

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

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“Show yourself as an example”

Jim Stauffer

1 Tim. 4:16 *Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.*

The concept of being an example for others is a common theme of the Bible. Jesus, Himself, declared His life and conduct to be an example for His disciples to follow. **John 13:15** *“For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.”*

Parents learn early on in the rearing of children their example goes much farther than words. The old idea of “do as I say, not as I do”, does not resonate effectively with children or others. Even if not expressed, people respond better to those who “practice what they preach.”

There are examples of good behavior and bad behavior, but both can be good examples for us to learn from. Paul offered the examples of sinful conduct of Israel as a learning opportunity for saints in the New Testament days. **1 Cor. 10:6** *Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.*

At every turn the apostles pled with those of their day and also us through the written word to seek out and follow good examples. To be encouraged by them to pattern our lives after such. After devoting much time to his own history, by explaining the cost of his discipleship, Paul encouraged the Philippians to follow his example and those who had learned from it. *Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.* **(Phil. 3:17)**

It has long been the desire and the mantra of the church of our Lord in this country and in this day and age to follow the patterns found in the New Testament. We do this in our worship. This is the reason for a lack of instrumental worship in the church. There was none in the New Testament church. This is the reason immersion in water to put on Christ in baptism and be born again is demanded for remission of sins. It was in

New Testament days. It is the reason we partake of the Lord’s Supper and give as prospered on the first day of the week. It was done so in New Testament days.

The point is, we must follow the examples given of New Testament Christians and churches in everything if we are truly committed to following the example of the Lord and His apostles.

When we hear Paul commend the church in Thessalonica as evangelizing the area in an attempt to follow his example, we must commit to the same.

1 Thess. 1:6 *You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8 For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.* This is how it works. Paul was their example and is ours as well, but they even more so.

Paul told Timothy, even as a young man he could and should be an example to others. **1 Tim. 4:12** *Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.* Our example then is that of one who believes.

It is amazing that living our lives as an example for others is a by-product of ensuring our own salvation. **2 Pet. 1:10** *Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.*

To provide us with examples to follow, Christ has set in the church, pastors to be our example. **1 Pet. 5:3** *nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.*

May we let them do this task with joy by obeying and following their lead **(Heb. 13:17).**

The Sermon on the Mount: *INFLUENCE*

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:13-16).

The qualities and characteristics flowing from the *Beatitudes* help kingdom citizens as they emit light and send out flavor that preserves. Kingdom citizens are people of influence. Their lives in Christ are responses to the needs of the world—salt and light. Salt purifies; it preserves. We use salt to flavor bland food. In the 1st c. meat, for example, was expensive (salt, too); it was essential that it be preserved. If your saltiness becomes insipid, you throw it out. Priests in the 1st c. preferred salt from the Dead Sea; that stronger salt accelerated the burning of animal flesh; its strong odor helped mask the stench of burning animals. People listening to Jesus teach understood quite well about the properties of salt (*New Testament Hours, Vol. 1, The Gospels, 283-4, Cunningham Geikie*).

Light attracts, warns, and exposes. Often, the NT contrasts light with darkness; the whole world lies in the power of the evil one (**1 John 5:19**). Light must be visible to do any good; you don't hide your light under a basket. True light (enlightenment?) comes from God. Yet, the light of this world can only result in darkness and rebellion. In this world, kingdom citizens are to shine forth, illuminating the true purpose of life and the need to follow Jesus, who alone can free one from sin.

Kingdom citizens are not cloistered people; they must remain *in* the world in order to do any good. In this world we never get away from those in sin; yet, we do not participate in their sin, but we remain, at least for a while, next to them (**1 Corinthians 5**). We dilute our saltiness when we mix with the world's sins. Are we really letting our lights shine? Is our influence sometimes irritating to the open sores of sin and rebellion? A rotten world needs preservation. Yet, when there is little difference between us and the world in terms of actions and attitudes, how can we expect to attract others to Jesus?

If you eat an egg that has no salt on it, you know it immediately. If you stumble through the house in the middle of the night, you are liable to have an accident. As the salt of the earth, are we present or absent? In a dark night of sin, are we lights that help people find Jesus, the true *Light of the world*?

Randy Harshbarger

OLD GRUDGES

It is said that in a certain town there had lived two men as neighbors and friends for more than sixty years. They were pillars in the village church, one of them being a deacon named White. The other was named Jones. After the long lapse of time a serious difficulty unfortunately sprang up between these two brethren of the church. The feeling waxed so warm that it grew into a bitter feud. Mutual friends attempted a reconciliation, but the men would not be reconciled. Finally Deacon White became dangerously ill, and drew nigh unto death. Mutual friends again interposed their kind offices to effect a reconciliation. They said to Brother Jones that it would be a sin for him to permit the sick brother to die with the quarrel standing. Jones was persuaded, and called on Deacon White. The two men talked over their mutual grievances, and, after agreeing to let them be buried, shook hands and exchanged mutual forgiveness in the presence of death. The Deacon then lay back upon his pillow, awaiting his final summons, and Jones arose to leave. But as the visitor reached the door, Deacon White, with a great effort, raised himself on his elbow and called out, in a weak, fainting voice: "Brother Jones – Brother Jones! I want it distinctly understood that if I get well the old grudge stands." It is a lamentable fact that in too many churches *old grudges* are standing around, stiff and stark, like skeletons in a closet.

