

# LENEXA EDIFIER

**"and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)**

**October 22, 2023**

## **THE TRUTH vs. SOCIAL GOSPEL**

**Jim Stauffer**

*but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:15)*

*Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." (John 18:37)*

Pilate then asks, What is truth? **Vs. 38**

Jesus teaches us the truth will set us free from the bondage of sin - **John 8:32**

He teaches us the truth will set us apart for God's purpose, sanctified - **John 17:17**

He also tells us He is the source of truth and that following it leads to life - **John 14:6**

Why, then, would someone choose something other than the truth? Look no further than God's people of the Old Testament who chose idols that could not speak or in any way assist them, over God Who had sustained them in the wilderness and led them to take possession of a land flowing with milk and honey (**Isaiah 44&45**).

Reasons for choosing error over truth:

Itching ears **2 Tim. 4:3,4**

Deceived by lying hypocrites - **1 Tim. 4:1,2**

Insufficient knowledge - **2 Timothy 3:16,17**

Example - Pharisees - **Matthew 21:23-27**

What is the result of such failure on our part to know the truth? We are simply unable to be a part of the kingdom of God, we are not worthy of His Son and therefore cannot attain to the life He promises, the life that comes by way of the truth - **Matthew 10:37-39**

What then is the solution? Is it not the preaching of the gospel, the good news about salvation in Jesus Christ? Paul claimed to preach nothing but Christ and Him crucified (**1 Corinthians 1:23; 2:1,2**). Are we not calling

men to repentance that they might not perish (**2 Peter 3:9; John 3:16**)? Are we not pleading with men to choose the strait and narrow way because it is the way of salvation offered by the author of eternal salvation (**Matthew 7:13,14; Hebrews 5:8,9**)?

The religious world around us is presenting the gospel as a message for the church to attend to the material needs of the less fortunate. Find housing and families for orphans and widows. Help the homeless find food and warmth. Solve the issues folks have in this life for the purpose of leading to happiness with their lives here. This is a complete distortion of the reason Christ came to the earth. He came that we may have life abundantly, that is eternal life (**John 10:10**).

Yet let it be clearly said without a heartless disregard for those in need of the necessities of life, that the church Jesus Christ died to purchase (**Acts 20:28**) was never given a commission to provide the necessities of life for the world. It was given the commission to present the truth of the gospel, which is the message of salvation from sin (**Mark 16:15,16**). It is as we say in our opening, the pillar and ground of the truth. That is, God has charged His people, the saved, yes the church to busy itself with teaching people the value of heaven versus life on earth and the pathway to achieve it as a result of our lives here. The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates that helping the needy of this world is the responsibility of individuals (**Luke 10:25ff; James 1:27; Galatians 6:10**).

If the church is to be the pillar and ground of the truth, it must adhere to the guidelines the truth, the Holy Scriptures put in place for its work. The church has three basic areas of work and each of them has a spiritual goal. It is to preach the gospel in order for those who are lost in sin to repent and turn to God (**Matthew 28:19,20; 2 Timothy 4:1-3**). It bears the responsibility to edify the saints, the children of God (**Ephesians 4:11-16**). We are taught by example it is to care for needy saints (**1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 8&9; Acts 6:1-6**).

The clear conclusion is if you are listening to Jesus (**John 18:37; Matthew 17:5**), you will understand just what the truth is and you will reject the deception of false teachers and refuse to let anyone scratch your ears with an earthly message designed to please. Instead you will trust in the all sufficient Scriptures that have been given to equip you unto every good work.

## A Holy Royal Priesthood

In **1st Peter 2**, we read of Jesus being described in an odd way. He is both the chief cornerstone and a rock of offense. It is not that He has a split personality. Rather, to the believer He is precious but the unbeliever rejects Him, just as many of the Jews did (**vs. 6-8**).

In the same context we read of how His people are described. *"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, his own special people..."* (**vs. 9**). One does not often think of us being a priesthood, but here, and elsewhere, we see that this is what we are called to (**Rev. 1:6**). Let's consider this description of the Lord's people.

**Holy** – The idea of holiness and sanctification is being set apart for a holy purpose, God's purpose. *"As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct"* (**1:16**). What must we do? We must lay aside wickedness (**2:1**). But not sinning does not make one holy, especially as all have sinned. No. Priests had to be consecrated, and we are priests. We were redeemed by the blood of Christ (**1:18**).

**Royal** – In the **Revelation 1:6** we read that the Lord, *"has made us kings and priests to His God and Father"* (nkjv). The esv reads, *"has made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father"*. Regardless of which is more accurate, the 1st Peter passage makes it clear; we are royalty, and gracefully so. In the letter's introduction we read of *"an inheritance incorruptible"* (**vs. 4**). Who receives an inheritance? Heirs do (**3:7**). We are children of God. By His grace we are royalty.

