

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.

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PRINCIPLES OR PRINCIPALS?

Jim Stauffer

One of the constant complaints about the judgment of men is their tendency to consider the person (principal) rather than the law or rule (principle). Justice in the hands of men has nearly always failed to be even handed.

When God dealt with Israel He insisted they extend justice equally for all. **Lev. 19:15** *You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.* Deut. 1:16 *And I charged your judges at that time, 'Hear the cases between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien who is with him. 17 You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.'* Notice, He did not say to favor the rich and powerful due to their status in society, but neither did He say to extend special mercy or compassion to the poor because they are less positioned in the community. Equal justice for all.

It was God's plan that each and every man was accountable for righteous conduct and there were no reasons to be given to excuse him from the justice due.

Obviously we have failed as a society in this regard. We see our system turned to the advantage of the wealthy and powerful every day. How is justice served in our land when a wealthy man can hire the best attorney in the land to defend him in order to avoid a just penalty for his crime and the poor man is only able to afford a young attorney not yet established in his practice and often receives a greater penalty for the same act? It is equally unjust to grant some special mercy to one person because he is lowly in society rather than enforce the law

truthfully. When either of these things happen, truth and therefore justice, is not served.

As we see from the verses above God has always demanded justice. Fortunately the injustice of men only affects one in his earthly life. That does not completely console the one who suffers such injustice, but he must understand there is a higher court, if you will.

While God instructed His people to enforce the laws equally He recognized they would not always do so. He intervened in Old Testament times to provide an example that even the mighty were obligated to obey His commands. When King Saul failed to *utterly destroy the Amalekites*, Samuel told him of God's reaction. **1 Sam. 15:23** *For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king.*

God sent His Son to the earth to demonstrate righteousness as the purveyor of truth. Truth demands righteousness always. It is not negotiable. When it is changed by man it is no longer truth. Those who change it are not in harmony with Jesus. **John 18:37** *Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."*

A New Testament example of the unrelenting demand for justice by truth is the apostle Peter. He demonstrated hypocrisy in his prejudicial conduct toward the Gentiles. The apostle Paul confronted him about this pointing out the injustice of his behavior (**Gal. 2:11-15**). Even the apostles of God faced the temptation of unjust behavior but were called to

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account for such conduct.

God recognized man's sin and failure to maintain righteous conduct. That was the purpose for sending His only begotten Son to die for those sins. His death, burial and resurrection enabled man to be restored to a righteous condition if he would simply obey the commands of God. Just as surely as the King of Israel was amenable to God's laws, so are we today.

Now we must recognize the value of God's justice and the extent of it versus that of men. While God has not promised to overturn the injustices of men while we live here, He promises eternal justice according to the truth Jesus has brought to earth. We can receive heaven, eternity in the presence of God if we accept the truth and receive His righteousness.

You see, God values the *principle* of truth above the response of any *principal* to it.

Can You Handle The Truth?

A young preacher in Kentucky wanted to make his first sermon memorable, so he preached a fiery denunciation of horse racing. After the sermon, one of the deacons called him aside and reminded him that he was now living in a neighborhood noted for fine horses, and that many of his members enjoyed the races.

The preacher took the hint and next Sunday thundered and stomped against tobacco. Whereupon, the same deacon reminded him that the weed was a major item in the economy of the region. The deacon pointed out that part of his salary would come from the tobacco growers.

The following Sunday, the preacher took out after whiskey and again stirred the deacon to remind him that the church building was in the shadow of distilleries. In fact, some of the members worked at the distilleries.

Frustrated by this time, the young preacher asked the deacon, "What can I preach on?" The deacon replied, "Why not preach against heathen witch doctors? There isn't one of them in a thousand miles of here."

It is not our aim to be insensitive with what I shall say in this article. I have heard, and must say I have been guilty of preaching lessons that were insensitive to the hearer's feelings. I am in total agreement that the TRUTH must be preached in love (**Ephesians 4:15**). However, any attempt to soft-soap a message because it steps on the hearer's toes, is unacceptable to those who love and preach the WORD.

Two things that a preacher must do to be effective. One, he must preach to the people who are

present. It does no good to present a truth, if those who need it are not going to hear it. Secondly, that which he presents must be the TRUTH regardless of whose ears tingle (**1 Samuel 3:11**). The preacher who omits certain subjects from his repertoire of sermons, does not deserve to be called preacher (**Acts 20:27**). A preacher must never let friendship, or the fear of losing a job, influence him to fail in his responsibility to, "preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (**2 Timothy 4:2**).

Truth, by its very nature, has a bite to it. Truth is singular. There is no other way and no compromise. Those who want to embrace doubt or shades of gray in the face of obvious truth, are going to be pricked in their hearts (**Acts 2:37**). Truth then becomes the agent that illuminates the heart of the hearer. If the heart is good ground, the seed of truth will bring forth fruit a hundred-fold (**Luke 8:5-15**).

