

Rom. 14:19
"So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another."

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

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

September
18
2022

SIMPLIFYING THE AUTHORITY OF EXAMPLES

by Doy Moyer

Here is the foundational principle: love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind (**see Mark 12:30**).

Some may try to pit careful adherence to obedience over against loving God. Arguing as if the Old Covenant was about strict obedience while loving God with all the heart is what living for Jesus is all about; some might fail to connect the fact that such strict obedience under the Old Covenant was closely tied to their need to love God.

Never has there been a time when God did not want or expect His people to love him with all their hearts. Never has God accepted cold, rote ritual in lieu of loving him. God has always wanted people to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with him (**Micah 6:8**), and never has any of this contradicted the need to be careful in diligently obeying him. Christ did not come to free us from patterns of obedience. He came to free us from the patterns of sin. He didn't change the context or the concepts inherently involved in loving God with all the heart. He strengthened them.

When we look into the New Covenant Scriptures and find God's people doing what pleases him, should we not want to follow their examples?

If we ask, "But is that example binding?" are we really asking the right question? Such is like asking, "Do I have to?" Wouldn't those who love God with all their heart rather want to follow an example that God saw fit to show us? Shall we not ask why this is here?

Think about it. By God's grace we have an example of something given that He likes. The Scriptures aren't all that large, considering what all might have been

included. So when an example is given that shows God's approval, wouldn't his people who love him with all their heart want to take special notice of this example? If we are able, and if our circumstances are comparable, wouldn't we want to follow the example that God, in his grace found important enough to include in his message? Following such examples is part of loving Him.

Further, what example of God's people acting in a way that pleases him is something that we would not want to follow? Is there a specific case of his disciples acting with his approval that we would look at today and say, "No, we don't want to do that?" If we are able, why would we look at something that pleases Him, argue it not necessary, and then ignore it? What kind of an attitude is this? It is one that demonstrates a total commitment and love for God? But aren't there details in some examples that really are not necessary? Of course there are. Not every detail is as significant as another might be. We need common sense, in keeping matters in context and recognizing the difference between incidentals of telling what happened and core issues that led to the disciples acting as they did in the first place. Are we capable of drawing reasonable conclusions about these? God gave us minds to use. Let's use them.

The point is that God chose to include examples of His people acting for a reason. Those who love him would, I would think, look at those examples and, as much as within their abilities, and where the circumstances compare, follow them. "Do I have to?" (i.e., "Is it binding?") Why are we asking that question unless we want some way around following what we see? **When God has, in his wisdom, provided a look into the**

actions that he likes, those who love him would want to do the same. Why would we even debate that? That's a foundational starting point.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR SIN

"I will go away and return to My place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their distress they will search for Me" (Hosea 5:15). The word "whoredom" is scattered throughout Hosea. Gomer was guilty of adultery; Israel was guilty of spiritual adultery. Early in Israel's history, she was betrothed to God; a bright future in service to Jehovah was possible. Still, old habits die hard. Even after wandering in the wilderness and arriving in the Promised Land, the pursuit of other lovers continued. The promise and hope of being God's chosen were not enough to keep God's own people from going after false gods, with their attendant immorality. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. We should quake with fear, too, when we are no longer in the presence of God. *"They will go with their flocks and herds to seek the Lord, but they will not find Him; He has withdrawn from them" (5:6).* Israel's condition is illustrated by Gomer and her marriage to Hosea.

A refusal to recognize and acknowledge our sin will drive us farther from God. We may pretend to be faithful; we offer our hypocritical sacrifices to placate a righteous God. True repentance means we own our sin; we are guilty and accountable. Sin creates a debt we cannot pay. Our only hope is a genuine return to Jehovah. *"When He killed them, then they sought Him, and they returned and searched diligently for God; And they remembered that God was their rock, and the Most High God their Redeemer. But they flattered Him with their mouth and lied to Him with their tongue. For their heart was not steadfast toward Him, nor were they faithful with His covenant" (Psalm 78:34-37).*

Jehovah returned to "His place." Enthroned in heaven, He patiently waits for His people to recognize to turn and repent. The truly penitent seeker will acknowledge the guilt in her life and will seek the face of the Lord; He will show Himself clearly and fully and with a readiness to forgive. Sometimes we need to "stew in our own juices." We need a spiritual kick in the pants. Our sin and folly separate us from the Lord; we are in danger. God knew His people better than they knew themselves. Still, He loved them and begged them to come back. *"When you are in distress and all these things happen to you, in the latter days you will return to the Lord your God and listen to His voice. For*

the Lord, your God is a compassionate God; He will not abandon you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them" (Deuteronomy 4:30-31). Judgment came to Israel. God tore His people to pieces.

We need to wake up spiritually. Gomer needed to wake up. Ephraim (referring to the ten northern tribes) needed to wake up. Political alliances with foreigners could not save. Idolatry, adultery, and the lure of this world, only drive us farther away from God. A refusal to repent only deepens our sins; our hearts grow cold and hard. We cannot see God's face because our eyes are clouded by sin. As a ferocious lion ravages his prey, God's people were taken captive; the Assyrians and the Babylonians were God's agents of judgment. Never mind about Hosea, Gomer, and Israel. Judgment is coming for us.

