

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”

May 17, 2020

## HUMILITY GOES BEFORE HONOR

by Jim Stauffer

*“The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility.” (Proverbs 15:33)*

*“Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, But humility goes before honor.” (Proverbs 18:12)*

*“The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches, honor and life.” (Proverbs 22:4)*

Throughout Scripture man is advised and warned about the need for humility. It is clear obedience is the product of humility. *““On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the LORD. “You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God. “If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people.” (Leviticus 23:27–29)* Scripture then

teaches us the honor that comes with humility is the result of the obedience that emanates from respect for His word. We are after all, His creation. It is necessary for us to be humble if we are to consider the will of the One Who created us *in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. (Eph. 2:10)* Such obedience to His call for the works He has designed for us is at the very heart of salvation. *“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,” (Hebrews 5:8–9)*

Humbling ourselves before God enables us to repent and receive His blessings. *““If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble*

*themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”*

**(2 Chronicles 7:13–14)**

This leads us to another aspect of this humility and obedience. We are to obey those who have the rule over us as they are placed there by God **(Rom. 13)**. There is no doubt it can be difficult to respect some men even when they are given the authority over us especially if they lack character or integrity. But when we view authority through that prism we have discarded the humility we are expected to have as His creation.

Therefore, it is God we are obeying, even as we obey human authority. There is a very specific viewpoint Scripture provides for us in this regard. The apostle Paul teaches the Ephesian brethren a necessary principle in his epistle. *“Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.”*

**(Ephesians 6:5–8)** See the principle? We go about our lives fulfilling our roles in society as if we are serving God in the process and not man. We obey and we serve in the capacity we fill so as not to fail the God Who created us.

We can see why there is so much emphasis on humility in Scripture and also the connection with honor it holds. It is not always an easy thing to be humble. First, we fight the fleshly desire that wishes to elevate us above others. We want to be the smartest guy in the room, the best at whatever is under consideration at the

time. That is the flesh appealing to us for satisfaction. That is the source of the problem Jesus addresses here, *“But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. Do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.”*

**(Matthew 23:8–12)** Now, we see the Lord attacking the the very heart of the issue.

Remember when James and John at the behest of their mother wanted superiority over the other apostles? What was it Jesus taught on that occasion? Servitude. We cannot be the servants we are called to be unless we first learn to humble ourselves *under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.* **(1 Pet. 5:6)** We often sing a hymn based on this very verse.

If ever there was a time for us to see ourselves in appropriate perspective it would be now as we deal with factors beyond our control.

What result does God demand of me? *“He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?”* **(Micah 6:8)**

## Thoughts on the Virus and Us by Gary Fisher

The virus has spotlighted chinks in our armor. I think nearly all of us have caught ourselves thinking in ways that show real weakness. Strengthening ourselves in the Lord is urgent. The virus epidemic isn't over; let us shore up the breaches. Observation: I will use we, but I am not indicting all brethren. I struggle with these things and I think many of us do. If you don't, wonderful! Help the rest of us, gently ... please!

We are too concerned about what others think about us and our church. Jesus was popular, for a while. The early Christians gained the favor of all the people, briefly **(Acts 2:47)**. Even Ezekiel was oddly sought after, during one era **(Ezekiel 33:30-33)**. But mostly they called the head of the house Beelzebul **(Matthew 10:25)**. The early Christians were a sect everywhere spoken against **(Acts 28:22)**. The prophets were rejected and ridiculed. Remember, *“you will be hated by all because of My name”* **(Luke 21:17)**. Because of the virus, the world sees it as deplorably ignorant and arrogant to go to church, to have brethren in our home, to touch or even get close to someone. It disturbs me that I care so much about what others think about me. Jesus preached one

sermon in which He lost thousands of followers **(John 6)**. Our goal is not to be popular or well thought of. The light both attracts and repels **(John 3:19-21)**. I recently read this: Truth all too often dies on the altar of gaining influence. We live in a very politically correct era; we may be despised for our commitment. So be it.

We (I) have been more concerned about physical health than spiritual health, We have heard many lectures on the irresponsibility of doing something that could cause another to get sick or die. Who is warning of the dangers of our shrinking back from one another and thus causing a brother or sister to spiritually weaken or die? I don't have all the answers. But there are some weak brethren with pre-existing spiritual conditions who desperately need contact, assemblies, edification beyond zoom. We don't want to kill anyone physically, but let us all be much more worried about the loss of souls.

We shrink back too much from risks. Health professionals are constantly imperiling themselves (and potentially contaminating their families). We applaud them. I love that little story in **1 Chronicles 11:17-19** where 3 men broke through enemy lines to get David water he craved from the well of Bethlehem. They put their life on the line. David saw the water as their blood! Staring down danger showed their love for David. Reaching out to people at this time risks our health. Some of us may die as a result. We should see this as heroic, not foolish. **2 Corinthians 11:26**.

