

THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16

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NO GIMMICKS, PLEASE!

The denominational world has degenerated into a glorified social swirl. They pretend to stimulate spiritually while making their basic appeals to the humorous and fun-loving natures of their members. There is little compelling about their preachers. Many are constantly searching for new gimmicks and gadgets to hold the interest of the people. All the recreational ideas, promotional persuasions, and social schemes are aimed at just one thing: to keep their folks happy.

The shame of it all is that the Lord's church is beginning to copy after them! A perusal of the many bulletins that cross my desk each week show a continued growth in the idea of keeping the people happy. Attendance, contribution and general interest seem to be the main problems. There is less and less Scripture being preached and more and more picturesque speech. Some would think the church is a medium of social functions, rather than a "soul-saving society." A Bible-filled Scripture-quoting, gospel sermon might be a rarity in some of our pulpits. Not only would it be unique, but elders of some churches have made no

effort to hide their criticisms of gospel preachers who "quote too much Scripture."

"We've got to hold our young people" is the password of this movement. As if such a desire opened the doors to anything, just so long as the young people's interest is held!

What an insult to young people! To think they have to be coddled and pampered and appealed to as if they were ignorant and unlearned in the truth! All too often, these same young people are embarrassed by such shenanigans of the oldsters, and in reality, are far stronger in the faith than the older ones!

When shall we realize that the gospel needs no gimmicks? It is God's power to save and would we imagine that God needed any changes that man might invent? We have long preached that the denominations are mistaken when they substituted the ideas of men for the plans of God. How consistent are we when we

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Editorial

Responsibility To The Truth

There are many people who profess "faith" in the Bible who belie their claim by their actions. It is imperative that we believe the Bible if we would be saved eternally. Thus a self-examination on the part of all who profess to believe the Bible is in order.

WE SHOULD HEAR IT

Jesus said: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Mark 4:9). James said: ". . . let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." (James 1:19). To refuse to hear is disastrous. It will cause one to be lost. All of us should listen attentively to God's law. He who refuses to hear God's Word as revealed in the New Testament cannot have saving faith because saving "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17). In fact, the apostle Peter said "him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:22-23). A person's faith increases in

proportion to his hearing the Word of God. Not only should we be willing to hear God's Word, but we should be willing to learn as much as we can.

WE SHOULD STUDY IT

The Sadducees erred about the resurrection because they DID NOT KNOW THE SCRIPTURES nor the power of God. (See Matt. 22:23-33). Our Lord said: "And ye shall KNOW THE TRUTH, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32). The wise man Solomon said "the heart of the righteous studieth to answer." Paul urged Timothy to "STUDY to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15). Study involves diligence and meditations. A person must exercise his mental faculties. Concentration is necessary. One must be willing to "SEARCH the Scriptures." An occasional casual reading will not get the job done. To glean from the storehouse of riches, one must apply himself unto wisdom.

From the Bible one can learn of God the Creator and His Son Jesus Christ. He can learn of the origin and destiny of man as well as his purpose on earth. The way of salvation is a grand theme of God's Book. One can learn how to be saved from past sins and also how to live, work, worship and serve God as a child of God.

WE SHOULD RECEIVE IT

When the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge. He recognizes that if he would be wise in the latter end, that he must hear counsel and receive instruction. In Acts 2:41 there were about 3000 souls who "gladly received his Word" and "were baptized." We, like the Bereans of old, should receive the Word of God "with all readiness of mind." (Acts 17:11). We must be willing to "lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word," which is able to save our souls. (See James 1:21).

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The Cause Of Division

That serious differences now exist among those known as "churches of Christ" cannot be denied. Since 1909 a movement has been underway to establish various human institutions through which the church may do its God-given work. Since 1940 the number of these institutions for the care of orphans alone has quadrupled; to say nothing of the educational institutions which have come into being claiming a right to church support. As these have multiplied they have become increasingly bold to demand support from the churches and to castigate and "quarantine" those churches which do not join in support of them.

Some of us have opposed these institutions claiming a connection with the church, on the simple ground that there is no Scriptural authority for them. Till now, NOT A SINGLE SCRIPTURE has been cited to show either by command, example, or NECESSARY inference any authority for their existing in such relationship. Yet, we who oppose them have been universally blamed with the division.

For nearly 1900 years, God's people carried on the Lord's work without such corporations. It was only when they were introduced, and particularly when they became aggressive in their fund raising, that the trouble came. The cause of the trouble should not be hard, therefore, to locate. For years we have argued logically that the instrument and the missionary societies were the cause of the division inasmuch as there was no trouble until their introduction. If that be true of the instrument and the missionary societies why is it not true of the educational and benevolent societies.

Likewise we have argued that if peace were to be had, the "instrumentalists" would have to make the concessions—after all, it was their practice under question and not ours. They agreed that our worship was Scriptural; they could worship with us with a clear conscience. They were the ones who added the questionable things. We accused them of loving the instrument (a thing which they admitted was not essential to please God)

more than they loved their brethren for they chose to push it on the churches even though it meant a rupture of fellowship.

The identical situation prevails today relative to the benevolent societies. They must agree that their societies are not essential. After all, the churches existed and did their work for centuries without them. They do admit this. One of the brethren who has been bitterest in his attacks on those of us who believe in the sufficiency of the church in benevolence was recently offered this proposition to affirm or deny:

"It is Scriptural for the local congregation to relieve all those for whom it is responsible, without building and maintaining human institutions, such as Child-haven, Tipton Orphan Home, etc."

What did he say? He said, "With this I am in complete agreement." Thus he agrees that our practice is Scriptural and therefore safe. There is no question about what we are doing. The thing that is causing the division is his OPINION that something else is also acceptable.

—Sewell Hall via
THE NINTH AVENUE MESSENGER

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

"A congregation has no right to build anything larger than it is able to support. It has no right whatsoever to bind any other congregation to any program of work of its own selection. Each congregation must retain its autonomy. Any effort that destroys the independence of the local congregation runs straight toward sectarianism, if not Romanism."

—E. R. Harper, Tulsa Lecturer, 1938

WE SHOULD OBEY IT

It isn't enough just to hear, study and receive what is taught in the Bible, but we should obey it. Otherwise, we have no hope of being saved in heaven. Jesus said: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21). It will cost us "all" if we would truly live by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." We must deny self and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. This will involve suffering persecutions and afflictions. But unless our faith prompts us to move with fear in obedience to the truth, we do not REALLY entertain hope of eternal salvation.

(CRS)

NO GIMMICKS, PLEASE!

change the basic appeal of the good news of Christ to some social or recreational tug at the fun-seeking nature of man.

Let's have no gimmicks and no gadgets. Let's offer no apologies for the frank appeal for men to save themselves from this crooked generation. Let's offer a frank, true-to-the-book stand.

Let's quit this silly appeal that the "church needs" the erring and negligent and tell them the truth: **THEY NEED THE CHURCH AND THE SALVATION OF CHRIST!** Why beg them to do what they in reality do not want to do!

Let's stand for the truth; teach it lovingly; and expect men to either get in or get out!

—Roy H. Lanier, Jr.

Sentence Sermons

The life one lives speaks more loudly than the words one utters.

When we have to swallow our own medicine, the spoon seems too large.

Nine-tenths of your income with God as your partner will go much farther than tenths without God.

A great deal of talent is lost in this world for the lack of courage.

You can take Salem out of the country, but you can't take the cancer out of Salem.

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