**Priests** – What do we, as priests, do? We, *"offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ"* (**2:5**). We, *"proclaim the praises of Him who called [us] out of darkness into His marvelous light"* (**2:9**). We serve others, doing our High Priest's bidding as the shadow has given way to the substance. This is especially impressive given the recipients of this letter. *"Who once were not a people but are now the people of God"* (**2:11**). Before? They were in ignorance (**1:14**).

The were abominably idolatrous (**4:3**). Who are we speaking about? Gentiles. Those who were not a people were now the people of God, and not just any people; a holy royal priesthood.

*John Hines*

## A Great Evangelistic Tool

I think it works better than radio, better than auto-dialers, better than showings of Jule Miller filmstrips, better than mailing out a bulletin, better than Dial-a-Bible-Reading, better than debates, better than cable TV.

What is it? It's brethren not being conformed to the world.

If a church is made up of people who understand 184 current and past issues correctly, but their lives do not show superior conduct, servitude, and holiness, don't expect an auto dialer, computer, printer, broadcast antenna, or cable outlet to compensate for the failure.

When church members think like the world, dress like the world, talk like the world, and chase money and status symbols like the world, it is the world that is winning them, not the other way around.

When church members are selfish, egotistical, arrogant, and shallow, then they are not in a position to help the world to a higher plane.

If our families are splitting up, our children are dropping out, and our homes are little different from our neighbors then our "light" gets rather difficult to notice.

But if people learn self-denial (**Lk. 9:23**), learn submission to God and care for our neighbor (**Matt. 22**), learn to be servants (**Jn. 13**), learn to be content (**1 Tim. 6:8**), learn to invest in family (**Titus 2:5; Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6**), and learn to clean out the inside of the cup, not just the outside (**Matt. 23**), then bright lights will shine.

*"Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light...having your behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that...they may glorify God"* (**1 Pet. 2:9-12**).

*"Present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God...and be not fashioned according to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind"* (**Rom. 12:1,2**).

We are not called simply to know some things different from the world -- we are called to rise above the world, and to "*be holy*" (1 Pet. 1:15). And when people become that kind of light in the world, they become great evangelistic tools in God's service.

And it will far exceed the effect of debates, radio, TV, and mail outs.

*by Scott Smelser*

### **“That is the Man That Died for Me”**

Let me tell you a true story about a young fireman. In the midst of a blaze, he stepped forward and volunteered to rescue a baby, even though the chief had said that the flames were too strong and the building too vulnerable. As the fireman got that little girl out the window into the rescue net, the building collapsed, and he ceased in the flames.

Twenty years later, at a graveside with a statue of a fireman, stood a young woman sobbing. A man stopped and asked politely, “Was that your father or brother?”

“No,” she replied. “That is the man who died for me.”

Christ did something for humanity that no one else could do. While we struggle with the finality of death, we should be more concerned about the finality of eternity. Everyone is going somewhere...Christ has provided the way to live eternally with Him.

In Jesus we have the yearning God in pursuit of people. In Christ we find that God is not content to let people live and die beyond His circle of love. Saul of Tarsus was overwhelmed in the Syrian Desert by the Savior whose religion he had set out to destroy. The story may be apocryphal, but when Karl Barth was asked what was the most profound theological truth he knew, he replied. “Jesus loves me, this I know.”

– *The Book of Jesus—Calvin Miller*

### **PREACHING ABOUT BAPTISM**

*By Dennis Abernathy*

No subject has been discussed and debated more than baptism. Is it essential to salvation or is it not? Is baptism immersion, sprinkling, or simply pouring water on one? Are infants to be baptized? Is one to be baptized because he is saved, or in order to be saved?

The questions are almost endless. Therefore, many just decide the subject of baptism is too controversial, and they do not preach or teach on the subject at all.

For example, let me tell you a little story. Preachers in a small town proposed a meeting in which all the preachers would take alternate turns to preach. A certain gospel preacher, had not been consulted on the arrangement, so he called the other preachers to request his turn to preach. He was informed that an agreement had been made that the subject of baptism would not be mentioned—that they had agreed to preach Christ and say nothing about baptism. The preacher accepted the conditions and agreed to preach without mentioning the word baptism. It was agreed, and he announced in advance his subject was "What Must I do to be Saved."

People came from all over to hear him preach. He preached with such animation and eloquence on salvation, and the love of God, that brought salvation to man through Jesus Christ. When he reached the point of the question—What must I do to be saved? he turned to **Mark 16: 15-16** and read the words of Christ: "*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and doeth that thing I promised not to mention, shall be saved.*" He then read **Acts 2: 38**: "*Repent, and do that thing I promised not to mention, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.*" And he proceeded to read every verse in the New Testament on baptism, and called it that thing I promised not to mention!

Isn't it strange how many people and preachers will detour around such a plain and positive command of Jesus and His apostles; so simple to be understood and performed, so easy to accept and obey, and so much emphasized in the New Testament? What about you, my friend? Would you like to study this biblical subject in order to understand what the New Testament says about it?

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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**