

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"

June 16, 2019

Listening to Scripture

by Jim Stauffer

There are two passages of Scripture in Paul's admonitions to Timothy, the young evangelist that resonate when read closely. First there is **2 Tim. 3:16,17**, *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."* Simply stated Paul says we can trust in His word and rely upon it for a guide to righteousness and preparation for everything God would ask of us.

Shortly after these words, Paul charges Timothy with the responsibility of imparting the message of Scripture to his hearers. He says, *"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths."*

(2 Tim. 4:1-4) The seriousness of the charge is contained in the phrase, *In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead.* Timothy is to preach the word and with it to reprove, rebuke and exhort. There is a reason such intensity is attached to this charge. First, the word of God as stated in the earlier passage is profitable for guiding one to righteousness and in the second passage it is the thing that will separate those who trust in God's word from those who are willing to hear something that pleases them instead of correcting any wrong doing in their lives.

It is obvious the majority of religion in the world is of a shallow commitment. Paul is telling us it goes much deeper than one might first believe. God's message to man is one of redemption and salvation. Redemption means buying one back by paying the price necessary. It is often used in connection with redeeming one from

slavery. And in the case of our redemption it is the price Jesus paid on the cross to redeem us from slavery to sin. Salvation obviously refers to being saved from something. That something is the wrath of God that is to be brought on all those who do not know Him or obey Him (**Rom. 5:10; 2 Thess. 1:7-10**).

Sin places one in a condemned condition and God's message, a guide to righteousness leads one to escape that condition and thus be redeemed by the blood of Christ thus saved from eternal damnation.

There is only one way this can be accomplished. It is by becoming obedient to His message of this salvation of which we speak.

If we were to attempt to list all the ways in which the world has lost its way concerning just and righteous behavior, it would take more space and time than we have. But suffice it to say, the world is progressing toward evil and digressing from the message of God.

Why is that, you say? It is because the message of God demands we strive to live righteously. The pathway of the righteous is rigid. It is difficult. It is demanding. Isn't everything of value difficult and demanding? Jesus describes it this way, *"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."* (**Mat. 7:13,14**)

Why would anyone choose the broad way? Simply because it is easy. There are no real restrictions and one can live his life as he chooses with no consideration to this message of God that calls upon him to discipline himself in order to live a godly life.

There is security for your future and mine if we choose to be redeemed by Jesus' work on the cross. That security is found in our willingness to hear what He has to say about how we are to conduct ourselves once we have become a part of the household of God.

That conduct must be guided by the message Paul communicates to Timothy, the inspired Scripture.

"LET THE BIBLE SPEAK FOR ITSELF"

The Bible is a library made up of 66 books, written over a period of some 1600 years, by forty different men. The Bible deals with man's need for salvation. Its message is for all the world. The Bible is *"God's power unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16)*. It can change the hearts of men. It can make weak men strong and sinful men righteous. It can lift our spirits and set us once again on the high road of life.

Great men have commented often on the influence of the Bible. 'Benjamin Franklin, in responding to Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*, said: "Don't publish it (referring to Paine's work). The world is bad enough with the Bible, what would it be without it?" Abraham Lincoln speaking to a friend once during the Civil War said: "I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this book upon reason that you can and the balance upon faith, and you will live and die a better man."

Inspiration says that God's word is *"living and active."* It is *"sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:11-12)*. The Bible is capable of doing what other writings cannot do. It penetrates. It searches. It brings to light the intents of one's heart, whether real or insincere. The Bible is sharp. It can cut into a person and separate him from sin. It examines and exposes any ulterior motives man might have.

The Bible comes to us from God; it is His word **(1 Thess. 2:13)**. The Bible reveals the mind of Deity **(1 Cor. 2:13)**. Things which man sees, hears, or conceives of cannot save, nor do the ideas of men constitute the mind of God. The Bible draws us closer to God because it reveals something about God's nature. Paul told the people of Athens that we are the offspring of God **(Acts 17:24- 25)**. Man is a spiritual being, made in the image of God. He is capable of fellowship with God. God is not described as a man with man's failures. God is righteous and holy.

