

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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CHRISTIANS ARE BUILDERS (No. 5)

As we continue our study of CHRISTIANS ARE BUILDERS let us remember that as **builders** we are responsible for **how** we build and **what** we build. To properly build, we must follow the principles set forth in the Scriptures. (Cf. Hebrews 8:5; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; James 1:25; 2:12). Not only should we build **good names, good solid families, good influences, lasting friendships,** but we should also build:

5. **STRONG CHURCHES!** There is a need for churches (local congregations) that will stand for truth and righteousness! Large numbers do not necessarily mean there is strength in congregations. Historically, the righteous have been in the minority. (Cf. Noah in Heb. 11:7; Caleb and Joshua in Num. 32:11-14 & Dt. 1:34-40; Also see Mt. 7:13-14). Strength does not come from beautiful edifices or large contributions. Neither eloquence, popularity nor pride brings strength to a congregation!

In order for a church to be strong there are a number of essentials. Here are some of them.

(1) **Truth** must be taught! (cf. John 8:32; 17:17; Eph. 4:15; 1 Tim.

2:4; 3:15; 2 Thess. 2:10-12). The whole counsel of God should be declared! (See Acts 20:26-27). Man is to live by every word of God! (Cf. Mt. 4:4).

(2) **Sin** must be exposed and rebuked and **sinner**s must be reprov'd! (See 2 Tim. 4:2-4; 1 Tim. 5:20; 1 John 4:1; Rev. 2:2). In order to build, it is sometimes necessary to tear down some things! (See 2 Cor. 10:5).

(3) **Truth** must be practiced! A church must be Scriptural in organization, work and work! The local church with elders (bishops) and deacons is the only organization God has authorized His people to work in or through to accomplish the work that He assigned them to do as a collectivity. (See Phil. 11: 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 5:16; 3:15; Eph. 4:12) Church "socials" will not give spiritual strength to churches!

(4) Christians must be strong in faith, persistent in prayer, liberal in giving and pure in life! (See Rom. 1:18; Gal. 5:6; Acts 2:42; 12:5, 12; 1 Thess. 5:17; Acts 11:29-30; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Rom. 12:8; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Titus 2:11-12).

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Editorial ...

THE GOSPEL - SOME FACTS

The word translated **gospel** basically means **good news** or **glad tidings**. We find the expressions "**the gospel**", "**the gospel of God**", "**the gospel of Christ**", "**the truth of the gospel**", "**the gospel of peace**", "**the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ**" and "**the glorious gospel of Christ**" are found in Mark 16:15; Acts 20:24; 1 Thess. 2:2; Rom. 1:16; Gal. 2:5; Eph 6:15; 2 Thess. 1:8 and 2 Cor. 4:4. These expressions refer to the same thing. Let us consider the following facts about **the gospel of Christ**.

1. **THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S POWER TO SAVE!** In Romans 1:16 the apostle Paul declared: "**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth:...**" He also said: "**For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.**" (1 Cor. 1:18). James urges us to "**...receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.**" (1:21). God's Work is "**quick and powerful...**" (Cf. Heb. 4:12). Referring to the **gospel** Paul said: "**By the which also ye are saved,**

if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain." (1 Cor. 15:2). Yes, God's Word (the **gospel**) is God's power to save!

II. **THE GOSPEL MUST BE PREACHED!** After His resurrection but before His ascension Jesus told the apostles to "**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them,...**" (Matthew 28:19). In Mark's account Jesus said: "**Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.**" (16:15-16). NOTE: All nations were to be taught! Every creature was to have the gospel preached to him! Within about 35 years the gospel "**...was preached to every creature which is under heaven...**" (Col. 1:23). Paul asked: "**...Have they not heard?**" He then replied: "**Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto all the world.**" (Romans 10:18).

In Romans 10:14-15 Paul said: "**...and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!**" It is essential that the gospel be preached or taught now as it was in the first century!

