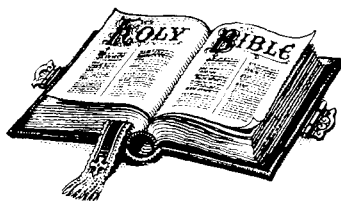


THE INSTRUCTOR



“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

Volume 20

JANUARY, 1983

Number 1

THE SIN OF INGRATITUDE

Ingratitude can be seen in the attitudes and actions of many people with whom we come into contact daily. Many children fail to be thankful for the many blessings provided for them by their parents. Parents often fail to show gratitude for the good things accomplished by their children. Many husbands and wives do not show proper appreciation for each other. Employers and employees are not thankful enough, in many instances for each other and they fail to manifest the proper attitude toward each other. As Christians, we may not be thankful enough for each other. As children of God, we may not be grateful and appreciative to God for the blessings provided us because of His goodness and mercy. It is very easy to be guilty of the sin of ingratitude.

On one occasion as Jesus entered into a certain village, ten lepers met Him and cried out for mercy from Him. He told them to go and show themselves to the priests. “And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God. And fell down on his face at his feet, giving Him thanks.” Jesus said: “**Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?**” (See Luke 17:11-19). Although ten lepers were cleansed, only one was grateful

enough for his cleansing to return and give thanks unto Jesus.

Let us now consider a number of Scriptures that teach that **Christians should have the spirit of gratitude.**

First, let us consider the fact that the **spirit of gratitude is the spirit of thankfulness. Ingratitude denotes unthankfulness.** One who is unthankful is ungrateful. He is without thanksgiving in his heart.

1. In describing some who, although they knew God, Paul said, “**they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful.**” (See Romans 1:21). Although they professed to be wise, “**they became fools.**” (See Romans 1:22).

2. Writing to Timothy and speaking of perilous times that would come, Paul said: “**For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . unthankful . . .**” (See 2 Timothy 3:1-5). Ingratitude contributes its influence, along with other sins, to help make for troublesome or dangerous times.

3. We should be **thankful to God** because He is the giver of “**every good gift and every perfect gift.**” (See James 1:17). God “**hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.**” (See Eph. 1:3). See also 1 John 4:9; Col. 1:12-14 and 1 Peter 1:3-4).

(Continued on Page 4)

THE INSTRUCTOR

Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting at 1107 Highway 431 South, in Albertville, Alabama.

CARROL R. SUTTON
EDITOR

Send all questions, comments, and criticisms to the editor, 1107 Highway 431 South, Albertville, Alabama 35950.

Second-class postage paid in
Albertville, AL 35950

Editorial - - -

WHAT PAUL THOUGHT ABOUT THE CHURCH

"What do you think?" is often asked. Others desire to know what "you" think about certain things. Frequently we are told what some "great" person thought about some particular thing.

In this study I want us to see what the apostle Paul thought about the church. Let us keep in mind that Paul was inspired of God and as he spoke and wrote he was doing so by the inspiration of God. So in reality, we are considering what God thinks about the church. Let us now consider **what Paul thought about the church.**

1. **HE THOUGHT THERE WAS ONLY ONE BODY.** There are at least nine passages where Paul says there is one body. Here they are: Romans 12:4; Romans 12:5; 1 Cor. 10:17; 1 Cor. 12:12; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Cor. 12:20; Eph. 2:16; Eph. 4:4; Col. 3:15.

2. **HE THOUGHT THAT THE BODY AND THE CHURCH WERE THE SAME.** Many people try to make a distinction between the body and the church, but no such distinction exists. In Col. 1:18 Paul stated that **"... He is the head of the body, the church: ..."** and in Ephesians 1:22-23 he said that God **"... hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is His body ..."**

3. **HE THOUGHT THAT CHRIST WAS THE HEAD OF THE**

CHURCH. In speaking of Christ, Paul said, **"And He is the head of the body, the church . . ."** and God **"... hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body ..."** (See Col. 1:18 and Eph. 1:22-23). NOTE: Jesus Christ does not direct religious organizations that advocate false doctrine.

Jesus, being only one head, directs only one body. (Also see Ephesians 2:18-19; Eph. 4:15 and Eph. 5:23).

4. **HE THOUGHT THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO DIVISIONS WITHIN THE BODY.** In 1 Cor. 1:10 Paul said: **"... that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."** In 1 Cor. 12:25 he said: **"... that there should be no schism in the body ..."** To the Ephesians Paul said: **"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."** (Eph. 4:3). In Romans 16:17-18 the apostle said to **"... mark them which cause divisions ..."** Divisions are evidence of carnality. (See 1 Cor. 3:3). In His prayer to the Father in John 17 Jesus Christ prayed for unity!

