

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

SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

by Jim Stauffer

The gospel is truly a simple message. As Paul closes out his letter to the Romans he offers a brief capsule of the redemption plan of God that was designed before the foundations of the world. (**Eph. 1:3-7**)

In **Rom. 16:25-27** he mentions three phrases through which God can establish/strengthen man. Each of these phrases further defines God's message of salvation to man.

First, he says God is able to establish/strengthen us "*according to my gospel*" as he refers to the gospel he has preached all over Asia Minor. He had spoken of this gospel earlier in the book when he said, "*it is the power of God unto salvation.*" (**Rom. 1:16**)

The next way in which God can establish/strengthen us is by the preaching of Jesus Christ. It is not coincidence that Paul uses this phrase to further define "his gospel." He also explained the role of Christ in the gospel earlier in this letter. He says in the introduction of chapter 1, he (Paul) was "separated unto the gospel." He then says in the succeeding verses of that chapter Jesus was the subject of the gospel. He "*was declared to be the son of God.*" This declaration, he says, was by His

resurrection from the dead. All then are called to be Jesus Christ's and are called to be saints, by the message of this gospel, which is the preaching of Christ.

Another way he says God establishes/strengthens us is by the "*revelation of the mystery which had been kept in silence through times eternal.*" As referred to earlier, Paul stated this plan for the redemption of man was planned before the foundations of the world. Yet it was not introduced until the appropriate time. Paul explains, **Gal. 4:4** *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.* This mystery was revealed to Paul by the Holy Spirit, (**Eph. 3:3; 1 Cor. 2:10-13**) promised by the prophets, (**1 Pet. 1:10,11**) and delivered in the person of Jesus Christ. (**1 Tim. 3:16**)

The final note Paul includes in his closing statement is that God can establish/strengthen us if we are "*obedient to the faith.*" Obedient to what faith? "*The faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.*" (**Jude 3**)

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It is an obvious conclusion then that we are established/strengthened through one source, the gospel of Jesus Christ. No message from human philosophy accomplishes this strength which results from a bond between God and man. No religious message from any source other than the revealed mystery of God can accomplish this goal.

It is equally obvious that this strength can only come if we are obedient to the faith. We cannot disregard the teaching of the gospel, nor can we become obedient to anything other than the gospel and expect to receive this bond with God.

It is interesting how God has provided but it is still our choice to partake. God will lead us to the water, but as the old saying goes, will not make us drink.

SNATCH THEM OUT OF THE FIRE

Carey Scott

I sat with tears in my eyes as I listened intently to the news reports about an event that happened near my home the other day.

During the morning rush hour on Monday, a bus filled with passengers was traveling in the special lane designed for multiple passenger vehicles. The driver might have been distracted, because he did not notice the traffic ahead had slowed down to a very slow pace. The bus plowed into the back end of an SUV containing a mother and her children.

By the time onlookers and fellow motorist got to the scene to render aid, the gas tank began to burn. The mother was helped out and someone pulled the little boy out, but the nine-year old girl was trapped. About ten to twenty people tried to help get the girl out, yet without success. After fifteen fire extinguishers were exhausted, the flames finally overtook the vehicle and the little girl burned to death. All this happened within a few minutes. It was a horrible tragedy.

I can only imagine the horror that was going through the minds of those people standing by and watching this little girl perish. The pain of a mother watching her child die cannot be put into words. Whatever happens to the driver who caused the accident is yet to be determined, but just knowing that he killed a person will haunt him for life.

But, as I reflect upon these events there are other things that come to mind.

I can only imagine the cursing and swearing by the thousands of motorists on their way to work because they were inconvenienced by this event. They were fussing and fuming about the traffic and their being late to work. I am sure the Lord's name was used in vain on numerous occasions, as our society has no problem with such language.

I can try to imagine the desperate efforts that several were putting forth in running around and asking for fire extinguishers and any assistance at all.

I commend those who rushed upon the burning vehicle and put their own life in a perilous situation because of their concern for a fellow human being. I would imagine that all of them would question their own actions for years to come with the thoughts of "If only I had..."

I feel sorrow for the mother who will miss her daughter and the brother who will miss his sister. Their loss can never be regained.