The Bible is needed because it is the only authoritative record of God's dealings with mankind. Where would man be without the Bible? Without the Bible there would be no record of how God dealt with man in the past and how He will deal with man now. The Bible is needed because it contains the one and only heaven approved plan of salvation. Men are lost in careless rebellion **(Rom. 1:18)**. The Bible offers help **(Isa. 55:6-7)**. The Bible speaks about God's spiritual family, the church, and man's part in this grand expression of divine wisdom. The Bible tells us to live. The morality of the Bible will lift and ennoble any people. The Bible offers the only real hope for the world to come. Let our hearts be stirred by the following words. "Many years ago I entered the wonderful Temple of God's revelation. I entered at the portico of Genesis, walked down through the Old Testament art gallery, where pictures of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses hung on the walls. I was attracted into the Music Room of the Psalms, where it seemed that every reed and pipe

in God's great organ responded to the tuneful harp of David, the sweetest singer of Israel's race. I passed on into the Chapel of Ecclesiastes, where the voice of the Preacher was heard; and into the Conservatory of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley, where sweet spices filled and perfumed my life." "I entered the Business Office of the Proverbs, then into the Observatory of the Prophets, where I saw telescopes of various sizes; some pointing to far-off events, but all concentrated upon the Bright and Morning Star, which was to rise above the moonlit hills of Judea for salvation. I entered the Audience Room of the King of Kings, where I beheld the vision of His glory, through the inspired eloquence of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. I passed into the Acts of the Apostles, where the infant church was being born. I then traveled into the Correspondence Room where sat Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude, penning their epistles as dictated by the Spirit of God." "I finally stepped into the Throne room of Revelation, where I beheld in vision the King of Glory, sitting upon His great white throne; and I heard the chorus of angels as they sang: 'All hail the power of Jesus' name, Let angels prostrate fall; Bring forth the royal diadem, And crown Him Lord of all...Yes, crown Him Lord of all. '"

Randy Harshbarger

Saved by the Blood of Christ

If you're going to get dirty, you better learn how to get clean! I like to work in my shop and even though I work mostly with wood there are times I need to do some metal work and then I get dirty and greasy. To get clean again I have found nothing better than dish soap. It works great! It seems that every kind of dirt or stain has its own cleansing agent. For example in the laundry there are some stains that require the use of a bleach to clean them out of the fabric.

Sin is a stain on the soul of man. Isaiah describes it so in **Isaiah 1:18**, *Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* There is only one cleansing agent for the stain of sin and that is the Blood of Christ. Peter said in **1 Peter 1:18f**, *knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, but with precious blood, as of a lamb without spot, even the blood of Christ.* Paul said the same thing in **Romans 5:8**, *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him.* The Hebrew writer points out the uniqueness of the solution for sin in the sister verses of **Hebrews 9:22** and **10:4**. (You should cross-reference these verses in your Bible!)

The only way to go to heaven is to either die before we sin, which means to die as a child, or to have the stain of sin removed, cleansed, by the Blood of Christ.

Cleveland R. Reddinger Jr.

Readiness of Mind

by L.A. Stauffer

After the apostle Paul departed from the city of Thessalonica, he left behind a few believers, but the Jews in general had closed their minds to the message that “Jesus is the Christ.” These Jews had access in their synagogue to scrolls of Old Testament scriptures. Paul preached from these scriptures that Jesus of Nazareth died for their sins and arose from the dead to prove He is the Messiah the prophets of their nation had anticipated for centuries. Although a few men of that city believed, a host of rabble rousers closed their minds, refused to countenance such an idea, stirred up persecution against the saints, and forced the apostle to “get out of town” late one night (**see Acts 17:1-9**).

