

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.

January
6
2019

RIGHTEOUSNESS; A NOVELTY IN THIS WORLD

Jim Stauffer

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”(Matthew 5:6)

It is a difficult thing to find leading thinkers in society to recommend right thinking rather than profitable thinking or that which is in some way beneficial to self. Jeremiah was challenged by God to roam the streets of Jerusalem in search of a man, only one man, who practiced righteousness and sought the truth (Jer. 5:1). God’s promise was to pardon Jerusalem if he were to be successful. This was a rhetorical exercise since God knew he would not find such a man and used this as an illustration of the evil to which Jerusalem had sunk.

What we see in reality in the world is man making a judgment on what he perceives as righteous and when he determines it should be practiced.

A very good illustration of this today is how one portion of our country is so very concerned about the children of immigrants entering the country illegally while at the same time having no compunction at all concerning the far greater number of babies whose lives are lost due to abortion.

For quite some time the family unit in our country has been under attack. The standards for the roles of husbands, wives, fathers and mothers have been altered or moved and now we are lost with no real definition of what is good and what is not when it comes to family structure. Once we have forsaken the family values God set forth the line has been crossed and we struggle to get back.

Legalized and consensual abortion is an indication of the failure of our society to consistently seek justice for all. This problem is just one of many that have resulted from the amoral influence of society on the lifestyle of its citizens. We have legalized abortion. We are in the process of legalizing marijuana state by state across the country. As we sink deeper and deeper into evil satisfaction of man’s fleshly desires, we look more and more like the Jerusalem Jeremiah observed.

There have been societies like ours throughout history and those who hungered and thirsted for

righteousness stayed firm in their resolve. There is a purpose for those people in every age. Jesus said, *“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:13–16)*

There is work to do on the part of those who choose the way of the Lord as their pathway. We must first and foremost be firm in our resolve. Every soul must secure his own salvation in the manner Peter suggests in **2 Pet. 1:5-11**. If we indeed add to our faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love, we can ensure our entrance into the eternal kingdom as he promises.

Paul tells us we must walk by the Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh. He then tells us what the fruit of the Spirit is. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.”(Galatians 5:22–23)*

You see, as the Lord said we are to be an influence for good in this world. It is not our role to simply debate politics as they exist, but rather to bear influence upon the hearts of those with whom we have contact.

The salvation of our soul and the souls of those we love are very important and therefore bring strong emotions from time to time. We must not be drawn away from the biblical instruction in such matters.

It is God’s word that matters. It is God we serve. He is the One Who will judge us.

He has made us righteous through the blood of His Son. It is now our responsibility to properly value that righteousness to the point we hunger and thirst for it above all things on this earth.

DEACONS

"Likewise, deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

All Christians, young and old, must set good examples. Commitment and consistency show the world our seriousness about our relationship to our Savior. Good behavior can and often does point others to Him. A crooked generation needs to see people who are blameless and harmless; our light may be the only light they ever see (**Philippians 2:15**). If this is true of all, how much more is it for elders and deacons, men who are duly recognized and put forward among the church and the world? When Paul wrote to Timothy about order in the church (**1 Timothy 3:15**), he spoke to the need for order to exist in the lives of those who seek to lead God's people in the way of truth. That is what the qualifications do; they put these men to the test; they paint a picture of what a qualified man and his family look like.

Before men are selected as deacons, they are to be put to the test; their lives are examined, proven, and scrutinized. Are their lives genuine? Can they be approved and deemed worthy to function in their work among God's people? Deacons must be sober-minded; they must be of sound mind; they are mature in their judgments. They are not double-tongued; they are not two-faced; they do not gossip. They are not drunken or impaired. Drinking problems always hurt the church. Deacons are not to be greedy. Covetous men are not focused on the Lord's work; their interests lie elsewhere. Deacons are to be sound and strong in the faith; they have a good conscience; that is, their life and their teaching match. They are blameless. They are stable in their marriage.

"Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things." We often focus on the men who will become deacons, with little or no consideration given to their wives. Positions of leadership means deacons (and certainly elders) are involved in the lives of God's people; they want to serve others; that is what the word deacon means. But their wives have a part in this, too. If a deacon's wife is a gossip, trouble in the church will occur. Failure to control one's tongue, regardless of who it is, will cause harm. The wives of deacons need to exercise good judgment and self-control. They are to be faithful in all things; they must be worthy of our trust in everything.

We are not reluctant to go to a particular deacon (or elder) for help.

Paul is telling Timothy that the Lord's church needs qualified men to lead and serve. Here are the qualifications; here is God's picture. When men are selected to function among God's people, they must have good character, good habits, even temperaments, along with spiritual and intellectual abilities. We must not blur the divine painting. This is true of elders, deacons, yea, of every Christian, young and old.

Randy Harshbarger

Hidden in My Heart

I have many things hidden in my heart. There are things I am proud of, like some of my greatest accomplishments, and things I am ashamed of such as the times I failed ignominiously as a Christian. There are memories I will freely share and things I share only with my wife. There are things hidden in my heart I'm glad are there, such as my fond memories of AHS, a small school with a big heart; and then there are memories I wish I could forget altogether. Such is what life is made of and each of these things hidden in my heart makes its own contribution to the man I am today.

