

The Lakeview Lamp

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

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Christian Buddies

Troy Nicholson

From time to time, I’m tempted to think of myself as a self-made deer hunter. Yes, I’m tempted to actually believe that I learned how to read sign, interpret deer behavior, hang stands, still-hunt, drive deer, sit patiently, shoot well – and the dozens of other skills that are part of being a whitetail nut – on my own.

I’d also like to believe that I cultivated most of hunting’s less-tangible elements without any assistance. Qualities like respect for the game, appreciation of the natural world, humility toward deer and deer hunters, and sense of reverence....

But the truth is, if I boasted that I achieved any of these skills and attributes on my own, I’d be lying. I can trace virtually everything I know and most that I believe to the friends and relatives who’ve been my hunting partners.

Scott Bestul, “Hunting Buddies,” *Deer & Deer Hunting*, Aug 2009, p80.

Where would you be today in your walk with God if it were not for “Christian buddies,” fellow brothers and sisters, partners in Christ? Would you have the same level of respect for the walk, appreciation of the natural world, humility toward Christ and Christians, and sense of reverence for God?

The wise man wrote, “*As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another*” (**Proverbs 27:17**). This principle applies whether we are hunting deer or serving God. We sharpen one another and help one another be better Christians.

The **Hebrew** writer emphasized the point that one reason we assemble as saints is to help one another. He wrote, “*And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another*” (**10:24-25**).

The more time you spend with your Christian buddies, the more you can help one another grow and develop as God would have you to do. Find buddies to help you. Be a buddy to others. We all need to be the best Christians possible, and we can help one another to that end. Don’t try to do it alone.

The Heart of the Problem Is Not Knowing the Scriptures

Kent E. Heaton, Sr.

There is little doubt the religious world is divided. With each turn of the road, a different faith presents itself with different names, dogmas, organizations, and teachings. Honest seekers of truth would question why this is so when the plea of Jesus was that all believers be one (**John 17:20,21**). With all the accolades of unity, the religious world is as diverse as possible. The heart of the problem finds itself in a story taken from the life of Jesus.

A group of Sadducees (a Jewish Sect) came to Jesus and posed a most puzzling question: *“Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her”* (**Matthew 22:24-28**). This type of question would dizzy the head of any student of the Bible. Jesus – the Master Teacher – went right to the heart of the problem. Jesus told them they were mistaken; and their mistake was because of two reasons: they did not know the scriptures, and they did not know the power of God (**:29**).

While the question was difficult, the answer was simple. If these Jews had known the scriptures (**:30-32**), they would not have asked such a question. At best they would have learned from scripture what the power of God was. They did not understand the power of God because they had not understood his word. Jesus affirms the word of God as being able to guide men if – and only if – they use it. The people of Jesus’ day were not accustomed to a man teaching as Jesus taught (**:33**) as He directed them to listen to God’s word and not man’s word.

Today, religious division is borne upon the confusion that man teaches as the word of God. Peter declares in **1 Peter 4:11**, *“If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God.”* The answer to religious division is to return to the Bible and let the Bible stand as Truth. Most of what men teach today is not found in the word of God. When people allow men to sway their minds from the truth by failing to examine the words of men with the words of God, error will be the only result. The people of Berea had the boldness to examine what the apostles taught as to whether it was true to scripture or not (**Acts 17:11**).

News and Notes

Members:

- * Virginia Bryant went home Thursday from her knee surgery.
- * Chris Gertsch received good results on his recent tests.
- * Cotton Read continues to have breathing problems.
- * Kevin Smith was bitten on his finger recently by a brown recluse spider. He went to the emergency room Wednesday evening and had surgery that night. They are waiting for the staff infection to heal to perform a needed skin graft.

Friends and Family:

- * None known.

Absent: Ken and Rhonda Hull (Canada/Michigan).

New Reports: None known.

The heart of the problem with religious division today is because men teach what men preach instead of what can plainly be seen in scripture as truth. The scriptures teach there is only one true church (**Ephesians 4:4; 1:22,23**), and yet men believe there are many. The word of God teaches salvation by obedience to the will of God (**Matthew 7:21-23**) but many believe they can be saved by faith only. The name of churches, the organization, the worship, teachings, and every aspect of religious division is based upon men “not knowing the scriptures, or the power of God.”

Jesus asked the Sadducees, “*Have you not read that which was spoken unto you by God?*” (**Matthew 22:29**). Paul shows how we can come to an understanding of these words: “How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery [as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ]” (**Ephesians 3:3,4**). What have you read lately...the word of men or the word of God? Only when we return to the word of God will we learn the Truth. Religious division is caused by man, despised by God, and settled in the word of God.



“How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD.” – Psalm 119:1