

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

Anna Surface 2010

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

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HANDLING TRUTH ACCURATELY

by Jim Stauffer

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

The Greek word for accurately handling in this verse means; to make a straight cut, i.e. (figuratively) to dissect (expound) correctly (the divine message): — rightly divide.

One of the most persistent issues with men understanding the Scriptures is being able to recognize to whom a particular message or passage is speaking. Of course the gospel brought to man by the Son of God was delivered by Him and His apostles first to the people of God, Israel as a fulfillment of the prophecies of those men in the Old Testament (**1 Peter 1:10-12**). Peter then says these prophecies have now been explained by those who preach the gospel, guided by the Holy Spirit.

Yet, the tendency of those people who lived under the Law of Moses was to cling to many of its tenets. They often honored the feast days of the Old Covenant even after Christ had initiated the New Covenant and nailed the Old to the cross (**Colossians 2:11-14; Ephesians 2:11-18; Hebrews 9:15**).

When this problem existed the apostles addressed it with clarity and firmness. Consider Paul’s letter to the Galatians, who had succumbed to these issues. He tells them in the first chapter the things they were practicing and binding upon people from the Old Testament were in fact distortions of the gospel and would result in condemnation (**Galatians 1:6-9**). He further describes those who have practiced these things as having ... *fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4)*.

As we attempt to worship and serve the Lord it is imperative we serve Him and not our personal wishes. We cannot support our worship by citing examples or

commands from the Old Testament. It is no longer in effect. Christ died on the cross to enable us to receive forgiveness of our sins, but we must obey and follow the tents of His covenant to receive that forgiveness. As circumcision was a sign of the covenant with Abraham and his descendants, baptism is the corresponding sign of the covenant man makes with Christ and God in the New Covenant. Paul reminds us our baptism is *.....a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, Who raised Him from the dead (Colossians 2:11,12)*.

This represents one aspect of the Old Law that has been changed by His New Covenant. We must be able to handle these things accurately. When we mix and match the commands of both covenants, we are not handling the word of truth accurately.

We must therefore understand that musical instruments in worship, attempting to have a priesthood patterned after the Old Testament, worshiping on the Sabbath as they did under the Old Testament and any other items of worship or offices in the church taken from that covenant, represent a failure to handle the word of truth accurately. This means we are not approved to God as a workman not needing to be ashamed.

TWO MEN TRY TO WORSHIP

by Bill Hall

Worship under the best of conditions can sometimes be difficult. Distractions, human error, and sometimes funny situations can occur to take one’s

attention away from the Lord. Attitudes, however, can prove to be a major factor in acceptable (or non-acceptable) worship. For instance....

Two men sincerely try to worship. **The first man**, though, is frustrated throughout. His frustrations begin with the opening announcements when the man in charge takes ten minutes to say what any normal man could say in three. He is hardly over that when the song leader adds to his frustrations, selecting a song he is sure contains an unscriptural phrase. The man who presides at the table doesn't help when he uses the term "loaf" instead of "bread," and then the man who is called on to "give thanks for the bread" gives thanks for everything but the bread. The preacher makes a major contribution by totally misapplying a passage of scripture ("he probably didn't spend enough time on that one," the man thinks). When the worship period is finally dismissed, he tries to share his frustrations with those around him, but no one seems to care.

The second man observes many of the mistakes the first man observes. In fact, without fanfare he just doesn't sing the questionable phrase in the song and he silently thanks God for the bread when he realizes the leader's failure to do so. But while observing mistakes, he focuses attention on the good sentiments of the songs that are used, and on the death of his Savior during the Lord's Supper. He makes the prayer that is led his own and appreciates the good thoughts presented in the lesson. He has come to worship God. He makes allowances for human frailty on the part of the leaders in worship, appreciates their sincere efforts, and refuses to let their mistakes keep him from his purpose.

The first man is to be pitied. His ability to "worship" is dependent on the ability of the leaders in the worship period, and any half-observant person knows how inept that leadership can be at times. He comes to worship, but spends the hour criticizing. He blames others for that which is really his own problem. Consequently, his problem with worship becomes a problem also with his brethren; but one cannot have a problem with his worship and his brethren without having a problem in his relationship with God.

The second man, by maintaining a positive attitude toward his brethren, even when they make mistakes, is able to worship acceptably and is drawn closer to God by his worship.

We are not condoning sloppily conducted worship periods. Leaders in worship should seek to avoid mistakes and to do their work effectively. But acceptable worship depends far more on the heart and

attitude of the worshiper than on the abilities of leaders. Our first man may point the finger of blame at others, but his real need is a total change of attitude with himself.

He Never Had Such Good Friends

A man – a brother in Christ – has slipped away and fallen seriously into sin. Though he was once growing and active in the Lord's service, now he is distant, unconcerned, and clearly pursuing a different agenda.

