

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”

JULY 13, 2014

## IS IT A BIBLICAL DISCUSSION?

*Jim Stauffer*

In a recent on-line discussion the subject of homosexuality came up when an athlete known to those on the forum “came out”, announcing publicly his homosexuality.

While the discussion did not progress to a thorough examination of all the arguments offered, those very arguments demonstrated the basis for the decision of those who proposed them.

The discussion centered on whether homosexuality should be considered honorable by society or not. The only arguments offered against its honor came from those whose conviction was based on the Bible. Those arguments are simply that it is a sin before God and should not be honored any more than other sin. Let us look at the arguments made for it and search for the foundation of that position.

### **#1 Why Choose Scorn, Ridicule and Physical Danger?**

All choices in life are made based on cost/reward principles. This point was made as a rebuttal to the statement that homosexuality was a choice and not genetically determined.

First, let us look at the argument proposing genetic determination. Even the one who claimed this admitted it did not make one homosexual, but rather left him more predisposed than others to be such.

Both sides of the argument would agree that each of us have temptations that are greater for us than others and vice versa. There is nothing new about this. The Lord commanded us to overcome such temptations by controlling the desires of the flesh. Our desire to control our flesh should not be limited. **(Mat. 5:27-29)** We do so by being led by the Spirit. **(Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:12,13)**

The sympathy here by most on the forum was God made him that way and if God is a loving God He will not punish him for being who he really is. But, of course, he was not created that way and like us all is responsible for his actions. God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can overcome. **(1 Cor. 10:13)**

Therefore, it is not unjust of God to demand we give an account of the things done in our bodies. **(2 Cor. 5:10)**

### **#2 It Does Not Affect Me**

Are you sure? All immorality affects each person in a society or nation immediately or eventually if it remains unchecked. Unchecked and unrepentant sin certainly

lowers the quality of life in a community. God taught the lesson of national responsibility concerning Judah in Jeremiah 18. According to verses 5-17 God’s actions toward a nation will be based on their remembrance of Him. When they forget His word He will “pluck up and break down” but when they remember Him, He will “repent of the evil I thought to do to them.”

It then becomes the role of each member of a society to bring the greatest influence they can to bring the nation both individually and collectively to God.

### **#3 There Is No Right Or Wrong In Sexual Choices**

Of course when this point is challenged with questions about bestiality and such organizations as NAMBLA (North American Man Boy Love Association) the qualifications were quickly offered. Children and animals are not qualified to “consent”. While these points are true it is ignored that homosexuality is accepted today because popular opinion favors it. It was rejected 50 years ago as a perversion because popular opinion said so. The argument that popular opinion can make something acceptable is fallacious at best. Popular opinion is just that. It is what is popular and the reason it becomes popular gets lost in the process. A people can break down the mores of society by continually going against the norm. When enough people are persuaded, as in the case of homosexuality, you have a swing in popular opinion such as has happened in the last 50 years. Why, then, do we think there will never be a change in popular opinion concerning sex with animals or with children? There are people who can be very persuasive who have already won citizens respected by most in society to those positions. It is more likely than not sometime in the future they will be as successful with popular opinion of their perversion just as homosexuality has been.

### **#4 Homosexual Discrimination Is Equal to Racial Discrimination**

Now this argument is strictly based on the position that men and women are created homosexual. Since that argument has no foundation, this argument fails to get off the ground.

Let us be very clear. Abuse, ridicule or any reactions that lead to or are in themselves mean spirited to any individual, homosexual or any other, is inappropriate. It is not only inappropriate, it is sinful. This represents

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hatred and is forbidden by God. (1 John 3:15) God is love and we are to emulate Him. (1 John 4:8; Eph. 5:1)

#### #5 Choosing What To Believe From The Bible

This is wrong, no matter who does it or what subject is under consideration. (Deut. 4:2; Mat. 15:9) The problem with any discussion of this principle is determining what teaching applies to whom. We are taught to "handle aright the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) This means to apply it in context as it was delivered. Often people begin to cite Old Testament laws given to the nation of Israel as laws in the Bible we do not keep. Of course we don't keep those. They were given under a covenant that was fulfilled by Christ. (Mat. 5:17) In so doing He initiated a new and better covenant. (Mat. 26:28; Heb. 7:22) The sentiment here is to have everyone admit we fail to keep the commandments perfectly. Then we can all go on with our sinful ways and quit reminding each other. After all, that just reminds us of our guilt and makes everyone miserable. Miserable is what we should be when we sin. Such misery leads those who love the Lord to repentance. (2 Cor. 7:9)

This discussion served as a reminder that two people cannot have a fruitful discussion of biblical subjects until they both share respect for the word of God.

