

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

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

"And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"

March 22, 2020

A MESSAGE CONCERNING DECISIONS ON THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Editor's Note: The following was sent to us by Jason Cicero, who was to preach a meeting for us this Spring. That meeting has been postponed due to the government requesting we reduce assemblies to 10 or less.

Jason's sentiments coincide with brethren in 1918 as do ours.

This is not the first time churches of Christ have had to respond to something similar to what is now happening in our generation. As we noted in class on Sunday, the apostle Paul was a Roman citizen and he used his citizenship to further the gospel (**Acts 22:25**). As disciples of Jesus we are to obey God rather than men (**Acts 5:29**). The current call to limit our assemblies to ten by our civil government is not Christian persecution, it is an attempt to keep the public healthy. We are to the best of our ability obeying God within His commands to "**be subject to the governing authorities**" (**Romans 13:1**) by suspending our assemblies until April. Attached is the slide about Paul's Roman citizenship from Sunday's class.

During the 1918-19 Pandemic, sometimes referred to as The Spanish Flu, churches were called on to suspend their services to attempt to halt the spread a virus (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html>). Below is an article from October of 1918 that could well have been written in March of 2020. I encourage you to consider that there is nothing new under the sun and that if we "**Fear God and keep His commandments**," every thing will be all right (**Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**).

**In His Strength,
Jason**

J. C. McQuiddy, "Closing Churches," **Gospel Advocate (October 24, 1918)**, p. 1020-1, responding to the government order to cease public gatherings, including church services, during the 1918 influenza epidemic.

"But Christians have not felt that God required them to meet upon the first day of the week when any of their family or loved ones were seriously sick. Especially they have not felt called upon to leave them and meet with the disciples on the first day of the week if thereby they would jeopardize the lives of members of not only their families, but the families also of many other people.

With this view of it, which is in harmony with the practice of Christians, I have suggested to the brethren who asked me about observing the command of the government that they should do so, suggesting, however, that they could meet in their homes or simply a few in some place and thereby obey the government, which we should always do, provided such obedience is not disobedience to God. . .

For Christians to urge that we should now assemble in large crowds to break bread in the face of the proclamation of the government is not warranted by the Scriptures. . .

It will not be questioned that the intent of the government is to protect and care for the lives of its subjects. As the observance of the command does not interfere with Christians' meeting a few together and observing the Lord's Supper, Christians should observe the command cheerfully, seeking to lead quiet, holy, and unblameable lives."

We provide Jason's chart at this location for your examination of the principles involved in these matters.

Paul's Roman Citizenship

1. Submit/Obey (Romans 13:1, 5; 1 Peter 2:13-14; Titus 3:1)
2. Pay taxes (Romans 13:6-7; Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26)
3. Respect/Honor (Romans 13:7; 1 Peter 2:17; Proverbs 24:21; Job 12:23)
4. Pray (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

The Godly & Ungodly In Psalms One

THE GODLY MAN ... HIS POSITIVE CHARACTER:

"But his delight is in the law of the Lord." The Christian life is not one merely giving up this or that, but it is entering into a new and happy inheritance in the Word of God. True, the prodigal son had to give up some things to come back. But what were they? The swine troughs and his rags! In exchange he acquired the best robe and the joys of a happy home. The godly man gives up the entanglements of sin, for the delight of God's law!

"And in His law he meditates day and night." The modern voices of secular values and occult interests urge us to MEDITATE, without specifying a worthy object of meditation. The godly man meditates on the law of God, and from that meditation receives spiritual strength and health. One telling test of a man's character is this: UPON WHAT DOES HE MEDITATE DAY AND NIGHT? (See Phil. 4:8)

THE GODLY MAN ... WHAT HE IS LIKE:

"He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper."

Here is the result of the godly man's character, negative and positive: SPIRITUAL FRUITFULNESS AND PROSPERITY.

If you want a life such as this; if you want to be like a healthy, thriving, fruitful tree *"whose leaf also shall not wither,"* do the things outlined in **Psalms 1:1,2**. "Blessed is this man!"

The first part of the chapter describes the blessedness of the godly man. HIS NEGATIVE CHARACTER lies in his refusal to walk in the counsel of the ungodly; staying away from the path of sinners, and not sitting in the seat

of the scornful. HIS POSITIVE CHARACTER lies in his delight in the law of the Lord, and his practice of meditation therein, day and night. As a result of this good character, there is spiritual benefit: *"And whatever he does shall prosper."*

The last part of the psalm shows WHAT THE GODLY MAN IS NOT LIKE. It is a description of the ungodly.

THE UNGODLY MAN....HIS CHARACTER

"The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

First, the ungodly are described as having the opposite behavior as the godly. After the description of the godly in **verses 1-3**, the writer says: *"THE UNGODLY ARE NOT SO,"* that is, they are living in another fashion.

