

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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## WHY DO YOU NOT BELIEVE?

by *Jim Stauffer*

### 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

Even when Jesus was on the earth performing miracles before their very eyes, men were busy denying who He was. In **John 9:29,30**, the Pharisees questioned who Jesus was while expressing faith in Moses. The blind man who was healed said, "*Why herein is the marvel, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he opened my eyes.*" The old joke prevails here. Are you going to believe me or your eyes?

Denying the obvious is not new to mankind. It is a practice common when one wishes to defend an indefensible position. Today, we are hammered with the concept that all Jesus taught were principles of love. Doctrinal matters, these people say, are a part of what men after Jesus have devised.

One may argue that is true concerning the church since it was established by the Apostles in the wake of His ascension to heaven. One must also accept, however, that those men were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, Jesus sent to them. (**John 16:13; Acts 2:4**) The evidence, then, is overwhelming to the student of the Bible and Christ that He authorized what the Apostles taught. (**1 Cor. 2:10-13**) Further evidence then teaches us that such things as obedience to the gospel through baptism for the remission of sins in the only way one can be saved. (**Acts 2:37-41; 2 Thess.**

### **2:14; Gal. 3:26,27**)

Now it is true that Jesus taught great principles during His personal ministry. It is true we must be "poor in spirit" and "hunger and thirst after righteousness", but we can hardly claim to embrace those principles and blatantly reject the clear teaching of Scripture that was authorized by Jesus. How can we obtain the righteousness He promises through the blood of Christ when we refuse the only method He offers of being cleansed by that blood? (**Rom. 3:24-26; 6:1-4; Heb. 9:14,22,23**)

Men see what they are willing to see. Jesus explained concerning the Pharisees why men cannot see the obvious. He said their eyes were blinded and ears closed to the truth. (**Matt. 13:15**) They were so blinded by prejudice they challenged Jesus on this occasion with the question, "*Are we also blind?*" His answer indicted their honesty by saying, "*If ye were blind, ye would have no sin: but now ye say, We see: your sin remaineth.*"

Those men willing to open the "eyes of their hearts" will see Jesus as the Son of God, demonstrated clearly before the eyes of men (**John 20:30,31**). When they have done that, they will of the necessity of reason accept the things taught by those whom he authorized by the Holy Spirit.



## THE RAPTURE

*Jim Stauffer*

This doctrine has grown in the denominational world since John Darby began to promulgate it around 1830 AD. It is dependent upon several false concepts. We will point out just a few of them in this brief article.

1) *The kingdom is separate and distinct from the church.* The two are presented as the same in Scripture. The Corinthians were in the church. **(1 Cor. 1:2)** Sinners were added to the church by way of conversion. **(Acts 2:41,47)** And men were translated into the kingdom at the point of redemption. **(Col. 1:13,14)**

2) *In separating the kingdom and the church, they teach the kingdom has not yet come.*

This, of course, breaks the promise of Jesus when He said it would come in the lifetime of those He taught while on earth. **(Mark 9:1)**

3) *The rapture is connected to the concept of pre-millennialism and this is founded in the idea that a portion of God's promise to Abraham is yet to be fulfilled.* Joshua reports that promise was completely satisfied during his life. **Josh. 21:43** *Thus the Lord gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. 44 And the Lord gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the Lord had given all their enemies into their hands. 45 Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.*

4) *It teaches that only the church will be resurrected at the second coming of Christ. The church, at that time, will be "raptured" away to heaven prior to the years of tribulation that shall precede the 1000 year reign of Christ on the earth.* Again this violates plain teaching from Scripture. Jesus teaches on separate occasions that both the righteous and sinners shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ

when He returns. **(Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:28,29)**

While these are not the only aspects of the doctrine that are inconsistent with Biblical teaching, they are sufficient to cause one to realize it is something contrived in the mind of man and is not from heaven.

## HERMAN WHO?

A few years ago as several brethren and I chatted about a medley of Bible topics, the discussion turned to hermeneutics. One of the fellows, his voice full of exasperation, blurted out, "Who is this Herman fellow? I'd never even heard of him until a few months ago and now nobody wants to talk about anything else." He was just putting us on, of course, but the annoyance was real. The use of the "fancy" term, hermeneutics, for Bible study bespoke a trend that concerned him. It smacked of intellectualism. He saw it as one more indication of a growing dissatisfaction with simple, direct language in the pursuit of Bible knowledge.

