

Romans 14:19 - ...Let us pursue the things which make for peace & the things by which one may edify another

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

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Meeting Times:

Sunday Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:20 am
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Classes	7:00 pm

Fighting the Good Fight

by Jim Stauffer

OUR GOSPEL MEETING IS NEAR OCTOBER 6-9

WITH DEMPSEY COLLINS
A STUDY OF PERSONAL
EVANGELISM

SUNDAY 9:30 – 10:20 AM
SUNDAY EVENING 5:00 PM
MONDAY-WEDNESDAY
7:00 PM

Everything about being a Christian indicates it is a fight to the end. We are told to prepare for a battle, **Eph. 6:10** *Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly*

places. 13 Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness. We are taught to "fight the good fight of faith." (1 Tim. 6:12) We are told to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered" (Jude 3). And that battle for our faith is clearly against the forces of evil led by Satan.

How do we reconcile such a militaristic approach toward faith with the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (**Matt. 22:39**) It is clear there are things we are to love (God and neighbor, **Matt. 22:37-39**) and things we are not to love (the world, **1 John 2:15-17**) and yet there is no contradiction in the command to do both.

How then are we to handle the situation where our neighbor loves the world which we are to reject? The answer is found in the first 6 verses of Colossians 4 where Paul requests the prayers of the brethren

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

that doors may be opened for him to preach without reservation, the truth of the gospel. A gospel that would confront those to whom he preached it with the command to love not the world they presently loved. At the same time he instructed the Colossians, and therefore us as well to, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one." (**Col. 4:6**)

No doubt then, our attitude toward truth and neighbor can be harmonized by our love for both. We recognize truth as originating with God and having the power to free us spiritually from the bondage of sin. (**John 8:32**) We learn to love and appreciate it. We also love our neighbor, having been taught so by Jesus, and therefore, take the opportunity to apprise them of what it can do for their souls.

If this is not the case in our lives, how can we claim to be a child of God, following in the footsteps of Jesus as the Apostle Paul teaches we should. **Eph. 5:1** *Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.*

The Essential Ingredient

Robert F. Turner

No man is without fault, yet we are not amiss in calling some men Christians. What sins may we safely ignore in deciding who is and who is not a Christian?

No congregation is perfect, yet there are surely some congregations that are acceptable unto God. How may we determine a faithful church?

I can hear the lawyer, tempting our Lord with the question: "Which is the great

commandment in the law?" (**MAT.22:36**). And Jesus answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind".

No teaching or commandment of God may be safely ignored. There is no resting place this side of complete and perfect obedience. We are not to "judge" the law, but to be judged by the law; and "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, (deliberately, presumptuously set aside as of no consequence; rft) he is guilty of all" (**JAM.2:9-12**).

Jesus was not choosing one law from among the many, when He answered the lawyer. He was stating the basis upon which our reaction to all laws is judged. Upon this basis we consider all of God's requirements equally important, and seek "with all our heart, soul, and mind" to serve God faithfully. How utterly blinded are those who conclude "just so one loves God; the commandments are unimportant".

The consequences of some sins are greater (in this life) than those of others. There are commandments which are basic in nature -- involving attitudes which affect further conduct -- which are therefore "weightier matters" (**MAT.23:23**) but the "offend in one -- guilty of all" principle holds true. "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

Final judgment is, of course, in God's hands; but Jesus teaches us to judge men (and churches) by their fruits (**MAT.7:15-20**). We may even, to a very real degree, determine one's love for God by this test. Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words" (**JOH.14:23; cf. 1JO.5:3**).

Love and respect for God begins with the reception of the seed of truth, a little leaven. The "germ" of spiritual life must grow

continued on page 3

continued from page 2

to the point that the individual will do what the Lord has commanded him to do for the remission of past sins, and entrance into the new life" (**ACT.2:37-41; ROM.6:3-4**) before we are at liberty to call that man a "Christian". We may admire the sincerity of one who is in this "prenatal" state, and acknowledge that "to this point" he has responded to the extent of his understanding; but this does not make of him a "Christian". Such an one is open, receptive to God's truth, anxious to know more. He "hungers and thirsts" for righteousness. A spirit of self-satisfaction, or pride that genders anger when his status is questioned, would be fruit that indicates a bad tree.

After the "new birth" -- as a member of the Lord's church -- the same tests may be applied. No Christian is perfect, but every Christian is striving to be perfect. Paul said, "Not as though I had already attained...but I follow after..". "I press toward the mark" (**PHI. 3:12-f.**). Any attitude other than this would be evidence of serious and possibly fatal error.

And these principles must also be applied to congregations. How may we determine a faithful church?. It must be a church that, above all else, operates upon the basis of love and respect for Christ, head of the church. Make no mistake. This is not a "warm molasses" kind of love -- oozing sweetness but ignoring the word of God in faith and practice. It is a love that obeys. Which divine characteristics are important, and which non-essential?. All are essential, and the congregation that is not making a conscientious effort to comply with all of the Lord's requirements is doomed.

But some may lack understanding of the Lord's requirements. What then??. As in the case of the Christian, certain

characteristics are necessary for identity. A given "group" has no right to be considered a "church of Christ" who has not conformed to NT standards. But people who really want to serve the Lord will have little difficulty in determining His will and walking in His ways.

The big problem is congregations that have "left their first love". Being filled with pride; self-willed; they measure themselves by themselves (or the majority of churches of Christ). The essential ingredient is missing (**REV.2:4-f**) and every fault becomes a declaration of apostasy.

Preparation for Our warfare

Recently National Geographic ran an article about the Alaskan bull moose. The males of the species battle for dominance during the fall breeding season, literally going head-to-head with antlers crunching together as they collide. Often the antlers, their only weapon are broken. That ensures defeat. The heftiest moose, with the largest and strongest antlers, triumphs. Therefore, the battle fought in the fall is really won during the summer, when the moose eat continually. The one that consumes the best diet for growing antlers and gaining weight will be the heavyweight in the fight. Those that eat inadequately sport weaker antlers and less bulk. There is a lesson here for us. Spiritual battles await. Satan will choose a season to attack. Will we be victorious, or will we fall? Much depends on what we do now--before the wars begin. The bull-moose principle: Enduring faith, strength, and wisdom for trials are best developed before they're needed.

Craig Brian Larson

2 Tim. 2:15 *Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.*

News & Notes

by Jim Stauffer

Eph. 2:19-21 “So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 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 1:1-6 “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; but his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 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. The wicked are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish.”

Let us remember the instruction of our Lord by visiting in whatever way we can, **Jan Patrick, Terry Czirr** and **Candiss Cason**.

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.”

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**).

EVANGELIST & EDITOR:
Jim Stauffer

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WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

- **HEAR** the gospel, **Romans 10:17**
- **BELIEVE** in Jesus Christ, **Hebrews 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**

