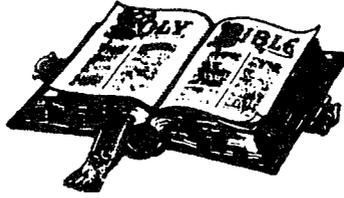


# THE INSTRUCTOR



*"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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## IS DOCTRINE IMPORTANT?

Frequently we hear someone say the "doctrine is not important." This statement may be made by an uninformed, sincere person or by an informed insincere person. A sincere person who is informed in God's Word and truly fears God would not say nor agree with others who say that "doctrine is not important."

The word "**doctrine**" means "**teaching**" NOTE: If **doctrine** is not important, then **teaching** is not important! Surely no informed, sincere person who fears God would dare say that "teaching is not important!"

A careful study of a number of passages of Scripture should inform every sincere person that doctrine IS important. Let us consider some such passages.

1. In 1 Tim. 1:10, 2 Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9 and 2:1 the apostle Paul speaks of "**sound doctrine**" and in Hebrews 13:9 the writer says: "**Be not carried about by divers and strange doctrines.**"

2. In 1 Tim. 4:1 Paul speaks of "**doctrines of devils.**" If doctrine is unimportant then one could teach or give heed to "doctrines of

devils" without any undesirable consequences.

3. In 1 Tim. 6:3 Paul speaks of "**the doctrine which is according to godliness.**" Is it important that we teach "**the doctrine which according to godliness**"? Surely, it is!

4. Paul admonished Timothy, saying; "**Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine:...**" (1 Tim. 4:16).

5. Paul charged Titus to show unconspicuousness in doctrine! (See Titus 2:7)

6. Read Revelation 2:14 and note the fact that Jesus had some things against the church in Pergamos because some held "**the doctrine of Balaam.**"

7. In Romans 6:17-18 Paul mentions the fact that the Romans who had been servants of sin were made free from their sins when they "**obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine**" which was delivered to them. (See Rom. 6:17-18). NOTE: Doctrine was so important that the Romans had to hear it, believe it and obey it in order to be saved! (Cf. Rom. 1:16; 10:17).

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## Editorial ...

### OBSERVING CHRISTMAS AS THE BIRTHDAY OF CHRIST

Multiplied millions of people obviously believe that we may Scripturally observe Christmas (December 25) as the birthday of Jesus Christ and in so doing we exalt and honor God (and His Son Jesus Christ). This is evidenced by their teaching and practice. Millions of dollars are spent and much time is expended in planning, providing and sponsoring plays, programs, pageants and other religious activities each year in the celebration of Christmas as the birthday of Christ. Are we **authorized** to do so? Is it **Scriptural** to so observe December 25 as the birthday of Jesus Christ! We must lay aside our likes, dislikes, preferences, feelings, etc. and allow the **Scriptures** to be the standard by which we determine if a practice or teaching is right. (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; James 1:25; 2:12; 2 John 9). Please consider the following.

1. THERE IS NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS BORN ON DECEMBER 25th! In fact, most scholars agree that Jesus was NOT born on December 25th. Note the following quotations.

The Word Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, p. 416, says: "Scholars do not know the

exact date of Christ's birth. For more than 300 years, people observed His birthday on various dates. In A.D. 354, Bishop Liberius of Rome ordered the people to celebrate December 25. He probably chose this date because the people of Rome already observed it as the Feast of Saturn, celebrating the birth of the sun.. The Christians of Egypt celebrated Christmas on January 6, and many members of the Eastern Orthodox Church still observe this date."

The Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 6, p. 22, says: "The celebration was not observed in the first centuries of the Christian church, since the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth... In the 5th century the Western church ordered the feast to be celebrated on the day of the Mithraic rites of the birth of the sun and at the close of the Saturnalia, as no certain knowledge of Christ's birth existed."

2. WE CANNOT OBSERVE CHRISTMAS AS THE BIRTHDAY OF CHRIST "IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST"! All we do must be done "**in the name of**", that is, "**by the authority of**" Jesus Christ! Paul said: "**And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,...**" (Col. 3:17). Since the Lord has NOT **authorized** it, it can NOT be done "**in the name of the Lord Jesus.**" NOTE: There is NO **precept** (command or statement), **approved example**, nor **necessary implication** in the Scriptures that authorizes such.

