

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.

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IN HIS NAME

Jim Stauffer

“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” (Colossians 3:17)

Men often make the plea for undenominational Christianity. What would that be? Does it exist in the world today? Paul made a plea to those in Ephesus and in it was a definition, a skeletal outline, if you will, for just such a thing. He said, *“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.” (Ephesians 4:1–6)*

Now, let us examine these two scriptures in light of other teachings in the scripture and see if there is indeed a way for us to find undenominational Christianity.

In the first passage cited, we are told to limit ourselves to those activities authorized by Jesus Christ. That is what it means to do something in the name of someone. Further, we are to be thankful to Him for such guidance since it obviously pleases the Father in heaven. What then are some things I should examine in light of His authority as I attempt to serve in the kingdom. First let me realize I have been ransomed from a sentence of death (**Mat. 20:28**) and as a ransomed servant, I am unworthy in and of myself and am privileged to serve the king (**Luke 17:7-10**).

As I then consider my life as a servant of the king, I must not become presumptuous to the point that I decide what would please God. I must worship and serve Him ONLY as He authorizes me. That is why Paul told Timothy, *“All Scripture is inspired by God and*

profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

(2 Timothy 3:16–17) There is nothing I can add to what He has already commanded me that will please Him. In fact when I add something in the belief He would be pleased, I displease Him, *“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.” (2 John 1:9)*

I must then consider the second passage. I am told here to walk in a manner worthy of the calling of the Lord. I do this by demonstrating humility, gentleness and patience. This allows me to be tolerant of my brother whom I love. I am to possess these characteristics in order to pursue the preservation of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Well, what is meant by that? There will be no peace with God without such unity of the Spirit. Let me say here, there is no such thing taught in Scripture as “unity in diversity”. In fact if we look at these verses we see a demand for unity in agreement on the one body (**Eph. 1:22,23**), and one Spirit (**Rom. 8:10**). He goes on to list one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father of all. And that God and Father is over all. Now ask yourself if undenominational Christianity would have multiple Lords such as Muhammed or Buddha, etc.? Would there be multiple faiths, such as the many different doctrines taught by different “churches” in society today (**Jude 3**)? How about the topic of baptism? How many different baptisms did Christ authorize for His disciples (**Mark 16:16; Rom.6:3-7**)? How many Gods are there who offer heaven to the faithful? How about Allah? How about those who worship the Sun, Moon and stars (**1 Cor. 8:6**)?

This is not rocket science. We can all understand what is meant by one. We can also with minimal search

continued on page 2

determine how there has come to be denominational "Christianity" in today's world. The term itself, in light of Scripture is an oxymoron, because once we become denominational we no longer have Christ, thus we are no longer Christians. The minimal search will show us the denominational religions of today came from the precepts of men (**Mat. 15:9**).

How about you? Do you wish we all worshiped according to the simple instructions of God and Christ and actually did all *word or deed.....in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.?*

HOW HUNGRY ARE YOU?

"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst'" (**John 6:35 NASV**). Even though Jesus jockeyed from one side of the Sea of Galilee to the other, the crowds always seemed to find Him (**John 6:25**). Only later in the chapter (**John 6:59**) do we learn that Jesus was teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. His discourse about the bread of life challenged the motives of those who tracked Him down. How sincere were the people as they pursued the one, who only a few hours before, had provided for them a sumptuous feast? While man does not live by bread alone, he does need some physical sustenance to survive. What kind of bread were the again-hungry followers seeking? What are we today seeking from Jesus?

Jesus invited the people to believe in Him. *"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent"* (**John 6:29**). Working for one's daily bread is helpful. Are we supposed to work for the true bread from heaven? The people already tasted heaven's bread when Jesus fed them loaves and fishes; His miracle pointed to something far greater than full stomachs; He pointed them to His kingdom. How could they not have faith in Jesus? Faith in Jesus is not a boastful work; it is recognition of who Jesus is, of what He is doing, and of what He wants to do for all who will come in faith. Yet, rather than showing their trust in the Lord, they asked for a sign—another sign! Was it the size of the crowd? Moses fed a large crowd in the desert; Jesus fed a smaller crowd by the power of God. Should Jesus again have to prove Himself to the people? Actually, it was not Moses who fed the Israelites; it was God. And the manna God provided was a pale shadow of the now present, living, true bread from heaven. Jesus says: here it is; do you want

it? Ok, give us this kind of bread. We know manna will perish; we want bread that will last. Were they starting to get the point? They had heard Jesus; they saw Him provide an abundance of food; yet, they were not convinced to believe in Him. Was the problem a lack of evidence? No, the problem was a heart problem, as it almost always is.

I AM the bread of life. This is the first of seven *"I AM"* sayings scattered throughout John's gospel. The bread Jesus gives is the bread that gives life; it is spiritual bread, not physical. Lacking faith, the people didn't get the point. They would not come to Jesus in faith and partake of the bread from heaven. Bread is the basic staple of life; we cannot live without bread. And we cannot live without the bread of life. The Israelites soon grew tired of manna; they grumbled about their provisions and asked for something else. Did they think God served at their beck and call? And what about the Judeans who were coming and complaining to Jesus? They forgot, and maybe we have, too, that the true Exodus is possible only in the great I AM.

By the way, what kind of bread do you like the most? Wheat or barley? How about bread from heaven?

