

THE LEXIA EDIFIER

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

JULY 21, 2013

IS THERE SALVATION OUTSIDE THE CHURCH?

Jim Stauffer

It seems we cannot contact many people before we hear a phrase similar to this. "I just do my Bible reading and prayer at home. I believe that is just as good as going to church."

Aside from the fact that people do not go to church, they are members of the church, we would like to answer the question posed by our title.

First, let us ask if people realize the implication of such a statement. Jesus said He would build His church and the gates of Hades would not prevail against it. **(Mat. 16:18)** He then gave His life to purchase it. **(Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25)** In the process He overcame the power of Satan through His death and resurrection. **(Heb. 2:14,15; 1 Cor. 15:20-22)** Now ask yourself how important the church is to Christ.

The same people who disclaim the value of the church claim to be Christians, followers of Christ. How can that be when we put on Christ in baptism. **(Gal. 3:27)** Then we learn that same baptism puts us in the one

body which is the body of Christ, the church. **(1 Cor. 12:12,13; Col. 1:18)**

Without fully realizing it, these people are putting down the church for which Jesus died. They are rejecting the opportunity to be part of His body. Accurately stated they have chosen to have no part of Christ. How ridiculous is that position for one who claims to be His follower?

There must be some reason one would come to such a decision. If you question them closely you will hear comments that indicate they believe the church is of human origin, operated by people who impose their standards on others.

Searching the Scriptures will help us understand the church is a spiritual institution housing the spirits of just men made perfect. **(Heb. 12:23)** But further that both blessings and responsibilities await those who are saved and added to the church by God. **(Acts 2:41,47)** And since God has added the saved to the church, we reject Him when we reject the church.

The Christian, a member of the body of

Christ, the church, is the beneficiary of God's great love and tender care. (**1 Pet. 3:12**) He provides for our needs (**Mat. 6:33**) and encourages us to use our right to appeal in time of need. (**Heb. 4:16**) Fellowship with other saints will strengthen us (**Phil. 2:1-4**) and help us on our journey toward the inheritance, heaven itself. (**1 Pet. 1:3-5; Rom. 8:14-17**) These would all be unavailable to the person who rejects membership in the church, His body.

There are also responsibilities incumbent upon the one whom God saves and adds to the church. We have a responsibility to love and encourage our brethren. (**Rom. 12:10**) We are to subject ourselves to the elders of the church duly appointed according to the Biblical pattern. (**Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 3:1-7**) There is work for which the church is responsible and its members must all have fellowship in that work. (**Eph. 4:11-16**) As honorable vessels in the house of God (**2 Tim. 2:19-22**) we are to contribute to the unity (**Eph. 4:3**) and the sustenance of its responsibility to be the pillar and ground of the truth. (**1 Tim. 3:15**)

As we can see, obeying the gospel of Jesus Christ leads to a blessed life on earth and an inheritance in heaven after this life. In the meantime we enjoy the tender watch care of our Father in heaven as we work in His vineyard, serve in His Kingdom, enjoy the benefits of a familial relationship with God and Christ. All this as members of his church.

What about you? Are you a member of the body of Christ? You can and you must be if you wish to go to heaven when this life is over.

THE CHURCH THAT JESUS BUILT

Part I

Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is? And they said, Some (say) John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say unto

thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (**Matt 16:13-19, ASV**)

Heaven had long planned for it and both angels and men had long wondered about the church, which would bring to pass the fullness of the hidden purpose of God (**Eph. 1:3ff; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Eph. 3:1-11**). Involved in the plans of God for the church were the demonstrating of His wise plan for man's redemption, and the securing of such a spiritual privilege for all human beings, Jews and Gentiles alike. It should not surprise any reader that the Christ would here introduce such a subject into the discussion with His trusted associates, into whose hands the work of establishing the church would soon fall. After gaining insight into the varied opinions of men about His identity, Jesus then directly asked the disciples of their understanding of who He was. Peter's response was so profound and timely that here Jesus used the opportunity to anticipate the church, as her existence would rest upon the solid base of truth acknowledged by the apostle. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

The Foundation of the Church

In Peter's confession we hear the two elements of Jesus' person—His Messianic role and His divine nature. Squarely upon this foundation would the people of God, the church, rest. No building is any stronger and more permanent than its foundation; expensive and elaborate buildings begin with foundations planted deep in the earth. Thus God secured for the church a stable and an enduring foundation.

