

# 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

December 6, 2020

## LIVING EVANGELISM

by Jim Stauffer

*“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)*

Let me first explain the term I have used for a title. We all recognize our need to personally tell the gospel story to anyone who presents an opportunity (**Acts 8:4; Gal. 6:10**). We cannot create opportunities nor take advantage of those we see if our lives are not an example of what we are teaching.

This principle guides us in nearly all aspects of life. We do not seek life counseling from a homeless addict, nor financial advice from someone who has just completed filing for bankruptcy. We do not ask for advice on auto repairs from a person who has never owned or maintained a car. Just the opposite, we seek those whose lives indicate success in whatever field of endeavor we are pursuing.

What Jesus then says to us in our text is, the way our light shines and brings glory to the Father is if we live by such good works. Now this word good refers generally to things beautiful, noble, of good character. Things that are virtuous in nature. Jesus described such things in **Matthew 25:34-46**. There He describes the sheep who He identifies as the righteous who will go into eternal life as those who appropriately respond to the needs of those who are hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick and those in prison. Caring for these would be indicative of a life devoted to good works. Those who do such would be not only pleasing to God but would be obvious to those who see them and glorify God.

That is the Christian who is like the expert mechanic we consult for advice on auto maintenance or the Doctor we consult about our health. They are folks who would be considered trustworthy in the eyes of anyone desiring to draw closer to God.

My purpose is not to make any of us feel badly, but to help us recognize how we are to become a trusted resource for friends, relatives and neighbors. Personal contact remains the number one way people are drawn to Christ. That is because they have met

someone they view as trustworthy with whom they can discuss spiritual issues.

When **Acts 8:4** describes those fleeing persecution as going *about preaching the word* we need to understand they were speaking to those who would trust them sufficiently to have the discussion of the gospel.

Yes, the gospel calls us into a covenant relationship with our Savior Who died for us as the One Who most severely suffered from persecution. And, as Peter tells us, and as Jesus warned His disciples, we are called to walk in His footsteps (**John 15:18-20; 1 Pet. 2:21ff**). But the reward is of such great value the temporary sacrifices of this life are but *light affliction* that our lives must speak this message as well as our words (**2 Cor. 4:16-18; Rom. 8:18**).

Let us then live lives that fit the description of living evangelism. Let us be a reflection of our Savior so it can be that we enable His promise to come to the lives of men. *“Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”” (John 8:12)*

## The Pharisees

*“Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, and said to him, “Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” John answered them saying, “I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know. It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing” (John 1:24-29 NASV).* The Pharisees would naturally be concerned about John the Baptist’s preaching. He was not Messiah, but great crowds from Jerusalem and Judea flocked to him. John made it clear that the Messiah was coming; the one to come would be greater than John. John said that He alone is worthy of all things; I am unworthy. This stir

about the arrival of a teacher of some kind was enough for the Pharisees to come running, asking and demanded answers. They were also setting the stage for many tense encounters with God's Son.

Where and when did the Pharisees originate? Their historical roots can be traced to Alexander the Great and his efforts to *Hellenize* the world. After successful military conquests, begun by his father, Philip of Macedon, Alexander began to force the Greek way of life on a wide swath of conquered peoples. Schooled by Aristotle, Alexander believed the world would be a better place if it embraced Greek culture and spoke the Greek language. Large, influential cities, such as Alexandria, Egypt, fueled scientific and literary interests; in time, the LXX was produced in Alexandria. Alexander died in 323BC; yet, his influence was still being felt in the 1<sup>st</sup> c. In fact, many Jews had become Hellenists (**Acts 6**).

Jews, especially those who lived in Palestine, resisted the influence of Greek culture. Lax morality and a neglect of monotheism prompted the citizens of Judea to rebel. Barbarous acts by Antiochus Epiphanes (military leader from Alexander's army), such as desecration of the temple, forbidding circumcision, and extolling the Greek way of life, led to a number of revolts. The Maccabean revolt helped solidify opposition to Hellenism. Some Jews (priests) compromised with Antiochus; this fueled further fighting against the armies trying to take over Palestine. In time, the Pharisees, the Pious Ones, the Separated Ones, emerged as guardians of true unadulterated Judaism (at least in their view).

