



LENEXA EDIFIER

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ARE YOU AN EXTREMIST?

Jim Stauffer

The answer to the question clearly demands consideration of the context in which it is asked. Most of us are extreme in the protection and care we provide for our families. When someone criticizes or threatens them we tend to bristle. At the same time we encourage them to practice moderation in various aspects of life; eating, exercise and recreation. These are all good things if we do not go to the extreme with them.

When it comes to the word of God, its authority and reliability; extremism is called for. Just think about the extreme statements of the Lord, *He who is not with me is against me (Mat. 12:30)*. There is no position in between. As politicians are often called upon to do so, the child of God in relation to the authority of Christ cannot compromise. When He says, *I am the way, the truth and the life and no man comes to the Father but by me (Joh. 14:6)*, there is no wiggle room in this statement. The Christian cannot compromise and say all religions are equal. When we do we are no longer with Him and therefore against Him.

This loyalty to Christ is not without reason. God has provided a process through which the Savior of all men came to the earth to die for the sins of mankind (**Lk. 2:11; 2 Cor. 5:14,15**). We can read of the exploits of God in heaven in the Old Testament and understand the mystery of the gospel revealed in the New Testament (**Rom. 15:4; Eph. 3:3-5**).

When we see the great deeds of God in the form of the 10 plagues on Egypt to free His people and the deliverance of the Land of Canaan, their new home, we understand the statement of Jesus, *All authority hath been given unto in heaven and on earth (Mat. 28:18)*.

We are able in hindsight through His revelation to see His faithfulness to the promise He made to Abraham to bless all nations in His seed. This gives us the moral courage we need when it is backed up by the same promise He made to Moses and Joshua not to desert or forsake us (**Heb. 13:5**).

There will be times our faith is challenged. The time will come when we must as Paul said, *discipline my body and make it my slave, so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified (1 Cor. 9:27)*.

Children of God understand the things of which we speak. They recognize the limitations the specific authority of the Lord places on us. We are, however, still in the flesh. If honest, each one of us knows someone who does not know and practice the truth of the gospel while at the same time claiming Christ as their Savior. Yet, we have failed to confront their error with the truth. We realize our timidity is caused by the weakness of our flesh. Christ said, *the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak (Mat. 26:41)*. The wise man said, *Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed (Pro. 27:5)*.

It is a certainty that men will think of us as being extreme. There is nothing wrong with conduct judged by men to be extreme, while found in accordance with the teaching of Jesus Christ. Jesus said in **Matt. 10:34-39**, He came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword. He said if we love our fathers, mothers and sisters and brothers more than Him we are not worthy of Him. We must be willing to lose our lives here in order to save them there. Yes, Christianity is extreme.

Idiotic Things People Say, III

In choosing to do a series of articles on the idiotic things people say I soon realized that this series could last almost the whole year. Well you can rest assured that I will not spend the whole year on this. There are, however, a few more gems I would like to examine in light of what the Bible says, along with a little bit of what one old commentator called “sanctified common sense”.

One of these gems of non-logic is “This church was good enough for my grandparents, and their parents before them. It’s good enough for my parents and it will be good enough for me!” Now it is absolutely true that people tend to attend the church where they were brought up as a child. That is true in all churches, mine included! However the fallacy I am pointing out ought to be obvious from the statement in quotes. Who is left out of the equation? The one question that is left out, not even mentioned is the one person who is most important: Jesus! The quoted statement leaves Jesus on the sidelines while making parents, grandparents and their forebears the standard of right and wrong! Every parent who wants the best for their children has had to admit mistakes from time to time. We are NOT perfect guides.

There IS one, however, who IS a perfect guide and he is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. A preacher whom I respect often told of his father who admonished him, “Son do what I say, but if I ever tell you to do something other than what Jesus wants you to do, then disobey me and do what Jesus says. He will never lead you wrong.”

Cleveland Reddinger

The “One True Church”

by L.A. Stauffer

An expression that is anathema among Protestants today is “the one true church.” In the universal or general sense they agree that there is only one true church, and that its members are known only to God who adds them to his family. In this sense they accept the Biblical teaching that “there is one body” (Eph 4:4). And to this we agree. But few, if any, believe there is “one true church” that is identifiable on earth.

Even many of our brethren have abandoned the idea of “restoring” the first-century church on earth. They scoff at the idea of studying the scriptures, identifying the church’s nature and character, and establishing it in every city throughout the world. They have given up on “restoring” the ancient order of things and are speaking of “updating” the church to meet twentieth century needs.

To them, talk about getting back to the first-century church and its practices is arrogant and they often

arrogantly respond: “which one” — Corinth and its factional, immoral character; Ephesus and its departure from love and its first works; or Thessalonica and its controversial views of the second coming? Their rationale is that churches at the beginning had problems and practiced error and God accepted them. By this they rationalize error today and plead for the acceptance of all churches. And, of course, that’s where the premise of their plea leads.

The ultimate conclusion and foundation of their view is that no man can study the Bible and determine truth — therefore all men are doomed to accept error. What they ignore is that the teaching of what was later written in scripture was considered the standard of righteousness and these churches were all condemned and urged to correct these errors. And what they further ignore is that God not only condemned churches who practiced error, but He also threatened to remove the lamp stand of any church that refused to repent (**see Rev 2:5**).

Jesus and the apostles again and again stressed the importance of truth: that the truth shall make man free; that one is sanctified by truth; that those who pervert truth will be accursed; that anyone who goes beyond truth is cut off from God; and that people who love not the truth and believe a lie will be condemned (**see John 8:31-32; John 17:17; Gal 1:6-9; 1 John 9; 2 Thess 2:11-12**). If Bible students cannot determine truth from error, then all are condemned to eternal damnation.

