

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

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

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

JANUARY

12

2020

OUR RESPONSE TO SHOOTING THREATS

by Jim Stauffer

The question of how we should react to a rash of violence taking place in houses of worship across our country begs a consistent answer. Last month at the West Freeway church of Christ, a visitor opened fire on the membership with a shotgun killing two people in the process. The reason the killing was limited to two was 71 year old Jack Wilson, who fired one shot and killed the attacker.

As is usually the case in a free country such as ours, everyone has an opinion as to the cause of these events and appropriate solutions. No doubt none of us has a perfect understanding of the provocations or is wise enough to solve the issue from this point forward. As a result congregations are forced to take whatever action they deem appropriate and feasible to prevent such things happening at their location.

What should we do from simple human reasoning? What can we do from a legal standpoint? And most important, what can and therefore should we do from a biblical standpoint?

Human reasoning recognizes the perpetrator as evil in these cases. He is violating the rights of everyone in the building when he intends to take their lives. Common sense tells us if we stand there doing nothing many lives will be lost and many of them unnecessarily.

So, what can a person do legally in such a situation? The law clearly affords any and all the right of self defense when our life is threatened. Further, we have the right to intervene when we see the life of another being threatened. The oft discussed 2nd Amendment to our Constitution, provides the right to an individual to bear arms as a form of such defense. Any debate over why the 2nd Amendment allows the citizenry to bear arms is easily answered by the local laws that govern such possession and carrying of those arms. The laws of each State regulate who and how one can carry various forms of weaponry with the full knowledge those arms are carried for defense of the life and liberty of the individual. Therefore, from a legal standpoint self defense is not just a way to avoid being

charged with a crime, it goes beyond that in its implication that one has the full right to do so the same as he has the right to breathe air.

But the United States Government is not the final answer the Christian must have concerning his conduct in any manner. The laws of the land allow for conduct a Christian cannot participate in if he is to avoid sin. We must then ask, what God's word says about such things as protecting ourselves from the harm one intends in situations where he plans to kill others anywhere or anytime.

Now some will turn to the Old Testament and use the Law of Moses to point out God gave specific instruction concerning how to deal with a violent person who robs or kills. And while this is true, the argument is then thrown back that Jesus taught us to turn the other cheek and go the extra mile. Both are insufficient to answer the question we have raised. We are not to be governed by the Law of Moses. We do not turn to it for our authority in worship or daily conduct of our lives and we cannot in this matter either. By the same token, Jesus was teaching us how to learn love for all men as we try to walk in his footsteps by learning to love both our neighbors and our enemies (**Mat. 22:37-40; 5:43-48**). He was not portraying the child of God as one who is intended as a target for evil doers with no way to defend his life or family and friends.

Look carefully at this passage: *"Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves."* (**Romans 13:1-2**) Now the passage discusses God's authorization of civic authority. In our country that civic authority has established laws against one person committing violence against another. The person who is the perpetrator in these incidents has resisted the local authority by his conduct and therefore has opposed the ordinance of God. Part of the purpose of allowing citizens to bear arms is for them to use them in lawful

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ways. A citizen has every right to enforce the law in this matter which actually calls for him to stop the unlawful action of a fellow citizen.

Where the actual debate comes in is whether a citizen should be required to take such action. It has not been established in our country that a person **must** bear arms, only that he is allowed the privilege. Therefore it is up to the individual whether he does or not. Some find it unpleasant to do. Some find it physically challenging to be capable of doing so responsibly. That is a decision each must make.

But it should be known that churches all over the country are aware of the danger of such incidents and as a result are taking security precautions against such.

It is a shame we must lock our church doors once worship begins, but it is a wise choice to do so.

Those who arrive late will need to ring the bell or knock on the door to gain entrance. This is an action taken to protect the congregants from danger. We at Lenexa hope the public will understand our need to do so as we strive for a peaceful atmosphere in which to honor our God by bringing praise to His Name by methods He has authorized.

What Are You Doing To Save Your Kids?

Russ Bowman

My youngest daughter turned twenty a few weeks ago. The fact that we no longer have any teenagers in our home is somewhat unsettling to me. You see, Tracy and I have spent the vast majority of the past twenty-six years raising our girls. Yes, we have had work obligations and responsibilities to our local church and friendships to foster and a marriage to cultivate. But raising children is – or at least ought to be – a 24/7/365 consideration. But you turn around twice and they are out of the house – in college or on their own or starting their own family. You look around and wonder where the time went and what you do now. Some degree of nostalgia – even melancholy – settles itself in the back of your mind, tugging at your attention at the sight of a soccer field or the sound of a marching band. That's where I am in my life. I made the turn and started the back nine some years ago, and now I'm playing the holes where my fivesome is becoming a twosome.

I'm starting to look back at the last twenty-six years and wonder if we did right. For the most part, my girls are living their own lives now. Yes, there is still a great deal of financial dependence and they still seek out advice occasionally (though they don't seem as interested in my opinions when they are unsolicited). The birds still flutter around the nest, but they are basically flying solo now. I see our influence in some areas. At other times I watch their decisions and wonder if they ever listened to anything I said. Such is life as the

parent of an adult. Our job has been to prepare them to live their own lives, to make wise decisions, to be good people, productive citizens, desirable neighbors, godly wives and mothers. But mostly, our job has been to point them to God. They have been His gift to us – His **"heritage" (Ps.127.3)**. He has expected us to make our children His children. I pray daily that we have done right by them, and by Him.