We generally think of the Pharisees as severe antagonists of Jesus. While true of many, it was not true of all Pharisees. Think of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Jesus ate in the home of Simon the Pharisee. Others, though, rejected John and eventually rejected Jesus. *"But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John"* (**Luke 7:30**). The opposition of the chief priests, scribes, elders, lawyers, and Pharisees to Jesus permeates the Gospels. Jesus often pointed out their hypocrisy, in spite of their good intentions to maintain the doctrinal purity of the Law (**Matthew 15:1-9**).

The Pharisees were on the alert for someone, whoever that might be, who came to take John's place. Eventually, for envy, they delivered Jesus to be crucified. They were still drinking out of a dirty cup.

**Randy Harshbarger**

## Jesus on Handling Personal Conflicts

As we enter this season of family get-togethers and reconnecting it's great to remind one another of the love we share as family, and tremendously important for our mental health as well. Unfortunately this same closeness will also bring the opportunity for conflicts to arise. This is not a moral failing! It is a natural facet of being free men and women who have the ability to think for ourselves. It is rather how we handle this natural conflict which will be either good or evil so Jesus has given us some instructions on how to handle personal conflicts.

Jesus' words on the matter are best summarized in **Matthew 5:23f**, *"Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering."* And in **Matthew 18:15** *"If your brother sins (against you, CR), go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother."* These are dealing with possibly sinful situations so we are adapting the PRINCIPLE involved for if it works with sin it can certainly work with mere misunderstandings and differences of opinion which involve no sin!

First, if your friend has caused a rift between you two, then you are to go and talk to them. It's not easy, believe me I KNOW, but sometimes all you have to do is show you care and that in itself is enough to heal the rupture. It's easy to say "He caused it! He needs to come to ME!" but that's not what Jesus told us to do, is it?

We'll have more to say on this subject next week!

**Cleveland Reddinger**

## The Lamb's Book Of Life

*And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb.....and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life* (**Rev. 21:23-27**)

How beautiful heaven must be (**Revelation 21:1-5, 22:1-5, 14:13; 1 Corinthians 2:9**). Heaven is not just a dream or make believe place, it is a real place. I know it is real because my Lord tells me it is real (**John 14:1-3**) and John tells me that heaven is a place where there will be none of the burdens and

cares that so often trouble my heart on this earthly journey. I love to sing, "There's a wonderful place we call home, 'Tis a city of glory divine, It is built in the garden of rest, And that beautiful home shall be mine." Our heart should be filled with joy, comfort and peace as we contemplate the day we will fly away to live forever in the wonderful city of God. Having our name written in the Lamb's book of life is far greater than any earthly honor, possession or accomplishment we may obtain on this pilgrimage of life for you see, with our name written in the Lamb's book of life we are part of God's family and we are on our way home (**John 14:1-3; Philippians 3:20-21; 2 Timothy 4:6-8**).

The words of one of our great songs, God's Family, are so beautiful and every time I sing them they ignite a spark of joy in my heart that makes me thankful that I am a member of God's family. I especially like the chorus, "*Sometimes we laugh together, Sometimes we cry, Sometimes we share together heartaches and sighs, Sometimes we dream together of how it will be, When we all get to heaven, God's family.*" When our name is written in the Lamb's book of life, we can with joy in our heart and in eager anticipation sing, "Just a few more weary days and then I'll fly away, To a land where joys shall never end." My prayer this hour is that all who now read these words can with the greatest of confidence say, "I know my name is written there" (**1 John 5:13**)

**Charles Hicks [swabbie5256@gmail.com](mailto:swabbie5256@gmail.com)**

## THE SIN OF DECEPTION

*by Richie Thetford*

Deception is defined as: the act of making someone believe something that is not true; the act of deceiving someone; an act or statement intended to make people believe something that is not true. There are various ways in which an individual can be deceived.

