

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 28, 2019

## *Buy the Truth and Sell It Not*

*by Bob Waldron*

One of the most important attitudes one can have in striving to go to heaven is that of intense zeal for the truth of God. Too often, people settle on something far less than the truth. Remember, a counterfeit, though it may look relatively genuine, is nevertheless worthless. Likewise, we cannot enjoy the benefits of truth just by getting pretty close. We must take our position firmly and foursquare on the truth. *"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).*

There are many among us who, like Pilate, would ask, *"What is truth?" (John 18:38)*. Many do not believe in absolute truth. The Bible, however, is absolute, unchanging truth. *"Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psalms 119:89)*. The belief that there is absolute truth is fundamental to one who desires to *"buy the truth and sell it not" (Proverbs 23:23)*.

### **One Can Be Wrong**

It is a fact that anyone can mistakenly be wrong. Paul, when speaking of his past manner of life, before his conversion, said, *"I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day" (Acts 23:1)*. Yet he was before a *"persecutor, and a blasphemer, and injurious" (1 Timothy 1:13)*. How could he have lived in all good conscience when he had been so wrong? The answer is simple. He thought he was right. *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 16:25)*. The fact that we can be wrong means that it does not behoove us to close our minds to further investigation. Jeremiah said, *"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16)*.

### **Faith vs. Opinion**

Naturally, study brings us to certain conclusions. All of us live by certain principles. But upon what do our conclusions rest? All too often they rest upon mere opinion. Realize that if something is a matter of faith, then God must have said something about it. We cannot know the words of eternal life by opinions. One man's

opinion is just as good as another man's; but no man's opinion is worthy to be compared to God's.

You would not want to risk crossing the ice over a river merely because somebody thinks you can. Neither should we risk trying to go to heaven by the opinions of men. The difference between an opinion and conviction is that an opinion is usually a spur-of-the-moment conclusion someone comes up with based upon skimpy premises, if any. A conviction is a conclusion based upon evidence which has been thoroughly studied and meditated upon. God has given us a wonderful book. It furnishes man with *doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, that he may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*.

The Bible is our evidence. It is the truth. When believed, it becomes subjective faith. The Bible did not come from men, so there need be no question about its reliability. It was given unto men though, and designed so they could understand it when they read it *(Ephesians 3:3-5)*. This is not to say that all the Bible is simple to understand. There are difficult portions of it that demand much study. The matters of conversion to God and everyday living are simple and easy to understand. What many find difficult about such matters is the application of that which may be so simple to understand.

### **Feelings — A Poor Standard**

Do not base your conviction upon some peculiar feeling you might have. Feelings are a poor standard of truth. We have already mentioned Paul. We might mention Jacob also who believed with all his heart that his son Joseph was dead, but that did not make it true. Remember, God has given us revelation, facts. Our convictions must rest upon these facts or else we will find ourselves upon shifting sand.

### **Conscience — Not a Reliable Guide**

Neither is conscience a reliable guide in determining whether your convictions are sound or not. The

conscience is very pliable to begin with. Our conscience is usually formed at a tender age. At that time it may be trained to approve good or evil. When we reach maturity our conscience alters and becomes almost unchangeable. From then on it tells us only whether we have done as we learned to do or not.

Changing the conscience then is a slow, difficult project. If your conscience were trained correctly, well and good. If it were trained incorrectly, then it will approve even when you do things that are really wrong, because it was taught that which was wrong. "Let your conscience be your guide" is therefore poor advice. This brings us back again to the fact that we must ultimately make our stand upon the word of God. Everything is to be judged by it.

## A Harlot's Attire

*"And there a woman met him, with the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart" (Prov. 7:10).*

Nothing hurts a child of God more than being accused of dressing like a harlot when they don't realize they are doing so. People often make vain attempts to justify sin by claiming ignorance. If someone doesn't realize that they are dressing in a provocative manner, does it mean it is not sin? Of course not. It may not be the intention of a saint to dress immodestly, but if they are, it is still sin if they are clothed in a lascivious way (**Gal. 5:19**).

So what can Christians do to make sure they are not dressing like a harlot? They need to understand what dressing like a harlot means and avoid it. To begin with, a harlot has seducing on her mind. Therefore, she must dress in such a way that advertises her body. The clothing is to be revealing. Here is a short list of how one reveals their body for show:

**1. Clothes that are very tight.** This means the contour of the body is clearly revealed. Remember, dressing like a harlot is not being nude. The seductress first lures people with her body to entice them to want more. Tight clothes are a signal that says, "look at my body."

**2. Clothes that reveal flesh.** We are not talking about someone not wearing socks or a long sleeve shirt. The flesh we are talking about are parts of the flesh that are not meant for the eyes of everyone. This would include shirts too short. When someone cannot comb their hair without revealing a midriff, then it is too short. Of course, some have it showing without even lifting their arms. Then there are tops with the neck line cut way too low. Also, we have the shorts and short skirts and skirts with slits that go to the thigh. Finally, we have the see through material that people like to wear.

The question is, if everyone dresses like a harlot, does that mean it no longer exists? No. Our society is

bombarded with advertising that uses sex-appeal. They use people that dress like a harlot to sell everything from cars to gum, and from clothing to music. The reason for this is, sex sells. I am told that a movie that doesn't require a provocative scene for the story line, will often have one added just to get a higher rating. Why? It draws people in.

