

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”

May 29, 2016

TEMPTED AND TRIED

Jim Stauffer

We have a hymn we sing with these words that meditate on both the meaning and effect of temptations and trials in our lives.

The writer of the Book of James makes it clear there is a distinction between the two. He says the trials we face in life are testing us. Such tests, he says, will produce steadfastness. Peter, who seems to be writing during a time of particularly intense persecution, says such trials purge us of dross such as fire does to precious metals. It is a purification process.

James does not pretend suffering is actually enjoyable when he says, *Count it all joy, my brothers when you meet trials of various kinds.* Our joy comes when we, *know that the testing of our faith produces steadfastness (Jas. 1:2,3).*

We will each be tried in ways that provide opportunity to grow and gain strength. How could one be more tested than Abraham, who was commanded to offer his only son, the son of promise as a sacrifice on an altar on Mount Moriah to God in heaven. Yet the Hebrew writer tells us, *He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. (Heb. 11:19)*

It is clear we will be tested in areas where we need to increase our strength. The fact is when we are faced with trials in our areas of strength, we often do not even perceive them as trials. It is the area of weakness that feels stress when challenged. This is much like a physical workout. Each of us have portions of our anatomy that are relatively stronger than others. We are not stressed as much working our strong body members as we are with those that are weaker.

It is imperative we see our testing clearly in order to summon the necessary courage to overcome. We must readily admit the failure to pass such tests indicates weakness in our faith. Peter explains this completely, **1 Pet. 1:6** *In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—*

more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Our faith may be tested in the rearing of our children, by the demands of our occupation, or as we attempt to be educated by godless men or women and so on throughout life. We see people who have what has been called a “mid-life crisis”, older people who succumb to the effects of age in their lives. All of these things can attack our faith by exposing a lack of spiritual courage to stand the test. The answer for us, or the actual test result is easy to read. It is whether we remain faithful to God through it all. Remember what God said to Abraham, *He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” (Gen. 22:12)* Paul gives the following encouragement, *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. (Rom. 8:18)*

It is interesting that James follows his admonition on trials and testing by encouraging us to pray for wisdom. May we do so and please our God in heaven with a faith strengthened by the trials of life.

Correction

Last week I published an old article on the subject of the falling away from the faith of one Thomas P. Hardeman. This occurred many years ago and I have never been personally acquainted with bro. Hardeman. The article obviously did not cover future events in his life. It has been reported to me by a reliable source that bro. Hardeman has been restored to the Lord.

I feel I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that as publicly as I presented the article of his falling away. The purpose of the article was to illustrate the dangers faced by those who seek education that exposes them to strong worldly influences. We rejoice, as do the angels in heaven that he has returned to the Lord. That which was lost has been found.

jcs

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows...." (Matthew 1:18). So begins Matthew's account of the genealogy, birth, and origins of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Mary is first introduced as the wife of Joseph. A betrothal or the pledge to be married was legally binding. Only a writing of divorce could nullify the agreement; infidelity at this point in the relationship was considered adultery (Deuteronomy 22:23-24). The marriage ceremony involved the groom taking the bride to his house (Matthew 25:1-13). In this setting the husband and wife would come together as married to each other; only in this setting was this physical relationship proper; Mary and Joseph had been chaste in their relationship with each other. Now, though, it is discovered that Mary was already with child. Matthew is not hinting at any kind of concealment; he only says that Mary's pregnancy became obvious. The child in her womb was a miracle of God the Spirit. Luke's account features the Holy Spirit's role in the birth of Jesus prominently (Luke 1-2).

In time it would have been obvious to Joseph that Mary was with child. And he knew whether he had or had not been with Mary as her husband. Matthew says that Joseph was a *"just man."* Does this mean that he was a nice fellow and simply wanted to spare Mary any embarrassment? Often justice required some kind of action on the part of the offended party. Did Mary tell Joseph the circumstances of her pregnancy? Matthew 1:20 indicates that it was the angel of the Lord who revealed to Joseph the reason for Mary's pregnancy. Was Joseph, a righteous man, reluctant to marry someone who had been unfaithful? This, though, would have exposed his guilt. So, now he simply seeks to obtain a "quiet" divorce, even, though, potentially, Mary could have been stoned to death (although this action was infrequently carried out in the 1st c.).

