

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



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

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A PROPER RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

by Jim Stauffer

Time and again the Bible tells us we are to respect God's word in such a way as to obey it as written and not add to or take from it (**Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18,19; 2 John 9-11**). The concept of a governing authority is not foreign to mankind. Every nation, county, province or city each has laws that have been passed and confirmed that must be obeyed by its citizens. In our country the Federal laws begin with the Constitution of the United States. While there may be citizens who do not obey these laws, the laws stand firm as violators are prosecuted and punished.

The question then comes before us, "Why would we think disobedience of the laws set forth by the Creator of heaven and earth would go unpunished?" Yet many live their lives as though they believed there is no punishment for breaking His laws or they assume it is not breaking His law when they choose another way than His.

What seems to be informative for us is, an examination of the Scriptures shows it matters not to God whether the person thinks he will not be punished for violating God's law or whether he thinks he is not breaking the law when he alters it by doing as he pleases instead. Look at a few examples from the Old Testament. Cain killed his brother out of hatred and became a marked man wandering the earth (**Genesis 4**). Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron chose to offer strange fire rather than the prescribed source instructed in the law and were consumed by the fire (**Leviticus 10**). Moses, himself, considered a faithful man, acted out of anger rather than showing respect to God and was denied entrance into the land of Canaan (**Numbers 20:8-12**).

Saul, the first king of Israel saw his replacement anointed because he failed to follow the specifics of God's law in **1 Samuel 13 and 15** and then died in a battle to be replaced by David.

There are similar cases in the New Testament. The rich young ruler who was unable to bring himself in subjection to the Lord over his wealth and therefore lost his hope of eternal life (**Matthew 19**). **Luke 12** tells of a rich man who was so greedy and selfish with his wealth his life ended without him enjoying it. Ananias and Sapphira lost their lives because they lied about the gift they were giving to the poor (**Acts 5**). Paul condemns the actions of the Galatian brethren because they chose to implement circumcision from the Old Testament into the practice of New Testament law (**Galatians 1:6-9**).

Now one needs to ask himself how the things we observe today are different. All these examples we cited were people who essentially for one reason or another rejected what God demanded of them as obedience. They all were punished according to God's wish. When someone today alters the demand of the New Testament that we be baptized for the remission of sins, are they not rejecting what God's word explicitly states? (**Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16**) When religious organizations are ruled by men other than those who are appointed within the local congregation, are they not rejecting the explicit word of God? (**Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1,2**) When churches today fail to observe the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week, are they not failing to do what the church in the New Testament did? (**Acts 20:7**) When churches turn their work into benevolence for the community or in other words undertake social works

instead of remaining a church of the Lord doing spiritual work, are they not distorting the very explicit instructions concerning benevolence for the church of the Lord? (**Acts 11:28-30; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 8&9**). The answer is a resounding yes! There is open and repeated disregard for the holy word of God in the religious world today. It ought not to be so. And as, *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8)*, punishment will be meted out at the appropriate time. Paul identifies that for us, *dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed — for our testimony to you was believed.* (**2 Thessalonians 1:8–10**)

Forgive and Forget

Luther Blackmon

An old Negro slave had defied his master's order not to read the Bible and was being flogged for it. As the whip cut into his flesh his owner taunted him with: "What can your Bible do for you now, boy?" "It can teach me to forgive master," he replied.

It is sometimes more difficult to forget than to remember. But we must learn to forget. "We do not mean literally to forget, but to cease to nurse a grudge, to put the thing behind us, never to be brought up again, no matter what happens in the future.

We need to forget our past failures. Don't cry over spilt milk; get up and milk the cow again. When you have tried something and failed, learn a lesson from your failure and then forget it.

Some people can never get over a slight by someone, or a wrong done them. The penitentiary is full of people who could not forget a real or imagined wrong, either by an individual or society as a whole. A man told me that one of the reasons he had never become a Christian was that he could not forgive a wrong done him. One of the first recorded statements of the Lord was: *"But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your*

trespasses." (**Matthew 6:15**) We had better remember that no unforgiving person can have fellowship with a forgiving God.

When Abraham Lincoln was President, he was bitterly criticized by Edward McMasters Stanton. He called Lincoln a "low cunning clown," the "original gorilla." Stanton was a Democrat, but after the attack on Ft. Sumter, Lincoln appointed him Secretary of War, because Stanton was a loyal man and qualified for the job, and because Lincoln was more concerned for the country than for Stanton's opinion of him. When Mr. Stanton looked into the rugged and homely face of Lincoln after he was killed, he remarked in subdued tones of respect, "There lies the greatest leader this country has ever known." Would it not be nice if Christians would put the interest of the Lord's work and His church before their own petty little injuries? We could use a lot of real men and women who have the spirit of Lincoln with regard to this matter.

A little girl was asked to define forgiveness. She said in substance, "I don't know the definition, but it is like this: when you crush a rose, the only resistance it offers is a sweet fragrance."

Paul might have remembered the ill treatment he received at Philippi, but instead he said: *"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mind for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now."* (**Philippians 1:3-4**)

DOES HELL SCARE YOU?

Craig Thomas

An unpopular subject in many pulpits is the subject of hell. When's the last time you heard a sermon on it or even contemplated the concept of hell? Many "Christians" deny it's existence or deny a loving God would send anyone there. But, what does the Bible teach?

