

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

"And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"

JUNE 15, 2014

WISE MAN OR FOOLISH?

Jim Stauffer

Jesus illustrates wisdom in **Mat. 7:24-27** with the story of two builders. One built his house on the sand and one on the solid rock. His conclusion is the house on the sand will not withstand the storms when they come, but the one on the rock will. As a result the man who built his house on the rock was wise while the one who built on the sand was foolish. In application, He tells us the man who hears and does His word is the one building on the rock and the one who hears but does not obey His word is building on sand. Jesus says a fool rejects the word of God that He came to bring to man. (**John 5:30**)

It is then imperative that preaching this word be accomplished by His servants. Paul told Timothy to "preach the word, be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching." (**2 Tim. 4:1-4**) The reason he gave is that some in time would reject "sound doctrine" in favor of things more pleasant to hear.

When the gospel is not preached with clarity and distinction men will either become disinterested due to its lack of power or they will become confused and unsure of the message.

This is at least part of the reason men disdain the advice Jesus gave, **Matt. 7:13** *Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby.* ¹⁴ *For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it.* It is for the confused and indifferent we offer the following rationale that allows a man to make a sure and safe decision concerning the future of his soul.

For instance, the skeptic claims the Bible to be the work of a few superstitious men. To support his claim, he will cite the work of many men who have opposed it. Men of considerable reputation as philosophers and thinkers of their day. At the same time the believer will recommend it as the word of God and cite an equally impressive list of learned men who agree with him. How is one to decide the pathway for his life?

Just to illustrate our point, let us assume the skeptic turns out to be right in the end. Throughout their lives both the skeptic and the believer have tried to lead lives of some accomplishment. When life is over and each

lies in his grave, who has gained advantage by his choice? Has the skeptic lived any better life than the believer? Has he enjoyed the truly good things in life more than the believer? The love of friends and family; the contentment that comes from a successful venture? Is there any noble thing the skeptic could achieve in this life the believer would be barred from? The answer is no.

Now, let us assume the believer turns out to be right in the end. Has there been an advantage to his choice? Clearly there has. They both now stand before Christ in judgment with the faithful man receiving a home in heaven while the skeptic is condemned to eternal destruction. (**Mat. 25:46**)

Now let's rinse and repeat with the concept of Calvinism. The Calvinist says God has predestined each and every soul to a specific eternal destination and nothing can be done to change it. Some will be granted eternity in heaven with the Lord and others eternal condemnation to hell with the devil and their choice of what life to live here has no effect on it at all. It is understandable some would be confused and conclude there was no real reason to concern themselves with the teaching of the Bible. After all, they cannot do anything on their own to alter their fate. Assume again you have one man who chooses to obey the commands of the Lord in his earthly life and one who says it does not matter. What happens if the Calvinist is right? The two souls go to their predetermined place in eternity, but both have enjoyed equally peaceful and productive lives while here. They have done what they could and their choices did not alter any success or happiness they had here. But what if Calvinism is wrong? What if Calvinism is a "doctrine of demons?" (**1 Tim. 4:1**) The faithful man will have enjoyed this life equally with the unfaithful and yet be prepared to enjoy the reward of heaven while the unfaithful man will be "prepared for the devil and his angels." (**Mat. 25:41**)

The same is true of every doctrine that has been manufactured that stands in conflict with the Scriptures. The Universalist believes every soul will ultimately be saved. Paul does not believe this. Instead he states clearly some will receive rest and some eternal destruction. **2 Th. 1:7,8** *and to you who are afflicted*

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rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, 8 rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: It was our Lord, Himself who taught us our own free will is the determining factor in obedience. **Mark 16:15** And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.

What is our point? It is simply to illustrate the rationality of obeying the gospel for those who have become indifferent or confused by the preponderance of false teaching concerning the Bible or the lack of sound doctrine being taught by men who do not respect the advice the Apostle Paul gave the young preacher, Timothy.

If your decision is made purely with the best possible results for your soul, you should choose God. It does not prevent happiness and success on earth while at the same time ensures success in eternity.

Are we suggesting submission to the Lord as merely a protection against bad things that could happen eternally? God forbid! The wise man who hears His word will submit to it just as the Lord, Himself did. (**Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Pet. 2:21-24**) And when he does he will live happily and content on the earth resting sure in the eternal abode of his soul. (**2 Pet. 1:10**)

Beginning To Look At The End

I was having a discussion the other day about heaven. I was taking the scriptures dealing with the end and how man is going to experience the end of time and what happens afterwards.

