

# LENEXA EDIFIER

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; Eph. 4:11,12

November 15, 2020

## FAITH AND DISCIPLINE

*Jim Stauffer*

Let us briefly examine the correlation of the following two passages. *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."*

**(Hebrews 11:1)** *"Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified."* **(1 Corinthians 9:26–27)**

First we must notice inherent in the message of Paul in the second passage is the free will man has been given by God. But along with that freedom man is faced with the responsibility that goes with it. We have the freedom to ignore the message God has communicated to us or as in the case of the apostle, the willingness to give heed.

This is where our faith provides the impetus for our commitment and obedience. The challenge of freedom exists in every facet of life. We have the freedom in this country to seek those things which are positive and give effort and support to them. We can honorably employ ourselves with the intent of providing for those of our own household **(1 Tim. 5:8)**. We can love our wives as Christ loved the church and we can submit to our husbands as to the Lord **(Eph. 5)**. But, of course we can do the opposite because we have this freedom.

Let us be reminded, God created man in His own image **(Gen. 1:26,27)** and as our Creator carries the authority over all creation. It is He to whom we must answer for our choices. Therefore, faith is imperative if we are to enjoy a harmonious relationship with Him.

God is the One who offers this thing everyone speaks of called heaven. Everyone talks about that as the destination of departed souls. No one speaks of its counterpart hell which the Lord discusses as the destination of those who do not possess the faith necessary to provide the impetus for the discipline Paul tells us about **(Mat. 25:46)**.

Jesus gives us excellent examples of both the disciplined and the undisciplined in the churches of Asia in His revelation through the apostle John.

Looking at the church in Laodicea we see a great concern with comfort rather than a commitment to self control leading to obedience. *"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 'Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see."*

**(Revelation 3:15–18)** Obviously their commitment was to pleasure and comfort in this life rather than a devotion to the One Who can offer the inheritance in the next life.

Yet we see in the church at Smyrna brethren who were committed to the Lord first even when persecution attempted to discourage them. *"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)**

I believe we can see both by example and direct statement God will respect and reward the one who has the discipline to sustain his commitment to the truth. And that commitment to the truth will be supported by the faith we have in Christ as the Savior of mankind and ruler over the Kingdom of God.

What remains for each of us is what we hear and heed as we live in the freedom God has granted. We are told faith comes by hearing the word of God **(Rom. 10:17)**. God spoke from heaven giving His approval to the message of Jesus in **Matthew 17:5**. We then must decide whether we will walk by the spirit or the flesh. Whether we will mind the matters of the flesh first and foremost or those things of the spirit **(Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:5)**.

We are free to choose. But we then must live with our choices. As the saying goes, choose wisely.

## The Word Made Flesh

*“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, ‘This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’ For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him” (John 1:14-18 NASV).*

Jesus, the divine logos, one with God from eternity, became flesh, one with us, humanity. The self-humbling Savior became a living, human being. At no time did Jesus stop being Deity; at the same time, He shared with us in *“flesh and blood” (Hebrews 2:14)*; He *“had to be made like His brethren” (Hebrews 2:17)*. There could be no going back. In Jesus Christ, God became man. The flesh didn't become the Word; the Word became flesh.

Jesus, Himself God, is the only begotten Son of God (**John 1:18; 3:16; 1 John 4:9**). Rather than thinking of the word *beget*, think of the word *being*. Isaac was Abraham and Sarah's only begotten son; Isaac was their unique and only son as per God's promise to them (**Hebrews 11:17**). If Jesus was not the only begotten Son of God, that is, of the same nature, then how could Peter, James, and John, and others see the glory of the Father when they looked at Jesus? Often in John's gospel, Jesus points to the Father by pointing to Himself (**John 14:9**).