There is, for example, a way of worship that is in “*spirit and truth*” and there is a way of worship that is based on the doctrines of men and is vain (**see John 4:24 and Matt 15:1-9**). Since the word of God is truth and the scriptures are the basis of righteousness, one must as the Bereans search the scriptures daily to see what is true. Those that do will learn that brethren in the first century spoke to one another in hymns and spiritual songs, assembled on the first day of the week to observe the Lord’s Supper, gave into a treasury as they were prospered, continued steadfastly in prayer, and taught and edified one another by the teaching of God’s word (**see Eph 5:19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 11:23-26; 1 Cor 16:1-2; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 14**). Is there anyone who would affirm that any of these practices are not based on truth?

We learned these practices from the scripture and we can learn also from scripture what the “work” of the church is, how churches were “organized,” “how believers became members,” what “name” they exalted and honored, and what “purity” and “holiness” demanded of them.

What God taught and approved of in these matters is what we are devoted to and if we practice them we will be identified with the practices of the “one true church” that Jesus built through the work and preaching of the apostles. This we are committed to and invite all

men to join us in these practices.

Taken from preachertrainingclasses.com website

Overcoming Obstacles To God's Mercy ***David B. Hartsell***

Jesus told a story about a servant that owed his master 10,000 talents and could not pay back this massive sum (**Matthew 18:21-27**). The master forgave him the entire debt. What a tremendous master! Of course, the master represents God and the indebted servant describes us, sinners who can't erase one sin much less all of them. God's loving mercy overwhelms the sinner's ability to understand it. Obstacles exist for those who long for and need God's forgiveness. These hindrances endanger the grace and mercy we long for.

Sin offends God! It destroys man's relationship with the Lord. He grieves over the great chasm of sin that separates all men from him. *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance"* (**2 Peter 3:9**). Mankind can regain his close fellowship with God but only through a special type of faith that involves genuine repentance and commitment to the Lord. Without this faith we are lost (**Mark 16:15-16 and Luke 13:3-5**). The saving message seems simple, and intellectually it is. However, man must be able to see himself as a sinner, hopeless and helpless, without God. Until one does he can't humbly turn to the Lord. Too many proud people try to deny or excuse their sins, only to later confess them in some general way. King Saul demonstrates this pattern perfectly. The Lord instructs Saul to fight and completely destroy the wicked Amalekites with their flocks and herds. Instead, Saul returns with Agag, Amalek's king, and the best of the animals. When confronted by Samuel regarding his disobedience Saul first said he did obey, next he excuses his actions by blaming the people, and finally he says, *"I have sinned"* (**1 Samuel 15:19-30**). One of the greatest obstacles to truly turning to God is human pride. Unless and until one can see himself as a sinner he is lost!

Sinful attitudes and activities also obstruct people from becoming true followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus lays down simple but strict requirements for discipleship. *"Then He said to them all, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me'"* (**Luke 9:23**). Two things can prevent us from tasting of God's mercy. The force of habit causes people to do many things without thinking them through: drinking alcohol, bad language, or inappropriate literature. Habit feels comfortable and easily can sweep us away from our Savior. Habit practiced too long becomes character. Also, pleasure can enslave people. Obviously the works of the flesh

often controls one's heart and diverts it away from God's saving mercy (**Rom. 1:18-21**). Sometimes fleshly sins involve transgressions with our heart and our mouth, these are just as condemning (**Galatians 5:19-21 and Ephesians 4:24-29**).

Salvation by God's mercy is free but it places great obligations on us. To be children of God means first seeing ourselves for what we are, "sinners." Only then can we humble ourselves to allow our Lord to save us from the evil one (**1 Peter 5:8**).

It Is Written; Kerrville, Texas. Taken from the Market Street Messenger

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH

"The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel" (**Phil. 1:16-17**).

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (**1 Tim. 6:12**).
"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (**Jude 3**).

"I am called upon to be a fellow soldier, and the very word soldier carries with it the idea of fighting.

Remember I am not only to put on the whole armor of God for self protection, but I am to carry the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God to enable me to fight the enemy. That soldier who goes on to the battle field with an unloaded gun or one who never shoots his gun, or one who is begging all not to shoot as to hit the enemy is a disgrace to the army. Yet I go to many places where many of my brethren claim to be soldiers, but they have not shot a gun at the enemy in ten years, and begin to plead with me as soon as I get there, and beg me to be careful not to shoot any gospel gun toward Baptists or Methodists, or "outsiders," for if I do and a gospel shot hits one, they claim it will hurt his feelings and make him mad and he won't come to the church again. Many church members are more fearful of hurting the feelings of their sectarian neighbors, and regard their friendship and love far above that of God in whose army they claim to be fighting. Brother, do you belong to this class?

Then can you claim you are in fellowship with God, when you refuse to teach the gospel to those who are the Lord's enemies, who are not only building on the sand, but are spending their time and talent in cultivating the human plants, or human churches that Christ states shall be rooted up?"

(J.D. Tant, Gospel X-Ray, page 159)

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:

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

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We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

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NEWS AND NOTES: REMEMBER THE SICK IN PRAYERS AND VISITS.

JAN PATRICK, L.A. STAUFFER, STEPHEN KIMKER, CHRISTIE CARTER AND J.T. PECK AND SARA DENT.

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS:
RELIGIOUS CONFUSION - JIM STAUFFER

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS:
ECCLESIASTES - BYRON TAYLOR

SUNDAY SERMON: THE ROLE OF DEACONS IN THE CHURCH



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