We know that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth (**Genesis 1:1**) We also know that the earth will be destroyed (**2 Peter 3:10**). In between is where we come.

Will anyone get to heaven any quicker than anyone else? Other than the fact that Jesus is already there in heaven at the right hand of God in an authoritative capacity; can we say anyone else is already there? We hear it in funerals all the time, yet I believe the idea is wrong. We know that all will die (**Hebrews 9:27**). We know that all will face the judgment. **Matthew 25** tells us of the great judgment scene where all the souls will be. Sheep on the right, goats on the left. We read that Jesus will speak to one group and then the other. We see that the punishment or reward is issued at that time. Everyone will be judged and sentenced at the same time.

Everyone will go one of two places at their judgment. Either it will be heaven or it will be hell, and there are no other options. We also realize that such sentence is final and will never change or cease.

We often speak about how grand and glorious it will be in heaven. The revelation speaks of that great city and its street of gold, and the tree of life by a pure river. My own personal opinion is that heaven will be so great, that we will not notice the golden street or the tree. We

will be there in the presence of God and the Lamb of God, Jesus. This we are told will never diminish or fade away. It will never get old. There will be nothing of the human experience to limit us as we have today. We are limited by time, space, physics, and numerous other things. That is why it is hard to really appreciate the things of heaven, or hell for that matter.

As we concluded our discussion, I realized that thinking about heaven and eternity is what keeps me going in my serving the Lord. I have come to the point in my life where I realize that this earth is just temporary, and what is really important is eternity. When we focus upon heaven and heavenly things, our behavior and actions will reflect such. We will live like we have something to live for. We will live with the purpose God intended for us to have. We will be the faithful of God who practice righteousness, realizing that by God's grace, we can be acceptable to Him.

Paul said that our citizenship is in heaven. We realize that heaven should be our home. We also realize that to get to that home, we need to be faithful and help others go to that home as well. A preacher I know once preached that one cannot go to heaven alone; they have to take someone with them. After studying the parables of Jesus, I realize this is a true statement. If we are going to heaven, we have to lead others there also. We do this by setting an example for them, then teaching them the truth. Once they have obeyed the gospel, we need to encourage and edify them. We should assist them if it becomes necessary.

Are you looking forward to going home to heaven?

By Carey Scott

LOVE AND WRATH

Both the love of God and the wrath of God are genuine and real. It is certain that God loves all mankind. Jesus said, "For God so loved the world...(Jno. 3:16). He tasted death for every man (**Heb. 2:9**). "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us," that is, "for the ungodly" (**Rom. 5:6,8**). God chastens those He loves and scourges every son whom He receives (**Heb. 12:5,6**). He loved Israel with an everlasting love (**Jer. 31:3**).

The wrath of God is as real as His love. It is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness (**Rom. 1:18**). John asked some who came to his baptism: "O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (**Lk. 3:7**). There is a "day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (**Rom. 2:5**). Those who turn from God to worship evil will drink of the wine of the wrath of God (**Rev. 14:10**). God's wrath is fierce (**2 Chron. 28:11**). Israel provoked God to wrath by their disobedience in the days of Moses (**Deut. 9:7,22**). Even so, today the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience (**Eph. 5:6**). This wrath is not vague and so general that its effect is not felt individually. Moses, Uzziah, David, and the remnant of Israel experienced it (**Deut. 1:37; 2 Sam 6:7; Neh. 13:18**).

Love and wrath do not cancel each other. They are

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not opposites. Hate is the opposite of love, and pleasure is the opposite of wrath. God loved mankind even though He was displeased with them (**Rom. 5:6,8**). God is provoked to anger or wrath by those whom He is seeking to save (**1 Kgs. 14:15; Jer. 44:6-8**). Wrath sometimes brings disciplinary action through love. Many times children provoke their parents to anger, not because the parents do not love them, but rather because they do love them. Fathers are told to "provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (**Eph. 6:4**).

We all have experienced the love of God, and we continue to enjoy its blessings every day. He sends rain upon the just and the unjust (**Matt. 5:45**). On the other hand, we surely have given God reason to be displeased and angry with us because of our misconduct. Jesus always did those things that please God (**Jno. 8:29**), but we sometimes miss the mark and so displease Him. If we wish to receive the benefits of God's love in the sacrifice of His Son, we, too, must do those things that please Him. Then we will not experience the tribulation and anguish that come through the indignation and wrath of God Who loves us, but which are reserved for those who do evil (**Rom. 2:5-11**). If one who is living in disobedience to God turns from his disobedience to serve God, then he shall save his soul alive (**Ezk. 18:27**).