The Word became flesh; salvation is now a reality. We have sinned; now, because God has acted toward us, we can be saved. Our salvation is possible only because Jesus came to die. This fact speaks to how we are viewed by God. In our sin, we feel unworthy; yet, God sent His Son to die. He alone can give life (**John 5:26**). Even John the Baptist is caught up in the wonder of it all! John said: He is higher than I am. I am six months older than the Word, but He existed before I was born. We need Him. Grace and truth come from Him. We need divine favor and we need to know which way to go in life. We follow Jesus because Jesus exeges the Father; He explains and clarifies the Father. Existing in the bosom of the Father, Jesus knows what to say and what to do that we might come to our heavenly Father.

The Word became flesh. Jesus knows all about our struggles. Can we take it all in! Jesus tabernacled in the flesh on this earth. One day we will put aside our fleshly tabernacles and meet Jesus and be like He

is (**2 Corinthians 5:1**). Moses gave the Law; but Moses doesn't take us to the Promise Land. Only Jesus, the Word, the Only Begotten Son of God can do that. John, the cousin of Jesus, sounded like he was excited when Jesus came. Are we?

**Randy Harshbarger**

## The Object Of Saving Faith

**Robert F. Turner**

Paul said, *“I know WHOM I have believed, and am persuaded that HE is able to keep that which I have committed unto HIM against that day.” 2 Tim. 1:12* (Caps mine, rft)

Paul's faith was not in a system, but in the author of that system. The system was right, and obedience to the laws and commands of that system right, because it was God given through Christ. This is not said to suggest that the system is unimportant, but to distinguish between the author and the product. Further, no "man or plan" choice is under consideration here. One can not truly accept Christ without accepting His teachings, nor can one consistently accept the teachings of Christ without accepting His divinity.

### **Philosophic Faith**

Modernism is proud of its current "Christian Philosophy." Preachers and teachers "compare" the various systems of religion, (buddhism, Taoism, and the like) and then urge the acceptance of "Christianity" because of its "superiority." (Naturally, this includes only that part of Christianity approved by the superior intellect of the teacher.) Intentionally, or otherwise, God is made subject to man, and in the final analysis such faith is in one's self, rather than in Him. Accepted on such a basis as this, "Christianity" becomes a human system with human limitations. Having been judged by man, its authority and power is limited to man's level--and can lift man no higher than this.

### **Sectarian Faith**

But what of those who equate their own brand of orthodoxy with "Christianity"? "My church teaches this, so I'll hold to "this" to my dying day." Is such creedalism any better than the philosophy of the modernist? One puts his faith in current theology, another in the earlier creed makers, but neither really trust in Christ.

### **Names and Claims**

And what of those who claim faith in Christ, but refuse to conform to the teachings of Christ? Calling one a Christian does not make a Christian and calling

one's church "of Christ" does not make the church of Christ. Jesus said, *"If a man love me, he will keep my words."* (Jn. 14:23) Note, *"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God."* (2 Jn. 9)

### **Faith and Relationship**

True obedient faith establishes fellowship between God and man, thru Jesus Christ. This relationship can exist as long, but only as long, as we walk in His truth. (1 Jn. 1:3-10) As servants of God, **our allegiance is to God**; not to church, not to creed, not to elders, not to preacher, not to friends, BUT TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST.

This is the true saving faith, and without it there is no salvation. With such faith, the Lord's teachings are not "a" way, but "the way." The consequences, I fully believe, are what He would have them be, and of them I can not be ashamed.

## **WHO IS GOING TO HEAVEN?**

We like quick easy answers, even for our big questions. In the list of big questions, this is the biggest. I need to resist the urge to give you a short answer that does not properly represent God's revelation. The whole Bible is written to teach us how we can be saved from our sins and restored to our Creator. Any brief answer will leave out significant information and fail to do justice to God's revelation.

In this little space, I want to suggest two things that I believe are valuable for one seriously considering the question: Who will be saved? First, read the word of God. Study the word of God. Seek to know the mind and will of God. Do not look for short-cuts and short answers that allow you to pay some dues and move on with your life. Do not take anybody's quick and easy answer so that you no longer need to worry about your relationship with God. Do not seek a formula or ritual that will solve all your spiritual problems. See God and understand His way by seriously studying His word.

