

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”

APRIL 18, 2021

Who will follow Jesus?

by Jim Stauffer

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.” (Matthew 16:24–25) When we obey Christ as He calls us to discipleship, we place sufficient trust in Him we can say as Paul did, “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13)

When I consider the implications of these passages side by side, I am reminded of the attitude of David when he was being pursued by King Saul. On two separate occasions David had the opportunity to take the life of the man who planned to kill him. Yet, even while encouraged by his friends and supporters to do so, replied,*“Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD’S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD’S anointed.” (1 Samuel 24:6)* David understood when something was in the hand of God and allowed Him to handle as He saw fit, even his life.

This principle is necessary for us to submit to the will of God. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, is an excellent example of this on many occasions, but let us observe two of those to instill in our hearts and minds the necessity to trust God. When Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness by Satan, He was tempted by the devil to turn stones to bread since it had been 40 days since He had eaten. His statement was,*“It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’” (Matthew 4:4)* Think about the commitment to His Father in heaven to put trust in Him above His very sustenance. Most folks today would justify feeding themselves prior to nearly everything else. After all, one must take care of life’s necessities, right? Not according

to Christ. He trusted that would occur when God allowed or planned for it, but what was of greatest concern was His commitment to God first and foremost. The same thing happened in the Garden when He was praying to God prior to His betrayal and crucifixion. His prayer was one of concern for the will of God above and beyond His own will (**Mat. 26:39**).

It should be apparent to us that we cannot satisfy ourselves with simply worshiping once or twice per week without any further commitment to His cause and expect Him to be pleased. That is the message of **Romans 4** when it tells us Abraham’s faith was credited to him as righteousness (**Rom. 4:9 cf. Gen. 15:6**). We must have the faith and trust of David, Abraham and Christ Himself, that God’s will for us is what is best.

Therefore, if we want our faith to be credited for righteousness, we must be faithful. In his epistle, Peter deals with the subject of suffering. He attaches suffering to persecution. We suffer as the righteous, he says, when we are persecuted for our faith in Christ. Now no one knows of our faith in Christ unless we demonstrate it by our conduct, both in behavior and in efforts to promulgate His gospel. If, indeed we are both living as He would have us and teaching as He would have us, we may well suffer as a Christian. Then Peter says we can be happy in our suffering. *“Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? AND IF IT IS WITH DIFFICULTY THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS SAVED, WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE GODLESS MAN AND THE SINNER? Therefore,*

those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.” (1 Peter 4:15–19)

Will you entrust your soul to a faithful Creator by doing that which is right, that which He has commanded you? Only you can make the application of these principles a personal thing.

Original Sin

Let’s consider the idea of inheriting original sin. The world God created originally was very good – **Genesis 1:31**; but after the curses that were a consequence of Adam’s and Eve’s sin, hardship, suffering, and even physical death were brought into the world. So we definitely suffer some physical consequences of sin entering the world, but do people today receive any sinfulness or a need to have forgiveness due to Adam’s sin?

Ezekiel 18 is clear that only the soul who sins and does not repent will die and that the soul who turns to God will live. **Verse 19** specifically says *“Yet you say, ‘Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?’ Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live.”* And **Isaiah 59:2** says, *“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.”* So it is our personal sins that we choose to commit that separate us from God and require forgiveness. **Romans 5:12** agrees with this: *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned”* The cause of sin spreading to all men is given as *“because ALL sinned”*. We do not need to be not forgiven of a sin transmitted to us by Adam, but of sins that each of us has committed ourselves. We praise God for his justness, that we are only liable for our own sins!

Matt Hodge

“I Don’t Know Enough Yet”

Yater Tant

How often gospel preachers and other Christians hear those words from the lips of someone they are trying to persuade to obey the gospel. And in most cases the statement is false.

The apostles of the Lord went out among pagan people who had never even heard the name of Christ or

of God. They preached one gospel sermon, and so simple was the scheme of redemption that these heathen people, by far the majority of whom could neither read nor write their own names, could understand and obey the word of the apostles.

Perhaps in the very fact of their simple, uncluttered paganism we have the answer. They had not been taught a lot of things about Christ that weren’t so; their minds were not cluttered and confused, bewildered and befuddled by the “theologies” of men. With them it was a simple choice between Christ and Paganism. It was not a choice between the relative importance of Christ’s commands — whether some of them were “essential” and some “non-essential.” It did not occur to them that any of his commands were non-essential. They were not bedeviled by the conflicting claims of parties and sects and schisms, each screaming its own excellence and anathematizing its fellows.

