

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”

April 17, 2022

THE REALITY OF HELL

Jim Stauffer

Hell is defined as a terrible place in which the wrath of God is delivered to those who have rejected His authoritative word (**Matthew 25:41,46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 20:14,15; John 5:28,29**). An eternal soul was created in man as he was made in the image of God (**Genesis 1:26,27**), and the eternal destination of the faithful and the unfaithful is clearly defined by our Lord in the account of the rich man and Lazarus (**Luke 16:19-31**).

It is likely the horrible and eternal suffering God promises is the reason so many today discount the reality of such a place. Combine that with the false concept men have of God Himself, as a loving grandfather type and you have the two most popular reasons men do not fear hell as they plan and live their lives today. God is just too loving a God to do such a thing to His creation. Peter pleads with his readers to remember what God did in the days of Noah (**2 Peter 3**). Here he reminds us God created the heavens and the earth and has destroyed the world already one time and promises to do it again. The even greater concern is that this destruction will come without notice. *The day of the Lord will come like a thief...* warns us of the need to spend life here preparing so we will be ready when that day comes to all as a surprise.

People will go there. In fact Jesus warns us that most people will go there, *“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”* (**Matthew 7:13-14**) And the reason they will go there is because they choose to ignore the warning and spend their lives in service to God and Christ so they can, indeed avoid hell and enjoy heaven (**2 Thessalonians 1:7-10**).

This result is not the desire of God. He has pleaded with man to listen to the message of the gospel (**Romans 1:16**) and by hearing that message come and submit to Him (**Matthew 11:28-30**). He truly desires all men to be saved, *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.* (**1 Timothy 2:4-6**) His desire is so strong and His commitment to the salvation of mankind is so firm, He sent Jesus to die for the sins of mankind. *...while we were still helpless....Christ died for the ungodly ...But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us* (**Romans 5:6-8**).

How sad it will be for those who have listened to the warnings of men over such things in this life that are far less serious, but reject the message of God that will determine their eternal fate. Listen to the Lord, *“So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”* (**Matthew 13:40-43**) *The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.”* (**Revelation 22:17**)

BAPTISM AND GRACE

by L.A. Stauffer

The Old Testament tells the story of Naaman, an honorable man in the nation of Syria and captain of the army. But it also says that he was a leper. In one of his battles against Israel, Naaman had conquered a Jewish girl whom he had made a servant to his wife in their household. One day the Jewish maiden suggested to her mistress that if Naaman could be with the prophet in Israel, he would be healed of his leprosy. At the servant girl's suggestion Naaman came to see the prophet and was met by one of his messengers who told him to dip in the Jordan River seven times and he would be healed. Enraged by such a strange idea, the honorable captain rejected the command. Later he was persuaded by one of his own servants to obey the command. After dipping the seventh time in the Jordan River, Naaman was healed (**2 Kings 5:1-14**).

Does anyone read this account and believe that Naaman merited or earned this gift of healing from God? Does anyone deny that the captain was healed by the gracious will and blessing of God? The goal of this event was to display God's power and convince Naaman *"that there is a prophet in Israel"* (**2 Kings 5:8**). It was not to pay a debt or fulfill an obligation to Naaman for traveling from Syria to Israel and on to the Jordan to dip seven times. The prominent soldier was made whole by God's grace—contingent, of course, on obedient faith.

How could anyone read this story and believe that men who obey God to be baptized have earned the forgiveness of sins? Why would they not agree that a baptized believer, in the same way as Naaman, is saved by grace? Does God owe a man salvation because he walks to the front of an auditorium or even ten miles to a river to confess Christ and be baptized? It takes a rather unusual kind of reasoning to draw this conclusion. The sense in which the Bible speaks of salvation by works is that God owes it to man as a matter of debt if man keeps God's law perfectly. Otherwise, *"Cursed is everyone who continues not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them"* (see **Rom 4:1-8; Gal 3:10-11**).

But no man, other than Jesus, has lived perfectly under God's law. *"All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God"* and His perfection (**Rom 3:23**). This means that all men by works are under God's curse and, as Naaman, must come to God's prophet to receive cleansing. The prophet of God today is Jesus (**Heb 1:1-2; Acts 3:22-23**) and all who come to Him must believe and be baptized. Jesus Himself said: *"He that believes and is baptized shall be saved"* (**Mark 16:16**).

