

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



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

**January**

**17**

**2021**

## **LIVING BY PRINCIPLE OR RESULT?**

*Jim Stauffer*

When the Lord said in the Sermon on the Mount, *“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”* (Matthew 6:33), He was teaching us to be guided by spiritual principles that would reward us eternally rather than submitting to the fears of losing out on material things. The following verse explains the value of **verse 33**, *“So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”* (Matthew 6:34)

Those things of tomorrow we are not to be concerned with are listed in detail in the entire chapter. He begins in the first 18 verses of chapter 6 with hypocritical worship and good deeds. Jesus says we should pray, give to the poor and fast for the spiritual benefit and not to be seen and admired by others. This, He says, comes under the heading of practicing righteousness to be seen of men, *“Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.”* (Matthew 6:1) To be sure, genuine righteousness has value in the eyes of the Lord and will warrant a reward of eternal value. But self-righteousness practiced to enhance our reputation among men denies us that reward. Whatever reward is given by men who observe such hypocritical worship is the only reward we will receive.

This brings to mind another statement by the Lord, *“And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.”* (Matthew 10:38–39) On both of these occasions, Jesus teaches us to be guided by the principles of righteousness and trust in Him that earthly life will be taken care of.

Back to chapter 6, He then enumerates many of these earthly concerns we are to dismiss in order to pursue righteousness. Beginning in verse 19 He speaks of wealth, food and clothing as things we are not to worry about. His reasoning is to look at nature and realize God has cared for the birds of the air and the lilies of the field and therefore, He will care for the most important piece of His creation (Gen. 1:26,27; Psa. 37:25). What He desires from us is to place our trust in Him and to focus our attention on things above rather than the things on the earth (Col. 3:1-3).

Now, we must examine ourselves in light of His word. Do we live and are we guided by these principles He has set forth or are we first concerned about seeing to our earthly comfort and then and only then devote ourselves to His cause?

As we look at our lives, we must examine ourselves in light of His word and not compare ourselves with others to produce the result that says, “I am doing better than he is.” We cannot as Paul warns us, compare ourselves with ourselves (2 Cor. 10:12). We must rather follow this advice, *“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you — unless indeed you fail the test?”* (2 Corinthians 13:5)

As nearly all ventures ultimately demand, we must implement the fundamentals, the principles of a given task or profession to be successful. We must live our lives by the principles of righteousness taught by the Lord if we are to receive the reward He has planned for the righteous. *“These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”* (Matthew 25:46)

## David and the Shewbread

Okay, let's try this one more time and see if we can get it straight. We continue to hear folks, even some Christians, who would like to use Jesus' reference to David and the shewbread as a justification for a kind of 'situation ethics' reasoning.

Do you remember the incident (**Matt. 12:1-8**)? On a Sabbath day the disciples had passed through a field and gathered some grain to eat. The old law allowed such gathering (it was not stealing). But the Pharisees criticized them as doing that which was "unlawful". Their complaint was about the 'work' involved in gathering the grain. While not forbidden by the law of Moses, the Jews had invented certain traditions which prohibited this.

In response to this criticism by the Pharisees, Jesus said: *"Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?"* (**vs. 3,4**). He went on to rebuke the Pharisees for *"condemning the guiltless"* (**vs. 7**).

The point here is clear. The Jews regarded David as their great national hero. In the matter of the shewbread, David sinned. (We must take Jesus at His word - David's deed was *"not lawful"*.) The Pharisees overlooked this clearly sinful act. But, in the case of Jesus' disciples, they criticized something that was not wrong (notice that Jesus said it left them *"guiltless"*). Jesus was simply pointing out the inconsistency of the Pharisees in this matter.

And so, we have here no justification for any 'situation ethics' type of reasoning. Jesus was not holding up David as a worthy example. He was not saying that the law can be broken under extreme circumstances. He was not justifying the disciples in a sinful deed. He was pointing out the hypocrisy of the religious leaders of His day. Learn the lesson!

**by Greg Gwin**

## THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

*"There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give Me a drink'"* (John 4:7 NASV).

Samaria was the land that had been settled by Manasseh and Ephraim. Even by the time of Christ, the

Samaritans still retained their identity; they claimed to be descendants of the two sons of Joseph. In the OT (2 Kings 17), the Assyrians invaded the land of Israel, took away captives, and then repopulated the region with exiles from Babylon. When the land persisted in idolatry, the Lord sent lions to get the people's attention. These exiles soon pleaded with the King of Assyria to send someone back to Samaria—someone who knew the ways and culture and the religion of the land. Jewish priests returned and instructed the people in the ways of the Lord; because of the instructions from these priests, the Samaritans saw themselves properly linked to Judaism; yet, they were attached to Mt. Gerizim, where they built an altar for sacrifices.

