ourselves after, *went about preaching the word* (**Acts 8:4; cf. Mark 16:20**) as they were fleeing persecution.

They were not waiting for an assembly or some other special situation. They were instead telling people about their Savior, what He did for them and the hope of salvation that resulted. Can we see where the emphasis must be? I need not tell people about me. I am just one of His many children. What must be told by each of us is what He did to purchase our souls from the clutches, *the bondage of sin* (**John 8:32**).

BIBLE STUDY - No doubt our goal must be to encourage the people we meet, those we know and communicate with regularly, to study the Bible. Everyone knows a phrase or two from the Bible but many are still ignorant of its comprised message. We also know that following Jesus was, is and always will be a minority view. **Matt. 7:13** *“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”* Remember the

parable of the sower. Let us therefore scatter the seed everywhere we go. Talk to all who will listen so the few who have those hearts of good soil have the opportunity to obey the author of eternal salvation. Let us love them as He did in dying for them on the cross.

AIN'T ANYTHING MEANER THAN KILLIN' BABIES

In Marc Connelly's wonderful 1930 play, *The Green Pastures*—wherein heaven is viewed through the eyes of African-Americans in the Deep South—there's a telling scene involving Pharaoh and a court official identified as the head magician.

Pharaoh's order to drown the male Hebrew children has been carried out, but his hatred for the Hebrews hasn't abated, and he's still trying to come up with something to make the Israelites' existence more miserable than it already is. But in response, the head magician says, "there ain't anything meaner than killin' babies, King."

One of the most terrifying passages in the Bible is **Matthew 2.16**: *"Then Herod . . . was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under."*

Pharaoh and Herod have rightly been held in infamy for millennia, but it wouldn't surprise me if before long they're the poster boys for the pagans in this country openly advocating the unspeakable atrocity of infanticide.

(1) In 1973, the Supreme Court said women have a right to privacy that allows them to get an abortion. (2) When asked about the fetus's right to life, the Court arbitrarily decreed a fetus, an unborn child, is a nonperson. (3) The Court further decreed that a person's rights exceed a nonperson's rights, reaffirming that a mother can do with a fetus whatever she wants. (4) Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop—in *The Right to Live; The Right to Die*—pointed out that the Court's logic, essentially, said that life begins at live birth.

But not anymore. Various state officials, including the Virginia governor, have recently argued born babies can be murdered if the mother doesn't want the child. God help us.

I believe there's an equality to sin (**Jas. 2.10**), but I also believe there's an inequality to it as well. I believe all sins are equal, but some are more equal than others. "Whereas all sins," wrote J. W. Montgomery, "receive their just recompense at the last judgment, some sins are such an affront to the divine majesty that they are very likely to trigger imminent judgment in the course of human history as well" (*Slaughter of the Innocents*, 122).

But what bothers me most right now is not what elected barbarians in this country are promoting, but the sense of outrage I've lost over this issue. If—contrary to all Biblical, rational, and scientific evidence—an unborn child can be defined as a nonperson, I'm not surprised murdering a born child is defined as a social good (as Hitler, Stalin, Mao, et al., argued). But I am disgusted that somewhere along the line I lost the virtue of anger and have done next to nothing as what was once a crime (abortion) became a debate that became a practice (legalized abortion) that has now become out-and-out murder (infanticide).

In *The Lord of the Rings*, the two hobbits, Merry (Meriadoc Brandybuck) and Pippin (Peregrin Took), meet Treebeard the Ent (a giant human-like tree). Treebeard was angry about the evils going on around him but had taken no action. When Merry and Pippin fill him in on Saruman's treachery, Treebeard comes to understand "there is something very big going on," and says, "I have been idle. I have let things slip. It must stop."

When it comes to killing babies, born or unborn, Treebeard's self-reproach and resolve are mine. I don't care if what I do amounts to no more than a drop in the bucket or dust on the scales (**Isa. 40.15**); I'm angry, and in godly, legal ways, I'm going to do something. Because listen, there's nothing meaner than killing babies.

Kenny Chumbley

LIFE IS COMPLICATED

Acts of bravery have the power to stir what is best in each of us. At least, we admire acts of bravery—someone runs back into a burning building one more time in answer to some anguished cry for help. We are amazed that someone would risk life and limb to help someone—someone, many times, the rescuer did not even know.

How do people make those kinds of decisions? What obligates a person to risk even life itself, to save another human being? How do you weigh the consequences of such action against the danger you may place yourself in? If you risk your life, then your own family could be in jeopardy. Is the risk worth it?