Paul made his way some 50 miles down the road to the city of Berea. Again, as was his custom, Paul entered a synagogue of the Jews and began the same process over—alleging and demonstrating from the Old Testament scriptures that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. The apostle found among these Jews open and receptive hearts—men who honestly and eagerly examined the scriptures Paul read in their midst. Luke tells us that these men of Berea not only received Paul’s teaching, but they daily examined the scriptures to determine *“whether these things were so”* (**Acts 17:11**).

When Luke commends the nobility of these Bereans, he made specific note not only of their study habits but also their *“readiness of mind”* (**Acts 17:11**). This attitude was prerequisite and fundamental to their willingness to examine and study the scriptures daily. The word *“readiness”* combines a preposition “before” and the word “mind” to describe the mindset of the Bereans before their study of the scriptures even began. The “mind” is essential to man’s examination or study of the scriptures, but its “before” condition determines whether that study ever takes place. The mind, as the Greek word suggests, must be “ready.”

The minds of the Jews at Berea, as Jews everywhere, were conditioned by scripture to anticipate at some point in their history the arrival of a Messiah—an anointed savior. Hundreds, even thousands, of years had passed since the first prophecies of the coming Messiah and many Jews had become lethargic and indifferent about its prospects. Others were so misinformed that Jesus didn’t fit the pattern of their thinking and was dismissed as perverse and false.

The Bereans, however, were different. They were both excited about the claim and the scriptures that proved it. When Paul unrolled the scrolls of the Old

Testament writings and announced Jesus as the Messiah, their minds were “ready,” “eager,” and “prepared” to examine the prophecies and Paul’s application of them to Jesus.

Would it not be wonderful today if every one of us who claim to be Christians was this eager to grow in Bible knowledge and Christ-like character? If we were, we would daily open our Bibles, examine verses and chapters, and answer a few simple questions that are designed to prepare our hearts for Sunday and Wednesday Bible studies and our lives for eager service in God’s kingdom.

Think, brethren, how much each of us would grow in wisdom and stature with God; think of the knowledge and strength we would gain in preparation for living in an ungodly world of sin; think of the deepened faith we would have in God and in His word; think of the love and care we would begin to show one another; and think of the zeal and enthusiasm we would have to teach sinners.

When Bereans had this kind of mind, God called them *“noble”*—a word that means of “high rank.” That’s who we’d be in God’s kingdom. Not only an *“elect race,”* a *“holy nation,”* a *“royal priesthood,”* but also “noble citizens” ranking high in the mind of God. How special would that be, brethren?

What Kind of Student Are You?

According to James Hamilton, there are two kinds of Bible readers--those who skim the surface and those who dig deep. He describes them by comparing them to two common insects. He writes, "One is remarkable for its imposing plumage, which shows in the sunbeams like the dust of gems; as you watch its jaunty gyrations over the fields and its minuet dance from flower to flower, you cannot help admiring its graceful activity, for it is plainly getting over a great deal of ground.

"But in the same field there is another worker, whose brown vest and businesslike, straightforward flight may not have arrested your eye. His fluttering neighbor darts down here and there, and sips elegantly wherever he can find a drop of ready nectar; but this dingy plodder makes a point of alighting everywhere, and wherever he alights he either finds honey or makes it. If the flower-cup be deep, he goes down to the bottom; if its dragon-mouth be shut, he thrusts its lips asunder; and if the nectar be peculiar, he explores all about till he discovers it. . . His rival of the painted velvet wing has no patience for such dull and long-winded details. . . The one died last October. The other is warm in his hive, amidst the fragrant stores he has gathered." Which type of Bible reader are you? Butterfly or bee?

James Hamilton.

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

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JACKSON AND TRUDY MULLEN.

BIBLE CLASSES - SUNDAY - THE

PSALMS - RON PECK - TEACHER

WEDNESDAY - 1&2 TIMOTHY -

JIM STAUFFER - TEACHER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:

MODERNIZING GOD'S PLAN



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