Society has made a distinction between a harlot and one who dresses like one. In God's eyes, both are sin. It doesn't matter if an innocent, naïve child just wants to dress like Brittny Spears - it is inappropriate dress. Somewhere along the way, people have grown accustomed to dressing like a harlot and think it is perfectly fine. As stated earlier, when the majority is doing it, it's difficult to see the harm.

The lust of the flesh (**1 John 2:16**) is one of Satan's strongest tools. Men that lust after women because of the way they dress, are often considered to be dirty minded. That may be the case, however, in the Proverb passage that speaks of the harlot, we are told that she tries to seduce young men who come by (**Prov. 7:6-8**). Let not the innocent, who dress immodestly, be unaware of how they can tempt the onlooker who is also naïve. There are two misconceptions about harlot attire that need to be addressed.

1. It is wrong to think that as long as no one touches you, that your attire is okay. Jesus spoke about the sin that occurs just by looking and thinking about a woman (**Matt. 5:28**).
2. It is wrong to think that as long as you cover the basic parts of your anatomy, it is okay. Remember when Adam and Eve covered themselves with fig leaves, it wasn't enough. God gave them skins to cover them up (**Gen. 3:21**).

It is important that we understand what this article is not saying. It is not saying:

1. That you should be ashamed of your body;
2. That you should always wear four layers of clothing, even in the summer;
3. That you shouldn't dress nice.

What is being said is, to dress the way God wants is going to take an enormous effort. People who don't care if they dress like a harlot can go to almost any store and buy whatever they see. Christians can't do that. It is almost like shopping in a harlot's closet. Just what do we expect to find in the world? The world is offering worldliness and we can not conform (**Rom. 12:1-2**).

Keep in mind that when Jesus was teaching of the kind of example we ought to set, He didn't say, "Let your bodies shine before men, so they can see your good form." He did say, *"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven"* (**Matt. 5:16**). Let us open our eyes and make sure that we dress modestly.

**by Chuck Bartlett**

## HE FIRST LOVED US

*"We love Him because He first loved us. If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also" (1 John 4:19-21).* God's love for us does not need perfecting; His love is perfect, complete, without lack in every respect. This truth should give us confidence as we anticipate standing before God in judgment. Since God has done His part, does this mean there is nothing for us to do? Paul wrote to the Philippians that God was working in them, seeking to complete what was initially begun by the gospel.

**(Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13).** He calls us in love and grace; we answer that call in fear and trembling. We take an active interest in our own spiritual growth.

Our duty to love God and our fellow man is made plain by God's love for us; He loved us first. God acted first. *"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).* Embracing that love can only result in our love for God and for each other. Since God is love, in this respect, the nature of God can be realized in our lives, even if imperfectly (**cf. Matthew 5:48**). The imitation of God's love as reflected in Jesus, is essential for every Christian.

There is an ethical dimension to this matter of love. Loving God means we will also love each other. Saying we love God may seem easy; true love for God means we will also love our brother. To say we love one and not the other is impossible, despite our pronouncements to the contrary. In a practical way, our failure to love each other makes false our claim to love God.

What application can we make in our congregational life? Hatred for a brother or sister is tantamount to murder. *"Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15).* We are liars when we say we love God but hate our brethren. What right-thinking Christian enjoys the words liar and murderer when applied to them? Of course, John is speaking about attitudes of heart that lead to unrighteous, unholy actions.

A good question is: How do people know that you love God? Are you active and enthused about God and His word? Do you participate regularly in worship services? Do you seek to teach the gospel to the lost? Have you spoken a kind word to someone lately? What about the sick and infirm? Do you pray for others? How tangible is your faith? All of these things, and more, will flow from a heart that truly loves God. We do not have to ask God about His love for each of us. But does God have to ask: Do you love me?

**Randy Harshbarger**

## A Return to Our Recurring Theme

This week we return to the recurring theme for this year's articles, and that is; Hiding God's Word Within The Heart of the Believer. The importance of memorizing the word of God cannot be overstated. It helps the Christian to be prepared to meet with and defeat temptation as demonstrated by Jesus in **Matthew 4** where, each time He was confronted with a temptation by the devil, He responded by citing the applicable scripture. For example when confronted with the temptation to turn stones into bread (He had not eaten in forty days) He responded with, *It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (4:4)*

Of course, just reciting a scripture won't make it impossible to sin. That's absurd! However, understanding what that scripture MEANS, and BELIEVING IT, will go a long way toward helping one to resist temptation. Jesus understood that the verse He had just quoted from **Deuteronomy 8:3** was teaching that there are some things which are just more important than others and that the bread of doing God's Word is more important than eating bread made from flour. Here is the second benefit of Hiding God's Word in your heart and that is simply this: Much of the difficulty of understanding the message of many verses disappears when we commit them to our memory. I was taught by folks I loved and respected to pray the sinner's prayer and accept Jesus into my heart. But when I memorized **Mark 16:16** *"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."* My difficulty was erased for the Sinner's Prayer is not in the Bible while **Mark 16:16** IS!

**Cleveland R. Reddinger Jr.**

In his book **Mere Christianity**, **C.S. Lewis** wrote, "Do not waste your time bothering whether you 'love' your neighbor act as if you did. As soon as we do this, we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone, you will presently come to love him. If you injure someone you dislike, you will find yourself disliking him more. If you do him a good turn, you will find yourself disliking him less."

**Our Daily Bread**

*"The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:8-10)*



*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.*

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Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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WHAT HAS THE LORD PROMISED?**



## ***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