

# THE LEXIA EDIFIER

**ROMANS 14:19 ....Let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.**

**APRIL 21, 2013**

## **JUSTICE AND MERCY (They work together) Jim Stauffer**

Let me join all who have expressed sorrow for those affected by the evil actions of a few in Boston. It seems we have witnessed several horrific scenes over the last couple of years and this has caused many to question the condition of the human race.

Solomon worded it like this, **Eccl. 3:16** *And moreover I saw under the sun, in the place of justice, that wickedness was there; and in the place of righteousness, that wickedness was there.* As you may already suspect from the title and the passage, my concern goes farther than just sorrow for the victims of this attack. It is a concern over how we will prevent more just like it in the future.

My concern is that either we do not know how to prevent such things or we lack the will to enforce what will prevent them.

Isaiah said, **Is. 26:10** *Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal wrongfully, and will not behold the majesty of Jehovah.* Please recognize the wisdom of God and elevate it properly above that of men who willingly sacrifice principle to

gain reelection to positions of power and influence.

Hear what the wisest man of all time had to say, **Eccl. 8:11** *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*

It is apparent to me our problem is mustering the will to mete out justice to perpetrators of such evil as occurred in Boston. Further, any punishment given is delayed for so long it becomes ineffective as a deterrent. This is the point of Solomon.

A perfect example of this is the young man who murdered several people in a theater in Aurora, Co. 9 months ago. At this point he has not even been brought to trial. It is not even on a docket yet. The prosecutors cannot decide how to proceed. The justice system in our country places no time constraints on carrying out this trial of a man who beyond any doubt is the one who committed the crimes.

Let us completely by-pass the argument over whether capital punishment

should be imposed in these cases. If the law calls for it then comply with that law, but if it does not, proceed according to that law. But by all ration and common sense, PROCEED!

The only way punishment will deter crime, and it will, is if the punishment is swift and sure. We are not speaking of lynch mobs and vigilanteism. We are speaking of justice handed down in an orderly time and fashion.

Now we have indicated justice brings mercy. How does that take place? And toward whom should the mercy be extended?

A perpetrator of a crime has the option according to our laws to throw himself on the "mercy" of the court. This usually means he has confessed to the crime and shown remorse. He will now place himself at the mercy of the presiding judge. In most cases he will receive something less than the maximum sentence. In these cases both justice and mercy are at work. But whatever the judge's decision is, there is no value in delaying it. Render the verdict, hand down the sentence and execute it without delay.

The same should be true if he refuses confession and goes to trial. Allow a reasonable time for attorneys to prepare their cases. Then go to trial, gain a verdict, and if there is a sentence, pronounce it and execute it promptly.

The best way to extend mercy to the victims is to stand up for them by bringing justice to those who harmed them. It is the only long-term mercy available and it extends not only to the victims but to would be victims of such future acts. The victims who live will receive mercy at the hands of health experts in hospitals. Those who were slain will only receive mercy in the persons who survived them. The loved ones left behind. The only way we can show any respect to their need for mercy is to have the courage to bring justice to the perpetrators.

Those who mourn the deaths and decry the evil, but lack the gumption to prosecute, convict and execute sentence against the perpetrators have a very shallow and irresponsible sense of mercy for the victims.

God has ordained the powers that be for the purpose of enforcing the law and avenging the evildoer. **(Romans 13:1-4)** The system we have is ordained of God. We should confidently enforce our laws, prosecute criminal behavior

and execute sentences without fear upon those convicted.

Now, will this eliminate evil in the world today? No! Will it deter crime and cause some to consider their actions with fear and wisdom. Yes!

And finally, it is the right thing to do. Isn't it about time we as a nation begin to do things because they are right instead of basing our actions upon what is in it for a few individuals?

## How Great the Kingdom of Heaven

*Jim Stauffer*

**Matt. 5:10** *Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Jesus warned His disciples, "A servant is not greater than his Lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you." **(John 15:20)**

There are, however, promises that put the persecution of the righteous in perspective. First of all, Jesus promises those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake will have the kingdom of heaven. This kingdom is a precious possession according to the prophecy of Daniel, **Dan.2:44** *And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

Those in the kingdom of heaven are the ones Jesus says will go into eternal life. **(Matt. 25:34,46)** The promise of eternal life with God and Christ in heaven is of great value. So great, a man would give all he had to acquire it. **Matt. 13:44** *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.*

This great value is what causes Peter to say, **1 Pet. 3:13** *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good? 14 But even if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye: and fear not their fear, neither be troubled.* It brought the following remarks from the Apostle Paul, **2 Cor. 4:17** *For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; 18 while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things*

*which are not seen for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.* And Paul then made this statement on another occasion, **Rom. 8:18** *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward.*

With this information it is easy to see why Jesus would say those who are persecuted for righteousness sake are blessed or happy.

