

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

3

2021

FOLLOWING THE TRUTH

Jim Stauffer

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

(John 14:6) He follows that later with these comments to Pilate, “Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” **(John 18:37)**

Now in nearly every aspect of life we acknowledge truth to be singular in nature. It is not negotiable, it is static, it is true and can only remain that way if it is unchanged. We would never think of exchanging money for a purchase or a sale with a variable concept of the value of each piece of money. A dime, a dollar, etc. each remain the same in any and all transactions.

Jesus is true in that same way. He is unchangeable **(Heb. 13:8)**. Jesus is God, in fact the God Who created the world and all that is in it **(John 1:1-3)**. Therefore the God Who guided the Israelites from Egyptian bondage to the Promised Land of Canaan, is the same God Who sent Jesus to earth to become man in order to suffer for the sins of God’s creation **(Heb. 2:14,15; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8-11)**. God then tells us if we need an example of how He deals with us to look at the Old Testament Scriptures **(Rom. 15:4)**.

If we then put all these things together we can learn very easily we must give attention to the things Jesus has said to us. We must indeed heed His commands. He is true and He is God. There must be a reverence for Who He is and an acknowledge for What He is.

Therefore, when I say something Jesus spoke is not important or does not have to be obeyed, it is the height of arrogance on my part. It seems easy for man to admit the necessity of obeying Jesus’ promise in **Matthew 10:40-42**, by demonstrating kindness to the needy. It is clear He is teaching us that a part of receiving Him is

the way we treat others.

But it is just as important to show reverence and obedience to the God Who is Truth, when He says, ... *he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...* **(Mark 16:16)**.

It is inconsistent for me to pick and choose which of the teachings of the Lord I will honor as true. He *is* truth and He cannot lie **(Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2)**. Therefore, when the choice is between what God has revealed in His word and something spoken by an intelligent, knowledgeable and even sincere man, I must, if I desire the truth accept the word of God.

Now what we have spoken thus far is very logical and easily understood. Why then the difficulty of religious men all over the world finding agreement in following the truth, the Lord Jesus Christ?

I submit to you men have loyalties and allegiances that are founded in this earthly life. It could be they do not wish to leave good friends who believe those things men have taught them rather than consulting the Bible. It could be as close as family that binds them to a concept that is not in agreement with the truth revealed by the Lord.

In regard to those things we can clearly see how God punished Israel and Judah over and over again in the Scriptures. He did so because they chose to worship idols because of earthly connections and friendships. Jesus says He will demand the same from us today. Listen to what He says, *“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”* **(Matthew 10:37-39)**

Will you decide to be worthy of the Christ by following Him regardless of what others think?

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Cleansing the Temple

“The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem ... He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables ... He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, “Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business.” His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for Your house will consume me.” ... the Jews said: “What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews said, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body. So, when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken” (John 2:13-22.

Passover was celebrated by the Jews annually; all male Jews were required to attend, sometimes taking family members along. The Passover has its roots in the OT (**Exodus 12**). The feast celebrated the Lord’s passing through the land of Egypt; the firstborn in every household was slain unless blood had been applied to the entryway of that dwelling. Amidst cries of anguish, the Israelites walked out of Egypt on their way to Canaan. Today, when Christians think of Passover, they think of Christ. *“Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed” (1 Cor. 5:7).* Animals of all shapes, sizes, and worth were offered in sacrifice during Passover. Out of necessity, those who sold animals and the bankers who exchanged foreign coins for local script, provided needed services. Rather than bring animals from home, worshipers purchased the needed animals in the temple; if needed, their money was changed into local coinage. A problem arose, raising Jesus’ ire, when the money changers and those selling animals inflated their prices far beyond any reasonable, fair value. The temple was dedicated to the Lord for high and holy purposes. Jesus exposed the greed and materialism of these violators. Taking advantage of others was wrong; prayer and worship were turned into thievery. *“Zeal for Your house will consume me”* is taken from **Psalm 69:9 (cf. Romans 15:3)**. The Psalmist (David?) was zealous for the things of God; just so, Jesus would not allow to stand the tables of dishonor in the Temple.

Seeing Jesus turn things upside down, the Jews asked for a sign; that is, who gave You authority to cleanse God’s house? The answer Jesus gave was the eventual resurrection of His body from the grave. The temple in **John 2** had been under construction by King Herod the Great; the Babylonians destroyed Solomon’s temple in 586BC; Jews returning from captivity made attempts at restoration. How could Jesus dare claim to have the power to destroy this magnificent structure? We know and believe that Jesus did what He said He would do. After three days He came forth from the grave. Now, early in John’s gospel, Jesus provides evidence as to His identity, His origin, His nature.

The “Gospel of Belief” identifies who Jesus is. Can we, though, become so occupied with selling animals and making change, that we miss that opportunity? He predicted His destruction by the Jews and His subsequent resurrection; both were true. Instead of picking up the loose change on the floor and setting up tables again, let us stop and listen to Jesus.

Randy Harshbarger

Rejoicing in What Is

This may not seem like it’s a very good follow-up to last week’s article, “Built Not Found” but it really is, as you’ll see.

One of the most popular verses of the New Testament is **Philippians 4:4**, *“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!”* It’s easy to see why. We believers have so much to appreciate in the Lord: Forgiveness of Sins, undeserved! (**Romans 3:23**) The Right to Pray, Undeserved! (**John 14:13f**) The Hope of Heaven, Undeserved! (**1 Peter 1:3-5**) These and many more besides! But, as a practical man who has to live in THIS WORLD until I leave for better places I need to ask this question: Is that all the apostle was talking about? I think not!

