

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” – **Psalm 119:105**

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Are We Being Too Strict?

Bryan Gibson

In worship, are we being too strict when we do only that which the Lord has commanded, nothing more and nothing less? When we organize ourselves under elders and deacons (**Philippians 1:1**), are we being too inflexible? Could we do it some other way and still be pleasing to the Lord? When it comes to the work of the church, is it being too narrow-minded to insist on doing only that which the Lord has authorized? Wouldn't it be okay to do something else, as long as the Lord did not expressly forbid it? We do not believe so, when we consider the words of our Almighty God. To the Israelites under the law of Moses, God made it clear that he wanted them to do all His will, nothing short of it and nothing beyond it. He told them plainly not to turn aside to the right hand or to the left (please read **Deut 5:32; 17:20; 28:14; Joshua 1:7; 23:6**).

This same emphasis is found in the New Testament, the law we are under today. Jesus said, “*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed*” (**John 8:31**). When we practice something that Jesus did not teach, when we go beyond His commandments, clearly we are no longer abiding in His word. Here is how it is expressed in **2 John 1:9**: “*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.*” (NASV). **1 Timothy 6:3-4** offers further support: “*If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing;...*” Everything we teach and practice must be examined in light of this question: Did Jesus Christ teach it in the New Testament? Realizing that the Lord communicates His will in various ways, we should ask these questions: Did He command it? Did He give us an example of it? Did He clearly imply it? If the answer to these questions is no, then we must put it aside.

To all our readers, the Bible is exceedingly clear on this point. We must do only that which the Lord has authorized. We must follow carefully the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His words alone (not just the ones He personally spoke, but also those given through His messengers). The path that will lead us to heaven is laid out in the New Testament; we must not turn aside to the left hand or to the right.

No Time

author unknown

I knelt to pray but not for long,
I had too much to do.
I had to hurry and get to work
For bills would soon be due.

So I knelt and said a hurried prayer,
And jumped up off my knees.
My Christian duty was now done
My soul could rest at ease.

All day long I had no time
To spread a word of cheer.
No time to speak of Christ to friends,
They'd laugh at me I'd fear.

No time, no time, too much to do,
That was my constant cry,
No time to give to souls in need
But at last the time, the time to die.

I went before the Lord,
I came, I stood with downcast eyes.
For in his hands God held a book;
It was the book of life.

God looked into his book and said
"Your name I cannot find.
I once was going to write it down...
But never found the time."

Preacher's points – We are now into the heart of the holiday season. It can be a very busy time of year, with regular schedules being altered to accommodate parties and get-togethers, shopping, etc. No matter how busy we may become, we must never become too busy for God. Our purpose in life is to spend our time upon this earth in sacrifice to Him (**Romans 12:1**), and we must never lose sight of that fact. Maintaining a proper relationship with God will help you survive the busyness of the holidays. Have you taken the time to talk to Him in prayer today?

News and Notes

Members:

- * Mary Burnett is sleeping a lot now. She will be 99 years old Saturday.
- * Connie Cobern was in the hospital last week but is now home. Her gout is bothering her.
- * Metty Fain remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.
- * Preston Matthews had successful rotator cuff surgery Thursday. He should be fully recovered in around four months.
- * Ame White fell last week and hurt her right arm and head and hip.
- * Bill White had surgery for a bleeding ulcer last weekend. He also had a tear in his esophagus. He has returned home and is doing better.

Friends and Family:

- * Sandlyn Fultz is scheduled for reconstructive leg surgery on both legs on Dec 31. For details see www.caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn

Absent: Ken and Rhonda Hull (CA thru 12-31).

New Reports: None known.



“Who is like the LORD our God, who is enthroned on high, who humbles Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth?” – Psalm 113:5-6