Popular opinion has led to much sin and sorrow in our nation just as it did those before us and will those after us. But something the Christian should always have foremost in mind is not the political ramifications of how this will affect social life in our country, but the condition of the souls of men who are led by the flesh, away from God toward eternal destruction. (2 Thess. 1:8)

## WORSHIP IS NOT FOR OUR ENTERTAINMENT

There is an erroneous idea today that the main reason we attend worship is to "get something out of the service", rather than going there to give our worship to God. This is a selfish motive on our part. This is the reason people cannot be satisfied with the worship service when their emphasis is not on the proper object of worship, God. People want to "do their own thing" in the worship of the church. What the Bible has to say about worship for many people is of little consequence as long as they are happy and feel good. We must be concerned with what God says on how He is to be worshipped instead of what we might want to offer Him.

The United States has produced the most entertainment-oriented people the world has ever known. We have more forms of amusement than has ever been known to man, but we still want more. In our age everything is designed to appeal to our emotions and to entertain us. We seem to have forgotten our worship service is to bring glory and honor to God, and not to entertain ourselves. When we have choirs to sing to us and concerts to entertain us, we are not worshipping God; but we have become the spectators who are being entertained. Worship is not a spectator event. We dare not become spectators, because in worship it is God who is the spectator. People have the roles reversed. People expect divine will to conform to what seems right in their own eyes. Proverbs 12:15

says, "The way of the fool is right in his own eyes." The emphasis is how can the worship service be made more entertaining to people to please themselves and not God.

Worship to God is holy and sacred. To pervert and corrupt it with entertainment and what we can "get out of the service" in trying to please and gratify ourselves is nothing short of blasphemy! The sacredness of true worship must not be sacrificed on altars of entertainment-oriented quartets, choirs, and other entertainment groups. We are as **Hebrews 13:15** says to "Offer the sacrifice of praise to God, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." In worship we must be the participants, not the observers. We want to please and entertain ourselves. In **Galatians 1:10** the question is asked, "Do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a servant of Christ." Worship is God-centered not man-centered. When our worship is to please God instead of ourselves, then and only then will our worship be much more meaningful and spiritually uplifting to us and acceptable to God.

When people seek an "emotional high" from worship and don't get it, they are disappointed and start blaming the song service, the preacher, etc. The world wants their worship service to be "more entertaining", thus they are failing to worship God in spirit and in truth. Where in the Bible can we go to show that our worship is designed to please the worshipper. The desire to have an experience or an encounter along the lines of mysticism also gives little regard to what God says in the Bible.

Our worship to God requires commitment on our part. People had rather worship Christ as a babe in a manger than Christ as their crucified savior. Their worshipping Christ as a babe in a manger requires no commitment on their part. They feel they can put Him in a box and live the rest of the year as they please. But worshipping Christ as our crucified savior requires commitment, a complete change of our life, and a willingness to do all that He says. Jesus says in **Matthew 10:37**, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." God and Christ must be first in our lives, and this requires that we be committed to them.

**By Ron Boatwright via Susquehanna Sentinel  
Dec 23, 2001**

## THE BIBLE AND ABORTION

One of the many sins for which God punished His people in the Old Testament was the sin of child sacrifice. The practice of offering infants as burnt offerings upon idolatrous altars incurred the wrath of Almighty God. God pointed out Judah's involvement in this sin saying, "they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My mind" (**Jer. 7:31**).

While it may be difficult for us to imagine a scene in which parents would burn their children on the altar of a pagan false-god, something similar is happening in our world today. Each year an estimated 50 million unborn

children are killed through abortion worldwide. Abortion is defined as the intentional termination of pregnancy before birth, resulting in, or accompanied by, the death of the fetus (Ecarta Encyclopedia, 1998). It is important to note that nearly all of these abortions fall into the category of what is called "abortion on demand." In other words, nearly every one of these 50 million abortions is simply the result of a mother's arbitrary decision to rid herself of her unborn child.

Though it may be true that thousands of babies are not currently being offered as burnt sacrifices on the altar of Molech today, something far worse is happening. Millions of babies are being sacrificed each year on the idolatrous altars of selfishness, greed, worldly pleasure, and irresponsibility. All of this is done in the name of what is referred to as "a woman's right to choose." But what does the Bible say about abortion? Though we cannot put our finger on a Bible verse that literally says, "abortion is wrong," we can bring numerous passages and principles to bear on the subject.

1. The Bible Speaks Of Unborn Children As Living Persons The Lord spoke to Jeremiah the prophet saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations" (**Jer. 1:5**). Jeremiah was no less a living person inside the womb then he was outside of it. Of John the baptizer, the angel said, "He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, from his mother's womb" (**Lk. 1:15**). Can there be any doubt that John is here spoken of as a living person while yet in the womb? Other Bible passages teach that same principle (**Isa. 49:1; Psa. 139:13,14**).

2. Unborn Babies Have The Attributes Of Living Persons: - Much of the debate surrounding abortion revolves around whether life begins before or after birth. The Bible answers the question with great clarity. Many passages of Scripture maintain that "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (**Lev. 17:11**) About three weeks following conception, the baby's heart begins to beat and to circulate his own blood supply. If the life is in the blood, then there is life in the womb. For this reason the penalty for destroying life was given to those who harmed unborn children under the Law of Moses. (**Exo. 21:11,23**). Science further confirms this point. At 40-42 days after conception, the baby's brain waves can be recorded. At 60-70 days the baby begins to squint, swallow, and move his tongue. At 70-80 days all major organs are present and working within the baby. It is possible for the baby to survive outside the womb after only five months.

