

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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DO WE REALLY WANT THE TRUTH?

Jim Stauffer

We have all seen situations unfold where someone's position on a given subject up for debate was clearly proven wrong. Yet in many of these instances they continued to cling to that position in spite of the provided proof.

Jesus dealt with this throughout His personal ministry on the earth. In the first **9 verses of Matthew 15**, Jesus is confronted with the question, *Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders?* The question was not asked concerning the conduct of the disciples regarding God's word, but rather the tradition of the elders. Jesus' reply went to the heart of the friction between the Jewish leaders and Himself. He said, *Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?* His goal was to drive them toward the truth rather than any tradition men may have established.

A similar situation occurs in **Matthew 21:23-27**. Jesus had earlier cleansed the temple of the money changers. He then is asked by the Jewish leaders, *By what authority are you doing these things and who gave you this authority?* In spite of their insincerity, Jesus offered to deal with them. If they would answer His question, he would answer theirs. His question was, *The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men?* The Scripture provides their reasoning prior to their answer. If they said from heaven they would have to explain why they did not believe him. If they said from men, the multitudes who did believe him would be angered toward them. Their answer was, *We do not know*. Jesus then refused to tell them by what authority He cleansed the temple and performed miracles.

Similar incidents took place in **Matthew 22** as well. They attempted to trip Him up with questions about paying tribute to Caesar as they thought this might bring the Romans down upon Him. His answer quieted them when He said, *Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's*.

Jesus, the Son of God, sent to earth as the Savior of all men, was sacrificed on Calvary for the sins of

mankind. He said of Himself, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me*. (**John 14:6**) He was the truth and everything He did and said on earth was representative of the truth. He claimed those who would follow Him would be in essence truth seekers (**see John 18:37**).

Now these incidents in the life of Jesus, whom many claim to believe, raise the age old question of whether we are really interested in following the truth or just trying to maintain an image of such. Following the truth will demand we part ways with worldly thinking on many issues. If we are to truly follow the footsteps of Jesus, we must accept His message revealed in His word (**Eph. 5:1,2; 1 Pet. 2:21-24**).

We face a time when both the leaders of our society and the majority of the followers will tell you some messages of the Bible are old fashioned and have not kept up with the changes in human needs. The Scripture condemns clearly without any ambiguity at all the practice of sexual immorality. Fornication, and homosexuality have been considered sinful from the beginning (**Lev. 21:10-14; 1 Cor. 6:9**). Yet, how many people today defend marriages that follow unscriptural divorces and welcome those into their midst as they worship the very God who condemns it (**Mat. 19:1-9**)? How many people today accept homosexuality as the normal response of those who choose that, even to the point of claiming they are born in such a state? That claim indicts God who created us and then demands we obey laws that contradict the way we were made. Friends, that is just not the truth.

Jesus represents the truth. If we are to be saved by the One Who is the way for our salvation; the One Who brings the truth necessary for our salvation; the One Who gives us the life of the saved, we must accept His word, the truth.

The ultimate question facing everyone is whether they are more concerned with pleasing God and living with Him in eternity or whether they are more concerned with what people think of them in the comparatively short time they spend on the earth.

Do We Need to See Miracles TODAY?

Last week I dealt with the concern about the necessity of believing the miracles recorded in the Bible. I pointed out that those historical events are recorded as facts and that Jesus, the Son of God, regarded them as factual and therefore we must as well. This will eventually lead to the question of those who "claim" to work miracles today by the power of God. In order to answer that question I must first answer the question in our title today, and again, the short blunt answer is "No!"

Look at the end of **John 20:24-31**. Thomas was absent when Jesus first manifested to the apostles after his resurrection and responded with the famous quote of **verse 25**, *"Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."* Let's not give Thomas any grief about this. It was an incredible story and he was in a perfect spot in both place and time to demand proof. Jesus obliges and utters NOT ONE WORD OF REPROOF to Thomas. **(See also Acts 1:3)** Jesus then says, *"Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."* Jesus said we DO NOT NEED to see what Thomas did to believe. The word of credible witnesses, properly recorded, is sufficient for faith. Such testimony is what we have in the New Testament. These men sealed their testimony with their own blood. Men simply do not die for what they KNOW to be false. These men died for the faith and taught us to do the same, and that is the mark of believability. The working of miracles today is totally unnecessary!

Cleveland Reddinger

God's Enemies In Psalms 83

This psalm is the cry of God's persecuted people as they pray that He would not remain inactive against the attacks of the wicked. There is not any implication here that God was indifferent toward their plight. This expresses their desire for relief. Armed with the strength of arrogance and cunning, certain ones had risen up to destroy Israel and their purpose was, to make the name "Israel" extinct.

In every dispensation there have been those who not only rebel against God, but actively seek to destroy those who walk faithfully with God. Their purpose isn't just to ridicule or annoy, but to destroy (they get this from their leader! **1 Pet. 5:8**).

In the study of this Psalm, we can learn some of the characteristics of God's enemies.

Notice:

1. God's enemies *"make a tumult," v.2*. Literally, this means they make a roaring. Luke illustrates this in the history he wrote in Acts. Repeatedly, militant unbelievers made a roaring or tumult over the

proclamation of the gospel (**see Acts 19**). Today, on occasion, there is some protest, sound-bite or editorial lashing out the venom of Satan against those who are not threatened by political correctness, and who dare to repeat what God has said about the sins of our day. Some in the media want to create a tumult and paint people committed to biblical values as a bothersome, dangerous minority group, threatening the peace of universal New Age tolerance.