Randy Harshbarger

How Could God Kill Thousands of People in the Old Testament?

Jarrold Jacobs

After an article about Ai, I had a dear friend ask me how God could kill thousands upon thousands. He said it was hard for him to believe that God would want this. I appreciate this question and respect him for asking it. When we examine the Scriptures, we see that God wants folks to examine, test, and ask questions like my friend did (**Isa. 1:18; Matt. 11:29; Acts 17:11; Eph. 5:10; I Thess. 5:21; Rom. 12:2**). Below is my answer to my friend's question. I print it here in the hope that perhaps this answer might help others who have had the same question.

It is hard to imagine God telling the Israelites to kill another nation, but I have to remember that this is part of a larger context. It is not God randomly saying He wants to kill one group or another for no reason.

God had been patient with these people for at least 400 years. Go back to Abraham and read this in **Genesis 15:1-17** where God promises to give the land of Canaan to Abraham but says he cannot have it now *"because the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."*

When God saw that the people would no longer repent, then He took them out of the land. Therefore, when the Israelites came there under Joshua's leadership to take the land of Canaan, it was a fulfillment of God's promise, yes, but it was also as a punishment for the sins of the Amorites, Jebusites, Canaanites, etc.

We see a similar theme through the rest of the Old Testament. Even the Jews would be allowed to be killed at times and taken into captivity because of their sins before God. When they refused to repent, they would be handed over to another nation for a while until they repented. We see this described in **Judges 2:11-23**. Also, when God gave over the northern tribes of Israel to Assyria, or later, the southern tribes over to Babylon, it was because of their sins and their refusal to repent (Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc.).

God would overthrow Babylon later for similar reasons. God has a way of making folks face the consequences of their sins. This is true of individuals, and this is also true for entire nations of people. Read **Daniel 4:31-32** about Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

Read **Romans 1:21-32** and you'll see a synopsis of God's dealings with the Gentiles over the years as they continued to sin before God. Especially notice **v. 28**. These people were given over when they got to the point they didn't like to retain God in their knowledge. I believe these things recorded in the Bible are also for our learning (**Rom. 15:4**). We need to understand that God keeps His word and that He will not allow sin to go unpunished. We learn that one day if we are in sin and away from God, we will be lost in Hell. Individual people will be judged –when He judges and shows how they had sinned before Him for years and years and years.

So, that is what we see happening in the Bible in places like Ai, and many others. This is not the acts of a random or vengeful God, but the act of a just and righteous God who has said these people have lived in sin and refused to repent for too long and must answer for what they have done.

Taken from edssermonsandthings.com

Healthy Churches

by Carl McMurray

Among church growth studies over the last three decades there has been a consensus that church growth parallels church health. Just like any physical body, when there is good health and the absence of disease and hindrances, growth naturally follows. A recent article I noticed followed up on this idea, Seven Secrets of Healthy Churches, by Thom S. Rainer. Although I don't

believe these are "secrets," putting my own spin on his main ideas, I do believe he makes valid points when he says that healthy churches...

...possess leadership and membership that have a high view of Scripture. If we are not always holding up the Word, we will soon lose our focus on it in the distractions of this world. **2 Timothy 2:15**

...seek to be relevant. We cannot help others with the gospel of salvation if we neither speak their language nor understand their needs. The date is NOT 1965 and the culture is not the same as it once was. **1 Corinthians 9:19-22; 10:33**

...hold to the primacy of preaching. That is the method God chose for saving men. Shall we trade it for entertainment? Should we compress the meat out for a diet drink of milk? **1 Corinthians 1:21**

...have a healthy, small group structure. It is in the relationship of small groups that we have the opportunity to ask questions, confess ourselves, and build relationships with others. Bible classes, contact groups, home studies or hospitality opportunities; those who don't use small groups lose their ties to their brethren and opportunities to grow spiritually. **Ephesians 4:16**

...emphasize corporate prayers and the ministry of prayer. Prayer is a fear killer and confidence builder. It is direct, heart-to-heart communication with our Father. It becomes the ability to see God working for us and with us. Jesus said it was the way that our Father gave us good gifts. **Matthew 7: 7-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:17**

...take membership seriously. Membership without accountability and responsibility is not membership at all –it is visiting! Healthy churches know the difference between members and visitors and act on that difference. Christians are not orphans and should not be acting like we have no family. **Acts 9:26-28**

...are highly intentional about evangelism. Healthy churches are motivated by heaven and hell to reach out to a lost world. Bible classes, advertising, outreach, and planning all have as their impetus sharing the good news of Jesus the Christ. **John 4:34-35**.

Are you a member of a healthy church? What are you doing to make it more so?

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

Deacons:

Bill Miller

Brandon Jamison

Joe Hurd

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Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

News and Notes:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick, Trudy Mullen, Denese Goring, and Brooklyn Boyer.

Tracy Richardson's surgery was successful she now recuperates at home

Pat Gaines; Surgery improved issues in his spine. He now will attempt to recuperate and see what his capability is. Covid – 19 – L.A. Stauffer

Sunday Morning Bible Class - Messianic Pathway - OT to NT - Jim Stauffer

Wednesday Evening Bible Class - Home and Family - Ron Peck

Sunday Morning Sermon - God is Great and Trustworthy



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