In view of all these events, I am reminded of a passage in **Jude 23**. "*Save others, snatching them out of the fire;..*" I know that the fire in Jude is not a physical fire, but I think it appropriate to bring it up because many that wear the name of Christ are in many ways similar to those described above.

Many brethren usually get upset that someone else has a problem and that it sometimes gets in their way of doing things. No one likes to be inconvenienced at any time.

Sadly, many brethren would show great courage to save a human from a gasoline fire, but would not put forth any effort at all to save a soul from an eternal fire.

Commendably, some would certainly be concerned and do what they could to offer assistance, even at the risk of hurting themselves or by providing a necessary need in an emergency. There are far too few of these in the church today.

The real lesson is in the overall picture of these events. Until we Christians can look upon souls of men as being lost, we will not make any effort at all to save them or attempt to snatch them out of the fire.

As His disciples, we are given the great commission to go make other disciples. We are to teach others about God and His laws and His grace. We are to do this because we love souls and each other. Yet, without love, we are just wasting our time (**1 Corinthians 13:2-3**).

May we all seek to remind ourselves of the great blessings that God has provided for us, and may we not be so selfish as to keep those blessings from others. For if we do, we will have failed to snatch them from the fire and we will have failed in capturing the essence of Jesus in our lives.

Almighty God responded to the cries of help and despair offered by those who had been separated from Him by sin (**Isaiah 59:2**). He provided a means of salvation. His grace is the gospel message of salvation offered to ALL men (**Titus 2:11**). Jesus Christ is the means and method of salvation today. The Holy Spirit revealed the good news so that souls could be saved. The gospel was preached so that souls could be saved. The church was built and designed to effect the salvation of souls. The only way to come into a relationship with God is THROUGH Jesus (**John 14:6**), and the only way to have spiritual blessings is to be IN Jesus (**Ephesians 1:3**). It is all about saving souls.

Brethren, if we do not try to save souls, we WILL NOT ENTER HEAVEN (**Matthew 7:21-23**). Think on these things (**Philippians 4:8**).

Prov. 12:15 *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.*

How Much, How Often

Robert F. Turner

There is nothing more completely opposed to the true spirit of Christianity than the attitude back of the questions, How much, how many, how often, must I serve the Lord? It is appalling that some would argue such.

Years back a man handed me a paper which listed his income, rent, food bill, utilities, etc.; and said, Now you have the facts. Tell me, how much must I give to the Lord? I asked if he thought he should visit the sick, help the needy; and when he said he did, I asked, How often?

He seemed a bit puzzled, so I suggested 50 times per week — and he thought he would do well to get in that many calls. But I persisted: On Saturday afternoon when you have just made your fiftieth call and are on your way home, you meet a brother who is destitute, obviously worthy, and you have the means to assist him. Do you say, I'm sorry I can not help you now. I have made my 50 for this week-- but hang on, drink water, and I'll see you first thing Monday(?) How does one measure service that is patterned after God's love for us? If a fellow just must have figures or percents, he should be given them from the scriptures; like 100% — all that she had, even all her living. (**Mk. 12:44**) Or, *Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.* (**Lu. 14:33**) Are you amazed? (**Matt. 19:25—f**)

A genuine Christian does not dole out an hour or two, a few dollars, or a pound of mercy for God. He first gives himself (**2 Cor. 8:5 Matt. 16:24**) and from then on his service is limited only by ability and opportunity. That's the meaning of as prospered (**1 Cor. 16:2**) i.e., in keeping with what God has given you. God gave life to Stephen, and when the service of God called for it, Stephen gave it back to God. (**Acts 7:59**)

When Jesus said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind (**Matt. 22:37**); He left no place for and 10% of thy money, and one hour per week of thy time. I believe Jesus will go fishing with you (**Lu. 5:4—f**); but don't forget, you are doing it on His time.

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, Candiss Cason** and **Jean Darnall**.

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**).

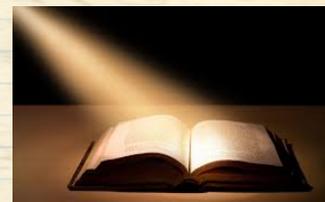
As a result of this justification we have been “delivered out of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (**Colossians 1:13-14**).

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**).

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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**

