

Rom. 14:19
So then let
us follow
after things
which make
for peace,
and things
whereby we
may edify
one
another.

John 8:32 And
ye shall know
the truth and
the truth shall
make you free.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

July
10
2016

THE CHURCH: ITS HEAD AND MEMBERSHIP

Jim Stauffer

How the church functions and in what condition it remains is dependent upon two divergent ideas. The thought that the church of the first century is the model and pattern for the church for all time is in competition with the modern concept that the church is an ever evolving body that must change to keep pace with modern times and new age needs of man.

Restoration	vs	Modernism
God's Wisdom	vs	Man's wisdom
God's Design	vs	Man's Design

Authority

This lesson will be about who has the authority to direct the path of the church. It will serve to remind us of the Biblical proof of the authorized position of the child of God. Where does the authority come from and how does the membership determine if the instruction they are called upon to follow is authentic in its source?

Christ, the Head

Jesus is said to be its head, appointed by God – **Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18**

The church is said to be subject to Him – **Eph. 5:22-24**

The qualifications of Christ to be the head are covered in the next few headings.

Jesus is God

John testifies to this – **John 1:1**

Matthew says the same – **Matt. 1;23**

Paul makes a clear statement – **Col. 2:9**

Jesus was the Creator

John again gives his testimony – **John 1:3**

Paul confirms this – **Col. 1:16,17**

This tells us He created us in His own image
Gen. 1:26

We are naturally dependent upon Him for guidance – **Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12**

Jesus was A/The Prophet

Moses prophesied of Him – **Dt. 18:15-19; Acts 3;22,23**

Writer of Hebrews testifies – **Heb. 1:1,2**

Jesus is Lord

This was a common conclusion in His day
John 13:13

The reason is given – **Matt. 7:29; John 7:45,46**

Sermon on the Mount – *“**Ye have heard it said... but I say unto you**”*

(They appealed to Moses for authority but Jesus' mode was, *“**I say**”*)

God acknowledged Him from heaven – **Matt. 17:5**

Jesus claimed *“**all authority**”* – **Matt. 28:18**

We must acknowledge this to be saved – **Rom. 10:9,10**

We must accept the validation Scripture gives to Christ from the beginning to the end. It tells us He is God, Creator, Prophet and Lord. If we reject any or all of this we cannot be remotely connected to the church He died to establish.

Scripture, the Creed

Jesus' actions and words are recorded for us to believe – **John 20:30,31**

He sent the Holy Spirit to convey His message – **John 14;25,26; 15:26; 16;13,14**

The Scripture is heaven sent – **1 Cor. 2:10-13**

They are inspired and not of man – **2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 1:20,21**

They are the oracles of God – **1 Pet. 4;11**

They are understandable – **Eph. 3:3-5**

Perverting Scripture brings condemnation/speaks to its value – **2 Pet. 3:14-16**

Paul makes this point to Galatians – **Gal. 1:6-9**

He warns Colossians about traditions of men
Col. 2:4-10

This is the same principle Jesus taught – **Matt. 15:9**

We must then realize Scripture is our way of hearing our Lord Jesus Christ. And when we hear Him we must acknowledge He sends a message that is not intended for our alteration or any updating that society may call for.

We have learned in previous lessons the church is the body of Christ. The body is subject to its head; therefore, the church is subject to Christ.

Man has no authority from God to alter or in any way change or update the church Jesus died to establish.

It is an admission that God is not omniscient to claim the church needs changing in any way. If God is not omniscient why do we follow Him anyway?

JOHN THE BAPTIST

"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matthew 3:1-2). All four gospels give attention to John the Baptist— lone prophetic voice in the wilderness, forerunner of the Messiah, fearless preacher of morality, cousin of Jesus. Jesus said of John: *"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:11).* John was a prophet who called people to repentance; but he was also the subject of prophecy. As Malachi closed the canonical door of the OT, he spoke of John. *"Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming, says the LORD of hosts" (3:1).* The messenger becomes the prophet in **Malachi 4:5**: *"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD."*

Matthew's introduction of John is abrupt. For the past 400 years prophetic activity was rare. Now this rough-hewn preacher, fresh from the wilderness, whose appearance was anything but soft and appealing, came heralding that the kingdom of heaven was close by. As **Isaiah 40:3** says, John was: *"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God."* Isaiah, looking beyond Israel's return from exile, anticipates the true release from captivity that only Christ could provide. This is the one, John says, the people must listen to and obey. Hard-baked roads will give way to the new and fresh entrance into the kingdom of God.

"Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matthew 3:5-6). Great crowds came out to see this strange preacher. And why not? He was not a *"reed shaken in the wind."* His clothing was similar to that of Elijah (**2 Kings 1:8**); John clearly stood in the tradition of OT prophets. His appearance and life gave seriousness to the matter at hand. John preached *"a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4).* Repentance with no intention of changing one's life and heart is not true repentance; it is mere formality. Baptism without true repentance is meaningless. It is a mistake to say that because Matthew doesn't include (as Mark does) *"baptism of repentance for the remission of sins"* that true forgiveness was not possible until after the death of Jesus. The Lord said that His death would bring salvation. *"For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28).* John, as the prophets of old, anticipated the ultimate sacrifice of the

Messiah for the sins of mankind. John's message of repentance and baptism for the remission of sins was the prelude for entrance into the kingdom.

Into this barren, spiritual wasteland, John came and preached. While Jews were familiar with the concept of baptism (**Hebrews 6:2; 9:10**), they would soon learn that being part of the fleshly family of Abraham was not enough to save. Mere acts of feigned repentance were not enough. Is John putting the ax to your tree? Or, does your tree bear good fruit?

Randy Harshbarger

How To Listen In Church

Robert F. Turner

Ever get sleepy during a sermon? Truth is, any one of us may find our attention wandering now and then. Long attention spans are difficult under the best of circumstances. The preacher bears a heavy responsibility here, for subject matter, style of presentation, relevance, and many other factors contribute to a "live" wide-awake audience. But the speaker cannot do it all. Nor is it enough to prove by the Scriptures that we should be vitally interested. We know that and yet we may need motivation. Perhaps we could even learn how to become better listeners.

Jesus said, *"Take heed... how ye hear" (Luke 8:18).* Not with dulled hearing and closed eyes, shunning the truth (**Matthew 13:15-16**); nor with preconceived notions that prevent our receiving truth (**Matthew 16:21-23**). The people I now have in mind do not belong in these categories. But there are "good" people whose minds wander, or are easily distracted; and this article is bold to make some suggestions for getting more out of the sermon and of worship as a whole.

1. Sit toward the front of the auditorium; close enough to feel the speaker is talking to you. Do this not just to better hear the speaker, but to improve the "oneness" of feeling, essential to good communication. It puts fewer distractions between you and the speaker, allows you to better "read" his expressions, gestures, etc. It also makes for better singing and a "closer" feeling for the Lord's Supper and other worship. Yes, there are mothers with babies who need to sit closer to the nursery; sick and elderly who need easier access to the restrooms; and always a certain number who "couldn't care less" about the worship, but come (now and then) for unknown reasons. Leave the back seats for them.

2. Become a participant, not an observer. In Christianity all saints are priests in a holy, royal priesthood (**1 Peter 2:5, 9**). Each is a worshiper; praying and singing with the leader, remembering Christ in the communion, giving freely with the Lord's work in mind, and learning – repeating in your own mind – that which is being taught. Being a true learner is not a passive

process, but requires distinct participation with the teacher.

3. Take note, learn to outline the message. Some are content to jot down the Scriptures used - and that is good. But this can be done without much thinking with the speaker. If we would make an effort to jot down his main points (in our own brief wording) and note their reaction to one another and to the subject, we would find ourselves much more of a participant – and certainly a much better listener.

4. Question what you hear. Is that a valid point, proven by the Scripture used? You will not be able to think the matter through during the sermon, but a question mark beside the point will remind you to “check it out” when you are home. This word of caution: one can be a “noble Berean” (**Acts 17:11**) without becoming a habitual critic of the work of others. Learn constructive criticism, and apply it to your own work.

