

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.

**November  
26  
2017**

## ***DIVISION; SOME GOOD SOME BAD***

*by Jim Stauffer*

**Matt. 10:34** *"Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 "For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; 36 and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD. 37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it. 40 "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. 41 "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42 "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."*

In this chapter, Jesus teaches a lesson about the singular focus of discipleship and what it can possibly do to our earthly relationships. He quotes a text from **Micah 7** that prophesied how men would act under the duress of the punishment of the Lord for their desertion of His love for idolatry.

His point is that when we choose to follow Jesus, we will face difficulties (**Luke 9:57-62**). Those difficulties will likely include the loss of friendship from both family and friends. That loss will occur because we have chosen to confess Jesus as Lord and focus our lives on service in His kingdom. This will alienate loved ones who cannot see the value of the eternal reward promised to the faithful compared to the cost of our earthly lives (**Mat. 16:24-26**).

This, Jesus says, is a division worth the cost. We have to make a decision. To love anyone or anything on this earth more than the Lord makes us unworthy of

Him. We determine to pay that price to achieve our eternal goal. After all, we are speaking of an unending life in the presence of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit in a place where there is no sadness or tears, only happiness and joy. There will be no sickness or dying. I know this is a concept foreign to anything we have experienced here, but this is the promise of our Creator. (**Eph. 1:18-23; 1 Pet. 1:3,4; Rev. 21:1-4**). And this inheritance is reserved for those whose lives have been devoted to His cause (**Rev. 14:13; John 5:28,29**). We can see, as Jesus promises, this division is a necessity for us to achieve our eternal reward, thus it is a good division.

But all division is not good. In his epistle to the Corinthians, Paul said, *Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1 Cor. 1:10)* The division spoken of here is a breach in the relationship of disciples who are in the process of following the Lord in the hope of that eternal abode we have just referenced. Where it can be necessary to separate ourselves from those who would hinder our progress in search of heaven, it is undesirable for men of like precious faith to differ over personal choices that are unrelated to that search.

This division hinders the work of the local church which has the role of being *the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:15)*. This division is poisonous to the goal of reaching the lost and further endangers the souls of those who are fighting amongst themselves.

The apostle reveals the source of this kind of division. He says it is the carnal nature of man reigning over the spiritual soul that strives to serve the Lord. **1 Cor. 3:1** *And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since*

*there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?* When Paul lists the works of the flesh in **Gal. 5**, he names such things as, *enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions and envying*. These are the traits of men who are still carnal. These things manifest themselves in the hearts of men who are not committed to the Lord at any and all expense as Jesus has commanded.

After all, Jesus warned those who would follow Him that a servant is not above His Master. If they persecute us for the Name of the Lord, it will mean we are passing the test of discipleship (**Mat. 10:22-24; John 15:18-20; 2 Tim. 3:12**).

## WHAT ABOUT ROMANS 14

*Edward O. Bragwell Sr.*

In my judgment, much of the recent discussion over **Romans 14** misses the mark. I have difficulty categorically affirming that the application of this chapter does not include anything in *“the faith.”* The very first verse tells how to deal with one weak *“in the faith”* — the same expression in Greek and English as in **Acts 6:7; 13:6; 14:12; 16:5**, etc., where it is clear that *“the faith”* refers to the system of faith — the New Testament gospel system. While this chapter does deal with matters that pertain to *“the faith”* (**v. 1**) — it deals with those matters of *“the faith”* that govern a Christian’s personal conduct before God.

The chapter is not dealing with moral matters — questions of what is morally right or wrong. God’s moral code, though incorporated into both *“the law”* and *“the faith,”* antedates both systems all the way back to the beginning of God’s dealing with man. The things in this timeless moral code are things that Paul would refer to as being right (*“clean”*) or wrong *“unclean of (themselves)”* (**v. 14**) — things that man has been taught from the beginning of time. Things that man is without excuse for forgetting (**cf. Rom. 1:18ff**)

Consequently, I have a problem with making this chapter cover moral matters — though immorality is mostly an individual matter. It simply does not deal with lying, stealing, adultery, licentiousness, fornication, homosexuality, drunkenness and the like. One will have to look elsewhere to find out what to do about such matters. There are specific instructions dealing with having fellowship with those guilty of such matters. (**1 Cor. 5**). Furthermore, there are specific instructions about having fellowship with one who teaches another to commit fornication or puts a stumbling block that results in another committing fornication (**Rev. 2:14, 20**). If one in our midst is found guilty of such, after a reasonable time for repentance (the Lord even gave Jezebel time) such a person must be purged for his own good and the good of the church.

Since the marriage, divorce, and remarriage

question involves adultery and fornication it does not belong in this chapter. Marriage is part and partial of God’s moral code that goes all the way back to the beginning of time. Marriage is God’s alternative to fornication (**Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 7**).

The things under consideration in **Romans 14** are matters of personal conduct taught in *“the faith”* — *“the faith”* delivered to the saints (**Jude 3**). Those weak in the faith are parallel to those weak in knowledge in **1 Corinthians 8**. Their knowledge and discernment under the faith had not yet developed to the point of the strong. The strong are required to bear with them in their weakness. The weak should not be allowed to judge (condemn) the strong. Each should allow the other to practice what he believes *“the faith”* requires of him in an atmosphere of peace, patience and learning — an atmosphere conducive to growing in the faith. As long as each has *“it to himself before God”* (**v. 22**), that is to say he does not make it a condition of “receiving” (**v. 1**) the other, they can still work together in those things that they must do in common (congregational matters).

