

THE LEXIA EDIFIER

ROMANS 14:19 ...Let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

NOVEMBER 18, 2012

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND FORNICATION?

Jim Stauffer

I have never in my lifetime heard of anyone who was not either involved in such activity themselves or someone who in some way felt they would benefit, recommend or encourage someone to commit fornication.

It does not take anyone, regardless of depth of understanding, long to learn what God thinks of fornication. It is condemned under the law of Moses. **(Deut. 22:21)**

Jesus equated fornication with such evil acts as murder, stealing, perjury, etc. **(Mat. 15:19)** Now to avoid confusion with conclusions we draw later, let us acknowledge Jesus is speaking of sin against God and man. He was not saying these were all equivalent under Roman law. His point is these things are evil and stem from evil thoughts.

The Apostle Paul makes the same spiritual argument in **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**. In this passage, fornicators are the equal of drunkards, thieves, homosexuals, etc. His point is you cannot inherit the kingdom of God if you practice such things.

Paul also draws a distinction between those who walk by the flesh and the spirit by saying fornication is one of the works of the flesh. He concludes those who walk by the flesh, such as fornicators, have no part in Christ Jesus. **(Gal. 5:19-24)**

Now you probably are thinking, who would recommend such activity to anyone. In addition to separating one from God, it is harmful to the participants in that it damages their reputations socially and often creates the feeling of guilt, even to those who have chosen to walk by the flesh rather than the spirit.

If you think no one would recommend such you need to simply remember recent political activity in our own nation.

The first step in the process was the moral equivalence of treating women with equality. However, that soon transformed into an attempt to please a certain segment of society in order to gain votes in an election. In hindsight we can see how one is drawn to an evil deed by one step at a time.

Once the desire for gaining the votes of a certain segment of society was equated with fairness to women, our President then decided health care should specifically pay for contraception for all women, single or married.

Even if the government should include contraception for women as health care, (very debatable) they should not use a single woman as the poster child to stand before Congress and the National Media in defense of this decision. For the government to pay for contraception for single people, male or female, is to recommend fornication.

This President, as many others before him has pledged his Christianity. Christians do not even condone fornication, let alone support it with the power and authority vested in them by the people of the nation. This decision directly contradicts what the Lord and the Apostle Paul had to say about fornication.

While I understand this is an ordinance of the President and thus the nation and is not intended as a law for the church, it still violates the purity of life demanded by our Lord and the revelation of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles. There are no situation ethics in Christianity. Therefore, the least we can conclude is this is not the act of a Christian, but rather one who is in support of walking by the flesh.

The lesson is twofold. We must be careful not to take the first step toward justifying sin. And we must recognize those who do and make every attempt to teach and correct until such time we must withdraw from any relationship with them as Paul says to do, **1 Cor. 5:4** *in the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

“Traditional Vs. Contemporary”

Have you noticed that churches have been offering different service times for their audiences on Sunday and they list them as "traditional" or "contemporary"?

Some places even advertise "come as you are" and a "casual" environment in which to worship God. You can wear anything from cowboy boots to t-shirts and drink anything from espresso to Red Bull while you watch other people offer a surrogate form of worship to God.

Why do churches feature different styles of worship? One website suggests: "offer worship services of varying styles so that everyone can attend a service that meets their personal preferences."

I've got a simple (and perhaps, a seemingly uneducated) question here - since when do my preferences determine my worship to God?

Churches are scrambling to offer services that "keep up with the times" and make people feel "comfortable" when approaching God in worship - which is actually not even what is being accomplished. How can you even attempt to unify a congregation around a common cause when you are catering to so many different tastes, preferences, and styles?

In **Acts 2:42**, we read that the disciples from the early church in Jerusalem "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." They were unified by a clear purpose, a clear doctrine, and clear practices. This group, though several thousand strong, did not have to be placated with entertainment, food, and their own styles of worship. Their common bond and strength was through Christ!

When I approach God in worship, I have to be humble enough to realize it is not about me! How haughty and proud it must be to God to tell Him that you can't trust in what He has prescribed for worship-that it is "outdated"-and that it needs to be according to our desires.

How ridiculous is it for people to think in their minds (and with their actions) that coffee and doughnuts (or food in general) has to be provided in order to get someone to come to worship? Have they considered the way that Jesus said God wants to be worshipped, and who He is?

"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (**John 4:24**)

While we're catering to different tastes, backgrounds, music styles, fashion preferences, and building designs, we are forgetting that God is Spirit and doesn't care about all of that. He wants our hearts dedicated to Him with our lives and a reflection of that through our worship!

When we worship God, we must come before Him desiring truth and recognizing that He is holy. Let's not worry about "traditional" or "contemporary"...and focus on "TRUE"!

by Drew Edwards

*Bro. Edwards makes a very valid point about worship. When we begin to assert our own ideas we have lost the true attitude necessary for worship. We remember the action of Cornelius in **Acts 10:25** when Peter came into his presence. He "worshipped" him. The Greek word used here indicates a reverential attitude toward Peter as he represented the word of God to Cornelius. Peter quickly corrected him by reminding him he was a man just as Cornelius. The clear implication is worship is reserved for God Himself.*

The point of my comment is simply we have lost our attitude of reverence when we allow ourselves to be pleased by dress or conduct before we consider our worship.

How can we be reverential when we conduct ourselves so casually we are drinking coffee and enjoying ourselves first and foremost?

As bro. J.D. Tant used to warn us in his writings, we need to be careful, we are drifting.

Jim Stauffer

SONG WORSHIP

I have noticed over the years there are some brethren who give the appearance they do not enjoy singing songs of praise to God. Now, to be fair, these brethren are clearly a minority. Jesus told the woman at the well, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." (**John 4:24**) Paul then tells us we are to use our song worship, "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." (**Eph. 5:19**) James then gives the admonition, "Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise." (**James 5:13**)

The clear implication of Scripture is that singing to God and to our brethren is an expression of love and happiness in the Lord.

I understand some people have a greater skill in singing than others. Well, is that any different than anything else God has commanded?

There are things such as public speaking that brethren decide they do not have the necessary skills to accomplish successfully. Even leading the singing in our public worship falls into that category.

But we must understand singing is like praying. It is our responsibility to sing to both God and the brethren in worship just like praying. We are created by the God who commands us to sing. It is good for us and it enables us to worship Him. Do the best you can. Allow your desire to worship to be expressed.

Jim Stauffer

Eph. 2:19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, **20** being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; **21** in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

1 Pet. 2:9 But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Psalms 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 the 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 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.

News and Notes: Let us remember the instruction of our Lord by visiting in whatever way we can, **Jan Patrick, Mary Czirr, Terry Czirr, Gladys Martinez and Candiss Cason.**

Matt. 25:40 *And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.*

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The Church at Lenexa is a congregation of brethren who have been "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (**Romans 3:24**)

What must one do to be saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17
Believe in Christ - Heb. 11:6

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

We recommend to you the following websites:

**[facebook.com/lenexachurchofchrist/](https://www.facebook.com/lenexachurchofchrist/)
thelenexaedifier.com
lenexachurchofchrist.org**

Our Meeting Times are:

Sunday Bible Classes: 9:30 AM
Worship Services 10:20 AM&5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes 7:00PM

As a result of this justification we have been "delivered out of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (**Colossians 1:13,14**)

We therefore respect the inspired word of God that will completely furnish us unto every good work by speaking only as the oracles of God.

(**2 Timothy 3:16,17; 1 Peter 4:11**)

Repent of sin - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be baptized for the remission of sins - Acts 2:38