We have shown more care to avoid the virus than to avoid sin. I assume all of us have taken some relatively strong measures to avoid being contaminated. The virus is contagious after all. So is sin. And way more lethal. Think about your pet sin: pornography, impatience, lying, laziness, pride, greed, selfishness ... Do you avoid it like the COVID? Do you keep away from the things, the people, the places, the situations that could contaminate you?

We haven't trusted God enough. I fear that we haven't reacted all that much differently than the world. I am sure there must be many exceptions. But for me, I haven't prayed enough, seen my life as being in God's hands enough. My first thought has too often been about what steps I should take instead of first turning to God and seeking His protection. We are not supposed to just walk off the cliff; but when the service of God requires us to work near it, we must trust God more than our protective measures. We must not *“fear what they fear”* **(Isaiah 8:12)**. God really is almighty; we can totally trust Him.

I don't believe these worrisome attitudes have been a respecter of persons. I have not done nearly as well as

I should have with them. I fear the virus is taking a larger toll spiritually than physically. May God help us!

## THE BEATITUDES

*“Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets. Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers used to treat the false prophets in the same way” (Luke 6:20-26 NASV).*

Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount turned the conventional values and wisdom of His day on their head. His beatitudes strike at the heart of 1st C., values, systemic values that corroded the Law of Moses and God’s chosen people. Jesus said to look deeper. Don’t settle for the thinking of this world. There is more. Still, these same values, world views, and prejudices continue to corrode the lives and hearts of people today. Why? Could it be that we simply want a kingdom of our own?

*“And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.”* The stakes are raised. Who can be part of the kingdom? To whom does the kingdom belong? To the rich, the powerful, the religious guardians of conventional wisdom? No, the kingdom is for those who are blessed or find true happiness in being poor; the kingdom belongs to them. But weren’t most of the people during Jesus’ time poor? Yes. Being poor then is not necessarily being in abject poverty for the things of this life (“things” though, can get in the way of accepting Jesus). Kingdom people are poor in spirit; they recognize their spiritual poverty. They know that without Jesus and His kingdom they are paupers, even if they had amassed a fortune along the way. Jesus said: *“But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full.”* If this is how you live, if these are the things you want, then you already have your reward.

*“Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied.”* How is your appetite? What fills your heart, your life? Spiritual people have spiritual appetites. Kingdom citizens yearn for, pursue, long for the riches of the teaching of Jesus, even when He demands much sacrifice. The insatiable thirst for God is a thirst that is never enough. How much of God do we want? Jesus fed the multitudes; they were hungry and were blessed with a good meal. They soon, though, refused His offer of

food that would sustain them for eternity. Sadly, we do the same when we are satisfied with what we believe are truly great and lasting “things.” Jesus said: *“Woe to you who are full, for you shall hunger.”* You will always be hungry when you turn from the kingdom of Christ.

The kingdom of Christ stands in contrast to the Roman Empire in the 1st. C. And in contrast to the kingdoms of the world today. Because we live in a social and political and economic context, our response to Jesus’ invitation to be a part of His kingdom will have implications for our everyday walk through this world. The challenge remains: Seek first My kingdom! Will we do that?

**Randy Harshbarger**

## An Answer to Our Quandary!

We ended last week’s article with a question: “And, how could we depend on a God who could not deliver on a promise centuries in the making?” See, if God could not deliver on the promised Kingdom because of the shortsightedness of the Jews of Jesus’ day, then men of all times could thwart the promises of God by their stubbornness. And what would that say about God? “He’s powerless!” Needless to say right-thinking people do not have that problem, and here’s why!

1. In the time of Jesus the church was still future, **Matthew 16:18**. So was the Kingdom, **Mark 9:1**.
2. In **Ephesians 1:22f** Paul said there was only one Body and that it was the church. In this church, the Body, were found *“every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,” 1:3*. Yet in **Colossians 1:13f** Paul says we were transferred into the Kingdom of Christ where there is redemption, clearly a spiritual blessing!
3. **Isaiah 2** tells us *“For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”* In **Acts 1:8** Jesus told the disciples *“and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”*
4. Paul preached the Kingdom, **Acts 28:30f** but he planted churches and suffered care for them, **Romans 16:16, 1 Cor. 1:2** (and many others).

Those who preach a “Postponed Kingdom” are missing the OBVIOUS CONCLUSION from these verses: THE CHURCH IS THE KINGDOM GOD PROMISED! The Apostle John tells us this point blank in **Revelation 1:6** *“and he made us to be a kingdom”*.

The Kingdom of God has been here for 2,000 years and God still wants you to be part of it!

**Cleveland Reddinger**

**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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Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship  
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PECK.** (ZOOM)

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS - **THE  
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(ZOOM)

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON  
YOUTUBE AND ZOOM - **THREE LEGS  
OF PREMILLENNIALISM - (TODAY  
MISAPPLICATION OF PROPHECY  
NO. 3)**



## **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