

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

Anna Surface 2010

John 8:32 And
ye shall
know the
truth and the
truth shall
make you
free.

June
30
2019

CONVICTION=FAITH UNTO DEATH

by Jim Stauffer

Conviction does not need to be noisy, raucous or even necessarily confrontational. Some of those things may occasionally be demanded by the circumstances but often, conviction is seen in the very simple statement by someone professing what they believe and how that faith affects the current situation.

Joshua told the people of Israel shortly before his death he and his household would serve the Lord God Who had delivered them from bondage in Egypt rather than the idol gods their ancestors had worshiped in Chaldea.

Jesus tells the church at Smyrna to properly evaluate the cost of faithfulness but also the prize to be rewarded to the faithful as they were to be called upon to endure persecution, even death. *“Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”* (Revelation 2:10)

Another very interesting occasion of such conviction occurs often in the book of Acts. In **Chapter 4** of the book, Peter and John were arrested for preaching Jesus Christ as the crucified and resurrected Messiah. They were told by the Council not to preach in His name further. *“But Peter and John answered and said to them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge;’ ‘for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.’”* (Acts 4:19,20)

They did not need to raise their voice or offer some violent demonstration in an effort to resist the influence of the Council. They simply stated the facts concerning their belief in Jesus and the events surrounding His death, burial and resurrection.

When they were released they returned to fellow disciples and reported how the Council had tried to discourage and prevent them from preaching Jesus. During that meeting with brethren they prayed to God

for the courage and confidence to continue to preach Jesus in spite of the danger they would be face.

In the following chapter a similar situation occurs. They are again imprisoned for preaching Jesus, but on this occasion an angel of the Lord released them during the night and commanded them to go preach to the people in the Temple. This they did and again the Council reprimanded them for preaching this message of salvation through Christ. This occasion brought this response from Peter and the apostles, *“But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men.’”* (Acts 5:29)

In the 21st Century in America, we have not faced such direct opposition to the gospel of Christ. Yet we are subtly discouraged just as consistently. We are accused of spreading hatred when we challenge sin and point out its eternal effect on the soul of man. Every response of the world to the gospel is to water it down. The goal is to say we preach the gospel but to make sure it does not offend anyone.

Is this nothing more than men choosing to have their ears tickled, as Paul warns Timothy in **2 Tim. 4:1-4**? He says this is turning away from the truth to hear those things we find more pleasing. The charge Paul issues to Timothy is to, *preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.* (vs. 2)

The apostles in New Testament days suffered greatly for their discipleship, but the suffering was not a part of their consideration because they knew who they were. They were disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and it made no difference whether people on the whole accepted or rejected that. They were appreciative of the salvific work of Jesus Christ in redeeming them from their sins. They had a hope of spending eternity with Him in heaven when this life was over. What other consideration should be taken under advisement concerning their conviction of the gospel of Christ?

What about our conviction? Will it endure?

The Church is the Body of Christ

The place to learn about the church is the New Testament. After all, that's where Jesus said He was going to build His church in **Matthew 16:18**: *And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.* It's where we learn about how the church was structured in the first century with overseers and deacons, **Philippians 1:1**, whose authority was limited to the congregation of which they were members, **Acts 20:28**. But it is also here where we learn how God views the Church and it is often quite different from the way that men see her (yes, the church is feminine!).

In the book of Ephesians Paul pictures the church as the Bride of Christ in **5:22-33**, a bride without spot or wrinkle or blemish. Men don't see the church that way, but God DOES! This accords well with the vision of the church throughout the book of **Revelation 21:2**. We also see that in the book of Ephesians the church is the body of Christ. Paul says in Ephesians 1:22f, *And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.* That is, the church is the body of people whom Jesus sees as his own out of all the people of the earth. Peter said in **1 Peter 2:9**, *But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

We are the Body of Christ!

Cleveland R. Reddinger Jr.