To *“have it to himself”* is not the same as to “keep it to yourself.” One may, yea, must teach what he believes to be the truth on any subject even in matters of personal conduct. Paul clearly taught what he believed *“the faith”* teaches about eating meats — *“I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself.”* (**v. 14**). Paul did not violate his own instructions to *“have it to yourself before God.”* He taught what he believed *“the faith”* revealed on the subject. However, he realized that some were not yet convinced (they were weak in the faith). He could still show deference to them and let them practice their weak faith (and not violate their consciences) while helping them grow unto the knowledge of *“the faith”* that he had. Each needed to watch his attitude toward and treatment of the other because each would stand before God in judgment (**v. 10**).

This chapter is not dealing in things fundamental to the faith — the “first principles of the doctrine of Christ.” Those addressed were *“in the faith”* — though some were weak in it. To be in the faith they would have had to believe and obey the first principles of the gospel. So, it is not talking about working together while holding to different doctrines involving those fundamental matters.

This chapter is not dealing with questions of congregational practice. There is not one thing in the chapter that deals with what Christians are do together as a church before God. Everything in the chapter deals with personal conduct. In such matters of personal (and morally right) conduct there can be “unity in diversity” — which is a far cry from the “unity in diversity” advocated by some brethren. This is why brethren for years have been able to work together

while holding various views on subjects of individual application. But when it comes to matters of corrupting congregational worship and work there can be no “unity in diversity.” When the instrument was introduced into congregational worship division came because it forced those who opposed it to sing with it or not sing – in either case it would violate their consciences, so they had to worship separately and mark those who brought it in as *“those who cause divisions.”* (**Rom. 16:17**). When missionary, benevolent, academic and other human societies were forced into church budgets, members had to either not give as commanded (**1 Cor. 16:2**) or contribute (have fellowship with) to that which they could not conscientiously support, so they likewise were forced to separate themselves so they could give in good conscience.

Again, we emphasize, **Romans 14** does not cover matters of *“the faith”* that apply to congregational activity, but those matters (right within themselves) that apply to individual personal practices where Christians may differ while they grow together *“till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:”* (**Eph. 4:13** American Standard Version).

**Taken from The Reflector;**  
**edsrsermonsandthings.com**

### **Saul and Ananias** **Randy Harshbarger**

*“Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, ‘Ananias.’ And he said, ‘Here I am, Lord’* (**Acts 9:10**). While we recognize Saul’s intense hatred for the followers of Jesus, his complete devotion to what he believed was right, and his evident sincerity and good conscience, still he lacked what the Lord was offering — salvation through the blood of Christ. Fasting and praying might indicate a change of direction, but still, Saul needed to come in contact with the Lord’s will for his life.

The book of Acts indicates that when someone needed to hear the gospel, the gospel was presented to that person by a “preacher.” The gospel is communicated by a messenger. *“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!”* (**Romans 10:15**). Ananias is summoned. Ananias, at first, was reluctant to go to Saul. *“Brother Saul,”* a common greeting, was not a statement about Saul’s spiritual condition, yea or nay. Saul could not see; maybe Ananias wanted to convey warmth and good will to this blind persecutor. This meeting resulted in the scales falling from Saul’s eyes and his baptism (presumably by Ananias). Only then did Saul eat some food. “

Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus. Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. Then all who heard were amazed and said, *“Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?”* (**Acts 9:19-21**). While the Christians in Damascus were naturally skeptical about the change in Saul, it is clear that he was soon accepted into the fellowship of believers.

When Saul obeyed the gospel, he was added to the Lord’s church (**Acts 2:47**). His relationship to Christ changed. No longer was Saul a persecutor; now as he preached Christ, he was often persecuted for this radical change. Saul immediately began doing what the Lord wanted him to do; he preached that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Christ of God. He argued about who Jesus was; he appealed to the OT in support of his preaching; he increased in strength and courage. Imagine the surprise of the authorities in the synagogues – those who had granted him approval to kill Christians – as Saul now worked with the followers of Christ.

Following Jesus always comes with a price. *“But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket”* (**Acts 9:24-25**). Saul openly traveled the road to Damascus, pursuing Jesus’ disciples. Now, he leaves Damascus under the cover of night in order to escape with his life. Paul wrote to Timothy: *“All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution”* (**2 Timothy 3:12**). Paul wrote to the Philippians: *“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain”* (**Philippians 1:21**). Are you on the Damascus Road?

**~via Stallings Drive Bulletin; Nachcogdoches, Texas**

### **Forgive Me When I Whine**

Today upon a bus, I saw a lovely maid with golden hair; I envied her -- she seemed so gay, and how, I wished I were so fair; When suddenly she rose to leave, I saw her hobble down the aisle; she had one foot and wore a crutch, but as she passed, a smile. Oh God, forgive me when I whine, I have two feet -- the world is mine.

And when I stopped to buy some sweets, the lad who served me had such charm; he seemed to radiate good cheer, his manner was so kind and warm; I said, "It's nice to deal with you, such courtesy I seldom find"; he turned and said, "Oh, thank you sir." And then I saw that he was blind. Oh, God, forgive me when I whine, I have two eyes, the world is mine. Then, when walking down the street, I saw a child with eyes of blue; he stood and watched the others play, it seemed he knew not what to do; I stopped a moment, then I said, "Why don't you join the others, dear?" He looked ahead without a word, and then I knew he could not hear. Oh God, forgive me when I whine, I have two ears, the world is mine. With feet to take me where I'd go; with eyes to see the sunsets glow, with ears to hear what I would know. I am blessed indeed. The world is mine; oh, God, forgive me when I whine.

**Source unknown**

**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**

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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***

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## **OUR ADDRESS IS:**

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

***Check out the following websites:***

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SUNDAY MORNING =  
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COLOSSIANS BILL MILLER -  
TEACHER

WEDNESDAY EVENING  
ISLAM VS. CHRISTIANITY  
JIM STAUFFER - TEACHER



## ***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