2. God's enemies lift up their head, **v.2b**. They raised themselves up in arrogance, displaying their menacing attitude without restraint. This kind of persecutor is well described in **Proverbs 21:24**, as *"A proud and haughty man, 'Scoffer' is his name; he acts with arrogant pride."* Jude describes those who were turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. He said, *"... these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries," and they "... speak evil of whatever they do not know," (vss. 8,10).*

3. God's enemies take *"crafty counsel against"* His people, **v.3a**. They are so determined to overthrow righteousness, they consult together and make plans to fulfill their wicked purposes. *"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed ...," (Psa. 2:2)*. In the events that led to Calvary, *"...all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death," (Matt. 27:1).*

4. God's enemies consult together, form a *"confederacy,"* and work *"with one another," vss.3,5*. The writer refers to a confederacy or conspiracy including Edom, the Ishmaelites, Moab, the Hagarenes, Gebel, Ammon, Amalek, Philistia, and Tyre (**vss. 6,7**). In Jesus' day, there was the deadly confederacy of chief priests, scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and even a traitorous disciple.

This is the way Satan works, even today. We are threatened by a combination of many dangers: classic infidelity, worldliness, secular humanism, the New Age movement, denominational confusion, cults, gay rights, materialism, and our own indifference. Satan has forged all these weapons, but they work in *"confederacy"* with one another to assault us and gain greater influence over those who are already lost.

It may not be an organized conspiracy that can be seen, or a networking of error that's overt. But these enemies enjoy power in their combined assault against God and His people.

5. God's enemies need to be humbled (**vss.13-18**). And we are certain they will be humbled, later if not sooner. In days of darkness and difficulty we can read the Scriptures and remember how God delivered the ungodly into punishment; and, we can read the Revelation given through John and know that the wicked will be overthrown eventually. *"...The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows the*

way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish," (Psa. 1:5b,6; see also, 2 Pet. 2:4-9).

Our God will *"bless the righteous; with favor"* and He *"will surround" us "as with a shield," (Psa. 5:12).* Remember what our Lord said: *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."* (John 15:18-20, KJV).

by Warren E. Berkley Taken from Simple Bible Studies, Carey Scott

What's Happening To Our Young People?

One doesn't have to read statistics from a professionally conducted census to know that many young people who are "raised in the church" are being lost to the cause of Christ. What's happening to them?

Permissiveness is happening to youth. In many instances, parents have abdicated their God-given role. They set no firm guidelines, have no definite rules of the house and often allow themselves to be manipulated. Parents are often literally afraid to have firm rules, afraid of the child rebelling. They don't know that love is not some kind of 'namby-pamby attitude, but that there must be a certain kind of toughness to love, amply shown in the book of Proverbs. It doesn't mean being roguish, tyrannical, or unmerciful in the demands it makes. But youth need guidance. They need someone to tell them "how far," some "cans" and "cant's," with good sound "why's." And, in some instances, the "why" may be simply "because I said so."

Work is happening to youth. In many instances young people are pushed and shoved into the "job market" without any consideration as to how the job will interfere with their worship, study, or the influences they will face. None of us want our children to grow up to be lazy good-for-nothings. We want them to "learn the value of a dollar," to know that, at least for most of us, "money doesn't grow on trees." But often that part-time job, which may be taking far too much of their time, is during hours of worship on the Lord's Day or during mid-week Bible study and every night of a gospel meeting. And then the parents, having allowed, maybe even encouraged it, or in some instances demanded it, wonder why their child no longer is interested in spiritual things.

Materialism is happening to youth. Not only are they being shoved into the work arena to make their "spending money," or to "buy some wheels," but also they see parents who are often more committed to

providing "things" than they are to living for the Lord. Frequently the parents are recreation crazed, and allow recreational activity to keep them from worship services and periods of Bible study, or they often put optional work ahead of worship, especially if "overtime pay" is involved.

Humanism is happening to youth. Like an octopus with its many tentacles, humanism is attacking from many directions, approaching from various sources. From very tender years, humanism's eroding influences bombard our young people incessantly; and often parents are unaware of it, and in many instances cannot be aroused to a sense of concern when told of those influences. Evolution is only one of humanism's tentacles, but it is a powerful one. How can one who is constantly told that he is but the higher form of a lower life, fail to ultimately act the part? It is bound to dilute or erode away spiritual influences unless strong teaching is given to the contrary. "Value clarification" advocates teach youth that there are no absolutes, no real definitive standard of right or wrong. This being true, what is to be expected, but that he should eventually cast aside the "old fogey" ideas of parents, preachers, Bible class teachers, and elders?

Hypocrisy is happening to youth. Children are very incisive, easily able to discern a sham. When they repeatedly see hypocritical behavior on the part of adults who are in some authority over them, it has its effect. Elders, preachers, parents, policemen, governmental officials advocating one thing while practicing another send forth uncertain sounds to youth. Especially in spiritual matters, if they see no real devotion, no depth of spiritual life, it affects them.

- by Norman E. Fultz, Taken from The Beacon Electronic Edition, 6/14/16

How shall the young secure their hearts
And guard their lives from sin
Thy word the choicest rules imparts
To keep the conscience clean

Tis like the sun, a heavenly light
That guides us all the day
And through the dangers of the night
A lamp to lead our way

Thy word is everlasting truth
How pure in every age
That holy book shall guide our youth
And well support our age

A hymn by Isaac Watts, founded in Psalm 119, to the music of Beethoven

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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REMEMBER THE SICK:

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AND REMEMBER L.A. STAUFFER.**

**SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS
A STUDY IN PRAYER-RON PECK**

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

**SUNDAY SERMON:
GIVING COMES FROM A
WILLING MIND**



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