

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

Anno Surface 2010

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

September
20
2020

WISDOM FROM ABOVE

by Jim Stauffer

“Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.” (James 3:13–17)

As we see the difference between the wisdom of God and that of men we realize the words of the wise man provide the guidance we need to achieve such wisdom. When he encourages us to *listen to counsel and accept discipline (Pro. 19:20)*, he suggests God’s word is knowledge and leads to wisdom (**Pro 1:7; 2:6**). That wisdom demands we practice discipline in our lives. That discipline eliminates the jealousy and selfish ambition that comes from men.

Job may well be our best biblical example of one who was able to cling to the discipline that comes from his knowledge of God even during distressful suffering. *“And to man He said, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.’” (Job 28:28)*

As a result man learns to revere God as He imparts to us the knowledge that leads to such wisdom. Notice the effect of a proper fear or respect of the Lord as spoken by the Psalmist, *“Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. Who is the man who desires life And loves length of days that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.” (Psalm 34:11–14)*

David’s integrity led him to obey God’s anointed,

King Saul (**1 Sam. 18:5**), because he sought to be blameless in the sight of God (**Psa. 101:2**). As a result the Lord stood by David in both the good and bad times of his life before and during the time he served as King over God’s people.

When will we acknowledge the wisdom of God rather than seek to know what men have to say. Listen to what He both promised and did. *“For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” “For it is written, “I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.”” (1 Corinthians 1:18,19)* In what way did He accomplish this promise? From these verses forward Paul tells us how God chose the simple things to confound the wise men of the world. In **verse 21**, he speaks of the *“...foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe*. This message is not something that impresses man as the Jews were led to stumble by the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom. And the Gentiles looked at a King who died as weak and foolish. But instead of pleasing those ideas of men, the message of the gospel is Christ crucified. **Verse 27-29** tells us, *“...God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God*. Paul says the result of this is that not many mighty, wise and noble in the eyes of men who will accept this simple gospel. Yet this simple gospel, according to the apostle Paul, *...is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16)*.

As we listen to the words revealed to Paul by the

Holy Spirit, when do we become those who accept the wisdom from above, the word of God, *which is able to save your souls* (**Jas. 1:21**).

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!” (**Rom. 11:33**)

BY WHAT AUTHORITY?

“On one of the days while He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders confronted Him, and they spoke, saying to Him, Tell us by what authority You are doing these things, or who is the one who gave You this authority? Jesus answered and said to them, I will also ask you a question, and you tell Me: Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men? They reasoned among themselves, saying, if we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say, ‘Why did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘From men,’ all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John was a prophet. So, they answered that they did not know where it came from. And Jesus said to them, Nor, will I tell you by what authority I do these things” (**Luke 20:1-8 NASV**).

Did Jesus have the right to teach the gospel in the Temple? The Jewish guardians of the Temple, had not authorized Jesus to teach; why would He presume to enter the obvious, physical symbol of their spiritual heritage, and then hold sway over those who had come to worship? He might teach in the synagogues, but not here. Jesus’ earthly ministry was mainly conducted far away from Jerusalem; now He finds a pulpit in the inner sanctum of Judaism. Were their questions and intent genuine? No. They were seeking to destroy Jesus (**Luke 19:47**).

By what authority is a good question. Anyone teaching false doctrine must be challenged. From the beginning, Jesus worked and taught with authority (**Luke 4:1,14,31**). Now, that authority is questioned. Jesus didn’t say: You have no right to ask your questions; there was no evasion of the issue of authority. But His unexpected way of answering exposed the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders. The Jews knew about John the Baptist; they rejected his teaching; they refused to be baptized by John (**Luke 7:29-35**). If John’s teaching came from heaven, why would they reject him? They did reject Jesus. We are not surprised.

Consider this excerpt from *Jesus The Master Respondent*, by James D. Bales. “Some critics of the Bible have complained that Jesus did not deal fairly with His questioners...He changed the subject to John...First, he who asks a question asks a favor...He who asks a favor should be willing to do a favor...One is not automatically obligated to answer another person’s questions...they (the Jews) had no right to complain...they had started the discussion with a question of their own...they were trying to trap and discredit Him (Jesus)...the answer to your own question may contain the answer to their question...He (the questioner) is more apt to see and accept the answer when he is led to answer it himself...it (Jesus’ question) calls on the other person to take a position...it (Jesus’ question) may stimulate the individual to think...The only way out of a genuine dilemma is to give up the error which involved one in the dilemma...Jesus’ opponents realized they were in a dilemma...if they answered one way they discredited themselves...if the other way they would be forced to acknowledge the authority of Jesus.”

When faced with questions that concern our relationship to Jesus, what do we do? We can evade, posture, seek inconsistencies in others, and get angry; or, we can be honest and yield to heaven’s will. Now, answer Jesus’ question.

