



John 8:32
And ye shall
know the
truth and the
truth shall
make you
free.

November
10
2019

Rom. 14:19
So then let
us follow
after things
which make
for peace,
and things
whereby we
may edify
one another.

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST (5)

by Jim Stauffer

As we pointed out last week, all work and worship of the Lord's church is done at the local level. There are not worship periods for the Universal church to conduct nor is there any work that unit is organized to perform.

There are earthly overseers of the local work; elders supported by deacons who then plan and organize local efforts to carry out the mission of the church. That mission as previously noted is to be *the pillar and ground of the truth* (1 Tim. 3:15).

In order to be the pillar and ground of the truth, the local church must, according to Scripture, do as the church in Thessalonica did, *"For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything."* (1 Thessalonians 1:8) That is the work of evangelists who were placed in the church for that purpose (Eph. 4:11,12). Those evangelists, pastors and teachers were placed there for *the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ*. We then learn it was the role of the local church to care for needy saints. In Acts 11:27-30, the church at Antioch of Syria, sent help to the needy saints in Judea. When we accept God's word as the guide for our actions both individually and collectively we soon learn there are three areas in which the local church has responsibility. It is to preach the gospel to the lost; to teach and edify the local saints and to help needy saints as they have both opportunity and ability.

There are then responsibilities given but also guidance as to how they are to be carried out. The responsibility is real and must be met if the local church is to be pleasing to God and Christ. Remember the words of our Lord concerning the seven churches of Asia. As the Lord cited their deficiencies He said they must repent or He would remove their candlestick. That is He would sever His relationship with them (Rev. 2&3). So, we conclude the Scriptures bring a responsibility the local church must give an account for.

Just as surely as the church is to fulfill its

responsibilities, it must carry them out in the way prescribed. As we try to understand this point, we must realize God gives churches and individuals responsibilities and He expects *them* to carry them out rather than hiring someone to do it for them. It is my personal responsibility to teach those who are lost at every opportunity I have. I cannot assign or transfer that responsibility to anyone else. The same point applies to the church. Its responsibilities cannot be assigned or transferred to others.

Let us look first at preaching the gospel to the lost. We have the command to preach (Mat. 28:19,20) and we have examples men being supported by individuals or churches as they travel away from the local area to preach the word (Phil. 4:15,16; Acts 18:2,3; Philemon 17,22).

Now the individual has greater freedom in support of efforts to preach, teach or help the needy as there is no restriction placed on him beside his sound judgment. It is imperative to limit ourselves to the guidelines of Scripture and Scripture never teaches by command or example that the church should support preaching any other way than directly to the preacher (Phil. 4:15,16). That eliminates the concept of sending support from one congregation to another. We cited an example where one church sent support to another when the saints in that location were in need of help, but that is regarding benevolence not gospel preaching.

Now why is this, you say? Well anyone could speculate, but that is not our role. Our role is to practice pure religion and that can only be done by remaining true to God's word.

So, in summation, we find authority to support gospel preaching by sending funds directly to the preacher either as an individual or a church. We learn also that we can support needy saints as an individual or congregation and we are authorized to send those funds to the church which has the needy saints. We have also noted it is the responsibility of the local church to edify its own saints in an effort to build up the

body.

Now, why have we brought this topic up and detailed Scriptural authority for carrying it out? Because there are those in the Lord's church who have long since decided the mission of the church is social in nature and have forsaken the spiritual nature of the church to appease the world's concept of the church as a social work in progress. The mission of the church is to bring about the salvation of souls and God has designed it and authorized its conduct for that mission. Further, since they have undertaken a social gospel, they have employed institutions to arrange and carry it out for them. Both in violation of biblical instruction. Who are we to assume we know better than He?

This may sound "picky" to some at first glance. But remember our need to *abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9)*, in order to please both the Father and the Son.

“Adding and Subtracting From the Word: Major or Minor?”

“Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers is giving you. You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.” Deuteronomy 4:1-2

The LORD instructed His people;
“...listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe...” (FOR THIS PURPOSE)
“...that you may live, go in and possess the land...”
which He was giving them.

If they were to be successful in the plans that GOD had in store for them it was necessary that they listen to His instruction and then keep that which He had commanded.

In order to be able to effectively observe the statutes and commandments that the LORD had given them it was essential that they not do 2 things.

1. **It was essential that they not add to the word that the LORD had commanded them...**
2. **It was essential that they not take away from the word that the LORD had commanded them...**

*“You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, **that you may** keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.” (Deuteronomy 4:2)*

How serious was this admonition?

It's clearly answered in the **text**. If you want to possess

the land that I'm giving you, you're going to have to listen so that you will know what you need to obey and if you're going to obey it, you must not add to nor take away from it.

Is this something that we should concern ourselves with?

Does GOD really care whether or not His people add a little something to the command or take a little something away or just make some minor changes to it?

Was the strange fire offered by Nadab and Abihu major or minor in the eyes of GOD? (Leviticus 10:1-2)

When Moses struck the rock rather than speak to it, was that act a major or minor discrepancy in the eyes of GOD? (Numbers 20:6-12)

When King Uzziah decided that he would burn incense to the LORD, was that decision major or minor in the eyes of GOD? (2nd Chronicles 26:16-21)

Jay Dixon

In the Service

Your body has 60,000 miles of veins, capillaries and arteries. Put them together end to end and they would wrap around earth nearly three times. But if one small vein around your heart gets blocked you are in a life-threatening situation. Systems like the human body rely on every part doing its function.