THE CHURCH AND SALVATION

In Paul's great treatise on the church, we are told that the church of our Lord is a reflection of divine wisdom (**Eph. 3:10**). While men denigrate the Lord's church, we must still recognize the significance of the church in God's eternal plan for man's salvation. Yes, we need to understand that Christ is our Savior. We need to understand that the church of Christ refers to that saved relationship made possible by Christ's death on the cross. At the same time, we need to appreciate the fact that when we obey Christ's will, He adds us to His spiritual body (**Acts 2:47**). We don't join the church. Rather, we are the church. We need to properly define and understand what we mean by the phrase "church membership," but when we do so, we can say that "church membership" is important. It is important to be in Christ and Christ collates His people together in His church (**Eph. 1:3; 5:23**).

In **Ephesians 5:32**, Paul says: *"This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church."*

The word mystery refers not to something that is deep, dark, and mysterious, or to something that cannot be understood. The word mystery denotes a *scheme, or strategy, or plan*. This helps us understand that the Lord has a plan for our salvation. Men scoff at "a plan of salvation." We are saved "by the man, not a plan" they say. They need to take that up with the Lord.

Paul spoke to the Romans about the plan (**Rom. 16:25**). That which is beyond the natural range of man's comprehension must be made known by divine revelation. God's plan for a time was kept secret or had yet to be revealed. Throughout the Old Testament we are given glimpses of that plan in type and prophecy. But, when the time was right, God revealed fully His plan for our salvation (**Gal. 4:4**). Paul told the Corinthians about how God's mind is revealed i.e., by the Spirit of God. The plan of God for our salvation is not dependent upon what we see, hear, or think. It comes to us from God (**1 Cor. 2:9-12**). We can rightly say that God the Father is the primary cause of our salvation in that He willed it. Christ is the sacrificial cause in that He purchased our salvation with His death on the cross. The Holy Spirit is the revealing cause of our salvation as He revealed "all truth" concerning this great mystery.

When people say that "the church is not essential" or that "one church is as good as another" or "that good people can be saved without the church," they are demonstrating either ignorance or prejudice, and possibly both, about God's will for man's salvation. Yes, Christ is our Savior. Yet, the church is the fullness of Christ; one cannot have anything in Christ if he is out of Christ's church (**Eph. 1:21-23**). Are we thankful for the church, the beautiful bride of Christ? Have you obeyed Christ's will that you might be free from sin and thus be added to His spiritual family? The Savior bids you come.

Randy Harshbarger

INVESTIGATE THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The church of Christ is composed of those who are being saved. It is not a denomination. When a person hears the gospel of Christ, believes it with all sincerity, soberly repents of his sins, confesses Christ as the Son of God and is baptized (immersed in water) by the authority of Christ, God forgives that person all his past sins and seals him with the Holy Spirit. Such is the person considered in the Bible as being saved and added to the Lord's church, the body of Christ. And such is the person rightly called a Christian. Please, confirm all these things in Acts 2:36-47; 1 Cor. 12:13 and Acts 11:26.

God wants you to investigate the church of Christ, the church for which Jesus shed His blood and died. Satan, the deceiver of man from the beginning has created several and various counterfeit churches many of which seem to look in some aspects to be the church of Christ. In denominationalism, Satan has tried to portray the kingdom of Christ as being divided against itself (Matt. 12: 25), but the truth is that Christ is never and can never be divided (1 Cor. 1:12,13). Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His word remains forever unchangable (Matt. 24:35; 1 Pet. 1:25). Like a counterfeit piece of money, which any reasonable person will reject, the Lord wants you to be careful that you do not get yourself stuck in counterfeit churches which exist in every place. Some of these counterfeit churches are very old and popular, while some are fairly new or young but popular too. Therefore, be careful!

