

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.

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Humility and Gentleness

by Jim Stauffer

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” (Colossians 4:6)

We all agree we are to contend earnestly for the faith (**Jude 3**) and that such effort must come from God’s word which is authorized by Christ (**Colossians 3:17**). But the end result should be a product of wisdom. Yes the text in **Col. 4:6** speaks of communication with those outside the faith, but follows **verse 5** which says wisdom should prevail in such communication. Such speech should be practiced even more so with our own brethren, if we truly possess brotherly kindness and love (**1 Pet. 1:22**). The logical conclusion would then be if I love my brother my speech would be planned and intended to bring about what is best concerning his soul.

“Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.” (Ephesians 4:29) Speak as to give grace to the hearer. Unwholesome is that which does not give grace to the hearer. It lacks the bitterness and wrath of **verse 31**. This would comport with walking in love as is mentioned of Christ in **Eph. 5:2** in imitation of God. (Exa. Christ, **Luke 4:22 cf. Psalms 45:2**).

All this does not mean we should not teach one another. But it does mean the purpose of such teaching is to lead brethren to practice authorized worship and conduct. That cannot happen in a poisoned atmosphere. Therefore, if I am unable to have a serious conversation with a brother who needs teaching, for whatever reason, I must practice wisdom and seek the assistance of those who can. This is a reference to the wisdom Paul calls for in **Col. 4:5**. Is there some reason I would not practice such wisdom with brethren just as I would with those outside the body of Christ? Of course not, because one of the attributes of maturity in a child of God is brotherly kindness and love (**2 Pet. 1:5-7**).

The summation of these comments is efficiently stated by the Holy Spirit in **Eph. 4:1-3** *“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”*

Take Up Your Cross

by Shane Scott

And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.” And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” (Luke 9:21-23)

Jesus predicted his death three times in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke), and with each prediction Jesus also taught about the nature of discipleship – what it means to follow him. To follow Christ is to imitate Christ, to do what he did, to go where he went. And in this passage, Christ laid out the grim destination of this call to imitation – the cross.

Jesus came to do the Father’s will, regardless of the cost to himself. And he invites us to follow him in the same self-denying journey of commitment to the Father’s will. So that none of us would misunderstand the painful nature of this commitment, Jesus expressed it in the most graphically violent way imaginable in the first century. We are summoned to follow Jesus in the shameful procession to Golgotha, bearing our own

cross on the march to the grisly execution called crucifixion.

This language is not to be pressed into crude literalism (although many Christians through the years have been put to death for their faith – even by crucifixion). But this language should not be diluted, either. Following Christ in absolute commitment to the will of the Father is very, very difficult.

It means surrendering your desires to God's. It means ignoring the jeers of the crowd to stay on the unpopular path of conviction. It means loving and forgiving those who are undeserving (though never as undeserving as you were of the Father's love). It means sacrifice, and some day it could even mean death. But the final destination of the way of Christ is not the cross – it is an empty tomb and a glorious new life. Jesus promised. *"For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it"* (Luke 9:24). Following Christ means losing your life to save it, becoming first by becoming last, seeking greatness by serving others.

So take heart! Yes, those of us who have joined the procession of cross-bearers have chosen the most difficult path of all. But our Lord's resurrection guarantees that the journey will be worth it.

*Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
and all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone,
and there's a cross for me.
How happy are the saints above,
who once went sorrowing here!
But now they taste unmingled love
and joy without a tear.
The consecrated cross I'll bear
till death shall set me free;
and then go home my crown to wear,
for there's a crown for me.
Upon the crystal pavement down,
at Jesus' pierced feet,
joyful I'll cast my golden crown
and His dear name repeat.
O precious cross! O glorious crown!
O resurrection day!
When Christ the Lord from heaven comes down
and bears my soul away.
Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone
by Thomas Shepherd (1693)*

Doy Moyer

We do a grave disservice to our Lord and His people when we make working for the Lord all about what happens in a pulpit or assembly. These things are relatively minor compared to what ought to be done daily by every single disciple of Christ (and you know I'm not downplaying assemblies!).

Those of you who know my wife knows that she works circles around me. I can't keep up. Seriously. The work she does in the kingdom, the teaching she does, the influence she has, is far greater and more impactful than anything I've ever done in a pulpit or Bible class. It is always the running... truth... that I'm brought in to work somewhere because of her. And all I can say is, "Amen."

We need to broaden our scope and concept of what it means to do God's work as His people. What we do in assemblies for a few hours a week is a drop in the bucket of what we ought to be doing every day.

My work is hampered by my own weaknesses, and my weaknesses can become a hindrance to others. My "self" is my downfall (cf. Luke 9:23). This is why I need to grow, to repent, to learn, to reassess, to rededicate continually. If I am to do the work of God, I want it to be about God. Not me, but Him, and I know I can do better. (Why am I hearing, "Amens"?)

