

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, for 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.

October  
25  
2015

## HARD FACTS ABOUT LIFE

Jim Stauffer

Lest we come to think of our lives as some inherent right to do with as we wish without the observation and judgment of God, follow this information from God with me.

Every man since the creation of Adam has sinned of his own choice (**Rom. 3:23; 5:12**) We have all yielded to our lusts, which have conceived sin and brought forth death, a separation from God (**Jas. 1:13-15; Isa. 59:1,2**).

This condition leaves us wanting when we face Christ in the judgment when unforgiven sinners will be eternally condemned and those who have appropriated the righteousness of Christ will be granted eternal life (**2 Cor. 5:10; John 5:28,29; Rom. 3:24-26**).

To all of us then Jesus offers Himself as, *the way, and the truth, and the life, no one cometh to the Father but by me.* (**John 14:6**) In what way is this true? Paul explains in the following way. First, he says we become *sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.* (**Gal. 3:26,27**) He then tells us what is entailed in putting on Christ when he says in his letter to the Romans. **Rom. 8:9** *But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* He then describes the effect of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us this way. **Gal. 2:20** *I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.* Our lives then become what he told the Ephesians they should be. **Eph. 5:1** *Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.*

Eternity in the presence of God is the reward to those who recognize the right of God our Creator to demand faithfulness to Him. Eternity in hell with Satan awaits those who disregard the right of the Creator to judge and condemn them for rebelling against His commands.

For this reason we address the hard facts about life. What will you do?

\*\*\*\*\*

I have in my files the following article by bro. Ron Halbrook. In it he outlines a problem that has been prevalent among churches of Christ due to the effect of men who as Israel of old, have a desire to be like the nations around them. Rather than argue from the standpoint of personal feelings, let us appeal to scripture which has always been the claim of those whose primary desire is to be disciples of Christ.

I believe he has properly represented what Scripture says about the subject and has provided ample information for any who are doubters of his conclusions to study for themselves to see what God has said.

For after all, this bulletin is devoted to what God says about any and all subjects we discuss, as we all should be.

\*\*\*\*\*

### BENEVOLENCE FROM THE CHURCH TREASURY: FELLOWSHIP AMONG THE SAINTS Ron Halbrook

Two kinds of benevolence are discussed in Scripture. Benevolence given from the pocket of an individual saint expresses our love for all mankind, reflecting our common humanity. When material aid is extended from the treasury of the local church, it has a deeper meaning. It is an expression of our spiritual unity and fellowship with God and each other in Christ. Let us study and distinguish these two kinds of benevolence, and give special attention to aid distributed from the church treasury.

#### Distinguishing Two Kinds of Benevolence

Benevolence may be extended from the hand of any individual Christian utilizing his own personal

resources. This benevolence extended to anyone in need is an expression of our general love for all of our fellow creatures, saints and sinners. Passages such as **Galatians 6:10** instruct Christians regarding this kind of benevolence: *"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."*

Benevolence may be extended from the treasury of the church to faithful Christians. The New Testament speaks of this kind of benevolence as "fellowship" because it represents our spiritual relationship to God and to each other as His saints. The first reference to the church treasury is found in **Acts 2:43-44** which states that the early saints maintained a "common" fund from which distribution was made as each one suffered need. The Greek word *koinos* referred to anything shared or held in common, such as *"the common salvation"* (**Jude 3**) (Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*: 351). The church had a common fund because at a deeper level they shared a common bond in Christ.

The churches of Macedonia sent financial aid to the suffering saints in Jerusalem. This financial gift is *"the fellowship of the ministering to the saints"* (**2 Cor. 8:4**). This word "fellowship" is from the Greek term *koinonia*, obviously related to *koinos*. When used of benevolence, *koinonia* refers to "a benefaction jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship" (Thayer: 352). The church had a common fund representing its deeper fellowship, and expressed this fellowship to the suffering saints in Jerusalem who shared that common bond.

