

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

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## ***DRAWING STRENGTH FROM THE COURAGE OF OTHERS***

*by Bill Hall*

How thankful we should be for wonderful examples of courage that spur us on to greater strength in the Lord's service.

Paul was just such an example: *"And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear"* (Phil. 1:14). These brethren, formerly timid and reticent, were drawing strength from the courage of Paul.

Other examples abound. Stephen's plea, *"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," surely had for its source of strength the forgiving spirit of the Lord* (Acts 7:60). The Thessalonian church found a source of strength in the example of the churches in Judea (1 Thess. 2:14). The Philippian church, a model of courage and conviction, could no doubt trace much of its strength back to the wonderful example of patience and equanimity demonstrated by Paul and Silas while in their midst. The Hebrew Christians were admonished to *"remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith"* (Heb. 13:7).

Christians of this generation are similarly drawing strength from the courage of others. Young men who refuse to miss services of the church to play on a ball team; young women who refuse to be seen in public in scanty attire; businessmen who would lose their jobs rather than compromise their convictions; women who continue to adorn themselves in *"meek and quiet spirits"* whatever the sophisticated world thinks or says of them; sick people who bear their afflictions with patience and faith; elderly people who continue to attend worship when they are hardly able to go

anywhere else; dying people who demonstrate how Christians ought to die; all are sources of strength and courage for others as they face similar circumstances. These all share a common spirit with the great characters of the Bible: they see in their temptations, trials, afflictions, and persecutions a special opportunity to be like Christ, to demonstrate their fidelity to Him, and to provide a source of strength for those who might be weak and wavering around them. They seize the opportunity and stand, and all of us are stronger because of them. Of these courageous people this world truly is not worthy.

Are we, however, to be always on the receiving end of the strength of others? As we draw strength from the courage of others, we must in turn become sources of strength and courage. Others look to us. Each of us has a "charge to keep," "God to glorify," and "a present age to serve."

### **THE VISION OF NAHUM**

*"The oracle of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. A jealous and avenging God is the Lord; The Lord is avenging and wrathful. The Lord takes vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies"* (Nahum 1:1-2). Except for his prophecy, we know little about Nahum. He was from Elkosh, but there is little certainty about this town's location. Even the dating of Nahum is unsure. If Nahum 3:8 alludes to the fall of Thebes, then a date around 660BC is possible. Some argue that Nahum prophesied close to the fall of Nineveh in 612BC.

Thankfully, items of interest and debate do not obscure Nahum's message. Oddly, his name means "comfort" or "compassion." A surface reading of this short book points in other directions; along with other prophets (Isaiah, Jonah, Zephaniah) warnings about Nineveh which say that something ominous is about to happen.

Early Bible references to Nineveh include **Genesis 10:11-12**; Nimrod started his kingdom in Babel and then moved into Assyria where he built the city of Nineveh. Most Bible references to Nineveh warn about her fall and destruction. Jonah was reluctant to go to Nineveh; why should God give these persistent enemies opportunity to repent? In the New Testament, Jonah's story is connected to the risen Savior (**Matthew 12:10-12; Luke 11:30-32**). Like most ancient Middle Eastern cities, Nineveh was protected by false gods; Ishtar, goddess of love and war, served as the city's patron deity. The Assyrian king Sennacherib ruled from 704-681BC (**1 Kings 19; Isaiah 37**). After choosing Nineveh as his capital, the monarch began a massive rebuilding program; intricate canals and waterways linked the city to the palace; impregnable walls held at bay the king's enemies. Enter Nahum: *"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him" (1:7)*. God, though, was "against" Nineveh (**2:13; 3:5**).

Nahum's prophecy was an "oracle." The word points to a load or a burden that is lifted; lifting or carrying a load could be a burden. Tribute taken in war could be a load that was carried; this would be a welcome burden. This oracle, this burden, was God's judgment against Nineveh (and His judgment against us) and is rooted in His holiness. Harsh words, such as wrath, anger, and vengeance express distaste and hatred for sin. People given over to idolatry make God jealous. People steeped in idolatry, injustice, and brutality face the holy, judicial, righteous judgment of God. And His judgments are always right. Yet, thankfully, for you and me, God is patient and longsuffering. He will punish sin; but now we have opportunity to repent. The burden of sin is too heavy for anyone to carry or to even think they can carry that which is against God. Will we repent?