The angel said: *"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins"* (Matthew 1:21). Rather than the father or mother naming the child, the angel said His name would be Jesus! More, though: *"You shall call His name Jesus."* It was not simply that Jesus was his name; it is that Jesus was to become the Savior of the world. To call His name Jesus is to recognize the purpose for which He came into the world. Jesus came to bring salvation—Jesus saves! The Messiah would not free the Jews from Roman tyranny. The Messiah would die on a cross to save all from sin—the very thing no one can save himself or herself from.

God is speaking through Matthew. God is speaking through dreams. God is speaking through His Son, Jesus, the Savior, the Messiah. That is good news and we need to listen. *"While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved*

Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" (Matthew 17:5).

Randy Harshbarger

Fathers:

Principle Trainers of Children

"Children are an heritage of the Lord" (Ps. 127:3) and as such should be considered gifts from God who have been placed in our hands to mold and fashion into worth-while citizens in his kingdom. Thus is laid on us the responsibility to *"train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it"* (Prov. 22:6). Note the word "train." Far too many times this is thought to be accomplished simply by telling how to act, etc. However, even a dictionary recognizes that such is not the case. It says, "to bring to a desired standard of efficiency or condition or behavior, etc. by instruction and practice" (Oxford American Dictionary).

Telling is definitely important. *"These words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up"* (Deut. 6:6-7). But practice and application are also required. This can be seen even in secular matters. One may attend school where he is told the information he needs, but then he needs on-the-job training, and some are hired as trainees. He needs the experience. Churches have training classes in which instruction is given, but training is gained by practice and experience.

This is brought out in the New Testament in **Ephesians 6:4**. It says, *"And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* There are several important points made in this passage:

1. Of utmost importance is the expression *"of the Lord."* This has religious and spiritual application. It is *"the way he should go"* (Prov. 22:6). It is not just nurture and admonition, but is nurture and admonition of the Lord.
2. The synonyms nurture and admonition are not easily defined but most seem to agree that the word "nurture" deals with training by act and discipline and the expression "admonition" is training by word (Expositor's Greek Testament). In his discussion of paideia (nurture) Thayer says: "1. the whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now re-proof and punishment)."
3. Usually we husbands leave this to mothers, but in doing so we have neglected the fact that the passage explicitly gives this to the father! Thus, it is his responsibility to do the *"nurture and admonition."* He can do this by reading the Bible and Bible stories to and with his children and enabling them to make application of its truth to various aspects of life. He doesn't merely tell

them but helps them in preparing their Bible class lessons. He is involved in training them when he sees to it that they go with him to church services and participate as much as possible in its activities. It is his responsibility that they are taught the word of God, to train them in proper behavior, and when needed he is to administer discipline, correction, and punishment, as he "*chastens them betimes*" (**Prov. 13:24**). If a father is not actively involved in this, he is neglecting his role as father. Thus he is the principal trainer of his children.

To be sure, his wife has a part in this. She is told to "*guide* (or rule, ASV) *the home*" (**1 Tim. 5:14**). Nevertheless, "*the husband is the head of the wife as Christ also is head of the church*" (**Eph. 5:23**). So, in addition to being involved in the actual teaching and training, it is his responsibility and God has given him the authority to see that all such, though done by others, is done properly. The following quotation from the Pulpit Commentary brings this out very well. In discussing the synonyms "nurture" and "admonition, it says, "It is difficult (but apparently impossible) to get words in the English language to represent the two words that are in the Greek original. They are in a general way to be distinguished as discipline by power and discipline by reason . . . It is rather all that drilling which a parent gives his children in virtue of the executive (magisterial) power which is placed in him. He has certain rules by which he goes in training his children, and he has got the power to enforce them. He makes them say 'grace before meat' that they may learn betimes from whom all table comforts come. He makes them attend to their lessons, that they may know that they have got to work and not be idlers. He makes them be selective as to their companionships that they may not get out in evil associations. He appoints certain hours for the house, that they may learn order and punctuality. He does not ask them if they will go to church, but he makes them go to church with him. That is the kind of drilling that is meant here, and when it is necessary it must be backed up by chastening, or judicious punishment for good." It is interesting that in discussing admonition it says, "It is not necessary that a parent should always explain to a child the reasons of his procedure. But it is important that, as a rule, children should have explained to them the evil of the course they are asked to avoid, and the advantages of the course they are asked to follow." Again observe that the text places the responsibility to do this on the fathers.