The Apostle John wrote, *"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship [koinonia] is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ"* (**1 Jn. 1:3**). Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon* says *koinonia* here means "the intimate bond of fellowship which unites Christians" (Thayer: 352). In other words, this New Testament word "fellowship" refers to the spiritual relationship and mutual service shared by faithful Christians. Our friends who are still in their sins and false religions do not share this unique spiritual bond and relationship with us.

One expression of our worship and fellowship with God is the collection taken every Lord's Day (**1 Cor. 16:2**). When Ananias and his wife gave some amount by laying it *"at the apostles' feet,"* they were giving into the treasury of the church which was held by the apostles because the church was still very young (**Acts 5:1-11**). Their mistake was to tell the lie that this donation was the full price for a certain property they sold, but it was only part of the price. They lied because they wanted to receive much admiration and praise from their brethren.

Peter explained in **Acts 5:4** that after the property was sold, the money remained in *"thine own power,"* meaning it was Ananias' personal possession to use in any rightful way he wished. The point is that when the money passed from his hands into the church

treasury *"at the apostles' feet,"* it was no longer under his power as his personal possession, but it was restricted to the proper use of the church treasury which belongs to God in a special way. Therefore, Ananias lied to God who is the actual owner of the church treasury.

The point here is to understand that the treasury of the church exists because of our fellowship with God. The treasury is an expression of that fellowship between God and His people. We are restricted to use the church treasury only according to God's instruction in the New Testament, and the treasury is not the equivalent of a saint's personal possession. Personal funds and the church treasury are separate and distinct.

### The Pattern for Benevolence from the Church Treasury

The New Testament is very clear in teaching that benevolence from the church treasury is to be extended to faithful saints. All passages on church benevolence form a consistent pattern, demonstrating that in all cases the funds were given to saints: a. *"all that believed"* (**Acts 2:44-45**); b. *"them that believed"* (**Acts 4:32-37**); c. *"the disciples"* (**Acts 6:1-7**); d. *"the brethren"* (**Acts 11:27-30**); e. *"the saints"* (**1 Cor. 16:1-2**); f. *"the saints"* (**2 Cor. 8:4**); g. *"the saints"* (**2 Cor. 9:1**); h. *"the poor saints"* (**Rom. 15:26**); i. *"widows indeed"* (defined as faithful saints in the context; **1 Tim. 5:16**, see vv. **5, 9-10**).

As in **Acts 5, 1 Timothy 5:16** clearly distinguishes funds utilized by individuals and funds utilized by local churches. The use of funds for benevolence from an individual's personal pocket and from the treasury of a local church are separate and distinct. *"If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed."* There are things individuals may do which the church is not authorized to do: *"let not the church be charged."* The church must focus on its duties as defined by the New Testament: *"that it may relieve them that are widows indeed."*

Some teachers in churches of Christ insist that funds from the local church treasury can be distributed to needy people in the world. Moved by humanitarian intentions, they approach God's Word with a liberal attitude on this matter, not observing the strict limits of the New Testament pattern. They try to find any pretext to give benevolence from the church treasury to visitors and neighbors who are not baptized into Christ, therefore not yet added to the true body or church of Christ (**Acts 2:41, 47; Gal. 3:26-27**).

People outside the true church of Christ are living in sin and some of them are following false religions and false doctrines such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Catholicism, denominationalism (Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptists, etc.), various ecumenical groups, and other assorted religions. Did Christ authorize the distribution of financial aid from the treasuries of local

churches to people living in sin and false religions? The New Testament is wholly silent about such a practice. The original doctrine of Christ does not authorize the distribution of material aid from the church treasury to sinners in the world. Not one verse authorizes it. If we distribute benevolence from the church treasury to people who are not faithful Christians, we go beyond the limits of God's Word and we are separated from God by this sin (**2 Jn. 9-11**).

### **Benevolence as Fellowship in 2 Corinthians 9:13**

Liberal-minded false teachers in the church of Christ claim **2 Corinthians 9:13** allows them to distribute funds from the church treasury to needy people who are not New Testament Christians. The verse speaks of the aid the church at Corinth sent to the saints of Jerusalem, *"Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men."* We are told *"all men"* is a direct reference to people outside the body of Christ.