William E. Wallace (Via TORCH, Vol. 3, No 12, December, 1968)

God's Son Is King

It is easy to forget how rich the Old Testament is with various sorts of prophecies about the Messiah that was to come. Even from **Genesis 3** and **Genesis 12**, we recognize there was an anticipation of the Christ and the coming Redeemer. Yet, even in some more common passages of Scripture, there are hints of Christ and the role that He would play. Upon first reading you might miss the Messianic implications involved. Place the second psalm in that category.

Upon first reading, and even as you begin to read the early verses of **Psalm 2**, you may begin to think David is writing about why foreign nations are coming against him and attacking Israel. He begins, *"Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together..."* (**Psalm 2:1-2**). However, David is writing as a prophet. He would conclude in **verse 2** that those kings of the earth are attacking the Lord and His Anointed [Christ]. The psalmist also writes the words of the Lord in **verse 6**, *"But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain."* The decree would be made known that

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the King is God's Son (**Psalm 2:7**). For those who refuse to listen and obey His Son, then wrath would be upon them (**Psalm 2:11-12**).

Psalm 2 is quoted and fulfilled as Peter and John, after being released from prison, made clear that their imprisonment was an attack against Christ, the Son of God (**Acts 4:25-26**). When Saul of Tarsus began to persecute Christians, the Lord appeared to him asking, "*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?*" (**Acts 9:4**). An attack against the kingdom is an attack against her King. Jesus Christ has been given all authority in heaven and on earth (**Matthew 28:18**). He has been made head of all things, particularly head of the church (**Colossians 1:16-18**). To deny worship, honor, and glory to Christ in that position of authority is to rage against Him and oppose Him.

We must recognize that Jesus of Nazareth is both Lord and Christ (**Acts 2:36**) and we are commanded to obey Him! Jesus is God's Son and He is also God's appointed King. He is reigning at the right hand of God, as the only begotten Son of God (**Acts 13:33**).

Let us "*Worship the Lord with reverence and rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!*" (**Psalm 2:11-12**). Through the Son of God there is redemption and forgiveness of sins. Yet, He is also the One who will judge all men by righteousness (**Acts 17:31**).

Will you honor God's Son who is the King?
Sean P. Cavender, The Bald Knob Builder

Telling the Difference!

I have in my library a dictionary which defines the word 'discriminate' as "the ability to recognize as being different; distinguish v.i. 1 to see the difference between things, to distinguish". This word does not have an innately racial meaning but refers to an important characteristic of mature people in all areas of life: the ability to tell the difference between things that are genuinely different. This has profound spiritual applications.

In the book of the prophet Ezekiel the man of God was describing the duties of the priests in the restored nation and says, "*And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.*" (**Ezekiel 44:23**) This was one of the besetting sins of Israel in that they often refused to learn to tell the difference between the common and the holy, the clean and the unclean. Look at the events of **Leviticus 10:1-11**. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord and died as a result (**vs1,2**). Moses then used the occasion to emphasize the importance of discernment (discrimination) in spiritual matters. Ezekiel

condemns the priests of his day for this same problem in **Ezekiel, 22:26** "*Her priests have done violence to my law, and have profaned my holy things: they have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they caused men to discern between the unclean and the clean*". Man may not want to see a difference between things but God seems to think it's pretty important in maintaining a relationship with Him.

And it's not as though God were asking us to see microscopic differences with the naked eye. Usually the ability to tell the difference says more about our desire to serve God than anything else.

Cleveland Reddinger, El Dorado church of Christ

Believing A Lie

II Thessalonians 2:10-12 reads "*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*"

According to this passage, a wrong action (sin) based upon a belief in a lie leads to us perishing spiritually. It doesn't matter how strongly a person believes in that lie, if it runs contrary to God's will, it will cause that person to be lost.

This is well illustrated by the man of God in **I Kings 13:15-22**. He believed a lie, and committed a sin of ignorance, **verses 18-19**. He was slain for it even though he thought what he was doing was okay (**verses 21-22ff**).

Here are some lies that many religious people believe:

- 1) doctrine doesn't matter (**II John verse 9**)
- 2) faith only salvation (**James 2:24**)
- 3) it is okay to stay in an unscriptural marriage (**Mt. 19:9**)
- 4) women preachers are authorized (**I Cor 14:34-35**)
- 5) homosexuality is acceptable to God (**Rom 1:26-27**)
- 6) all churches are okay no matter what they teach or stand for (**II John verse 10-11**)

II Thess 2:10-12 shows us that the reason many believe such lies is because they don't have a proper "*love of the truth.*" Love for the truth would motivate us to diligently seek God (**Heb 11:6**), his truth (**John 8:32**), and his righteousness (**Matt 6:33**). Instead many take the easy way out and don't study as they ought, or they accept what they like or think the truth ought to be according to their own human reasoning. When we believe religious lies, that reflects upon our love for the truth.

Matt 15:14 says "*if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*" Make sure you are not a blind follower of a false teacher. Instead, accept all of what God's word says on every subject, and put it into practice in your life.

Patrick Donahue <patdonahue@bellsouth.net>

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

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**WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS -
BOOK OF ROMANS - JIM
STAUFFER**

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SIMPLE GOSPEL OF JESUS
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