The man who walks into the waters of baptism does exactly what Naaman did. First, he believes both the

promise and command of God. Secondly, he submits to God's will and obeys him. This is what Paul in the epistle to the Romans called the "obedience of faith." He tells the recipients of this letter both at the beginning and end of the letter that the scriptures were revealed to bring the *"obedience of faith"* to all nations and that he was commissioned as an apostle to teach all nations the *"obedience of faith"* (see **Rom. 1:5; 16:26**). When he proclaims in this letter the gospel as God's power *"unto salvation to everyone that believes"* (**Rom. 1:16**), he has no intentions of eliminating obedience to baptism or of teaching the reformation theology of "faith alone."

But someone might ask: what does being dipped in water have to do with forgiveness? And what, they could also ask, did dipping in the Jordan River seven times have to do with being healed of leprosy? The connection is that men manifest before God the *"obedience of faith"* when they keep His commandments. And men who by faith are baptized obey God's command and receive His promise of forgiveness (see **Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16**).

But beyond this, note that baptism puts believers into Christ: *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ"*—who Himself is the "gift" of God's grace (**Gal 3:26-27; Rom 5:15**). And, secondly, those *"who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death"*—where His blood was shed (**Rom 6:3-4**). When sinners by faith are baptized into Christ and into His death, they come to the cross—the ultimate expression of God's grace (**Eph 2:13-18**). It is in Christ Jesus that sinners are redeemed and forgiven by the riches of God's grace through the blood of Jesus (**Eph 1:7**).

Making Good Use of Money

Robert Hines

We think at times that the answer to our money problems is more money and that may be so. But sometimes rather than more money the answer is using what we have more wisely. Could that be one of the ideas included in what Paul said in **Philippians 4:11-13**? *"I have learned in whatever state I am to be content. I know how to live humbly, and I know how to live in prosperity. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."* The idea of necessary belt-tightening

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came to mind when we saw this clever exchange of notes from the book "Parents Wanted!"

*A Note from School Dear Mom and Dad, Cla\$\$e\$ are really great. I am making lot\$ of friend\$ and \$tudying very hard. I \$imply can't think of anything I need. \$o if you would like, you can ju\$t \$end me a card, a\$ I would love to hear from you. You're ju\$t the be\$t of parent\$!
Love, from your Son*

The Reply from Home Dear Son, We kNOw that astroNOmy, ecoNOmics, and oceaNOgraphy are eNOugh to keep even an hoNOr student busy. Do NOT forget that the pursuit of kNOwledge is a NOble task. Will we see you in NOvember? We enjoyed getting your NOte. Drop us aNOther when you get time. We will close for NOw. With love, from Mom and Dad

Scripture teaches us how to use money wisely. We must pay our bills ("*owe no one anything except to love one another,*" **Romans 13:8**), and we must take our part in the Lord's work (*On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside,*" **1 Corinthians 16:2**). We must take care of our families (*provide for his own...household,*" **1 Timothy 5:8**), and help others (*something to give to him who has need,*" **Ephesians 4:28**). The wonderful thing is that this is possible without having a lot of money. For example, of taking part in the Lord's work Paul says, "*For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have*" (**2 Corinthians 8:12**). So then the call of a successful life is not necessarily in more money, but in using what we have wisely. In that regard it is like every other gift or ability we have, as in **Matthew 25's** parable of the talents. Make good use what you have and you will be blessed and a blessing to others.

Did you know this is taught in the Bible?

That members of the church were told to if they are hungry to eat at home and then come to worship.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:18,22

Little Things **by Edgar A. Guest**

Lord, make me strong enough to bear
My little round of anxious care.
The day returns. For this I pray:
Sufficient wisdom for the day.
Although I may not walk with kings,
Let me be big in little things.

Grace me with modesty and teach
Me kindness of thought and speech;
Let me not hasty be to chide
The children walking at my side,
And spoil with imperfections slight ;
The record which the day shall write.

Lord, make me big enough I pray
To triumph in a lesser way.
When petty disappointments rise,
Let me be patient, gentle, wise.
Missing the joy which greatness brings
Let me not fail in little things.

Lord, I would work and neighbor here
Too big to hate, too wise to sneer.
I would be helpful, cheerful, kind,
Gentle of speech and broad of mind.
And though not far my circle swings,
Let me be great in little things.

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***We believe in worshiping and serving the
Lord as He has instructed in His word.***

*"While he was still speaking, a bright cloud
overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the
cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am
well-pleased; listen to Him!"*

(Matthew 17:5)

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 P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship
Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

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WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS
GENESIS - 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