

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"

MARCH 29, 2015

WHO ARE YOUR FRIENDS?

Jim Stauffer

What is to be said about the kind of relationships the Christian should have with people of the world? Many people, even many brethren would raise an eyebrow at the question we have raised. Yet scripture warns us against such relationships. Yes, it is true it does not condemn association with people of the world. How would one teach the lost, if he cannot have any kind of relationship with him? Some would even refer to **1 Cor. 5:10** which excludes fornicators of the world from Paul's command to refrain from keeping company with brethren who conduct themselves so. Yet in fairness to the text Paul is not recommending we choose fornicators of the world as our friends, but rather acknowledging our need to have contact with the world as we try to bring light to darkness and provide salt for the earth.

But it is also Paul who teaches us *Evil companionships corrupt good morals.* (**1 Cor. 15:33**) The point made is that we are affected by those with whom we have regular contact. Obviously any person has the opportunity to control the relationships he has with others and should for the very purposes we have already mentioned. If we plan to influence any or all of society for good, we must insist things be done in a way that reflects that good.

Paul, when speaking to the Ephesians of their conversion from a sinful life to that of a child of God said, **Eph. 4:22** *that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit; 23 and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.* When one has done this it is imperative he steer clear of any temptation to return to that former life of sin. If he cannot associate with friends of his former life without the temptation to return to sin, he must avoid them. Our first concern as a servant of the Lord is to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.

Some might become a bit confused when he reads Jesus' instruction to His disciples following His resurrection, **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. It may be that one might react by saying, "How can I preach the gospel to the whole creation without having companionships in the world?" Of course the answer to that is if we are preaching the gospel to those in the world, we are influencing them instead of the other way around. It is when we fail to teach them and simply fraternize with them for social benefit that the danger of their influence over us comes into play.

James issues a warning to some greedy brethren who were more concerned with gaining this world's goods than with teaching the lost about the saving power of the gospel. He calls them adulteresses who are becoming friends with the world and as a result the enemies of God. (**Jas. 4:4**) Before you think that is a harsh statement, look at what the Apostle John said about loving the world. **1 John 2:15** *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.* Now John is not suggesting we hate those who are not Christians, but that we learn to hate what the world stands for. Anything that promotes sin is to be both avoided and condemned. The world is all about the lust of the flesh, eyes and the pride of life. This is what James was condemning. Choosing these things over the spiritual values Christ has set forth is, James says, being unfaithful to God. He therefore uses the term adulteresses in addressing those who have switched their love from God to the world.

Proverbs 13:20 says, *Walk with wise men, and thou shalt be wise; But the companion of fools shall smart for it.* If we wish to be wise in the eyes of God we must make decisions that comport with the lives we are attempting to live for Him. The wisdom of the world is not what we are to follow. We have chosen the simplicity that is the gospel of Christ and we must think in those terms instead of the temporal wisdom we see around us. Paul says worldly wisdom is what prevents people from

accepting the gospel. **1 Cor. 1:22** *Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom: 23 but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness; 24 but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*

We are then called to preach the gospel to those who are lost. Those who are lost are guided by a worldly wisdom and thus opposed to the wisdom of God. From this we observe there is an adversarial relationship with the wisdom of the world which must be understood by the child of God to avoid being swept up in it. Our task is rather to convert the world to Christ.

This is exactly what Paul was teaching Timothy when he said, **1 Tim. 6:20** *O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called; 21 which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with you.*

Indeed our task is difficult, but the value of the work we do is so significant to the souls of men, God has commanded we undertake it. We do so with the hope of hearing our Savior say, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (Mat. 25:34)*

Jesus Would Not Receive Deceivers & False Teachers

2 Jno. 9,10

By Warren E. Berkley

Jesus came to seek and save the lost, so He met people, talked to people and took advantage of every opportunity to tell people what they needed to hear about life, God and eternity. In doing this holy work, He encountered opposition and criticism from the religious establishment. One charge they made against the Lord was, He received and ate with sinners (**see Luke 15:1-2**).