*"And He had to pass through Samaria."* Because Samaria lay between Judea and Galilee, travelers moving south to north, would take the longer route on the east side of the Jordan River to their destination; the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus really did not have to pass through Samaria; but He did. This tired and thirsty traveler stopped by Jacob's well. Wells in ancient times were surrounded by walls. This protected the precious water in the well; too, it would keep animals and people from falling in. When Jesus spoke to the woman at the well, there were four walls of separation. There was a religious wall; a gender wall; a racial wall; and a moral wall. None stopped Jesus from talking to this woman about water. After all, what else might Jesus talk about!

The woman, a Samaritan, was surprised when Jesus, a Jewish man, spoke to her. Jesus did ask for a drink and then turned the conversation from physical needs to spiritual needs. *"Jesus answered and said to her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water'"* (**John 4:10**). How would this woman know who Jesus really was? She simply thinks that He is a Jew who unexpectedly talked to her. She thinks: Why ask for a drink when you don't have anything to draw the water with? Clearly, you are not greater than our father Jacob. He gave us this well. Who do you think you are?

Jesus replies: *"Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."* How often had this woman traveled to the well for water? To live we all must have water. Now, because of Jesus, we can drink and never be thirsty again. Still, the woman misses the point. Give me this water so I can stop coming to this well. Jesus said: *"Go,*

*call your husband and come here."* The woman answered: *"I have no husband."* Jesus said: *"You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly."* The woman said to Him, *"Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."* Is the woman now beginning to see her need for Jesus' water? Are her eyes opening? Is her heart being moved? *"I perceive that thou art a prophet."* But then she changes the subject. Is she still thirsty?

**Randy Harshbarger**

## ***Believing the Unbelievable Story of Jesus.***

God intends for people to come to Him by faith. Undoubtedly God could reveal Himself to humanity in a powerful, material, undeniable way. Still, God says: *"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him"* (Hebrews 11:6). So, we are called to believe things that are not seen.

Because Jesus is *supernatural*, living outside of the material realm, His life on earth exhibits divine power. How can we believe all the unbelievable things? No single event can convince a skeptical individual, but the cumulative effect of the evidence in varied locations, among multitudes of all kinds of people, in varied circumstances, provide a strong case for faith. One specific event can illustrate how the four gospels all cooperate to make the incredible story of Jesus credible.

Note the story of the wise men who visit the young child Jesus in Bethlehem (**Matthew 2:1-12**). This curious story is recorded only in Matthew's gospel. If there is no God, no spiritual powers at work, this story cannot be explained or believed. However, if we accept the possibility of the existence of God, the incredible story becomes believable. Consider some questions.

- How did the wise men know of the birth of Jesus?
- Why did these Gentile officials even care about the birth of a Jewish king?
- How did they know he was so worthy of their worship that they made this long trip?
- How did they know where to find him?
- When they were close, they asked Herod for help. Why did Herod believe them?
- Where did Herod and his advisors turn to find out where this child would be?

- How could Herod tell them where to find Jesus?
- Why did Herod feel the need to kill Jesus if he did not believe this story?
- How did the wise men know not to report back to Herod who said he wanted to worship?
- Why was Herod willing to suffer the fall-out of the mass murder of children to kill Jesus?
- Why did Joseph take his family to Egypt? How did he know about Herod's evil plan?

Each part of the story confirms the rest! This is not an event in some unknown place in some unknown time. These public, historical events were confirmed by multitudes of people including government officials and religious leaders. These are things prophesied and recorded centuries before they occurred. This is an unbelievable story made credible. That is the nature of the entire life of Christ. Believe!

**Don Bunting**

## **RELIGION**

The 19th-century Danish theologian Soren Kierkegaard identified two kinds of religion -- Religion A and Religion B. The first is "faith" in name only (**2 Tim. 3:5**). It's the practice of attending church without genuine faith in the living Lord.

Religion B, on the other hand, is a life-transforming, destiny-changing experience. It's a definite commitment to the crucified and risen Savior, which establishes an ongoing personal relationship between a forgiven sinner and a gracious God.

This difference explains why for many years British author C.S. Lewis had such great difficulty in becoming a Christian. Religion A had blinded him to Religion B. According to his brother Warren, his conversion was "no sudden plunge into a new life, but rather a slow, steady convalescence from a deep-seated spiritual illness - an illness that had its origins in our childhood, in the dry husks of religion offered by the semi-political churchgoing of Ulster, and the similar dull emptiness of compulsory church during our school days."

*Our Daily Bread*, March 15, 1994.

*"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."* (**Galatians 2:20**)



**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 Jamison**

**Joe Hurd**

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**Check out the following websites:**

[facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist](https://facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist)

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

### News and Notes:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick, Trudy Mullen, Denese Goring, and Brooklyn Boyer.

Tracy Richardson's surgery was successful  
(awaiting biopsy results)

Pat Gaines; Surgery scheduled for 1/21

Covid – 19 – L.A. Stauffer

Sunday Morning Bible Class - Messianic Pathway -  
OT to NT - Jim Stauffer

Wednesday Evening Bible Class - Home and  
Family - Ron Peck

Sunday Morning Sermon - The All Sufficiency of  
Christ our Savior



### **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