Jesus Christ or His apostles did not start any denominations. And you don't read of a Roman Catholic disciple, a Methodist disciple, a Baptist disciple, a Pentecostal disciple or any sectarian disciple in your Bible. Do you? Also, Jesus Christ did not design His church to be shredded into denominations ruled by conflicting creeds. Even His apostles rose up boldly to expose and check those who Satan was using in their time to plant the seed of denominations. Please, read with sober reflection Jno. 17:20,21; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; and Rom. 16:17,18.

If we are sincere, it must be admitted that the Spirit of Christ is lacking in all professed believers who neglect the one divine pattern of Christianity set forth plainly in the New Testament and divide themselves into conflicting, and in some instances antagonistic sects. One sect is Methodist which operates upon a human-made constitution, another is Baptist, another is Catholic, another is Jehovah's Witnesses so called. You also have the numerous brands of the charismatic assemblies, and various brands of so called evangelistic groups. You count and count until you are fed up. This is wearisome to any God fearing, right thinking person who reads about true Christianity as demonstrated in the New Testament during the first century A.D..

The major instruments of division among believers are the creed books, constitutions or manuals of the various sects. Creed contradicts creed, constitution varies from constitution and doctrine conflicts with doctrine. Whereas, the prophet of old had said, "... the Lord is our law giver" (Isa. 33:22), and James also declared "There is one law giver, who is able to save and to destroy" (Jas. 4:12). Even though our God has given us the law in the Bible, people have neglected their Bible and become a law to themselves. The Bible is neither subject to revision or amendment because of its inerrancy. It is all sufficient for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness to equip the man of God for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16,17). However, every sect has written its own constitution, or creed

according to what they felt was right in their own eyes, using the Bible to give it legitimacy.

The main and sure source of information for you to avoid being misguided is the Bible. Therefore, take up your Bible now and start your investigation of the church of Christ, because the Bible is the only book in this world in which "holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Your feelings, your conscience, what the majority are doing or saying, what your parents or ancestors have been doing, what the leaders say, etc. cannot guide you into what is religiously right or wrong. The Bible, the Book of God is the only source of truth in all spiritual and moral matters.

Remember, when you use your measuring tape to measure an object you accept the result without questioning. Will you not accept whatever the Bible tells you in all moral and spiritual matters, even much more readily because it affects your eternal destiny? God has given all men the Bible to enable them to identify the true church of Christ, so they can be saved from being trapped in counterfeit churches which deprive men of the true hope of eternal life. Start today to investigate the church of Christ.

By Ezekiel A. Akinyemi

Will They Know GOD?

After the death of Joshua and his generation we're told in **Judges 2:10 ... there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.** The fruit of their ignorance is found in the 2 verses that follow. **Judges 2:11 and the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals. 12 And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the people who were around them, and bowed down to them and they provoked the LORD to anger.**

A failure to know GOD and all the things which He had done resulted in the participation of pagan worship. This generation was said to have abandoned the Lord and provoked Him to anger. When we are gathered unto our fathers, what will be said of the ensuing generation? A local church will not inevitably be standing 100 years into the future simply because it exists today. Our future descendants will not inevitably be faithful Christians simply because we claim to be one now. In fact the local church that we are a member of now may not exist in the future because of the brand of Christian we are now. Likewise the forthcoming generation from our immediate family may never come to Christ because of our slothful servitude now. What are we teaching? How are we living? What do they see? Will they know God? **(Deuteronomy 4:7-10; 6:4-8; 31:7-10)**

Jay Dixon

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

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

NEWS AND NOTES: SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

JAN PATRICK, ALMA
BAUMGARTNER, STEVE AND
SUZANNE WIMP, TRACY
RICHARDSON, LINDIA
JACKSON AND TRUDY
MULLEN.

BIBLE CLASSES - SUNDAY -
THE PSALMS - RON PECK -
TEACHER

WEDNESDAY - 1&2 TIMOTHY
- JIM STAUFFER - TEACHER

SUNDAY MORNING

**SERMON: THE SECURITY IN
OUR ETERNAL HOPE**



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