

LENEXA EDIFIER

"and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

October 16, 2022

GOSPEL MEETING

October 16-19

With speaker Jordan Shouse

Bible answers to tough questions

Sunday 9:30 AM

Faith and Doubt

Sunday 10:20 AM

How Can I Know the Bible is God's Word's?

Sunday 5 PM

How Can I Know Which Church is Right?

Monday 7 PM

How Can I Find the Balance Between Law and Love?

Tuesday 7 PM

How Can I Know God is Good?

Wednesday 7 PM

How Can I Know There's Hope for Me?

Please accept our sincere invitation to attend this series of lessons and hear the word of God offered as the answer to the problems of life.

"TOGETHER" IS...

T. Sean Sullivan

Introduction:

There is no replacement for our interaction as a spiritual family. The church is not "just some social gathering". The church is not "just some membership club". Some have tried to come up with "a better way" – splintering off into small groups, or not assembling at all – but our gathering as a congregation is a divine plan, which cannot be improved.

When we are truly engaged in this process there are many irreplaceable advantages. What many fail to understand, is the need for an environment of mutual care and encouragement. The need for this care is made apparent by the trials of this life – trials we can face with greater courage; being built up by our brethren.

Our scheduled assemblies should be embraced as our time of refuge, away from the world, in a place of love, care, and encouragement. Let's consider, from the Scriptures, what we can do for one another in order to build up one another – to know the importance of

"together".

"Together" is Strengthening

We are strong together when we share together "in faith". Now, it must be clearly understood that there is more to making our practices righteous than just agreeing with one another. Some people base the entirety of their faith on mutual agreement, or a consensus, alone; they justify themselves by those who agree with them. The doctrines of men will never be right, no matter how many people adhere to them (**Matthew 7:21-23**). In the days of Noah, the entire population of the earth – except Noah and his family – were following their own ways; and were rejected by God (**Genesis 6:5-7**). Even among the people of Israel (God's people under the Old Covenant) when the majority of them strayed they were not accepted (**1 Corinthians 10:1-5**). Numbers or majorities do not sway God (**Matthew 15:9**). We must base our mutual faith on the truth of God. God's revealed word is the only true source of faith (**Romans 10:17**). His word is the only instruction in righteousness (**Romans 1:17**). Only His truth will sanctify us (**John 17:17**) and set us free (**John 8:31-32**).

Because we share our faith, we are able to build one another up in our mutual needs. Each of us wants to please God, so we search out what pleases Him (**Ephesians 5:8-10**). We seek those things diligently (**2 Timothy 2:15**). Encouraging one another in our proven-true mutual faith makes us strong together.

"Together" is Consideration

We can become strong from our mutual care and consideration: There is definitely "strength in numbers"; this is something that we all know and hopefully have a sense of among our brethren. We are to be living examples of what Solomon speaks of in **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**. If we are separated and alone, we are weak and vulnerable. Together with our brethren, we are strong and able to withstand.

In the New Testament: Paul says that we are woven together in **Ephesians 4:16**, "*joined and knit together by what every joint supplies*". Peter, in **1 Peter 2:5**, says that we are built together, "*As living stones, in a living house*". These examples, both Old and New, teach us

that we are supposed to be "together".

Our strength comes from that which we can only do for one another when we are together. There is a picture of that need for togetherness in **Hebrews 10:24**. It is there that we are told to *"consider one another"*. To meet this requirement, we must make a reasoning-observation of each other's well-being. We look at each other, for a "demeanor determination". We listen to each other, for a "dialogue of needs". As brethren, we "want to help"; so, we "want to know". It is in this same passage, the very next verse, we are expressly given the "when-opportunity" of these requirements (**Hebrews 10:25**). It is in our times of assembly that we are most able to meet these needs. We are clearly told to *"not forsake the assembling of ourselves together"*.

We have the strength to move forward, because of the mutual consideration and care of our brethren. These blessings are ours strong together.

"Together" is Encouragement

We benefit from the consistent encouragement we receive: We are to always want what is best for our brethren and encourage the best in their lives. The Scriptures record several examples of those who really encouraged the best in others: Like Barnabas, in **Acts 4:36-37**, who is said to be born of encouragement-the *"son of encouragement"*. He was willing to do what he could, with what he had. Like Tabitha, in **Acts 9:36-39**, who made clothes for those in need. She was willing to do what she could, with the ability that she had. Like Epaphroditus, in **Philippians 2:25-30**, who, not considering himself, supplied Paul with what he lacked. He was willing to suffer, so that others would not have to.

We need to be the encouragers of our brethren: The bringers of courage, like the brethren who came to visit Paul before his imprisonment (**Acts 28:15**). We encourage our brethren: By offering our brethren what we should (**Romans 12:9-15**). By providing the care that we all need; kindness, tenderheartedness, and forgiveness (**Ephesians 4:32**). By seeking to provide for one another as God wants us to, *"Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing"* (**1 Peter 3:8-9**). When each of us determines to provide the encouragement our brethren need, we will receive the encouragement we need.