They are *"like the chaff."* This term "chaff" is used throughout the Scriptures as an emblem of what is weak and worthless (see **Job 21:18; Dan. 2:35**, and **Matt. 3:12**). In ancient times chaff was considered of no value, and when corn was winnowed, it was thrown up in the air until the wind had blown all the chaff away. Hence the ungodly are pictured by this language as weak, of no value; something to be thrown out, *"which the wind driveth away."*

What a way to live! Think of the reality of living a life that is worthless, of no value ... compared to something that is good for nothing, but to be thrown out.

"Therefore," because of this worthless life, *"the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous."* While the wicked may be proud, arrogant and high-minded in this day. In the last day the wicked will not be able to hold up their heads. They will have no security, and will have no place with the righteous. There will be a great separation (**Matt. 25:31-46**).

On the other hand, *"the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish."* Here, simply stated, is the end to which all men are headed. In the world there are good and bad - righteous and unrighteous. Their character and behavior are entirely different. And the Bible teaches, all things will eventuate in the salvation of the righteous, and the destruction of the wicked.

Warren E. Berkley

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

"And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So, all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea,

continued on page 3

to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:1-7).

The question, “When was Jesus born?” is asked by many, especially so, because of the religious celebration of Jesus’ birth on December 25th. While the Bible nowhere commands that we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we might ask if there is evidence of some kind that relates somehow to the time of His birth?

Luke’s passage includes three references to historical figures. Even if you do not believe the Bible, these people are in the history books; you can weigh the evidence and decide if you believe that these persons really lived. Augustus Caesar, the nephew of Julius Caesar, ruled the Roman Empire from 27BC to AD14. Quirinius was governor of Syria from 10BC to 6AD. **Matthew 2:1** refers to Herod the Great, half Jew, half Idumean, who was appointed ruler by Rome in 40BC; he reigned until AD4. What shall we conclude? It is clear that Jesus was born into a particular historical framework; Luke’s attention to detail places Jesus’s birth in the context of the Roman Empire. And it is clear that Jesus was born before Herod the Great died.

Still, the Bible does not say that Jesus was born on December 25th. **Luke 2:8** says: *“Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.”* An angel told the shepherds that Jesus, the Savior, Christ the Lord, had arrived. Some argue that since the shepherds were watching over their sheep by night, this would not have been in December, which was a typically harsh and cold month. Whether yes or no, we are still looking for something that might point us to December 25th. The shepherds went to Bethlehem, found the newborn baby, and then told others about what had happened; others were interested in the report of the shepherds. They did not say, though, that they had gone to Bethlehem on December 25th.

If we do not celebrate the birth of Jesus on December 25th each year, do we celebrate His birth at all? We should rejoice and be thankful that Jesus did come to this earth. Just because the majority of the “religious world” is on shaky ground in celebrating Jesus’ birth on December 25th, that doesn’t mean that we cannot and should not be just as happy and thankful as anyone else might be in the fact that Jesus, born of a virgin, did come and die for all (**Hebrews 2:9-10**). His death frees us from the bondage of death (**Hebrews**

2:14-15). His birth fulfills prophecy; wouldn’t this be of interest to Luke who was writing an accurate account of the life of Christ? Rather than *when* did Jesus come, let us ask: *Why* did He come? When we figure that answer out, we can then go beyond December 25th in our commitment to our Savior.

Randy Harshbarger

History Repeating Itself!

In the year 165AD the Roman Empire was rocked by the Plague of Antonius (AKA The Plague of Galen, the pagan physician who described it) which may have killed off 25% of the population of the Empire. Two hundred years later the Plague of Cyprian killed 5000 people a day in the city of Rome alone, at the height of the outbreak. The Pagan response was abandonment of the sick and active self-preservation. It was the Christians, however, who stayed and cared for the sick and nursed the survivors back to health.

In both cases the emperors complained that these ‘Galileans’ were putting the pagans to shame by their virtue, even though the emperors themselves hated Christianity. In both cases Christianity grew by massive amounts as the survivors converted to Christ ‘en masse’ as a direct result of the DEMONSTRATION of Christian doctrine in life, *“Love thy neighbor as thyself”* and *“All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.”* (**Matthew 7:12** and **Mark 12:31**) It is one thing to hear the Parable of the Good Samaritan, it is quite another to be the recipient of the command to *“Go, and do thou likewise.”* when the doer puts himself in danger by the deed.

For years believers have privately complained about the looming secularism in American society and the declining fate of Bible-believing churches. Here we have a golden opportunity to do something constructive about it. It may or may not be enough but let it never be said of us that we shrank from our duty or that we abandoned our posts! Let it be said that we were there when our neighbors needed us!

Cleveland Reddinger

“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.” (**Psalms 27:3**)

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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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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OUR BIBLE CLASS ON SUNDAY IS
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CLASS - **THE BOOK OF JOB**

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:
RECORDED ON YOUTUBE - **THE
SIN AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF
MAN**



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