Secondly, I will answer a question that is related to the one we are considering: Who will NOT be saved? I am confident as I take you to the words of Jesus for at least a partial answer to this question. *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven"* (Matthew 7:21). This passage warns us against being presumptuously confident about our salvation. This passage emphasizes the need to *know the will of the Father*.

God wants YOU to be saved. He CAN save you. Pay attention to HIM.

**Don Bunting**

## **A Closer Look at Matthew 18:15-17**

**Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.**

*"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."* (Matthew 18:15-17)

This passage is second only to **Matthew 7:1** ("Judge not") in popularity among the replies given by those who have been called out for their sins and their sympathizers. It is especially invoked when one publicly sins in word or deed and is immediately or shortly publicly rebuked for his transgression. The one rebuked and his sympathizers often throw this passage back at the one doing the public rebuking. "You are also guilty because you did not first come to me, or go to him privately, like the Bible says."

These verses are not dealing with sin committed publicly. It is the pattern for dealing with private sin known only to the offender and offended. It has two objectives: to gain a brother and to keep private sins as private as possible. Notice the progression from being known by two individuals (the offender and the offended alone). If it is resolved at this level it need not be known by any one else. If not resolved by the two alone, then it is made known to two or three more called upon to help resolve it. If this fails, then it is made public by telling it to the church. Then if the church cannot persuade the offender to correct it, then he is to be treated as a *"heathen and tax collector"* (the same as withdrawing and having no company with as in **2 Thess. 3**). In this scenario, the sin began privately between only two people and then progresses to public knowledge only if private efforts to gain the offender's repentance is not accomplished.

Insisting on invoking this pattern to be applied to sin already public knowledge reduces the first two steps to mere formalities to say nothing of being unnecessary. When sin is publicly committed it is already past the first two steps of our text. It is being publicly made known as it is being committed. It is known by the church.

Just one other observation about this passage. There is an idea that renders this passage totally unnecessary. If the offending party in a sin is to be unconditionally granted forgiveness by the offended party even before he repents then it makes this whole instruction unnecessary. If this be the case, then the instruction of these verses could be greatly reduced. It would read, "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and put your arm around him and tell him that you love him and forgive him." Then one could go on his way feeling great that he has a forgiving spirit – while leaving the offender still guilty of his fault.

*"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear." (Isa. 59:1,2)*  
*"I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance." (Luke 15:7)*

#### NEWS AND NOTES

##### Sick in need of prayers:

JAN PATRICK, ALMA BAUMGARTNER, TRUDY MULLEN, RENE RATLIFF, DENESE GORING, RODNEY BLOUNT, DAISY DARNALL, BROOKLYN BOYER, JESSIE GIBSON, PAT GAINES IS AWAITING BACK SURGERY - TRACY RICHARDSON IS SCHEDULED FOR SURGERY 11/19/20. THE SISTER OF DAISY DARNALL HAS COVID-19

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS - EVIDENCES - BILL MILLER

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS - THE PARABLES - BY MULTIPLE TEACHERS (BOTH CLASSES OFFERED ON ZOOM)

SUNDAY SERMON: ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS ARE FOUND IN CHRIST JESUS  
STEVE WIMP

**Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer**

**Elders:**

**Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer**

**Deacons:**

**Bill Miller**

**Brandon Jimison**

**Joe Hurd**

*"Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:"*

**(Philippians 1:1)**

#### **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - **Rom. 10:17**

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - **Heb. 11:6**

**Repent** of sins - **Acts 17:30**

**Confess** Christ as Lord - **Rom. 10:9,10**

**Baptism** for remission of sins - **Acts 2:38**

*"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)*

**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.*

#### **ADDRESS AND HOURS OF WORSHIP**

7845 Cottonwood Dr. Lenexa, Kansas,  
66216

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/ Worship

**Visitors welcome**

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**Check out the following websites:**

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[lenexachurchofchrist.org](http://lenexachurchofchrist.org)