In Old Testament prophecy the Messiah was depicted as deity (**Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Mic. 5:2**). Though they stress different aspects of His role in the world, the witnesses of the Christ all agree concerning His divine nature in their accounts in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The full force of prophecy also presented Him as the Messiah, the "anointed one," which finds its New Testament equivalent in the word for

Christ. Its meaning stems from the practice of anointing, used there to acknowledge one as God's choice for a particular office. Prophets, priests, and kings were often shown to be God's men for the office through the ceremony of pouring oil upon the individual's head. The question arises about which office of the three Jesus was meant to fill. We do not have to choose one over the others, for Jesus came to fill all three—prophet, priest, and king.

He is that prophet like Moses, speaking for God with authority and finality (**Deut. 18:15-18**). In fact, He is God's final prophet, coming after a long line of divinely sent spokesmen (**Heb. 1:1-2**). His prophetic role comes "in these last days," in connection with God's final arrangement for mankind. Jesus also is God's priest (**Psm. 110:4; Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17**). One of the astounding portraits of the Christ in the Hebrew letter is that of His high priestly role, as He offered Himself for the world's sins and then took the blood of His own offering into the holiest of holies in heaven. We lose something of the Christ's significance if we ignore Him as king. The same passage in **Psalms 110** also speaks of His people (subjects) being willing in the day of His power (royal, kingly), and Zechariah declares the simultaneous execution of His dual roles as priest and king on His throne (**6:13**). Jesus assumed none of these roles and undertook no initiative on His own, but He did all in subjection to the Father's will. For all of this work He had been "christed," anointed by the Father. So secure was His standing with God and the basis for it—His messiahship and His deity—that not even the gates of Hades would be able to prevail against the building of the church in the death of the Savior. What certainty the affirmations of the Approved One here conveyed!

Could there be any more solid and enduring foundation for the church? The attempts of men to start their own religious organizations have always manifested their own plans and ideals, but Christ came in demonstration of that eternal wisdom planned by God before the world began. When the church sprang forth on the earth, beginning on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection from the tomb, she came out of the divine womb as a

consequence of people's willingness to hear the prophet, submit to the king, and benefit from the priestly work of Christ. Such was the substance of Peter's confession and such also was the very foundation of Christ's people, His church. Only in hearing Him, bowing before Him, and being cleansed by Him does anyone have any standing with God and any part in His church. Whatever foundation the church has and whatever permanence Christians enjoy in God's long-range plan, we owe to the foundation laid by Christ for His church. Such a foundation assures a people trusting in the One sent by the Father and anointed by Him.

by Bobby Graham

Israel fell because of its own internal corruption, and so has many another nation fallen. That is the greatest danger facing our nation today. When God is ruled out of the educational, social, and business life of a nation all sorts of corruption follows, and corruption means decay and death.

The lesson Israel never did learn, nor has the world yet learned it; **Jer. 10:23 O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Prov. 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; But the end thereof are the ways of death.**

R.L. Whiteside

There'll be no debt ceiling in heaven
Nothing will be left to chance
No sorrow or heartache forever
For Jesus has paid in advance

There'll be no debt ceiling in heaven
No cause to weep or despair
No visions of pushing poor Granny
Off of a cliff in her chair

There'll be no debt ceiling in heaven
No seniors whining for more
No medical bills will be unpaid
When we land on that beautiful shore

Grant Clothier

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: Remember these in prayer. **Jan Patrick, Mary Czirr, Terry Czirr** and **Candiss Cason. Grant Clothier** continues his therapy and recovery from surgery at Overland Park Nursing and Rehab Center, 6501 W. 75th St. Overland Park, Kansas. **Joe Hurd** returned from Mayo Clinic with a good report.

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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We recommend to you the following websites:

***facebook.comlenexachurchofchrist/
thelenexaedifier.com
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