Let us notice more carefully the prepositional phrase "unto all." Does it mean people still living in sin and false religions? No. This becomes clear when we pay special attention to the word "distribution." Benevolence "distribution" was extended to a certain "them" and to an additional "all." When we clarify the meaning of "distribution," the meaning of the "all" who can receive benevolence will be clarified as well.

The Greek word for "distribution" has the literal meaning of "fellowship," which yields the meaning literally *"your liberal fellowship unto them, and unto all men."* It is the word *koinonia* again: "a benefaction jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof fellowship (Thayer 352). Our giving into the church treasury and our distribution from that treasury represent the spiritual fellowship we share as the saints of God. The recipients must be within that divine and holy fellowship in order to receive benevolence.

That is further confirmed by the context because Paul said the recipients are saints who *"glorify God"* for the gospel and who pray for the brethren (**vv. 13-14**). Do the people living in sin and following false religions glorify God for the true gospel? Do they submit to the gospel of Christ including the Great Commission which teaches men must be baptized to be saved? Do they pray for our success as we labor to spread this true gospel? No, they deny, argue, and fight against this true gospel! They insist we can be saved by choosing any religion we prefer, and many of them insist we can be saved in Christ before and without submitting to Christ in water baptism. Therefore, they do not fit Paul's description of saints who glorify God for the gospel and who pray for the brethren (**vv. 13-14**). It is clear they are not included in the *"all"* who may receive this benevolence from the church treasury.

Here is the simple and true meaning of **2 Corinthians 9:13**. Paul is thankful for the church at

Corinth because they are willing to provide benevolence to the faithful saints in Jerusalem. This is the *"distribution"* or fellowship *"unto them."* Furthermore, Paul is thankful the church at Corinth is equally willing to provide benevolence to faithful saints in any other place where it may be needed. This is the *"distribution"* or fellowship *"unto all."* *"Unto all"* means saints in other places besides Jerusalem.

### **No Fellowship Between Saints and Sinners**

The people of God are set apart from all other people in the world. We love them, we consider them our friends, and we treat them with kindness and courtesy at all times. We are ready to help them in many ways, especially to help them obey the true gospel of Christ. Because they follow their sins and false religions, in God's eyes we cannot have "fellowship" with them. Rather, we learn to separate ourselves from their sinful conduct and false religious activities. That is the clear meaning of **2 Corinthians 6:14-18**:

*14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*

*15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?*

*16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

*17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*

*18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

We should pity people who do not know that they are living in darkness and that they are lost while following their sins and false doctrines. Our concern for them motivates us to do our best to teach them about the true and original gospel of Christ which will save their souls. We cannot extend "fellowship" to them because there is no true spiritual fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness. Before we can speak of having spiritual fellowship with them, we must convict them of their sins and convince them to repent, confess Christ as God's Son, and be baptized in water for the remission of sins (**Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38**). Until they submit to Christ in this way, we have no fellowship with them. They are not New Testament Christians.

Let us as Christians be ready to help all men at all times as we have the ability and opportunity. When we function as God's people in the local church, we must recognize our separation from the world and our unique fellowship with God and His saints. When fellow Christians suffer tragedies and emergency needs, we express our fellowship with them in Christ by providing assistance from the treasury of the local church.

**[Truth Magazine LIV, 5 (May 2010):24-26]**

+++++

**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](http://thelenexaedifier.com)

[facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist/](https://facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist/)

[lenexachurchofchrist.org](http://lenexachurchofchrist.org)

## NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS: GRANT CLOTHIER AND J.R. DANIEL AND JAN PATRICK.

JON COONES IS IN ICU ROOM 2655 OF KU MED CENTER.

STEVE WIMP IS IN REHAB AT TRINITY NURSING, 62ND AND MASTIN IN SHAWNEE.

BIBLE CLASSES: SUNDAY: GOSPEL OF JOHN - RON PECK - WEDNESDAY: THE THEME OF THE BIBLE - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY SERMON: THE GOSPEL IS FOR ALL



## **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