Who then will accept this offer of Jesus who says, **Matt. 11:28** *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

### **High School Marriages**

**James Wallace Adams**

One of the manias of modern society is the craze *to have too much too soon.* The old virtue of waiting and working to obtain is exactly what we called it, an old (obsolete) virtue. Precocious youth wants a hot rod when it ought to be pedaling a bike, a boy friend when it ought to be playing with dolls. Young married people want an expensive home in an elite suburb when they should be living in a frame cottage on Thrift Avenue.

High school boys and girls rush into the sacred institution of marriage and assume the responsibilities of household bills and children when they should be solving algebra problems and attending football games.

There is a time for everything that is right and proper within itself, but nothing is made better by rushing into it before its time. The divorce courts bear mute testimony to the truth of this statement with reference to teenage marriages. Someone has said, "How can the teenager who isn't ready to make a success of high school think he is ready to make a success of marriage.

Marriage is ordained of God for man's good. It is hedged about by divine laws. Therefore, it should not be entered inadvisedly or hurriedly, but with intelligent deliberation and in the fear of God. Christians young and old should realize that marriage is "until death do us part." Divorce should not be a part of the

Christian's thinking. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" is the principle by which the Christian lives. A relationship so sacred and permanent as marriage deserves mature consideration. It was not designed by Him who ordained it to satisfy the flighty whims and unrestrained fleshly appetites of precocious infants.

### **Pointed Paragraphs**

**R.L. Whiteside**

*"Here am I; send me."* To know the Lord and to realize our dependence upon Him makes us willing, even anxious, to do whatever He wants us to do. There is something fearfully wrong with the heart of one who inquires concerning any duty, will it pay? Is it pleasant work? Will I be thrown with the right sort of people? Will it enhance my reputation? Is the work below my dignity? The true servant of the Lord, like Isaiah, says: *"Here am I; send me."* Like his Lord he can say, *"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to accomplish His work."* (**John 4:34**) *"I delight to do thy will, O my God; yet, thy law is within my heart."* (**Psa. 40:8**)

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A privilege is a right which we may exercise or not, as we choose, Attending the annual feasts of the Jews was a privilege with the women. They could stay at home or go, without guilt. To the men, attending these feasts was not a privilege, but a duty. To fail brought guilt. Christians should do some serious thinking to determine their privileges and their duties. To say that a certain thing is both a privilege and a duty is about as sensible as to say that a certain thing is both black and white. To be baptized, to attend the Lord's day worship, to give, to study God's word, and to obey all other commands are duties, and are not privileges in any proper sense of the word.

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Jeremiah has been unjustly called the "weeping prophet" as if he were some sort of weakling; whereas there was never a more heroic soul. Nothing turned him aside from his duty. If he wept, it was because he loved his nation and his heart was torn with the knowledge of what was coming to his people. He would have been cold-blooded had he not wept.

**Eph. 2:19** So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, **20** being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; **21** in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

**1 Pet. 2:9** But ye are an elect race, royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

**Psalms 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 the 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 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.

**News and Notes:** Let us remember the instruction of our Lord by visiting in whatever way we can, **Mary Czirr, Terry Czirr, Candiss Cason, Irene Hurd, Wendy Taylor and Grant Clothier.**

**Matt. 25:40** *And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.*

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lenexachurchofchrist.org***

Our Meeting times are:

Sunday Bible Classes: 9:30 AM  
Worship Services 10:20 AM&5:00 PM  
Wednesday Bible Classes 7:00 PM

The Church at Lenexa is a congregation of brethren who have been "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (**Romans 3:24**)

As a result of this justification we have been "delivered out of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (**Colossians 1:13,14**)

We therefore respect the inspired word of God that will completely furnish us unto every good work by speaking only as the oracles of God. (**2 Timothy 3:16,17; 1 Peter 4:11**)

**What must one do to be saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

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

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

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be baptized** for the remission of sins - Acts 2:38