God loves us all, but we will experience His wrath if we trample the Son of God underfoot, and count the blood of the covenant by which the saved are sanctified a common thing, and insult the Spirit of grace. He has placed the choice before us (**Heb. 10:29**).

By Gilbert Alexander

Don't Blame The Job!

Dan S. Shipley

Jobs don't have futures, people do. I don't know who said it, but it is certainly a thought - provoking and sense-making statement. The point is, success and failure lie mostly with the individual and not so much with his kind of employment. Most of us can think of those who have failed with golden opportunities and the most favorable of circumstances — and of others who have succeeded eminently where opportunity appeared meager. The very job in which one makes outstanding achievement has been the scapegoat for another's failure. The difference is in the man.

The difference is in the man in the spiritual realm too. It is not unusual to hear of Christians blaming the job for some of their own failures. For instance, when churches do not grow or when the membership declines, it is because the meeting— place is in a poor location or insufficient parking space. While such things could be a contributing factor it may be well to take an unbiased look at the man too (remembering that circumstances are often blamed for man's failures). Unless the members are dedicated, hard-working, involved and zealous it is not likely that another location or more parking space will solve their problem. I fear that we may have placed too much emphasis on such externals; even to the point depending on them —and / or blaming them. Many small,

financially burdened churches have learned the hard way that a new and modern meeting house is no guarantee of growth. Dead churches do need a change, but it must come from within; with a renewal of mind (**Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23**). Others blame the job by insisting that no one will listen to the gospel anymore, so they don't spread it. Sure enough, they don't convert anyone — and their premise is proved? The only thing worse than a world lost and dying in sin is Christians who are unconcerned about it. To too many Christians the work of committing the gospel to others is just a job without much of a future — failing to see themselves as Christians without much of a future.

Absolutely nothing can take the place of individual effort and initiative by consecrated saints. The primary need is not for better jobs but for better men to do the job God wants done here. There is little profit in lamenting over what can't be done, or over what could be done if we had more members, if we had a full-time preacher, if we met in a better location, or if we had a larger contribution. IF we are not doing the best we can with what we have where we are, then why do we need anything more?

The faithful are little affected by circumstances and situations which help or hinder others. They always see the fields that are white unto harvest. They don't succumb to the problems, discouragements and obstacles that are bound to come wherever they might be. They seek for opportunities, not excuses; for a better self, not for a better job. They appreciate the fact that God has furnished them completely unto every good work (**2 Tim. 3:17**). Their only need is for like-minded brethren to help do the job.

A NEW CREATURE

The man who has been "born anew" that is "born of water and the Spirit" is the same man who "is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away" and the same man who is a "son of God through faith in Christ Jesus." He is indeed the man who has been "baptized into Christ" and has "put on Christ" in that baptism. (**Jo. 3:3-5; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26,27**)

These are all phrases indicative of conversion to Christ from the world.

The fact is this man has changed and that change should be evident in his life.

He will have become more charitable than he was before. **Acts 20:35** *In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

He will become purer in the life he lives. **1 Pet. 1:15** *but like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; 16 because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.*

He will become less selfish and think of others more than in the past. **Phil. 2:4** *not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.*

He will become more evangelical, **Acts 8:4** *They therefore that were scattered abroad, went about preaching the word.*

He will encourage his brethren to faithfulness, **Heb. 10:25** *not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh.*

These and other things are visible in his life.

Jim Stauffer

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;

1Pet. 2:9 But ye are an elect race, a 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:

Psa. 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 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 the 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.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

Check out the following websites

thelenexaedifier.com

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NEWS AND NOTES:

SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

J.R. DANIEL REMAINS AT HOME. LILLIE KEECH IS RECUPERATING FROM ADDITIONAL SURGERY. PAT CLOTHIER HAS RETURNED HOME FROM THERAPY. SURGERY SHOULD BE IN ABOUT ONE MONTH. WENDY TAYLOR IS HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL.

WE ARE NOW STUDYING THE CHURCH (GIVING ANSWERS) ON SUNDAY AND JEREMIAH ON WEDNESDAYS.



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins

Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10