Randy Harshbarger

Pardon My Intrusion

Please pardon my intrusion into your life. I cannot honestly regard it as an intrusion at all, but that you so consider it is painfully obvious. My object is not to waste your time, or rob your pleasures, or thwart your plans, or interrupt your schedule or interfere with your life - as you think - **BUT TO SAVE YOUR IMMORTAL SOUL**. And you do have a soul - an inward man, a spirit made in God’s image, never ending, destined to spend eternity in hell or heaven.

Your life tells me that you have time for other matters - your job, your family, your body, your pleasures - but none for your soul. Your schedule tells me that you are interested in other realms - business, family, education, civic, social - but not in the spiritual. Then when I try to visit with you and to talk with you about God, Christ, the Bible, and your salvation, when I try to get you interested in your own soul, you seek to make me feel like I am imposing. Your conduct and your attitude speak clearly: “Leave me alone. Stop

bothering me. I wish you wouldn't come to my house. Get out of my life and get off my back." But I can't do that until I have exhausted all efforts and am convinced that it's hopeless. If your soul isn't on your conscience, it is on mine. God wants me to care - and try.

by Bill Crews

The Consequences of Free Will

"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live..."

Deuteronomy 30:19,20

God, the supreme Creator of all things, is sometimes accused by critics as having created evil. After all, doesn't God Himself admit, *"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things"* (Isa. 45:7 KJV)? In this passage, God is not saying He is the author of moral evil but rather that He has the power to bring calamity or disaster as a just judgment (Amos 3:6). What the King James Version renders as *"evil"* here is speaking of the distress and disaster which people experience as a consequence of their sin (Ex. 34:6,7).

Ok, so Isaiah 45:7 doesn't teach that God created evil but what about the devil and sin in general? If God is the Creator of the universe, and evil exists in our universe, wouldn't He at least be responsible for its existence? Let's examine a few possibilities of God's creation of which there can only be four:

1. **That God would create nothing** (where there is no possibility for good or evil).
2. **That God would create an amoral universe** (where there is no such thing as good or evil).
3. **That God would create a universe without freewill** (where there is no possibility of evil).
4. **That God would create a universe with freewill** (where there is possibility of good and evil).

The only universe in which love can exist is the fourth possibility, a universe with freewill. This is the universe God chose to create. This is the universe we find ourselves in, both longing to love and be loved by others.

Love is the supreme ethic and the deepest longing of every human heart. This possibility of love is one of the greatest gifts God has given to us. But if we erase freewill, we also erase the possibility of ever experiencing love. These two concepts depend on one another.

But while freewill opens the door to love it also opens the door to evil. The possibility of love makes us all

extremely vulnerable to pain and loss. But those of us who have ever opened our hearts fully to God's love will say it is well worth the temporary pain.

But to receive the eternal benefits of God's love is a choice of our freewill. Eternal residence either near God in Heaven or away from Him in Hell is ultimately a choice God has left to us.

C.S. Lewis once famously stated, "There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, "Thy will be done," and those to whom God says, in the end, "Thy will be done." All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. Those who knock it is opened." A father who takes his son to the doctor for a vaccination may appear to his child in the moment to be cruel. But the father's decision that once perplexed and angered the child is clearly understood when he is safe from a disease ravaging his town years later. Time and trust are necessary components to making sense of the evil in our world. In time, those who choose to wait on the Lord will understand their pain and learn to even rejoice in it (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Thank God for His love and our freewill.

**Taken from the Danville church of Christ,
Danville, Ind.**

WISDOM

Unless I learn to ask no help
From any other soul but Him,
To seek no strength in waving reeds
Nor shade beneath the straggling pine,
Unless I learn to look at grief,
Unshrinking from her tear-blind eyes,
And take from pleasure fearlessly
Whatever gifts will make me wise,
Unless I learn these things on earth,
Why was I ever given birth

When I have ceased to break my wings
against the faultiness of things;
And learned that compromises wait
behind each hardly opened gate;
When I can look life in the eyes,
grown calm and very coldly wise;
Life will have given me the truth
and taken in exchange my youth

Sara Teasdale quoted by Charles Swindoll

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

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

Joe Hurd

NEWS AND NOTES:

SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

JAN PATRICK, ALMA
BAUMGARTNER, TRUDY MULLEN,
RENE RATLIFF, DENESE GORING,
RODNEY BLOUNT, TRACY
RICHARDSON, DAISY DARNALL,
BROOKLYN BOYER, STEVE WIMP,
JESSIE GIBSON AND PAT GAINES

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS - BOOK OF
DANIEL - BILL MILLER

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS - STUDY
OF WORSHIP - JIM STAUFFER
(BOTH CLASSES OFFERED ON ZOOM)

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON
(YOUTUBE ALSO)
THERE WILL BE TRIBULATION



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