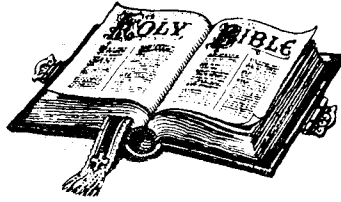


THE INSTRUCTOR



"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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THE DEVIL AND SCRIPTURE

In his "immortal" work, "The Merchant of Venice", William Shakespeare had one of his characters say, "The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose."

In this Shakespeare was eminently correct, for immediately following his baptism at the hands of John, Jesus was led into the wilderness, and tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1). One of the things Satan tried to get Jesus to do was to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. The devil said, "... for it is written, **He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone**". (Matt. 4:6). The adversary quoted Psalms 91:11. It seems significant that he omitted the phrase "**to keep thee in all thy ways**", (Luke 4:10 shows the devil said "**to keep thee**" but he omitted "in all thy ways" - CRS), in other words, in keeping with God's plans and purposes. At any rate, while the devil quoted Scripture, he did so "for his purpose" and in doing this, he most certainly misapplied what David had said!

Satan has "ministers" today (2 Corinthians 11:15) and they too quote Scripture. However, they also imitate him in perverting and misapplying the word of God. Such handling of the teaching of Christ will not bring a blessing; instead its results are disastrous (2 Peter 3:15-16).

Citing Scriptures in our teaching

and preaching is truly a commendable practice, but in doing so, let us make certain that we always make a proper application.

-- JOHN IVERSON
in THE MESSENGER

TO WHOM WERE THEY SPEAKING?

In Acts 16:31 when Paul and Silas said: "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house,** they were speaking to an unbeliever, the jailor at Philippi. (Acts 16:12).

In Acts 2:38 when Peter said: "**Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, . . .**" he was speaking to believers in Jerusalem. (Acts 2:36-37).

In Acts 22:16 when Ananias said: "**And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord,**" he was talking to a penitent believer, Saul of Tarsus. (Acts 9:4-18; 22:3-16).

In each of the above cases, each person was told what he needed to know at that particular time. To have the proper concept, we must accept the **sum** of God's Word.

(CRS)

THE INSTRUCTOR

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Editorial . . .

"PROOF REQUESTED

PROOF GIVEN" (No. 23)

Scriptural proof that the statement, "We are not under any system of law", is false was given in THE INSTRUCTOR last month. It seems that even some brethren, such as Carl Ketcherside and Arnold Hardin, who have departed from "grace" as revealed in the New Testament, are not willing to humbly and lovingly accept the truth of the gospel concerning law and grace. Obviously, many have "understood" "law and grace" according to the idols within their hearts. (Cf. Ezekiel 14:1-11; 2 Thess. 2:8-15; Matthew 5:6 & John 7:17). The fact that some label those of us who accept the teaching of grace as "legalists" does not prove that "We are not under any system of law."

We challenge those (including Carl Ketcherside and Arnold Hardin) who believe that "We are not under any system of law" to prove by the Scriptures that such is the case. We are willing to engage in a series of public discussions with anyone (who has the right to so discuss) who is willing to attempt to prove such. We will be waiting to hear from someone.

Number twenty-four is the next item to be examined in the list of twenty-five things that appeared in THE INSTRUCTOR, October, 1983, under "Specific Wickedness" for

which Scriptural proof for the opposite view (than that stated in #24) has been requested. It reads as follows:

"24. Churches have a Scriptural right to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people."

COMMENTS: Many denominational churches have been providing entertainment, recreation and social activities for both young and old for a long time. However, not many churches of Christ have done so for either young or old until recent times. In 1944, Floyd A. Decker wrote a tract entitled, "WHY I LEFT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH", in which he stated as one of the reasons he left was:

"The Christian Church emphasizes society and the physical man by appealing to the carnal nature, with church carnivals, bands, plays, choruses, dramatics, church kitchens, church camps, and elaborate fellowship halls; the church of Christ does not. (1 Cor. 10:7; Romans 14:17; 1 Cor. 11:22, 34)."

NOTE: In 1944 churches of Christ (with rare exception) did not have kitchens, camps, choruses, carnivals, bands, etc. Nearly thirty-six years ago when I began preaching, I did not know of a single church (of Christ) that provided such things! Today, it is a different situation. Many churches of Christ are providing entertainment, recreation and social activities for the old as well as the young people.

Churches have gradually become involved in these activities. If it had been otherwise, many Christians, who now accept it, would have rebelled against the idea. This is true of most unauthorized practices. Gradually introducing unauthorized practices is one Satan's most effective ways (in my judgment) of influencing many to accept that which they otherwise would reject. NOTE: When we are ignorant of Satan's devices, then Satan gets an advantage of us. (Cf. 2 Cor. 2:11).

A consideration of the following facts and principles should enlighten any sincere person as the unscripturalness of churches providing entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people.

1. The Spirit says things to the

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churches through the letters (in the New Testament) **written to the churches.** (Cf. Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29, Rev. 3:6, 13, & 22). **NOTE:** In other words, churches must follow the **word of God** as revealed in the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures which are complete. (Cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; James 1:25).