Whatever the merits of this brother's concern, Bible study, under any name, is a critical topic for Christians. Knowing how to do it well is an absolute necessity. I don't mean to suggest that we all must take formal courses in Logic and Hermeneutics before we can understand the gospel message of salvation. But at the very least, we need a common-sense grip on how communication works if we are going to understand God's message to us.

If we are to "receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save (our) souls" **(Jas. 1:21)**, if we are to "know the truth" which shall make us free **(Jno. 8:32)**, if we are to have some grasp of "all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue" **(2 Pet. 1:3)**, then we need some skill at the business of interpretation.

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Whatever natural gifts we may possess along that line, additional knowledge and polishing won't hurt.

In our previous article we discussed the importance of context in Bible study, noting that a verse cannot be taken out of its context.

**No Contradictions:** Another common hermeneutical principle is the presumption of harmony. We grant this even in general hermeneutics: every author is assumed to write in agreement with himself, unless it is clearly established other wise. In sacred hermeneutics (interpretation of the Bible) this rule is considered an absolute. If the author of the Bible is God, it will have no contradictions, since He is all-knowing and all-powerful.

Clinton Lockhart, in *Principles of Interpretation*, lists this rule as an axiom: "One of two contradictory statements must be false, unless corresponding terms have different meanings or applications" (p. 28).

**Defense:** This issue confronts us in two practical situations. The first is when an unbeliever, in an effort to prove that the Bible is not written by God, charges that it contains contradictions. This puts us on the defensive and obliges us to show the harmony of the matters in dispute. How we do this depends on the specific facts of the case.

Suppose, for example, that the unbeliever charges that Paul, in saying that we are not saved by works, contradicts James, who says that we are saved by works. Here, our task is to show that these two writers use the word works in different ways. Paul speaks of works of merit which would put God in debt to us; James has in mind the obedience of faith, which Paul also taught (**cf., Rom. 1:5; 16:26**).

Or perhaps the skeptic believes Matthew, when he mentions one angel at the tomb of

Jesus (**Matt. 28**), to be in conflict with Luke, who refers to two angels (**ch. 24**). Here we have two possible solutions. First, the writers may have had different time frames in view: at one point there was one angel, and either earlier or later, there were two. Second, different or additional facts (one angel/two angels) may be complementary rather than contradictory. Matthew felt it necessary to mention only one angel, while Luke, in accord with his purpose, gives us more detail.

These two examples suggest some general guidelines for resolving alleged inconsistencies in Scripture.

**Offense:** The other situation finds us on the offensive, as we study to interpret a given passage correctly. In **Matt. 4:7**, Jesus showed us that one verse cannot be pitted against another. The devil had tempted Him to jump from the pinnacle of the temple by citing **Psa. 91:11,12**, which promised Him God's protection. But Jesus replied, "It is written AGAIN, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'" **Psalm 91** must harmonize with **Deut. 6:16**.

As another example, it is faulty exegesis to attribute salvation to faith only in passages such as **Jno. 3:16** and **Acts 16:31**. Why? Because other verses say that matters such as repentance and baptism also play a part in salvation (**Acts 2:38**). Not to mention **Jas. 2;24**, which says that a man is not saved by "faith only." One text cannot oppose or nullify another.

Finally, whatever meaning we ascribe to God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart (**Exo. 9:12; 10:20, etc.**), we cannot advance a view that denies man's freedom to choose (**Deut. 30:19; Jos. 24: 15; Prov. 1:29; 3:31**).

Sound interpretation of Scripture is based on sound methods of study. Stay tuned. We'll talk about hermeneutics some more.

*by Jim Ward*

# 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, Alma Baumgartner, Mary Czirr, Terry Czirr, Candiss Cason. J.R. Daniel** had hip surgery and is recuperating in V.A. Hospital, Leavenworth, Ks. **Lillie Keech** was admitted to Shawnee Mission Hospital, late Friday with pneumonia. The daughter of **Grant Clothier** had back surgery and is also in the same hospital.

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**