No matter who you are, where you come from, or where your talents and abilities are found, be a worker for the Lord. You don't need to be in pulpits to do it. You don't need to be the greatest at the task the world has ever seen. Just take your corner of the world and make it about the Lord every day.

We can do this. Let's help one another for His sake.

Continuedin Prayer

After the death of Jesus, the apostles went back to Galilee and, among other things, we read they returned to fishing. We do not know what they were thinking but it seems they were returning to their former life and that their hope in Jesus was damaged.

When Jesus left them the next time, it was to ascend to heaven, returning to the Father. Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem and that, when they had received power by the Holy Spirit, they would begin preaching. You can read in Acts chapter one that they did return to Jerusalem. How did they spend their time? *"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication..."* (Acts 1:14).

What a difference the resurrection made. There can be no hope or future in a deceased Jesus. One might as well go fishing. However, in a resurrected Jesus, there is clearly power and promise pointing to a great future. When Jesus ascended, they went back to Jerusalem and *"continued with one accord in prayer..."*

Faith in a resurrected Lord changes everything. Believe in Jesus. Spend more time in prayer.

Don Bunting

Whole Integrity **Jonathan Banning**

Have you ever noticed that most everyone has a unique gait? Some are swift of foot, others plod along. Some kind of bounce as they move along, while others move with more fluidity, and there are those few who walk with an unmistakable swagger. I once met a person who walked on their toes. Their heels almost never touched the ground.

Psalm 15 introduces us to a man *"who walks with integrity."* That does not mean he carries integrity in his knapsack or Integrity walks alongside him as a companion. The phrase speaks to his gait, describes his movement, but not in a physical sense. This extends beyond the physical realm. The Lord doesn't care about the balls of his feet or the swiftness of his pace, but about the quality of his spiritual movement. He cares about our spiritual movement. He wants to find that we walk with integrity.

What does that mean? Integrity comes from the Latin word "integer," a term we use in mathematics in speaking of a whole or complete number. That's what integrity describes; something whole, complete or pure. The Lord calls for a walk that is whole. That implies a uniform quality about the walk of integrity. It will not tolerate any deviation. A spiritual walk is composed of hundreds if not thousands of choices every single day. If I walk with integrity all of my choices will line up. They will harmonize and build upon one another, choice after choice, building into a beautiful symphonic whole. One need not wonder why some call the Christian life, "The Well Orchestrated Life." The man who walks in integrity lays his head down at night, and as he ponders the path he walked that day he sees consistency.

"He does not slander with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor takes up reproach against his friend" (**Psalm 15:3**).

He is consistent. Neighbor and foe experience equal treatment. Could you say the same of your walk? *"In*

whose eyes a reprobate is despised, but who honors those who fear the Lord" (**Psalm 15:4**).

He is consistent. He aspires to be like those who fear God and remembers to deviate from the reprobate path no matter how enticing it may look. Could you say the same? *"He swears to his own hurt and does not change..."* (**Psalm 15:4**). Should his promise lead to hardship he will not break it. He is consistent. *"He does not put out his money at interest, nor does he take a bribe against the innocent"* (**Psalm 15:5**).

Do you see the consistency? All of it holds together, every piece of life matches up. This man's path is whole. We often say that to have integrity is to be the same person when people are looking and when people aren't looking. How correct that is! Appreciate that the man who walks with integrity never changes. Pure integrity means every choice is consistent. We have no discordant choice. We find no dissonant action. All of it holds together.

Sadly, I find my life does not always produce such a symphony. Regarding some sins I am incredibly strong, yet regarding others I am pitifully weak. Have you found that to be true of yourself? If we aren't careful we may begin to believe that our strengths make up for our weaknesses, that our wonderful choices in some way negate our failures. With that thinking, our inconsistencies become beloved pet sins. They become tolerable and familiar to us. Though we can't look through our day and find a symphony of consistency we still lay our heads down at night and feel "okay." This lifestyle is the opposite of integrity. The Lord calls out for a walk of integrity, because He loves the life that is consistently devoted to Him. Often we call for harmony with the brethren, still more we call for harmony with the scriptures, but this morning let's heed the Lord's call for harmony within ourselves.

Are you walking with integrity? The Psalmist begins with a question, *"O Lord, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill?"* Inspired by the Holy Spirit the psalmist also gives the answer, *"He who walks with integrity..."* (**Psalm 15:1-2**).

~via Rockville Bulletin; Fairfield, California. Taken from The Market Street Messenger

"Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation." (**Isaiah 12:2**)

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 Jimison

Joe Hurd

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-620-0563

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

News and Notes:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick, Trudy Mullen, Denese Goring, Brooklyn Boyer and George Root. Tracy Richardson now recuperates at home Pat Gaines; Surgery was successful. L.A. Stauffer currently in rehab.

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

Wednesday Evening Bible Class - Home and Family - Ron Peck

Sunday Morning Sermon - The Assurance of our Hope



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