There is a quote going around that comes from a movie in which a Marine colonel says, "The truth, you can't handle the truth!" It is sad when people of the world cannot deal with the truth from God's word. It is disastrous when those who call themselves New Testament Christians cannot handle the truth. Can you handle the truth?!

By Glen Young

DO ALL ROADS LEAD TO HEAVEN?

It would seem that the majority of the people of the world think so. They make such statements as: "It makes no difference what a person believes as long as he is honest and sincere." Then, people are urged to "Join the church of your choice." Others say: "One can be saved outside the church as well as inside." Such statements indicate that people who say such things really think that all roads lead to heaven. When you get right down to it they even say so. "You believe what you want to believe and I will believe what I want to believe and we will both end up in heaven even though we are traveling different roads. Because all roads lead to the same place."

Such statements and ideas as given above are in direct contrast to what is said in the Bible. We are told to study the Bible that we might know the truth that will make us free from the bondage of sin. (**2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16,17; Jno. 8:32; 17:17**). Sin is a transgression of God's law (**1 Jno. 3:4**).

If and when we become familiar with the Word of God, through a study of it, we will be aware of such statements as: "*Not everyone that saith unto Me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;*"

but he that doeth the Will of My Father Who is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21-27). Jesus also said: "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the Word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day." (Jno. 12:48). So, the Word of God, the Bible, will judge us in that day. We must abide by it's teaching and do what we are told.

In 2 Cor. 5:10, Paul says: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." In 2 Jno. 9-11 we read the following: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works."

What people are saying, when they say that all roads lead to heaven, is that each person can follow his own steps, believe what he wants to believe, do what he wants to do, and still arrive in heaven only by different roads or through different beliefs. Such thinking is actually saying that man can direct his own steps when it comes to the matter of religion. But the Bible says: "O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." (Jer. 10:23) And again: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; But the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14:12).

There is only one way that leads to heaven and that is through following the teaching of the Word of Christ Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. (Jno. 14:6). Won't you let us help you to find that way and follow in it?

By Jim Sasser

Assurance in Prayer

Some of the greatest blessings that we have as children of God are associated with and obtained by prayer. However, not every child of God knows how to pray. Even the Lord's disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1). How can I know that my prayers are working and that God is hearing my prayer? How can I have assurance in prayer?

1. Prayer Must Be In Harmony With the Will of God. "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him" (1 John 5:14-15). Notice the assurance that John has in prayer. However, this assurance is conditional. John says that if we ask according to His will, He hears us and we have the

petitions that we ask for. God will not grant any request that is contrary to His will. God's will is set forth in the Bible.

2. We Must Be Keeping God's Commandments. "And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:22). Again, notice the assurance that John has in prayer, but it is based upon the fact that the one praying is keeping the commandments of God and doing the things that are pleasing in His sight. God has never rewarded rebellion.

All the verbs in this verse are in the present tense. As we continue to keep God's commandments, and continue to do those things that please Him, we can continue to ask and expect to receive. This assurance is not based upon past accomplishments, nor upon future intentions, but upon present obedience.

3. Prayer Must Be Offered In Faith. "But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways" (James 1:6-8). Our entire relationship with God is based upon faith. Why would prayer be any different? Prayer is an exercise of faith. The effectiveness of our prayers will be in proportion to the strength of our faith.

James says that those who doubt are "unstable." They believe in God when things are good, but have doubts when things are bad. In times of doubt, prayer is little more than a shot in the dark. This kind of prayer will not be answered.

4. Prayer Must Be Fervent and Earnest. "... The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16). The adjectives "effective" and "fervent" come from the Greek word ENERGEIO, from which we get our English word "energy." There is great power in prayer, but we cannot just throw a prayer into the air and expect it to "avail much." Prayer works for those who will "work" prayer.

5. Prayer Must Come From A Humble Heart. In Luke 18:9-14, Jesus gave the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. This parable showed that God accepts the prayer of a humble sinner over the prayer of one who is self-righteous. Indeed, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5).

Humility is not a garb to be thrown on when we are ready to pray. Humility must be an established part of our character if we expect God to hear and answer our prayers.

Concluding Thoughts. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and told them to expect to have their prayers answered (Mark 11:22-24). We can have this same assurance in our prayers, if we allow the Bible to teach us how to pray.

by Heath Rogers

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.

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Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS: J.R. DANIEL, GRANT CLOTHIER, JAN PATRICK AND STEVE WIMP AND LILA, THE SISTER OF ALMA BAUMGARTNER.

MARY CZIRR IS UNDER HOSPICE CARE.

DERRICK GAINES, THE SON OF JAN PATRICK IS RECUPERATING FROM TRANSPLANT SURGERY AS IS THE SISTER OF WENDY TAYLOR.

OUR CURRENT STUDIES ARE: SUNDAY MORNING: THE BOOK OF ACTS - BYRON TAYLOR AND WEDNESDAY EVENING: THE SCHEME OF REDEMPTION - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON: GOD IN OUR LIVES THROUGH PRAYER



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