III. **THE GOSPEL MUST BE HEARD!** Sinners cannot be saved by the gospel unless they hear it. In Romans 10:14 Paul asks: "**How then shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?**" In verse 17 Paul concluded: "**So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**" In Acts 15:7 Peter

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declared that **"...God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."** Hearing the word of God produces faith in our hearts! Saving faith comes no other way. Romans 10:8 mentions **"the word of faith."** Yes, the gospel must be **heard** (therefore it must be preached) before men can believe and **"call upon the name of the Lord"** and be saved!

IV. THE GOSPEL MUST BE BELIEVED! Jesus declared that **"...he that believeth not shall be damned."** (Mark 16:15-16). Paul declared that the **gospel of Christ** **"...is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth..."** (Rom. 1:16). If a person does not **believe** the gospel it will not save him! The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to **believers!** To **"call upon the name of Lord"** to be saved, one must be a **believer!** In explaining the parable of the sower Jesus said: **"Those by the way side are they that hear: then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their heart, lest they should believe and be saved."** (Luke 8:12). Yes, the gospel must be **believed** (therefore it must be preached and heard) in order for sinners to be saved by it!

V. THE GOSPEL MUST BE OBEYED! Obeying the gospel may never enter the minds of many people since most preachers never say much (if any thing) about it. Although some preachers never even mention **obeying** the gospel, the apostle Peter raised this question: **"...what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"** (1 Peter 4:17). Listen to Paul's statement in 2 Thess. 1:7-9 where he tells us that **"...the Lord**

Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." NOTE: The word of God is plain! The truth is simple! Those who do not **obey the gospel** will be lost forever!

A study of Romans 6:17-18 will reveal that a person is made free from his sins when he **obeys!** Hear the inspired writer: **"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."** Without **obedience from the heart** sinners cannot be made free from their sins!

The **facts** of the gospel (including the death, burial and resurrection) can and **must be believed!** (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-2) The **commands** of the gospel can and **must be obeyed!** **Repent and be baptized** are commands of the gospel! (See Acts 2:38; also see Acts 17:30-31; Acts 22:16; Acts 10:48; Acts 11:18). They must be obeyed! (See Matthew 7:21-23; Hebrews 5:8-9; James 1:22, 25; Revelation 22:14; John 14:23-24 & Luke 6:46).

VI. WE WILL BE JUDGED ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL! In Romans 2:16 Paul mentions **"...the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel."** It is obvious from this statement that the **gospel** is the standard by which we will be judged in the last day.

James admonishes us to **"So speak ye, and so do, as they that**

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shall be judged by the law of liberty." (2:12). In view of this, the gospel must be the law of liberty! It is! It is the **good news** that was preached in the first century that produced faith that prompted men and women to **obey** the Lord! It is the **good news** by which we can be saved and also the standard we must face in judgment!

Since Jesus said: "...the word that I have spoken...shall judge him in the last day", the gospel, the **law of liberty** must be the **word** spoken by Jesus! Yes, we will face Christ in judgment and be judged according to the **gospel!**

Although in the first century the gospel was made known "**in all the world**" and was preached to "**every creature under heaven** and

thus all heard it, Paul declared: "**But they have not all obeyed the gospel.**" (See Col. 1:15, 23; Rom. 10:16). Back then, most people did not **obey the gospel** although they heard it. They died unprepared to meet God! Today, many who hear the gospel will not believe and obey it. What about you!

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(5) **Discipline** must be administered! The disorderly should be withdrawn from and those who cause divisions should be marked and avoided! (See 2 Thess. 3:6; Romans 16:17-18). Yes, we must earnestly endeavor to build **strong churches!**

(CRS)

- SENTENCE SERMONS -

Respect cannot be bought nor gained by demanding it but it must be earned.

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We should be more concerned about our duties than our difficulties.

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You are much poorer with an empty heart than with an empty purse.

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The Bread of Life never becomes stale.

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Wild oats thrive when one's religion is not pure.

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