5. **HE THOUGHT THAT THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD WOULD BE KNOWN BY THE CHURCH!** In Eph. 3:10 Paul said: **"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."** The church as designed by the God of heaven is indeed a manifestation of the wisdom of God. We should never try to second-guess God as to the design and purpose of the church. We should accept it as a revelation of God's wisdom. We should never lose sight of the fact that God designed the church so as to enable it to make known His word and wisdom to those of the world as well as to those who are saints. In writing to Timothy, Paul affirmed that the **"... house of God, which is the church of the living God,"** is **"the pillar and ground of the**

(Continued on Page 3)

SOME QUESTIONS FOR ARNOLD HARDIN

Since Arnold Hardin stated in THE PERSUADER, January 16, 1983, that “. . . all of us are wrong about some things . . .” I would like to ask him some questions and request of him that he answer them in THE PERSUADER. NOTE: THE PERSUADER is a weekly (I think) bulletin of the SCYENE ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST of Dallas, Texas. Arnold Hardin is the editor. Here are the questions:

1. How do you **know** that “**all of us are wrong about some things?**” NOTE: Arnold was discussing a person’s “**understanding**” of God’s word when he made the above statement and not a person’s actions.

2. What are the “**some things**” about which YOU are wrong? Please name them.

3. What are the “**some things**” about which I and others are wrong? Please name them.

4. If you do not **know** what the “**some things**” about which YOU are wrong, how do you know that you “**are wrong about some things?**” Please explain.

5. If you **DO know** what the “**some things**” are about which YOU are wrong, why don’t you **CHANGE** and accept what is **right**?

6. Did you make the statement that “. . . all of us are wrong about some things . . .” in order to **condemn** the “**wrong**” in all of us or to **justify** the “**wrong**” in all of us? Please give a forthright answer.

A NOTE TO YOU READERS: If you have been saying that “**all of us are wrong about some things**” or that “**no one can perfectly understand God’s will for man,**” then I also direct the above questions to you and request that you answer them. As you answer them, please remember such passages as Psalms 119:130 which says: “**The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple,**” and Ephesians 5:17 which says: **Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.**”

Let us remember that Paul said: “**If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given to me to youward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.**” (Ephesians 3:2-6). It will also help us if we will keep in mind what Jesus said in Matthew 13:23.

WHAT PAUL THOUGHT

(Continued from Page 2)

truth.” (See 1 Timothy 3:15). As to organization the local church (the congregation) is the **only** organization through which God has authorized his people to function in “**organized capacity**” to carry out the work of evangelism that He has charged the church (collectively) to do. The same principle is true also in the field of edification and the relief of destitute saints.

6. **HE THOUGHT THAT ALL WHO WERE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH WERE ALIENS.** In writing to the Ephesians prior to their obedience to the gospel and thus being reconciled to God in the **one** body (the church), he said: “**That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.**” (Ephesians 2:11). We learn from 1 Cor. 12:13 that we are “**baptized into one body.**” When one obeys the gospel and is saved from past sins, God adds him to the church!

7. **HE THOUGHT THAT GOD SHOULD BE GLORIFIED IN THE CHURCH.** Paul said: “**Unto Him**

(Continued on Page 4)

WALK IN THE LIGHT

I JOHN 1:5-9 says: "Then this is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1. Verse 5: LIGHT — No darkness (sin) there!

2. Verse 7: **IF** we walk in LIGHT, **THEN** the blood cleanse from sin . . . !

3. Verse 8: . . . Because we DO (occasionally commit, though not "walk" in — v. 6) sin (that is, step "out" of the light — v. 5)

4. Verse 9: **IF** we confess our sins, **THEN** He cleanses us from sin!

5. **THEREFORE**: "Walk in the light" INCLUDES "confess our sins" (when we step out of the light).

SUMMARY: **IF** (v. 7) we walk in the LIGHT, including (v. 9) confessing our sins (which are outside the LIGHT — v. 5) when we (v. 8) step out of the light, **THEN** He is (v. 7, 9) faithful to cleanse us by His blood!

A THOUGHT TO PONDER: If it is not right to explain John in 1 John 3:6, 8, 9 in such a way as to make him contradict his own statement in 1:8, **then** is it not equally wrong to lift his statement in 1 John 1:7 out of its above context by allowing "walking in the light" to include some sins (those of "ignorance" and/or "weakness")?

---Bob Mitchell, 58 Academy Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35406

SIN OF INGRATITUDE

(Continued from Page 1)

4. We should be grateful to God because He is the Creator and "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." (See Acts 17:28 & Job 33:4).

5. The apostle Paul emphasizes that we should give "thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. 5:20; Also see Col. 3:17 & 1 Thess. 5:18).

Each one of us should endeavor daily to be thankful for the many blessings we

WHAT PAUL THOUGHT

(Continued from Page 3)

(i.e., God) be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages world without end. Amen." (Ephesians 3:21). God receives glory in the church! Paul certainly thought the church was essential and very valuable.

DO YOU THINK LIKE PAUL?
YOU SHOULD!

(CRS)

receive. We should also express our gratitude and appreciation to God!

(CRS)

Sentence Sermons

Christ is not against men making money, but against money making men.

You will be thankful IF you are really thankful.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
1107 Highway 431 South
Albertville, AL 35950