Does the Bible provide any guidelines for the Christian who is making some kind of evaluation about how to act in certain circumstances? Does the moral standard of the Bible apply in the 21st century? What is right, good, wrong, just, or fair? How do people who have nothing more than their own subjective, inner feelings about what is right or wrong, go about making the right choices in life? And why do Bible believers routinely resist Bible instruction about ethical matters? **Deuteronomy 8:3** says: *"So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make*

you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD." If this world cannot adequately feed us, why do we resist being nourished by God's word? It may be that we have neglected a true, deep, genuine study of God's word. Maybe we have exchanged God's word for the desires, whims, and ideas of man. If so, it is little wonder that we are confused morally, doctrinally, and ethically.

In every aspect of our lives we need to confront God's word directly. What does God say? We reason that it is too difficult to understand; too difficult to agree on what the Bible says; too difficult to apply what the Bible says. The result of these supposed difficulties is that we neglect the very message we need to help us live in right, ethical, spiritual ways.

Many Christians have their minds made up about the way they should live. When confronted with sin in their lives, or, when confronted with Bible teaching that is counter to their own feelings, many say: "My mind is made up. If we disagree, there will be division. Don't try to tell me what God's word says." We decry the moral decay in society; what about the moral decay in the Lord's church?

One result of refusing to listen to God's word is that we easily dismiss our accountability before God. Since when, though, is ignorance of God's word a good excuse for not doing what is right? *"If you say, 'Surely we did not know this,' Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds? (Proverbs 24:12).* Exposure to God's word is something we should be thankful for.

Randy Harshbarger

What I learned by Fasting, 3

Whenever people talk with me about fasting they often make the comment that they "don't have that much willpower", and if they aren't saying it outright you can tell they're thinking it by the way they speak. The dirty little secret (It's called that because it's NOT a secret!) is that 'willpower' is not the strongest characteristic you need. O yes, you do need some, of course, but what you really need is found in **Romans 13:14**, *"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts."*

"Make no provision for the flesh." In his book, "Atomic Habits" James Clear calls this 'structuring your environment'. Get rid of anything which 'triggers' a bad habit by disposing of it, putting it out of sight or whatever. In my case I need to keep all pastries off the counters and in the bread drawer. If I don't see them I am not triggered to eat them and the amount of willpower I need to keep to my fast has gone down drastically. It is STILL NECESSARY, but it's down to a level where I can deal with it till I can develop it

stronger. Your willpower is like a muscle and the more you use it the stronger it will become.

If you're struggling with a sin, alcohol, tobacco, lust, whatever, realize that the craving for these is triggered by something. Examine your life (**2 Cor. 13:5**) and find out what that trigger is and get rid of it, if possible. You may have to make some drastic changes in your life. Be ruthless, after all, given the wages of sin from **Romans 6:23** if you can save only one soul in this life, MAKE SURE IT IS YOURS!

Cleveland R. Reddinger Jr.

The Other Services

Two preachers were talking. One said, "The elders where I preach decided to do away with Sunday evening services because only a handful attended." The other preacher asked, "What do the members think about this?" The first preacher replied, "Most of them don't know." Sad. Would you even know it if the church quit meeting Sunday evening or Wednesday night? What about Sunday morning Bible class? If you showed up for work one day out of four, would your boss consider you a faithful worker? Is it because worshiping the Lord, studying His word, and encouraging each other to good works are less important than secular activities? Is your bank account more important than your soul? *"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works" (Matthew 16:26-27).* *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).* *"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).* *"Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2).*
Keith Sharp | Mountain Home, Arkansas, USA

Luke 8:11-15 *"Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. "Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. "Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. "The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. "But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.*

Let us be reminded to pray for those we support who are preaching in other areas of this country and also of the world. Remember to pray for Kyle Bennett in Boston Ma., Matt Hodge in Marshfield, Mo. and Cleveland Reddinger in El Dorado, Ks. Overseas we need to remember, Wilfredo Pelino and Jonathan Sapitula in the Philippines as well as Moses Tivane in Mozambique.

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

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AND TRUDY MULLEN. **SYMPATHY**

TO: DARLENA MYER (HER
MOTHER) AND TOMESHA
MONTGOMERY (HER
GRANDMOTHER)WHO HAVE
LOST LOVED ONES

**BIBLE CLASSES - SUNDAY - THE
PSALMS - RON PECK - TEACHER
WEDNESDAY - HEAVEN AND
HELL - JIM STAUFFER - TEACHER**

**SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:
GOD'S SALVATION IS
CONDITIONAL**



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