The honest soul who holds back from obeying the Lord today because he thinks he “doesn’t know enough,” should take a lesson from these early disciples. Come to the word of God with the same open mind, the same desire to learn that they brought to the apostles’ words and the truth of God is as brilliant and unmistakable in our day as it was in theirs. You will not be confused by claims of men; you will not read in God’s word of a single one of the modern “protestant” churches, any more than you will read of the Roman Catholic church. There is not one word in the Bible telling how one may become a member of any of these human organizations.

If a man will divest his mind of all thoughts of this church or that church, this creed or that creed, and simply open the Book and do what it teaches him, God will “add” that man to his church. He will not be confused; he will not be misled. If one knows that Christ is the Son of God, and that his word must be obeyed, one knows enough to imitate his obedience — an obedience that will bring him step by step into full fellowship in the family of God, and will bring him finally to heaven itself.

~via Apostolic Doctrine; Vol. 6 No. 8; August 1965.

Jesus Is God

Patrick Farish I Waxahatchie, Texas, USA

“Long ago at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our Fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.... ”

Before His birth He was named "*Jesus*" by an angel "*for he will save his people from their sins*" **Matthew 1:21**.

These are some of the things we know about Jesus.

1. He was born of Mary, a virgin (**Luke 1:26-34**).
2. He was God in the flesh; so John writes of him: "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,*
and the Word was God ... And the Word became flesh,
and dwelt among us..." (**John 1:1, 14**).
3. He was fully and truly man, **Hebrews 2:17, 18**; and as a man, He "*suffered for you, leaving you an example that you might follow in his steps, who committed no sin ...*"
4. So when He was tempted, it was a real temptation (**Matthew 4:1-11; Hebrews 4: 15**); He had to make a choice. If His sinlessness was a product of His being God, He was not "*one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*" And as such He can be no example for man (**1 Peter 2:21 - 22** reads, Christ left "*an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin....*"

Jesus Died for Man

Christians eat the Lord's Supper every first day of the week, as a memorial (**1 Corinthians 11:33-36**). The memorial is to cause us to reflect, to regularly and deliberately elevate the death of Jesus in our consciousness. The Bible affirms that Jesus died for our sins (**1 Corinthians 15:3**), that He "*gave himself for our sins (Galatian 1:4)*"; that He "*bore our sins in his body on the tree*" (**1 Peter 2:24**). He is our great example; but certainly more than that, He died for us.

Because the "*wages of sin is death*" (**Romans 6:23**) and "*all have sinned*", it follows that all men are under sentence of death; all men, except Jesus, who was "*without sin*" (**Hebrews 4:15**). Jesus, and Jesus only, was without sin; so He, and He only, could atone for sin by the shedding of His blood.

Jesus' Church

Jesus built His church (**Matthew 16:18**). He is the head of the body, which is His church (**Ephesians 1:22-23**). Some are advertised as another head, or priest, or pope of Jesus' body, but they are not. A human body has but one head; even so the body of Jesus, the church, has but one Head.

Because Jesus is the head of the body, He is the Lawgiver (**Acts 3:22,23**). He is the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (**Hebrews 5:8,9**). To be saved by Jesus (and there is no other Savior) we must do what He says. In **John 14:6**, Jesus said to Thomas, "*I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*"

Jesus is Lord. One who is "lord" is master. This aspect of the identity of Jesus is made clear when He asks, **Luke 6:46**, "*Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and not do what I tell you?*" If Jesus is really your Lord, you will be seeking to do His will in all things, at all times.

Taken from Meditate on These Things

Don't exclude anything God has included!

In Bible study, it is important to draw our conclusions in a comprehensive rather than an exclusive manner. What I mean by that is that I must not isolate one statement to the exclusion of other relevant information that relates to the subject and can affect the conclusion.

That is the reason a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible is important. That is why we must keep reading and seeking truth. Often a text that addresses a specific matter on a particular subject does not present the full picture. It did not intend to! So, one statement often is not the final statement. We must keep listening to God.

This can be illustrated in one passage that speaks of our purification or salvation. So, what purifies our souls?

- obeying the truth
- the Spirit
- being born again
- the word of God

As we seek God's salvation, let's not exclude anything that He has included.

Don Bunting

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We believe in worshiping and serving
the Lord as He has instructed in His
word.

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.*

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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