Randy Harshbarger

Hezekiah's Prayer

In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, *"Thus says the Lord, Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live."* (2 Kings 20:1)

Hezekiah was twenty-five years of age when he became king of Judah. He reigned over Judah for twenty-nine years during which he did that which was right in the eyes of God, trusted in the Lord God of Israel cleaving to God and keeping his commandments (2 Kings 18:3-6). My friends, these are qualities that make an individual stand out among his peers and I must say are qualities that should be seen in our lives at all times.

When he was only thirty-nine years of age Hezekiah became mortally ill and Isaiah was sent to tell him to set his house in order because he is going to die. Did he become bitter, maybe despondent, discouraged and lash out at God? No, according to Isaiah he turned his face to the wall, prayed and wept sore (Isa. 38:1-3). With tears flowing from his eyes, Hezekiah tells God that he has lived a life dedicated to God and in essence reminds God of that life of dedication. He lays before God an inside look at his life, a perfect heart as well as an outside look, a walk in truth doing what was good in God's sight (2 Kings 20:3). As I think about Hezekiah's reaction when told he was going to die, the thought

echoes within my heart that there is no substitute for godly living. (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

God saw Hezekiah's tears and heard his prayer resulting in Hezekiah's illness being cured and fifteen years added to his life (2 Kings 20:5-6). There were other blessings involved in those additional fifteen years granted to Hezekiah. A son, Manasseh, was born, Judah was saved from the Assyrians and the world saw a miracle when the sun dial was turned backward (Isa. 38). My friends, when dedicated men and women pray fervently, God can and often will do wondrous things.

The thought occurs here that God sees every tear that falls from his children's eyes and He hears every petition that comes from their heart (1 Pet. 3:12; Ps. 34:15; Ps. 145:18-19; Phil. 4:6-7; 1 Thess. 5:16-17). The power of prayer is awesome (James 5:16). Knowing that we are all under the sentence of death (Eccl. 9:5; Heb. 9:27), will you, can you, go before your God in prayer and say to him, "*Remember now. O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight*" (Isa. 38:3). To God be the glory now and forever!

Charles Hicks

"Assurance of Pardon"

"We must strive to walk in the steps of Jesus and so grow into the likeness of God. But with our best efforts to serve God, we will often fall short of doing his will. We are human. And never a day passes that a person can say: 'This day I have done my whole duty.' We fall short; we make wrong steps; we are frail and imperfect. When we have done the best we can, we must be saved by the mercy and love of God. His grace is sufficient for us, but we never reach the point that we do not need his grace to save us...God's grace is revealed to our faith as sufficient to save all who continually strive to serve God, to do his will despite the weaknesses and frailties of humanity that cause people to fall short of a perfect obedience."

David Lipscomb, Gospel Advocate 52 (27 October 1910) 1184-5.

Death and Judgment Await us All

Jesus reminds us all of this fact. "*Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs*

will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment." (John 5:28-29)

This thought came to mind when at the memorial service for Queen Elizabeth there was little to no mention made of the judgment that follows death for everyone and the eternal reward that results from that judgment. "*And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.*" (Hebrews 9:27-28)

Who then are those who eagerly await Him? To understand this, we must realize the word judgment is used in two ways in these texts. First it refers to the actual examination of one's life to determine if he has been faithful or not. Second it refers to the condemnation that comes to those who have not been faithful (2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25:46).

Here is the description Jesus offers for the faithful, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.*" (John 5:24-25) The dead Jesus speaks of here are those who are dead in sin and because of their obedience to His word are made alive again in Christ (Ephesians 2:1-5).

I only use the Queen's service to illustrate the lack of concern men seem to have over the impending judgment each of us face after this life is ended. This is a meeting we shall all have with our Creator, Who became our Savior, if we hear His word and believe.

Jim Stauffer

- ***"We offer either in home studies in person or by way of Correspondence Courses.***
- ***Call me, Jim Stauffer at 913-620-0563, Evangelist at the Lenexa church of Christ***
- ***We believe in worshiping and serving the Lord as He has instructed in His word.***

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

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.
Lenexa, Kansas 66216
913-620-0563

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders:

Ron Peck
Jim Stauffer

Deacons:

Bill Miller
Joe Hurd
Troy Armstrong

NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER: JAN PATRICK, ALMA BAUMGARTNER. DENESE GORING, BROOKLYN BOYER, TRACY RICHARDSON, PAT GAINES, MATT BASSFORD, DAVID, JOANNE BECKLEY, MARK WALKER, STEVE WIMP, ERNESTINE BYERS, NICK COOPER, RUTH ANN SIMCOSKY, KEN KLING, ELAINE LUCAS AND PAT M.CLOUD.

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS
1,2,3 JOHN - BILL MILLER

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS
EXODUS TO SINAI - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY SERMON: **PERVERTING THE GOSPEL**



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