His brethren see his condition. They are aware of the spiritual danger he is in. All signs point to the fact that he is heading down a path to eternal ruin.

Out of love for his soul, and with knowledge of their own duty in such matters (**Galatians 6:1,2**) his brothers and sisters in Christ reach out to this erring one. They are crushed to think that one who once worked hand-in-hand with them in the Lord's service could now be so alienated from them and God. They humbly try to encourage him, reminding him of things he already knows – but has chosen to ignore. They plead with him to *"repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee"* (**Acts 8:22**).

And, what is the response from this brother in desperate need of rescue? Too often the response is one of bitter animosity and resentment. Instead of looking inwardly and humbly admitting his sins, he lashes out at those who are trying to help him. He has harsh words of criticism and disdain for them. His effort is to deflect attention away from his own sins, and place focus on what he perceives as the failings of others.

What this man fails to realize is that he never had such good friends as these fellow Christians who are committed to help him and restore him to a right relationship with God. It would have been easier – much easier – to look the other way and ignore the situation all together. Let him go – clear his name off the 'church roll' – and proceed as though nothing significant had happen. But, love will not allow this. He is a brother – a friend – and they cannot, will not, let him go without a fight for his soul. Truly, he never had such friends as these.

by Greg Gwin

IT IS TIME

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, This people says, The time has not come, even the time for the house of the Lord to be rebuilt.” Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?” (Haggai 1:2-4 NASB). Beyond a few references to Haggai, nothing is known with certainty about this prophet. God sent him, along with Zechariah, to stir up the Israelites, urging the completion of the temple (**Ezra 5:1; 6:14**). Haggai’s message was a call to action. After seventy years in captivity, and then another sixteen years of minimal activity on the temple, Haggai says: It is time! Israel needed to regroup, build the temple, and get on with the business of being God’s chosen people. While in Babylon, Israel built houses, gave their children in marriage, and engaged in business enterprises; they knew how to make progress in many areas of life (**Jeremiah 29**). Haggai’s message does not condemn idolatry or immorality. He simply says: Get to work!

Haggai received four oracles from Jehovah. The first oracle says Israel should have completed the task of rebuilding the temple. They had worked on their own houses, while the temple lay in ruins. Nebuchadnezzar *“burned the house of the Lord, the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every great house he burned with fire” (2 Kings 25:9).* Yes, the inhabitants of the desolated city needed houses to live in; yet their focus was on themselves rather than God. The Lord said: *“Consider your ways.” “Rebuild the temple and glorify Me!”* To their credit, the Jews got up and got busy (**1:12**).

The second oracle (**2:1**) delivered two months after the first, was an effort to encourage the discouraged—those who remembered the glory of Solomon’s temple. The question is: How could this refurbished temple exceed the splendor of Solomon’s house? Does Haggai anticipate Herod’s renovations (**John 2:20**)? Or does Haggai speak about the ultimate fulfillment of God’s plans for all people—salvation through His Son?

The third oracle (**2:10**) addressed a matter of the Law; inattention concerning matters clean and unclean illustrated a lackadaisical attitude toward their responsibilities of rebuilding the temple. Lethargy in one area of service translated into lethargy into other areas of service. The Lord was trying to get their attention.

The fourth oracle (**2:20**) promised an overthrow of God’s enemies; nations and kingdoms would lose their power—power that came from Jehovah in the first place. Zerubbabel, the Lord’s servant, was to be a signet, a

sign for what the Lord intended. *“As I live,” declares the Lord, “even though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were a signet ring on My right hand, yet I would pull you off” (Jeremiah 22:24).* Haggai’s message unfolds the fulfillment of God’s promise of a Savior. Remember that Zerubbabel is part of the Messiah’s ancestry (**Matthew 1:12; Luke 3:27**). The time is here. The King is coming!

Randy Harshbarger

"O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger."

The Book of Psalms is full of songs/prayers that cry out to the Lord in dire distress and need. A call for help because of troubles, trials, oppression and enemies is a common theme. **Psalm 6** is a desperate cry for help for a very different reason: guilt.

"O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger, Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled; But You, O Lord—how long? Return, O Lord, deliver me! Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake! For in death there is no remembrance of You; In the grave who will give You thanks?" Psalm 6:1-5.

Whatever trouble we face, nothing is so devastating as our guilt before God. I must acknowledge my sin and its eternal consequences. Having done that, I must turn to the Lord in repentance, calling on Him to treat me, not as I deserve, but as His mercy allows. The misery of sin must move us toward God.

As I turn and move toward God, I am a beggar crying out for mercy, healing and deliverance. What I deserve is God's rebuke, anger, chastening, and displeasure. *"O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger ... Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak."*

Don Bunting

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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

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YOU CAN COUNT ON ME



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