3. IT IS NOT A GOOD WORK! According to 2 Tim. 3:16-17 the Scriptures furnish us to **every good work**, but they do not furnish us with authority to observe **Christmas** (December 25 or any other day) as the

## **OBSERVING CHRISTMAS AS THE BIRTHDAY OF CHRIST**

birthday of Christ! Therefore, it is NOT a **good work!** Paul said: **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.”** QUESTION: In view of this Scripture, can a work be “a good work” if the Scriptures do not furnish us unto it? REMEMBER: Neither preference, emotions nor traditions constitute the **standard** by which we may determine if a practice is a “good work”!

4. WE CANNOT OBSERVE CHRISTMAS AS THE BIRTHDAY OF CHRIST BECAUSE IT (the observance) DOES NOT PERTAIN UNTO LIFE AND GODLINESS! Peter and other **inspired** men were given **“all things that pertain unto life and godliness.”** (See 2 Peter 1:3). But they were NOT given **authority** to teach (nor observe) Christmas (Dec. 25) as the birthday of Jesus Christ. Therefore, observing Christmas as the birthday of Christ does NOT **“pertain unto life and godliness”!**

5. WE CANNOT OBSERVE CHRISTMAS AS THE BIRTHDAY OF CHRIST BY FAITH! We are to **“walk by faith, not by sight”**, according to the apostle in 2 Cor. 5:7. We learn from Rom. 10:17 that **“...Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”** Since the Word of God does NOT **authorize** the observance of Christmas as the birthday of Christ, it cannot be done **“by faith”!**

6. WE CANNOT OBSERVE CHRISTMAS TO THE GLORY OF GOD! Paul exhorted: **“...Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”** (1 Cor.

10:31). One cannot glorify God by observing Christmas as the birthday of Christ since it is NOT **authorized** by Jesus Christ! He has ALL **authority** both in heaven and on earth! In Matthew 28:18 Jesus declared: **“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”** NOTE: Since He is our Lord and thus the Lord of our lives, we dare NOT go beyond the His Word to do more or less than that which He has authorized!

7. THE OBSERVANCE OF CHRISTMAS AS THE BIRTH OF CHRIST IS A TRANSGRESSION OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST! We learn from 2 John 9 that we must NOT **transgress** but **abide in** the doctrine of Christ in order to **“have God”** the Father and Jesus Christ the Son! John declared: **“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”** NOTE: Since NO **authority** is found in the doctrine of Christ, one must transgress the doctrine of Christ in order to observe Christmas as the birth of Christ! This is **sinful!** John tells us that **“... sin is the transgression of the law.”** (1 John 3:4).

8. If it is right to observe Christmas (Dec. 25 or any other day) as the birth of Christ, how would we learn the **proper** way to observe it? NOTE: The Lord tells us (in His Word) how to observe His death, but He nowhere tells us how to observe His birth! (See Mt. 26:26-30; 1 Cor. 11:23-34). He even tells us (by approved apostolic example) the day on which we should observe it. (See Acts 20:7). However, He does NOT give **any** such information about observing the birth of Christ! This should tell us something!

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9. In addressing the Gal. 4:10-11 Paul warned: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." QUESTION: Can you give one Scriptural reason for observing Christmas as the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ?

In view of the facts we must accept the fact that it is NOT Scriptural to observe Christmas (Dec. 25 or any other day) as the birthday of Christ and that we do NOT exalt and honor God (nor His Son) by so doing!

(CRS)

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**IS DOCTRINE IMPORTANT?**

8. Speaking to the church in Pergamos Jesus said: "so hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate." (Rev. 2:15)

9. John said: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deed." (2 John 9-11)

Yes, without question doctrine is very important!

(CRS)

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**– SENTENCE SERMONS –**

No civil law can change evil into good or vice into virtue.

\* \* \* \* \*

To arrive at the right destination you must travel the right road.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is no moral difference between legal and illegal gambling.

\* \* \* \* \*

For lack of proper training, some children grow up like weeds – instead of flowers.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sometimes speaking the truth requires more courage than some can muster.

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