2. **Christ is the HEAD of the church.** Ephesians 5:23 says: "**For the husband is the head of the wife, even as CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH: . . .**" Col. 1:18 says: "**And He is the HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH; . . .**" Eph. 1:22-23 says: "**And hath put all things under His feet, (the feet of Christ - CRS), and gave Him to be THE HEAD OVER ALL THINGS TO THE CHURCH, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.**" **NOTE:** Since Christ is the **head over all things to the church**, this includes the **work** of the church.

3. **The church is SUBJECT to Christ.** The apostle Paul said: "**Therefore as the church is SUBJECT UNTO CHRIST, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.**" (Eph. 5:24). **NOTE:** Since the church is **subject** to Christ the head, the church as no right to function in any area of work unless Christ the head authorizes it. What Christ the head authorizes is revealed in the Scriptures. (Cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 2:9-16; 2 John 9).

4. **Jesus as HEAD of the church has ALL power.** In Matthew 28:18 Jesus said: "**. . . All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth . . .**" **NOTE:** The word "**power**" as used here is equivalent to "**authority**". In fact, the New American Standard Version says: "**all AUTHORITY**". Since Christ has **all authority** the church has **no authority** to **choose** its organization, worship or work. Jesus **authorizes** that which pleases Him. We must read **His word** to learn what **He authorizes**. The church has **no right** to act **unless** Jesus has authorized!

5. **The church is authorized to teach the truth!** In 1 Tim. 3:15 Paul

declares that the church is the **pillar (support)** of the truth. The church in Thessalonica "**sounded out the word of the Lord**". (1 Thess. 1:8). Churches paid "**wages**" to the apostle Paul while he preached the gospel at Corinth. (2 Cor. 11:8). The church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas out to preach the **word**. (Cf. Acts 13 & 14). **NOTE:** The church **is authorized** to preach and teach the gospel - the truth, but not error.

6. **The church is authorized to edify, i.e., to perfect the saints.** Please read carefully Eph. 4:8-16. A careful study of 1 Cor. 14 indicates that the activities performed in the assemblies are designed to edify. When spiritual gifts were in operation, speaking in tongues was prohibited in the assembly **unless** an interpreter was present. Otherwise edification would not be accomplished. Prophets were to speak one by one that others present might be edified. **NOTE:** There is **no** indication that churches may provide food, fun and frolic in an effort to edify (perfect) Christians spiritually. Neither is there any indication in the **Scriptures** that food, fun and frolic will serve to **perfect** saints spiritually.

7. **The church is authorized to relieve destitute saints.** The church in Jerusalem relieved needy saints. (See Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35; 6:1-7) Other churches helped needy Christians. (See Acts 11:27-30; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8 & 9 & Rom. 15:24-32). In 1 Tim. 5:16 Paul said: "**. . . Let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.**" **NOTE:** There is a vast difference in the church relieving destitute saints and the church providing entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people. One is **authorized**, the other is **not!**

8. **There is no precept (either command or statement) in the Scriptures that authorizes the church to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people!**

9. **There is no necessary implication in the Scriptures that churches are authorized to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people!**

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10. There is no example in the Scriptures where any church (with God's approval) ever provided entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people!

11. In I Cor. 11:17-34 the saints at Corinth were abusing "the Lord's Supper." They were taking their "own supper" to the assembly and were eating and drinking. The Apostle Paul condemned their actions. He did not correct the situation by telling them that they could eat and drink in the assembly as long as they properly observed the Lord's Supper. He rebuked them by saying, "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? . . ." Neither did Paul suggest that they could eat and drink in the assembly if they would share with the poor. Since they were eating to satisfy their hunger, they were not eating the Lord's Supper. Paul told them they had houses to eat and drink in to satisfy their hunger. Paul suggested that their actions indicated that they despised the church of God!

We do not assemble as a church to satisfy our hunger. Paul very plainly said: "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another." And if any man hunger, LET HIM EAT AT HOME; that ye come not together unto condemnation." NOTE: If they

came together as a church to eat because they were hungry, they would be condemned! Obviously, the only eating they were to do as a church was eating the Lord's Supper.

12. It is not a question as to whether one may incidentally eat in the church building, but whether or not the church may provide or arrange for food, fun and frolic as a church! We are not discussing what Christians as individuals may provide or arrange. NOTE: I may incidentally tie my shoe in the church building if it needs tying, but the church is not authorized to provide or arrange a "shoe tying" event anywhere!

CONCLUSION: God has not authorized churches to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people!

When a person presumes to speak the doctrine that "Churches have a Scriptural right to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people" in the name of Christ, he is speaking presumptuously and is teaching false doctrine because such is not taught in God's Book! The person who so speaks is guilty of wickedness!

We should be very careful and be respectful of God's word and "so speak" and "so do" as those who will be judged by "the law of liberty!" (See James 2:12).

(CRS)

(To be continued)

— SENTENCE SERMONS —

The easiest road to travel is the one that goes down.

* * * * *

People who run into debt usually have to crawl out.

* * * * *

God speaks to all who take time to listen. Have you read his word lately?

* * * * *

Following Jesus Christ is not an escape from life — it is life!

* * * * *

We can not serve God and mammon, but we can serve God with mammon.

* * * * *

There are married failures, but marriage is not a failure.

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