Is appreciating the blessings we have in this life not part of rejoicing in the Lord as well? Now we come to the title of this article, “Rejoicing in What Is”. There will always be someone who has blessings you do not. That is just life. Neither I nor my wife has the kind of looks that would make anyone in Hollywood, or just about anywhere else for that matter, give a passing glance. Bruce Willis has the kind of rugged good looks that I was not blessed with. As I was watching my wife get ready for her day recently I, again, thought to myself that I am married to a pretty classy lady. She’s not glamorous by any means. She’s classy, and I’ll take class and character over glamour any day of the week and twice on Sunday.

Rejoice in what is! Don't fret and waste your time over what isn't! It may be just around the corner – or not! Trust that God is blessing you for your good.

Rejoice in What Is!

Cleveland Reddinger

Resolutions Require Commitment!

A reportedly true story is told about a school principal who, at the end of the year, encouraged all his teachers to write out their resolution for the New Year. He promised to post these on the faculty bulletin board so that all could benefit from them.

When the resolutions were posted, all the teachers crowded around to read the suggestions from their co-workers. Suddenly one of the teachers erupted in a fit of anger. "Mine is not here! He's purposefully left mine off the board. He doesn't care about me. That just shows how little I'm appreciated around here!" The principal was shocked. He had not intentionally left anyone's resolution off the board. He rushed to his desk and found the missing note under a pile of papers. He immediately proceeded to post it. The resolution read: ***"I resolve not to let little things upset me anymore."***

What we see here is a clear case of resolution without commitment. All of us are guilty of this -- and it happens too often. Failed diets, abandoned exercise plans, neglected projects, etc., are all the result of lack of commitment.

But, without doubt, the most serious area of concern is in our spiritual service to God. At one time or another we have all said, "I need to do better, and I intend to do so!" It may involve our attendance at the worship services and Bible studies, or it might be in personal study and prayer. Perhaps it involves personal evangelism, visiting the sick, or sharing hospitality with other Christians. Whatever it might be, the resolve is good, but we need commitment to see the task through.

As we enter into this New Year, let's do some serious personal evaluation; make some needed resolutions; and then, FOLLOW THEM THROUGH!

Greg Gwin

Out With The Old, In With The New

As we leave the year 2020 behind and enter 2021, we in just a few more days will pass another milestone on our journey to eternity where we will face our God in judgment (**Acts 17:31**). Even with all the difficulties and hardships of 2021, our journey thus far has been a good

one and I venture to say that we are eagerly anticipating the days and months that now lie in front of us. None of us know what the year 2021 will bring into our lives. I must confess that the turmoil that now surrounds us with so much unrest both socially and politically coupled with the corruption, wickedness and gross immorality that now engulfs this nation, all of which seem to be increasing with each passing day, brings much concern into my heart. Even though I am greatly concerned about what lies ahead, I am not afraid because my trust is in God and I pray this holds true for you also (**Psalms 56:3; Prov. 30:5; Isa. 12:2-3; Rom. 8:28-37; John 14:27**). A deep, abiding trust in God will lift our tired shoulders, turn gray skies into blue and turn defeat into victory.

As we say goodbye to 2020 and enter the year 2021 with all its uncertainty, I pray that each of us will ever remember that our God calls for our best love (**Mark 12:29-31**), best labor (**Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 15:58**), and the best of our loyalty (**Matt. 6:24; Rom. 12:2**). With a firm, unwavering determination to seek the things of God each day of our life will make the path we walk much easier to navigate (**Col. 3:1-2; Matt. 6:19-21; 2 Cor. 5:6-9; 2 Tim. 2:3-4; 1 John 3:18-22; Matt. 6:33**). Hear this from **Proverbs 23:6**. *"My son, give me thine heart and let thine eyes observe my ways."* Giving our hearts to God requires that we pay close attention to the things of God and that we follow Him always doing what is right according to His will (**Luke 6:46; Matt. 7:21-23**). Give God your heart without reservation and by so doing find peace and comfort on this pilgrimage of life rejoicing every step of the way knowing that the best is yet to come (**John 14:1-3; 27; Rev. 21:3-4**).

We are about to close another chapter in the history of our life on this side of eternity. In this hour we need to understand that time is swiftly passing by and one day we will write the final line, the last chapter will end, the book will be closed and we will fly away (**Psalms 90:9-12**). When will it happen? Not one of us knows the answer to this question but we all know it is going to happen (**Eccl. 9:5; Heb. 9:27**). As you enjoy life today, as you eagerly look forward to another year, make absolutely sure that you include plans for the eternity that you one day will step out into. Today while you have the opportunity, give God your best, give Him your heart, believe Him, love Him and obey Him (**Eccl. 12:13**).

*"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" (**Gal. 2:20**).*

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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

lenexachurchofchrist.org

News and Notes:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick, Trudy Mullen, Rene Ratliff, Denese Goring, Rodney Blount and Brooklyn Boyer.

Tracy Richardson is scheduled for surgery 1/11

Pat Gaines; Surgery scheduled for 1/21

Covid – 19 – Jim Ratliff, Jerry Carter, 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 - YOU OUR GOD - 2021



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