**Lies:** making up information or giving information that is opposite or very different from the truth.

**Equivocations:** making an indirect, ambiguous, or contradictory statement.

**Concealments:** omitting information that is important or relevant to the given context.

**Exaggerations:** overstatement or stretching the truth to a degree.

**Understatements:** minimization or downplaying aspects of the truth.

In the Bible we can read where the authors of

deception are said to be Satan (**Rev. 12:9**), evil men (**2 Tim. 3:13**) and false teachers (**2 Cor. 11:13**). We know that individuals who practice deception are not pleasing to God and will give an account for their actions at the judgment day (**2 Cor. 5:10**).

**Who is Deceived?** There are several occurrences in the Bible that show us who it is that is deceived. We know that the one who hears the word but does not do it, deceives himself (**Jas. 1:22**). The one who does not bridle his tongue, deceives himself (**Jas. 1:26**). If one thinks too highly of himself he deceives himself (**Gal. 6:3**). If one says they have no sin, he deceives himself (**1 John 1:8**). And if one expects to reap what he did not sow, he deceives himself (**Gal. 6:7**).

**How are People Deceived?** There are many different ways in which an individual can be deceived. Most often it is the result of sin (**Heb. 3:13**). Deception can also come from riches (**Mat. 13:22**), smooth words (**Rom. 16:18**), false promises (**2 Pet. 2:18,19**), empty words (**Eph. 5:6**), and even by our own selves (**1 Cor. 3:18**). We do not have to be deceived. In fact the Bible says, Do not be deceived my beloved brethren (**Jas. 1:16**). We must be determined to know the truth and practice the truth so that we will not be deceived. Let us not forget that we are to "Be over, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (**1 Pet. 5:8**).

## Ten Truisms

1. Prayer is not a "spare wheel" that you pull out when in trouble; it is a "steering wheel" that directs us in the right path throughout life.
2. A car's WINDSHIELD is so large and the rear view mirror is so small because our PAST is not as important as our FUTURE.
3. Friendship is like a BOOK. It takes a few seconds to burn, but it takes years to write.
4. All things in life are temporary. If going well, enjoy it; they will not last forever. If going wrong, don't worry; that can't last long either.
5. Old friends are like Gold...New friends like Diamonds. If you get a Diamond, don't forget the



Gold! Because to hold a Diamond, you need a base of Gold!

6. Often when we lose hope and think this is the end, GOD smiles from above and says, "Relax, it's just a bend, not the end!"
7. When God solves your problems, you have faith in HIS abilities; when GOD doesn't solve your problems, He has faith in YOU.
8. A blind person was asked, "Can there be anything worse than losing eye sight?" He replied: "Yes, losing your vision."
9. When you pray for others, God listens to you and sometimes blesses them. Sometimes when you are safe and happy remember that someone has maybe prayed for you.
10. Worrying does not take away tomorrow's TROUBLES; it takes away today's PEACE.

Anon.

*"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:1-3)*

### NEWS AND NOTES

#### Sick in need of prayers:

JAN PATRICK, ALMA BAUMGARTNER, TRUDY MULLEN, RENE RATLIFFE, DENESE GORING, RODNEY BLOUNT, DAISY DARNALL, BROOKLYN BOYER, PAT GAINES HAS BACK SURGERY SCHEDULED FOR 12/9/20. TRACY RICHARDSON HAD SURGERY 11/19/20. THERE WILL BE AN ADDITIONAL SURGERY SCHEDULED TO COMPLETE THE REMOVAL OF TUMOROUS TISSUE.

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS - EVIDENCES - BILL MILLER

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

SUNDAY SERMON: UNLESS WE REPENT

### 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**

**We conduct in home Bible Studies**

**We offer Correspondence Courses**

**Check out the following websites:**

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

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

**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)**