(1) Hell Is Real. Hell isn't a fairy tale, myth, condition, or state of mind. It's a real place. It's as real as heaven for they are put on an equality as far as their contrasting qualities are concerned. In **Matthew 25:46** Jesus said, *"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."* So, if heaven is real, so is hell. If hell is a myth,

so is heaven. If hell is just a “state of mind,” then so is heaven. If hell is only temporary, then so is heaven. Jesus said we ought to fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (**Matt. 10:28**). In this we learn three things: A) Hell should be feared, B) Hell is beyond the grave, and C) The reality of hell should motivate us to live so we won’t go there. Have you seriously contemplated the shocking reality of hell? If not, you need to give yourself a “reality check,” for hell will be a reality for the vast majority! (**Matt. 7:13-14**)

(2) Hell Is Terrible. Some believe the Bible’s descriptions of hell are overstated. That’s blasphemous since the person who used the word most often was the Lord Himself! The horrific nature of hell can be seen from three of its aspects. First, its name, Gehenna, is derived from the Valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem where idolatrous Israelites once burned their children alive as sacrifices (**2 Chron. 28:3**). Later this valley was used to burn Jerusalem’s garbage. Dead bodies were thrown into this dump and its fires were kept burning to consume the rotting filth. Second, the Bible describes hell as a “*lake of fire*” (**Rev. 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8**). Imagine if every drop of the Great Lakes was gasoline and then set ablaze. What would it be like to be thrown into the middle? Further, hell contains “brimstone” a sticky, flammable, sulfurous compound. Imagine having a sticky, gooey, stinking, burning liquid clinging to your body! Can you image how such would intensify the pain, increase the agony, and magnify the suffering? Other passages portray hell as a furnace of fire (**Matt. 13:42, 50**), a flaming fire (**2 Thess. 1:7-9**), a baptism of fire (**Matt. 3:11-12**), and an unquenchable fire (**Mk. 9:43**). Is it any wonder then hell is characterized by “*weeping,*” “*wailing,*” and “*gnashing of teeth*”? (**cf. Matt. 8:12; 13:50; 25:30**). Do we need a more vivid picture? Do we want to go there? Do we want any of our loved ones or brethren to go there?

(3) Hell Is Eternal. The above descriptions would be bad enough even if hell only lasted for a few seconds. But, the pain and suffering of hell is eternal. Jesus equated “*hell fire*” (**Matt. 18:9**) with “*everlasting fire*” (**v. 8**). Jesus contrasted “*everlasting punishment*” with “*eternal life*” (**Matt. 25:46**). Everlasting is a difficult concept to get our minds around, but be assured it is a long time! Hell is as long as heaven for the smoke of torment ascends “*forever and ever*” (**Rev. 14:10-11**). We’ll all spend eternity somewhere. Do you want to spend it in hell or in heaven?

Jesus tells us the overwhelming majority of people will go to hell (**Matt. 7:13-14**) contrary to God’s desire (**2 Tim. 2:4**). Hell is our choice if we don’t obey the gospel and live God’s way (**2 Thess. 1:7-9**). Where do you plan to spend eternity?

Gossipers

W. C. Hinton

After denouncing tattlers and gossips, the apostle immediately defines what he means by a “busybody.” He says that they speak “*things which they ought not.*” In other words, they misuse their tongues! (See **I Tim. 5:13**)

Do you ever gossip about others? Be honest now! It’s a very common sin. Many people, most (?), indulge in it. Busybodies are always repeating something which may damage someone else. The fact that the thing may be true is certainly no excuse for repeating it. Wise Solomon knew “*a talebearer reveals secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit conceals the matter.*” (**Prov. 11:13**) Again he observes in **Proverbs 17:9**, “*He that covers a transgression seeks love, but he that repeats a matter separates friends.*”

Let us take heed to our tongue every day and speak only that which can edify. How wise we would be to not repeat anything we hear that might be injuring to some brother or sister in Christ! Better yet, **let us not even listen** to gossip! We very probably do not know all the facts nor circumstances and are in a poor position to make competent judgment. Just think of all those things of our own lives that would not sound good if blazed abroad to any and every soul!

The word “tattler” actually means a “bubblor,” in the sense of gushing out everything. Gossip is a greater sin than stealing, for goods stolen can be returned, but evil speaking robs men of their good name, character, or reputation—such that often can never be recalled. What troubles could be avoided in the home, among friends, and in the church if all “loose-tongues” could be stopped! We, like David, should say: “*Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.*” (**Psalm 141:3**)

Psalm 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. ~ 9:00 Bible Study
- Sunday A.M. ~ 10:00 Assembled Worship
- Wednesday P.M. ~ 7:00 Bible Study & Worship
- **Visitors welcome**
- **We conduct in home Bible Studies**
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OUR ADDRESS IS:

**7845 Cottonwood Drive
Lenexa, Kansas 66216
(913) 620-0563**

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Evangelist and Editor: Jim Stauffer

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*"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi,
with the bishops and deacons:"*

Philippians 1:1

NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER ALMA
BAUMGARTNER, BROOKLYN BOYER,
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MCCLOUD, ELLIE GOLDSTON, WINNIE
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AUTHORITY

WEDNESDAY 7 PM - JIM STAUFFER

MINOR PROPHETS

SUNDAY SERMON: **THE JUSTICE OF
GOD**



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