He did, but not in the way they implied. Jesus never condoned sin. He never engaged in any kind of association that involved any favor, endorsement or encouragement of any sin or error. In His association with sinners, He was trying to reach them, teach them and change their lives into what God would have them be. You will not find, in the New Testament account of His life, any occasion where Jesus associated with anybody in such a fashion as to convey any approval of sin or any tolerance of error.

We, His followers, should learn from this and live as He lived. We must seek opportunities to talk to lost people, teach them and influence them away from the arms of Satan. We have friends, neighbors and relatives we associate with daily. In that association we must guard against any participation in sin, or any expression of approval of sin, and we must use the association to teach and show the lost the way to heaven.

Sometimes, we must cease association with someone - because a continued association could

corrupt us and could also convey approval of sin. There are some very plain statements about this in the New Testament:

"From such withdraw yourself," 1 Tim. 6:5

"And from such people turn away," 2 Tim. 3:5

"And avoid them," Rom. 16:17

In each of these cases, we must study the contexts and that study will enable us to see what kind of behavior requires such a reaction. These are principles of God Jesus did not ignore and would not ignore today. While it may be extremely difficult in some cases, these passages demand our attention and obedience.

Jesus would not receive and embrace deceivers, rebels against God's will and false teachers. I know this, because of what His apostles wrote: *"Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward. Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds," (2 John 8-11).*

Jesus would not receive, greet and share with one not bringing *"this doctrine."* We must react in the same way.

IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

Jesus told the woman at the well that the time had now come when true worshippers would **"worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (Jno. 4:24).**

This has long been a favorite passage among us preachers because it lends itself so well to sermon outlines. We can say this passage teaches us the proper object of worship (the Father), the proper attitude of worship (in spirit), and the proper standard of worship (in truth), thus making a good three-point sermon outline for next Sunday.

Now I have no doubt concerning the essential truthfulness of such lessons, but I wonder if that was really the point Jesus was trying to get across to the woman of Samaria. Frankly, I have come to doubt it. As I look at the context of **John 4**, it seems to me that Jesus was saying that this worship that was described as **"in spirit and in truth"** was to be some new type of worship. Yet there is nothing new at all about worshiping God with the right attitude and according to the standard of truth revealed in His Word. The Israelites were constantly being chastised by the prophets of the Old Testament for their failure to worship God **"in spirit and in truth" (Isa. 1:10-15; Amos 5:21-24; Mal. 1:6-14).**

In fact, the very point that Jesus is alleged to be making was made all the way back in **Jos. 24:14** when Joshua admonished the Israelites to **"fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and truth."** God has always expected men to worship Him with the right attitude, and according to the standard of truth. It doesn't seem sensible to have Jesus saying in **John 4** that the time for such worship had just now arrived.

Moreover, a continued examination of the context of

John 4 seems to indicate rather clearly that the coming of this new "worship in spirit and truth" has something to do with the transition from the old to the new covenant. It was the Samaritan woman's question about worshipping in Jerusalem or Samaria that prompted Jesus' remark. And the coming of this new type of worship is linked directly by Jesus to the cessation of worship in Jerusalem (**Jno. 4:21**).

What then is there about the worship that we offer under the new covenant which, when compared with the worship offered under the old covenant, can be characterized as "in spirit and in truth?" I believe that the key to the answering of this question is in vs. 24. Jesus says that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth." Now Jesus is not just making an assertion here. He is making an argument. He is implying that it is because of God's nature as a spiritual being that our worship must be in spirit and truth. Now if "in spirit and in truth" only means in sincerity and according to God's laws, it is a bit hard to see how the necessity of such worship is related to God's nature as a spiritual being.

But, if we take the phrase "in spirit and in truth" as a combination of two words to express the single concept of the inner spiritual realities of the new covenant as opposed to the external shadows of the old covenant, all becomes clear. Jesus is telling the Samaritan woman that God is not a material being but a spiritual being, and the time has now come for the material and external forms of the Old Testament system to be replaced by the true spiritual realities which they foreshadowed.