This is one reason Jesus chose to call the church His body. Certainly it describes His intimate relationship with us, but it also illustrates the vital necessity of every member doing its part. God saved *you* so His body could experience the benefit of *you* being a part of it. One of the keys to advancing the gospel is for the church to be made up of individuals who consider it their task to do the work of ministry, rather than having a group of people who expect the paid workers to minister to them. In healthy churches every member is a minister.

Every Member A Minister

Peter put it like this, *“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10)*. God's grace is seen in so many different ways in our lives. His grace is seen in the way we learned the gospel, the experiences we had, the talents and opportunities we were given, and the resources God provided. “Now,” Peter says, “Be faithful to dispense those gifts in a way that serves

the body.” We have gifts not to erect our own kingdom but to magnify His.

The early believers did not order their salvation “take out” style to be consumed in the darkness of their living room. Their life had a new priority, not to self, but to the saints. Those freed from the slavery of sin, then became servants of something more meaningful and eternal, the body of Christ (**Galatians 5:13**).

May we never be content with surface relationships with God’s people. It’s only when every member is a minister that our potential for **growth** will be realized. Some people envision the church as a pyramid with one person at the top meeting the needs of those below. This limits the effectiveness of the kingdom to the gifts of the few. The church is to be more like a circle where we all minister to each other. You grow, not by adding people to the bottom of the pyramid, but by adding more servants to the circle. When *“every part does its share, it causes the growth of the body”* (**Ephesians 4:16**).

In addition, when every member is a minister it enhances the **unity** of the body. Many people feel isolated from the fellowship. They say, “We’re not close.” “I don’t know anyone.” “I feel so alone here.” The unity of believers is deepened through service. Jesus is our example. He restored our fellowship with the Father by coming in the form of a servant. If we are going to maintain a vibrant, loving fellowship we must first become servants.

Every Leader an Equipper

Even with all the blessings of service it remains difficult to give up our time, pleasures, and money for the body of Christ. Maybe that’s why the New Testament teaches that every leader is to equip the believers to serve. Paul wrote, *“He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”* (**Ephesians 4:11-12**).

Some leaders are driven people who want to do all the work themselves so it’s done right, or so they think. Others just find it easier to do the work themselves to escape the effort of recruiting and training. Whether they are driven or lazy they are not doing the work of godly leaders if they are not equipping the saints to do works of service. As a result the church’s potential is limited to what only a few can do, and the spiritual growth of the body stagnates.

Healthy churches have leaders who involve as many members as possible. They recruit new workers and instruct them in what to do. They encourage the workers with words of praise. Leaders do not just ask for volunteers. They find people who can do the task, train them and put them to work.

Moses had his Joshua, Jesus had His disciples, Paul trained Timothy and Titus, and every leader since has the responsibility to train others to do the work.

The possibility of production in the body of Christ is

astounding, but people are desperate for leaders who will equip the saints to serve (**Neh.1-6**).

Every Minister A Lover

The real key to using your gifts in service to God and His people is love. Paul ends the great chapter on Christian service with these words, *“Yet I want to show you a more excellent way.”* (**1 Cor. 12:31**). That way is the way of love (**1 Cor. 13**). If you try to serve without love you will either become disillusioned and give up or become self-centered and do more harm than good. Genuine love for God and people is the real key to service.

Love must come first before the service will be effective. This truth is contained in the most familiar verse in the Bible, *“God so loved the world!”* that’s where service starts, *“that He gave His only Son”* (**John 3:16**). When you start with love no act of service is too great. When you are prompted by love no act of service is more joyful or effective.

So, go ahead and do it. Boost your love level for the imperfect, roughhewn body of believers of which you are a part. Participate in the service with all your might.

Tim Jennings *timj.theway@hotmail.com*

Tell Me More About Faith!

Knowing that ‘faith’ is the ability to know about things we cannot see, established in last week’s article, we move on to an important distinction: BIBLICAL faith is not BLIND faith! You see, Biblical Faith is based upon visible and verifiable evidence while blind faith is based upon nothing more than “I believe because I want to believe.” This is why so many of our youth abandon the Scriptures when they go to college. It’s not because faith is for the ‘ignorant’ and they are now part of the ‘well informed’. Rather, it’s because they were never exposed to a vibrant Biblical Faith and taught the bases upon which it is founded, but were only given a blind faith, “I believe because I believe.” which will never stand up under scrutiny, or attack! While the evidences for knowing that God exists are beyond the scope of this article they are easily available for any believer who wishes help in establishing his faith. Josh McDowell’s book, “Evidence Which Demands a Verdict” is an excellent place to start.

Faith is so essential for the Christian because **Hebrews 11:6** says, *“And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.”* Why is this so? Because God is invisible, **John 1:18 & 4:24** therefore to know that God exists requires the ability to trust in where the evidence leads, even if it leads to something that is not visible to the human eye. We know love exists. We know hatred exists. Neither is visible but both are abundantly clear through their respective effects upon human hearts and society. God is not visible but His existence is abundantly clear also!

Cleveland Reddinger

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

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-764-9170

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders: Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons: Bill Miller

Brandon Jimison

Casey Dent

Joe Hurd

NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER JAN PATRICK, STEPHEN KIMKER, STEVE WIMP, AND ALMA BAUMGARTNER, LINDIA JACKSON, TRUDY MULLEN
RON DALY
SUZANNE WIMP IS IN MERRIAM GARDENS

BIBLE CLASSES

SUNDAY MORNING
STUDY OF AUTHORITY - TEACHER
BILL MILLER
WEDNESDAY EVENING
THE BOOK OF JOB - TEACHER
JIM STAUFFER



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