Such are the meanderings of my mind today. The new year is upon us and I'm watching them go about their lives as I try to go about mine. For the past fifteen years, a new year would bring new busy-ness to our world. School soccer season and Winter Drumline were starting. We cooked and hauled and loaded and drove and cheered and celebrated and consoled and ate and slept and did it all again the next week. It was great fun. It was hard work. I loved every minute of it. We tried desperately to help them be active and involved and godly at the same time. God and God's people were always the first priority. We wanted them to compete, to participate, to enjoy their activities, but to do so with character, integrity, excellence, discipline, righteousness. And involved they were.

But it was all temporary and, frankly, insignificant. None of the playoff runs, contest titles, state competitions, "all-whatever" teams, medals, or police escorts into town make much difference now. Now, I just hope and pray that they are serving the Lord.

What are you doing to save your kids?

If your kids are still at home then the chances are that you are as inundated as we have been. Great. Enjoy it. Cheer them on and help them learn all of the lessons that go with teamwork and participation and competition. They need the discipline that comes with education or raising livestock or marching with the band. Every kid ought to experience the joy of winning and the misery of losing, both individually and as a part of a team. They need to find their talents and develop them and they need your encouragement. But more than anything else, they need to know where they came from, why they're here, and where they're going. Soccer and band ain't life. And preparing for life is your job, parents.

Deu.6.4f and **Eph.6.4** offer directives for parents. Both passages essentially make the same plea – point your kids toward God. **Ps.78.1-8** reminds us that the knowledge of God is to be passed from generation to generation through the family. This is what God desires from mothers and fathers. How to hit a curve ball or the proper embouchure necessary to play a bassoon are going to be irrelevant one day soon. But discipline and character, righteousness and decency, happiness and faith will serve your kids well throughout their life. Are you focused there? Are you introducing them to God, talking about Him and His word and His son? Are you setting priorities that are eternal in scope? Do you show them God in your life? Are God's people more important

than the PTA folks or the little league moms? Is worshiping God and learning His word more important than school work and deer hunting? Do you make them get their Bible class lessons as diligently as you make them get their math homework? Are you trying to get them to heaven, or just on the All-star team?

There are all kinds of practical directives that might be employed in accomplishing these spiritual ends. Much of the “how” involved is, honestly, personal and individual. Different kids respond to different approaches. Parents have their own personalities, and one couple may pursue these goals differently than the next. But they need to be pursued, and pursued passionately. One day – and it won’t be long – you’ll come home from work to an empty house. A new year will be starting and it’ll hit you that your youngest is no longer a teenager. You’ll watch your kids living their own lives. You’ll still be involved to some extent. You’ll still be cheering and supporting and loving, laughing and crying. But there’ll be more looking back, as you play the last few holes. They’ll move on. And you’ll wonder if you did enough, if you did right.

What are you doing to save your kids?

Russ Bowman
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Take Care of Things Now!

As I write these words my family is in the process of saying our “Good-Bye’s” to my 87 year-old Mother-in-Law, a sweet Christian lady for over fifty years. It’s not easy! But, we’re not alone.

As I walk the halls of the hospice I find another family saying farewell to their father after a long and devout life. Five days ago he was living happily independent but now leaving forever this world. In another room a healthy mother sits with her dying son. It’s always too soon to bury a child, isn’t it? It SHOULD be the other way around but it’s not always. In God’s profound and unfathomable wisdom He ordained this uncertainty about life because of the introduction of sin into the world, **(Genesis 3:22ff)**. From the moment we are conceived in the womb we are old enough to die. That is the unchanging truth of life! It is uncertain! James, Jesus’ younger brother, said, *“For ye are a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”* **(James 4:14)**

That is all too true but what is the point? Simply this: If you have someone who is precious to you and you haven’t said, “I love you!” recently then do it now! Better yet do something to demonstrate your genuine love for them. These families, and mine, are being given the opportunity to do so at the very end of life even though my short acquaintance with them leads me to think that it has been a part of their lives for some time. NOT

EVERYBODY GETS THAT CHANCE! Some are in eternity now that were happy and laughing fifteen minutes ago. For that matter, it may be YOU that is headed for an unexpected destiny with the Grim Reaper! Do the right thing now!

Cleveland Reddinger

New Year Resolve

Author Unknown

I will start afresh this new year
with a higher, fairer creed;
I will cease to stand complaining
of my ruthless neighbor’s greed;
I will cease to sit repining
while my duty’s call is clear;
I will waste no moment whining,
and my heart shall know no fear.

I will look sometimes about me
for the things that merit praise;
I will search for hidden beauties
that elude the grumbler’s gaze;
I will try to find contentment
in the paths that I may tread;
I will cease to have resentment
when another gets ahead.

I will not be swayed by envy
when my rival’s strength is shown;
I will not deny his merit,
but I’ll try to prove my own.
I will try to see the beauty
spread before me, rain or shine;
I will cease to preach your duty,
and be more concerned with mine.

Taken from The Roanridge Reader; Roanridge church of Christ

““And I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. ‘But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in me. (Acts 26:15-18)

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

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons: Bill Miller

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SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS: SEARCHING FOR A KING - RON PECK TEACHER

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS: THE BOOK OF JOB - JIM STAUFFER TEACHER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON: LET ME SEE WHAT IS THERE

WELCOME TO:

MARTIN GRIFFIN AND DENESE GORING WHO WERE RESTORED TO THE LORD AND HAVE CHOSEN TO WORK AND WORSHIP WITH THE BRETHREN IN LENEXA.



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