The wording of this may seem somewhat harsh, but remember the same verse (**Eph. 6:4**) lets us know that it is to be administered in such a way as not to provoke the children to wrath.

Conclusion

It seems fair to say that, in this regard, the Bible shows:

1. Children need the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
2. This involves much more than mere telling; it requires training.

3. God has specifically given this responsibility to fathers.

by Hiram Hutto THE BEACON - Electronic Edition – 4/26/16

The Proper Use of The Old Testament

Nothing in the old testament serves as law for Christians (**Gal 3:24-25, Heb 7:12**) – not principle, precept, ordinance, commandment, statute - nothing. The "new testament" is held out as our complete law for today (**II Cor 3:6, Heb 9:15, Heb 7:22**). But it is still so very important that we study the old testament regularly because there are vital things we can learn from it (**I Cor 10:11**) that help us understand the new testament. Some examples include ...

John 3:14-15 compares Jesus being hung on the cross and the necessity of our belief in him to the **Num. 21:4-9** story of the brazen serpent being hung up and the necessity of the Israelites to look at that serpent in order to be healed of their snake bites. If we never study the old testament, how would we properly understand this parallel? And there are many other examples like that - where the new testament draws a parallel to the old.

I Tim 2:9-10 tells us to dress modestly and **Gen 3:7,10,21** helps define for us what modest dress is. **Gen 1:1** tells us that God created the heaven and the earth. The old testament is littered with many such facts that (by definition) don't change – since they are facts, not laws.

The new testament tells us homosexuality is sinful (**Rom 1:26-27**), but **Lev. 18:22-23** in the old testament informs us that God considers the sin like (in the same category as) having sex with an animal.

Ezek 3:18 helps us understand that we should warn those in sin as we have opportunity - though what is and what is not defined as sin has changed in some particulars since **Ezek 3:18** was written.

We can't learn how to worship God today from **Lev. 10:1-2** since it is part of old testament law, but we certainly can learn from the passage that God will be displeased with us if we don't worship him the way he has instructed in his new testament law.

There are probably dozens and dozens of other illustrations, but the above should suffice to make the point. The old testament was written "*for our learning*" (**Rom 15:4**). Let's not neglect it in our studies.

by Patrick Donahue

Her Gain is our Loss

Mary Ruth Czirr passed from this life 5/20/2016 and was laid to rest by family, friends and brethren 5/23/16. She live 92 years upon this earth and was an excellent example to all of what faith in God and His word means. She will be sorely missed but her influence remains while she rests in the bosom of Abraham.

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 P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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NEWS AND NOTES:

SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

GRANT CLOTHIER, J.R. DANIEL
AND JAN PATRICK.

WE BADE FAREWELL FROM THIS
EARTH TO OUR SISTER IN CHRIST
MARY RUTH CZIRR ON TUESDAY
THIS WEEK. IT IS SAD TO LOSE A
LOVED ONE BUT HER HEALTH HAD
DETERIORATED AND SHE LONGED
TO BE WITH THE LORD. MAY WE
ALSO BE WHEN THAT TIME
COMES.

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS - BOOK OF
ACTS - BYRON TAYLOR
WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS - BOOK
OF JAMES - JOE HURD
SUNDAY SERMON: THE MEANING
OF THE RESURRECTION OF
CHRIST



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