5. Listen with the intention of making this your message, when you have time to think it through. How would you tell this to others? How could you improve on it, to fit someone you need to teach? This point of view can have an amazing effect on your attention span.

6. Make self-application of the lesson. How can this improve my life for Christ? How does it fit my personal needs? Listen with a tender conscience, ready to learn and adjust your life accordingly.

You can have the blessings of Jesus Christ if you will learn to be a good listener. The Savior said, *“Blessed are your ears, for they hear.”* He also said, *“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled”* (**Matthew 13:16; 5:6**). Which a little practice on the above, and this kind of incentive, you may not notice the preacher ran overtime.

~via Cyfair Family News & Notes; Cypress, Texas and Market Messenger, Athens, Al.

A Thousand Times...NO!

Ever notice that you can say "no" a thousand times, but all those no's are canceled by one "yes"? "No, you can't have a cookie, can't have a cookie, can't have a cookie! Okay, yes!" The cookie will be eaten! To concede and fail you don't have to say yes as many times as you must say no to remain steadfast and succeed.

A thousand no's to fornication are deleted by one yes that robs one of his virtue and virginity. A thousand no's to adultery are swept away by a yes that destroys family, home and soul. A thousand no's to drugs are erased by a yes that opens the door to all kinds of destruction and excess. A thousand no's to stealing are forgotten by a yes on our record when we stand before the law. A thousand no's to pornography are overwhelmed by a yes that writes indelible images in the mind. It applies across the board to all sin.

While it is certainly true that forgiveness in Christ is available for any sinful yes decision we make, this must

not be seen as license to make that errant decision even once. We are called to completely die to sin (**Rom. 6**) -- it is to have no part in us, or us in it.

Parents often tire of the "May I have a cookie?" question and finally concede with a yes. Kids know this. Satan knows this. We tire of saying no and looking different from others. We tire of our "no" answer causing abstinence from activities that appear pleasurable and fun. We tire of always being the one to say no. In time, sin nags us to the point where we finally want to say, "Okay, yes just this time." How much more can God expect us to resist -- how many more times must we say no?

The Hebrew writer reminds us, *"You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin"* (**Heb. 12:4**). We're not just talking about saying no to the point of alienation and missing out on some of life's pleasures. Resisting *"to bloodshed, striving against sin"* means saying no to sin until it kills us! That means a thousand times no to the sin that tempts us from within and from without. And when we have said no a thousand times it is then time to say it a thousand and one times, and more!
by David Diestelkamp -- Via Think on These Things, January-February-March, 2002

BLESSINGS FROM GOD

James 1:17 *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.*

We at Lenexa have been blessed from the past couple of years until now with the birth of several beautiful young babies. Aria Miles, Sean Peterson, Aubrey Echols and now very recently, Madylin Price, Hannah Echols and most recently, Madison Miles.

There are so many ways we can show our appreciation of these fine young parents and children and provide assistance to them as they attempt to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

We, as the brethren of these parents need to realize our responsibility to encourage them in every way we can. It is not asking too much for us to provide any help and assistance they may need. And let it be said, we don't have to wait for them to ask. We can observe and step up and offer as needed.

The Psalmist said, **Psa. 127:3** *Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; And the fruit of the womb is his reward. 4 As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, So are the children of youth. 5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: They shall not be put to shame, When they speak with their enemies in the gate.*

We shall let these parents decide just how full their quiver should be with these blessings but we thank them for their faithful service to the Lord and can well remember our days of rearing youngsters and teaching them to love the Lord. God bless them in their efforts.

Jim Stauffer

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

Elders: Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER J.R. DANIEL,
GRANT CLOTHIER AND JAN
PATRICK IN PRAYER AS THEY
DEAL WITH HEALTH ISSUES.

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS -
A STUDY OF PRAYER - RON PECK

WEDNESDAY - THE BOOK OF
JAMES - JOE HURD



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