This point can be most clearly illustrated from the very question that the woman put to Jesus. She wanted to know whether men should worship God at the sanctuary in the temple at Jerusalem or at the sanctuary of the temple on Mt. Ebal in Samaria. Jesus responded by saying, in effect, that though Jerusalem was God's appointed place, the time had now come for the old temple worship of Jerusalem to be replaced by the new "worship in spirit and in truth." But He is not thereby implying that the worship that had formerly been offered at Jerusalem was insincere and false. Rather, He is saying that the time has now come for that temple to be replaced by the true spiritual reality that it foreshadowed, the true sanctuary that the Lord pitched and not man (**Heb. 8:2**). As a matter of fact, the writer of Hebrews develops this very point throughout chapters 8 and 9 of his letter. The Aaronic priesthood has been replaced by the true spiritual reality that it foreshadowed, the priesthood of Christ. The animal sacrifices of Moses' system have been replaced by the spiritual reality that they foreshadowed, the sacrifice of Christ. And the old sanctuary has been replaced by the true sanctuary that it foreshadowed.

Perhaps we can also bring in **2 Cor. 3:1-18** at this point. There we are told that the old covenant was one of the letter while the new is one of the spirit. I do not believe Paul is saying here that the religion of the Old Testament was unspiritual. That was just not true. In fact, Paul himself said that the Law of Moses was indeed spiritual (**Rom. 7:14**). But though it was a religion for spiritually minded people, the Old Testament system was still an external foreshadowing of inward spiritual

realities that were not to be fully revealed until the coming of the Christ. And in that sense, the Old Testament was an external ministration of the letter as compared to the ministration of the spiritual realities of the new covenant.

This then is the interpretation of Jesus' words that seems to me to suit the context best. I have difficulty seeing Jesus telling the Samaritan woman that the time had just now arrived for men to start worshipping God sincerely, and in accordance with His laws. But I can sure see Him telling her that her question about the proper mountain of worship would soon be insignificant because the time had now come for the old external forms such as the temple at Jerusalem to be replaced by the true spiritual realities which they foreshadowed. Indeed, I believe that such a message would have been of special interest to this woman, for it would, if actually understood by her, enable her to see why Jesus, a Jew, had been willing to talk to her, a Samaritan. The matters that separated the Jews and Samaritans were related primarily to external features of the old covenant. But the time had now come when the true Jew was to be reckoned, not according to the flesh, but inwardly, according to the circumcision of the heart in the spirit (**Rom. 2:28,29**). And thus it was that Jesus, the Jew, could offer her, a Samaritan, the water of life.

By Phil Roberts, via. Biblical Insights, Vol. 6, No. 7, July, 2006.

VERIFYING WHAT WE ARE BEING TAUGHT

Pat Donahue

Acts 17:11 reads, *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.* Obviously this is a highly approved example - intended for us to follow. **Heb. 6:12** *that ye be not sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

The gospel is to be preached and it is the responsibility of the listener (any listener) to examine what is said, comparing it with the scriptures to verify if it is really so. **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.*

If it does concur with God's word, it is our obligation to comply. If it does not concur, we are not to pay it any mind. **Acts 17:11** teaches this verification process on our part is to occur regularly.

And we have to possess enough courage to run counter to our parents, friends, anybody around us. Jesus said in, **Luke 14:26** *If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.* We must have the will if that is where the truth leads. **John 8:32** *and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Are we willing to do such? Are we studying God's word as we ought?

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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NEWS AND NOTES:

SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

J.R. DANIEL, IRENE HURD, MARY CZIRR AND JAN PATRICK. GRANT CLOTHIER HAS RETURNED HOME AND JESSIE GIBSON IS RECUPERATING AND RECEIVING THERAPY AT HOEGER HOUSE IN OLATHE.

OUR BIBLE CLASS ON SUNDAY IS THE STUDY OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN - WITH RON PECK. WEDNESDAY OUR STUDY IS THE SUBJECT OF PREMILLENNIALISM.

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:
THE EXTREMITY OF TRUTH



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