**Randy Harshbarger**

### ***There Is A Lion In The Way***

*The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way, a lion is in the streets - Proverbs 26:13*

A slothful man can be described as one who is inactive, sluggish and is content to remain idle, feeling no sense of duty or responsibility. It seems that Solomon is pointing out how quickly some individuals are to devise a way to excuse themselves from doing those things they know they should do. A person who does not want to diligently perform his/her duties and responsibilities will use any and all excuses, even those that are unlikely or unbelievable, in their effort to sidestep around those duties.

This is a very disappointing way for individuals to live their lives. Tragically, it is found much too often in the spiritual lives of men and women today. Difficulties, real or imagined, become the lion in the way for those who want to be idle in the Lord's vineyard. The weather, aches and pains, company, physical tiredness, amusements and recreational activities, downplaying abilities and talents among other things become the lion in the way. Spiritually this is a most foolish way to pursue because of the everlasting consequences. Vain, frivolous excuses for being idle in the Lord's kingdom are not, will not be pleasing to the Lord (Luke 14:17).

Sometimes the lion in the way is an attitude that the Lord can't use me and for the life of me I don't understand why anyone would have that attitude. He used 2 mites to teach a great lesson on giving (Mark 12). He used some stones, a sling shot and a shepherd boy to overcome a giant and an army that had defied Israel (1 Sam. 17). He used a man of slow speech to lead a nation of people (Exodus 4). He used a little boy's lunch to feed a multitude (John 6). He even used a donkey in his service (Numbers 22). We must never say the Lord can't use us. He can and will use us if we will commit ourselves to him wholeheartedly ( Mark 12:29-30, Gal. 2:20 2 Tim. 1:12, 2 Cor. 8:5). Never say "I can't do that" (Philippians 4:13).

There is no doubting that we are living in a very perilous time (2 Tim. 3:1-5). The actions and conduct of men everywhere lend credence to the fact that Satan now reigns in the hearts of great masses of people (1 John 5:19). We must do all we possibly can do in order to be strong in the Lord (Prov. 14:26, 1 Cor. 16:13, Eph. 6:10). We must not stand all the day idle (Matt.20:6). It is imperative that we do all we can to make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:4-11). Let's put on the whole armor of God and by so doing wage a victorious battle against the evil one (Eph. 6:11-18).

My friends, all Satan needs, all he wants, is for you and I to say, "There is a lion in the way, a lion is in the streets" because he knows that when we do, he wins.

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## The Church Is Sufficient

As a result of having the whole council of God preached by Paul, the church of Ephesus was in the unity of the faith. (see Eph. 4:1-6) This gave them all that they needed to do anything that the Lord wanted done. They were completely independent spiritually from everything else on earth. They looked to no school, paper, or center or influence. They were not a part of any super organization that exercised control over them. God needs no unit larger than the local congregation to do his work. The local church is sufficient; it is all-sufficient!

**by James P. Miller**

"A newspaper article states that churches must make major changes if they are to survive. Should such changes be made? If the purpose of the church is to attract as many people as possible, then it will have to accommodate itself to changing human preferences. But the survival of such a church is of very little consequence to the world.

The church that Jesus built is not a church "of men" but "of Christ" (Romans 16:16) and "of God" (1 Thess. 2:14). It is composed of men and women bound together by a common purpose to live by the will of the unchanging God (James 1:17) as revealed in His unchanging word (1 Peter 1:23-25). Any changes made must bring them closer to the will of God, not to the will of men (Acts 5:29). They dare not attempt to remake God in the image of man; their mission is to remake men in the image of God, however many or few may be willing to be remade. They are the salt God has placed in the world to improve it. "But if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned" (Matthew 5:13)? The church must not allow temporal considerations to turn her from her eternal mission." (Hall, S. (1989). *Hallmarks: Back to the Bible—To Be Christ's Church. Christianity Magazine*, 6(6), 5.)

## Commentary To Consider

When it comes to the Word of God; we must decide to accept it as we find it - - the Creator's only inspired, definitive, completely- and solely-sufficient guide to life here on earth as well as the next one in eternity. It is NOT just an elaborate system of inter-related philosophies; manners of life; and wise, sage advice from which we may choose to interpret and accept or deny application to our own daily spiritual lives as we see fit.

In this, we can see that one of the best ways to "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where it is silent": is to LET it.

*Give it Some Prayerful Thought*

**Kevin L. Greer, Editor**

**Did you know the Bible does not teach the often repeated phrase, "It doesn't matter what you believe, as long as you are sincere."?**

In fact Jesus said, *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."* (John 14:15)

The apostle John later said, *"Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son."* (2 John 1:9)

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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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### **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