The most important thing hidden in my heart however is what the Psalmist praised in **Psalms 119:11**, *"Thy word have I laid up in my heart, That I might not sin against thee."* David is described as a young man as a *"man after God's own heart"* and he was concerned about maintaining that relationship with God. So, when God spoke David listened. Then he went further and committed God's words to memory. He did so in order to avoid sinning against God. If David felt he had to do that I certainly could do no better, and neither could you. I challenge you in the coming year to commit one important Bible verse each day to memory. At first it will seem an impossible task, after all, in our decadent society we memorize almost nothing (and that is our loss). As you work at it the verses will become easier.

Next week I'll give some hints at making this easier and more profitable. Meanwhile read **Psalms 119** and find the TWO verses which do NOT refer to the Word of God.

Cleveland R. Reddinger Jr.

What The Work Of The Church Is Not

All who know and respect Bible teaching realize the work of the church is spiritual in nature and is done in view of the salvation of souls. However, many churches, including many identifying themselves as churches of Christ, have gotten caught up in the social gospel movement and are involving themselves in activities designed to satisfy and please the carnal

desires of men rather than pleasing and glorifying God. In this article we wish to call attention to those things which are not authorized by God as the work of the church.

Political issues are not the work of the church. Even though there are issues such as abortion, homosexuality, etc. that we must oppose and teach against (as we would any other sins) we must recognize that it is not the work of the church to develop or carry out a political agenda. These same issues may be political issues for some, but as the people of God we deal with them the same way we deal with other sins, i.e., by teaching the word of God and seeking a change of heart in those who hear.

Secular education is not the work of the church. I am sure all agree that proper education of a secular nature is good and beneficial. However, it is not the work of the church to build, support or maintain schools or colleges to provide such education. This is the responsibility of the home rather than the church. Paul acknowledges that there are responsibilities to be fulfilled by individuals *"and let not the church be charged"* (1 Timothy 5:16). This could be applied to each of the things discussed in this article

Social activities are not the work of the church. It is good for brethren to get together and enjoy one another's association whenever possible. However, we need to remember the words of the apostle Paul as he addressed the problem of the Corinthians perverting the observance of the Lord's supper. He said, *"What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?"* (1 Cor. 11:22). It is not the work of the church to provide for social meals and gatherings. Several years ago I presented a lesson in which I made the point that the church should not be using "coffee and doughnuts" to entice people to attend. A relative of mine objected and said, "James, if it takes coffee and doughnuts to save souls then I think we should use coffee and doughnuts!" I think she was surprised when I answered, "I totally agree with you!" And I still agree with her statement. If it takes coffee and doughnuts to save souls then let's buy all the coffee and doughnuts we can find. However, if we were to do that all we would have is a lot of people full of coffee and doughnuts. If we wish to save souls we must use that which will accomplish such. Paul said, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."* (Romans 1:16). Yes, the gospel of Christ is God's power to save. To resort to gimmicks and carnal attractions is not only without authority but demonstrates a lack of faith in God and His will.

Recreation and entertainment are not the work of the church. Wholesome recreation and entertainment have their place but it is not the work of the church to provide such. This truth has been generally understood and accepted by brethren through the years however, in recent years it seems that many are more desirous of

turning the church into a country club or health spa than letting "the church be the church." As a result of this thinking we see churches sponsoring ball teams, building gymnasiums and sponsoring various forms of entertainment. I have received announcements of "clowns for Jesus," magicians, puppeteers, body builders or singing groups all being used by churches to reach the masses. The one thing lacking in all these announcements is the scripture or scriptures that would authorize the church providing such. Paul tells us that God has provided all that is necessary *"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"* (Ephesians 4:12). Note that all he lists in verse 11 have to do with the revelation and proclamation of God's word. Note the parallel between **Ephesians 4:11,12** and **2 Timothy 3:16,17**.

The inspired scriptures are all we need. When Paul had warned the Ephesian elders of the dangers they would face after his departure he said, *"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified"* (Acts 20:32). We, today, need to put our faith in God and His word and not in the schemes and gimmicks of men that appeal to the flesh.

James Hahn—Lincoln Bible Reader

Narrow-minded? Well, a person's mind should be narrow enough to shut out everything but truly, and broad enough to accept all truth.

The pessimist has no motor; the optimist has no brakes.

Superstition is ignorant reverence; rationalism is irreverent reasoning.

Moreover, with some the principal involved has a greater urge than the principle.

Anvil Sparks:via Doctrinal Discourses
R.L. Whiteside

"Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard. On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining. The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes. 1 John 2:7-11

Let us be reminded to pray for those we support who are preaching in other areas of this country and also of the world. Remember to pray for Kyle Bennett in Boston Ma., Matt Hodge in Marshfield, Mo. and Cleveland Reddinger in El Dorado, Ks. Overseas we need to remember, Wilfredo Pelino and Jonathan Sapitula in the Philippines as well as Arao Uchaio, Francisco Vascob in Mozambique.

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

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders: Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons: Bill Miller

Brandon Jimison

Casey Dent

Joe Hurd

NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER JAN PATRICK
(WHO HAS A BROKEN FOOT),
STEPHEN KIMKER, STEVE AND
SUZANNE WIMP, ALMA
BAUMGARTNER, AND GEORGE
ROOT.

BIBLE CLASSES

SUNDAY MORNING: THE PSALMS
RON PECK - TEACHER

WEDNESDAY EVENING:
HEAVEN AND HELL
JIM STAUFFER - TEACHER

SUNDAY SERMON: SALVATION
BY FAITH



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