We will be strong in our confidence to move forward, because of the direct encouragement we are strong together.

Conclusion:

Within our strong spiritual family, we have an environment of proven faith, mutual care, and encouragement that helps us to confidently face the trials of life. When we are "who we need to be", we will supply a strength that cannot be found elsewhere. This lesson encourages the things we already have, but as Paul prayed for the Philippian brethren that the love they already had would *"...abound still more and more..."* (**Philippians 1:9**), we need to grow the good things we have.

The blessings we have talked about today can be yours. There is an opportunity for you to take up your place as part of this strong spiritual family. Either by beginning in obedience to this gospel or by renewing and being more fully engaged in this process. Take this moment, and this encouragement, and obey God right now.

Living Right In A World Gone So Bad

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age (**Titus 2:11-12**)

As I think about the instructions given to us in this passage, I think about the instructions given us in **Colossians 3:5-6**, *Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed which amounts to idolatry, for it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience*. And now, the instructions of **Romans 12:1-2** begin to echo within my heart, *Therefore I urge you, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship and do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect*.

Reflecting on the evil, wickedness and gross immorality that surrounds us and must be dealt with each day just serves as a reminder that it is not going to be easy to follow these instructions. Living right in a world gone so bad is going to require great effort on our part not to fall prey to the evil one (**1 Pet. 5:8-9; 1 Pet. 2:9-12; 1 Cor. 10:12; 1 Cor. 9:27; James 4:7-10**).

Thanks be to God, we do not walk alone in this old world of sin and strife, one that is filled with so much unrest socially, politically and spiritually, a world in which God is mocked and his word is torn asunder with doctrines of men. O, how I love the words of **1 John 4:4**, *"You are from God little children and have*

overcome them; for greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world. The thought occurs to me that in order to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present world, we must have an unwavering trust in our God (**Psalms 62:8; Psalms 56:3; Prov. 3:5; Job. 13:15; James 1:2-6**).

One of our greatest aids in living right in a world gone so bad is the privilege of going to our Father in prayer and to there receive mercy and find help in time of need (**Heb. 13-16; Phil 4:6-7; 1 Peter 3:12; 1 Thess. 5:17**). Pray, pray, pray—and when you pray, pray like you mean it (**James 1:6**). Think about these passages from the 34th Psalm: **verse 15**, *The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears are open to their cry*; **verse 17**, *The righteous cry and the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles*; **verse 18**, *The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit*; **verse 19**, *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out them all*.

I love this refrain from one of the songs we sometimes sing, “Just a closer walk with thee, Grant it Jesus is my plea, Daily walking close to thee, Let it be dear Lord, let it be.” If we truly desire this walk, find this walk and confidently walk close to the Lord, it will enable us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age. *To God be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen* (**1 Timothy 1:17**).

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WHAT TO BELIEVE ABOUT GOD

God says for us to be logical. Just look at the Universe around you and how it is sustained day in and day out and your first conclusion will be to acknowledge God’s existence.

Next, you must decide what you believe about the Bible, which God says claims as His word. First, there is a process in its revelation. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God has revealed His message to man through men who were not only guided into all truth, but were given supernatural powers to confirm their words were from God (**1 Cor. 2:10-13; Mark 16:17-20**) As to those who say this is unreliable in our age, consider the evidence for the Bible in terms manuscript evidence compared to that of the writings of such accepted historians as Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Demosthenes, Caesar, etc., even Shakespeare. Yet no one rejects the authenticity of these writings, though the Bible has much more quantitative and ancient evidence.

The major reason men reject the Bible is simply because it demands a change in our daily lives and conduct.

The Bible claims the God, Who by now is obvious as we view the world, created this world in 6 days. Men deny this and make all manner of claims against it, but fail miserably in their attempts to provide an alternative explanation for the beginning of life.

Then, of course there is the miraculous story of the death, burial and resurrection of one Jesus of Nazareth. Another powerful demonstration of God’s authority over the entire Universe and the power over life and death. Men deny this and yet, historically there remains the fact Jesus was seen alive by over 500 people following His resurrection.

Here is the most interesting quandary of those who do not accept the complete authority of God as expressed in the Bible. God, through His word offers eternal life in heaven to all those who faithfully obey the instructions in His word. Men are at least somewhat guided by the morality of the Bible in an effort to create a harmonious society, even as they reject His claim of creation. Nearly everyone you meet has some vision of heaven after this life is over, even as they deny the claims of the One Who offers heaven.

The consistency of reason demands if I have a hope for eternal life in heaven, I am basing that on the word of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures. If, indeed I believe in heaven, I am forced by pure logic to accept all the other instructions and promises God has spoken to mankind. We need to THINK more honestly.

Jim Stauffer

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

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SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS:

1,2,3 JOHN - BILL MILLER

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS:

EXODUS TO SINAI - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY SERMON: **THE GOSPEL MEETING SCHEDULE**

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