3. The Bible Uses The Same Words To Refer To Unborn Children As It Does To Refer To Children That Have Been Born: -- In the Old Testament we find the same Hebrew word for children employed in describing Jacob and Esau in their mother's womb as is later used to refer to Jacob's grown children (**Gen. 25:22; 37:3**). No distinction is noted in the words used to refer to unborn children and those who have already been born. This is also true in the New Testament where the unborn Jesus is referred to by the same Greek term as John, who has already been born (**Lk. 1:36,57**). Again no distinction is made in the terminology used to refer to unborn children in contrast to those who have been born. While society may refer to an aborted baby as simply a "discarded fetus," the Bible refers to unborn babies as living children. From the perspective of our Creator there is no difference.

4. By The Standard Of God's Word, Abortion Stands Condemned As Murder: -- Murder is defined as killing with premeditated, evil intent. Abortion on demand is intentional, premeditated shedding of innocent blood. It is not hard to understand what God thinks of this form of legalized murder. Among those things which He hates are "hands that shed innocent blood" (**Prov. 6:17**). What could fit the description of shedding innocent blood more accurately than the barbaric

destruction wrought upon helpless unborn children around the world each day? The Bible consistently condemns murder as a sin that will keep a person out of heaven (**Gal. 5: 21; Rev. 21:8**).

5. The Bible Charges Parents With The Responsibility Of Loving And Caring For Their Children: -- Among other things, older women are to teach the younger women "to love their children" (**Titus 2:4**). There is a radical difference between a mother loving her child and a mother paying a physician to cut out, suction, poison, or otherwise expel her child as is the case with abortion. Rather than commit such atrocities against their own children, parents are to "bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (**Eph. 6:4**).

Conclusion: -- The Bible does speak clearly on the subject of abortion, and its proponents are well described by the apostle Paul as being "without natural affection" (**Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3, KJV**). In allowing and condoning abortion on demand, our society demonstrates a lack of respect for God, His Word, and the sanctity of human life. Where will you take your stand on this controversial moral issue? This is one area where you must exercise your "right to choose." Make the right choice.

**By David Dann in Truth Magazine, Vol. 51, No. 9, Sept. 2007.**

## PREACHING CHRIST

Denominational preachers have always objected to the preaching of what the New Testament says about the Lords plan of salvation and the one church by insisting that we should simply "preach Christ and Him crucified, not the church and not the plan."

Their idea of preaching Christ is to simply tell what He did for us, but remain as silent as the tomb about what man is required to do in obedience to Him. These objections to the preaching of the ONE plan, the ONE church and the ONE worship coming from denominationalism are not surprising nor alarming, seeing as how the ONENESS of the New Testament forever abolishes the whole concept of "unity in denominationalism." What is a source of surprise and dismay is to hear any man who claims to be a gospel preacher parroting such objections.

What is even more amazing is that these preachers who are always talking about "preaching the man and not the plan" and "preaching Christ and not the church" tell us that this is something NEW that they have recently learned! They talk about it being "a new truth I have recently learned". Well, it is NOT NEW and it is NOT TRUTH. It is as old as denominationalism and IT IS FALSE TO THE CORE!

I am willing to affirm that no man can preach Christ in His fullness and completeness without preaching His plan of salvation and His church which He purchased with His own blood. The eighth chapter of Acts tells us that Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. But in preaching Christ he preached THE KINGDOM (THE CHURCH), THE NAME OF CHRIST, AND THE PLAN OF SALVATION. (**Acts 8:12**). This Scripture sounds a lot different from the cry of these fellows that are always talking about preaching Christ and not the plan and not the church.

How are you going to preach Christ and not preach what he said? Whether we like it or not He did say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (**Mark 16:16**). Belief and baptism is the Lords plan of salvation for the sinner and Philip certainly preached that plan in Samaria. I am sure that when he preached the name of Christ he preached salvation in that name, and he preached that we are baptized into that name. (**Matt 28:18, 20**) He also preached the church, for that is what the Kingdom of God is, and Luke says he preached it.

How any man can talk about preaching Christ and not the church is beyond me. The church is His body (**Col 1:18 - Eph 1:22, 23**) and He is the HEAD of that body. He is the savior of that body. (**Eph 5:23**) Therefore, I affirm that no man can preach Christ without preaching His plan and His church.

**By: Voyd Ballard**

**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**

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**Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer**

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### NEWS AND NOTES:

SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

J.R. DANIEL REMAINS AT HOME. LILLIE KEECH CONTINUES HER RECUPERATION AT HOME. PAT CLOTHIER IS RECOVERING FROM CANCER TREATMENTS. PLEASE REMEMBER JAN PATRICK AS SHE CONTINUES TO BATTLE HEALTH ISSUES.

OUR BIBLE CLASS ON SUNDAY, THE CHURCH AND WEDNESDAY, JEREMIAH 6

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON: FAITH IN GOD OR TRADITION



## **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