

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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WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TRUTH?

The word attitude suggests a mental position or a feeling or an emotion toward a person, place, fact, theory or thing, etc.

Attitudes are very important because they determine our actions, and our actions determine our character and our actions determine our destiny.

What is truth? The Word of God, the Gospel!

In His prayer to the Father Jesus said: **"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."** (John 17:17); Also see Psa. 119:142, 151)

Truth is very valuable and it is essential that we have the proper attitude toward it! Here Are Some Reasons Why Truth Is So Valuable!

1. **"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."** (John 1:17).

2. A lost person must be begotten (spiritually) by the Word which is the gospel of Christ. (See Jas. 1:18; 1 Cor. 4:15). Without this, there can be no new birth!

3. It will make us free from sin. (See John 8:32; Rom. 6:17-18).

4. It will sanctify us & give us an eternal inheritance! (John 17:17; Acts 20:32).

5. It saves! (James 1:21; Rom. 1:16; Acts 11:14).

6. It will judge us in that last day. (See John 12:48; Rom. 2:16).

Here Are Some Things You Should Do!

1. You should desire to know the truth! (See 1 Tim. 2:3-4; John 8:32; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:7; Eph. 5:17; 3:2-6; Acts 17:11; Mt. 5:6).

2. You should have a love of the truth. (Read 2 Thess. 2:6-12)

3. You should obey the truth. (See 1 Pet. 1:22-23; Rom. 2:8; 6:17-18; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Mt. 7:21)

4. You should earnestly contend for the faith (the truth) which was once delivered unto the saints. (See Jude 3)

5. You should never be ashamed of Christ or His gospel! (See Mk. 8:38; Rom. 1:16-17)

QUESTION: What is your attitude toward the truth as revealed in the NT? Is it proper?

(CRS)

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Editorial...

THE DANGER OF STRIFE AND CONTENTION IN THE CHURCH (Concluded)

As we continue our study of "**The Danger of Strife and Contention in the Church**", let us resume with the study of some causes of strife and contention among the people of God.

4. False Doctrines.

Jesus warned against false prophets in Mt. 7:15; 24:4, 11, 24, etc. We have been warned against false apostles, false teachers, false brethren, etc. in 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 2:2; 2 Pet. 2:1-3, etc. False teaching will cause strife and contentions in the church.

Read 1 Tim. 6:3-5 very carefully and you will observe this fact. Questions and strifes of words which cause strife are used to defend false doctrine.

1 John 4:1 says: "...**Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out**

into the world."

Heb. 13:9 says: "**Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines.**" See Mt. 24:4, 11.

5. Strife for Personal Glory.

John the Baptist did not seek personal glory but he pointed people to Christ (John 3:26-31).

Some even preach Christ for strife and envy. (Phil. 1:14-17)

Paul did not seek personal glory. (See 1 Cor. 9:16). In Phil. 2:3 he said: "**Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.**"

In James 3:14-16 he said: "**But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.**" NOTE: We should never strive for personal glory!

6. Foolish and Unlearned Questions. In 2 Tim. 2:23 Paul exhorted Timothy saying: "**But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.**" In Tit. 3:9 Paul urged Titus saying: "**But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.**"

WHO CAUSES STRIFE AND CONTENTION?

1. A Wrathful or Angry Man.

Solomon tells us that "**A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.**" (Prov. 15:18) He also tells us that "**An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.**" (Prov. 29:22) We must learn, as Jas. 1:19 says "**to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.**"

2. A Froward Man.

Froward suggests the idea of *unreasonable; perverse; disobedient; petulant; cross*. This adjective describes some people. Such a person will cause strife among others.

In Proverbs 16:28 Solomon declared that **"A froward man soweth strife and a whisperer separateth chief friends."**

Frowardness has no place in the heart or life of a Christian.

3. The Scorner.

Scorners will cause strife and contentions among others. If the scorner is cast out, the contention will also go out. Solomon said: **"Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease."** (Proverbs 22:10) There is no need for scorners among us.

4. A Talebearer.

Talebearers reveal secrets as they go about (see Prov. 11:13 & 20:19). In so doing they may cause strifes, contentions and divisions. **"The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly"** (Prov. 18:8). In Prov. 26:20 we read: **"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceases."** It is obvious that a talebearer can cause strife in the strife ceases where there is no talebearer.

Let us make certain that we are not talebearers.

5. A Proud Heart.

Pride is a common sin. It is condemned in both the Old and New Testaments. (See Prov. 8:13; 29:23; Hosea 5:5; Mark 7:22, etc.)

We learn from Prov. 13:10 that pride causes contention.

We are also told that **"pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."** (Prov. 16:18). In Prov. 28:25 Solomon tells us very plainly that **"He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife..."** No doubt, pride is one of the major causes of strife and contention. Each of us must make sure that we are not a proud person! Pride and humility cannot dwell in the same heart at the same time. We must **"be clothed with humility"**. (See 1 Peter 5:5). We must be humble enough to submit to God's will in everything!!

6. A Contentious Man.

We learn from Prov. 26:21 that **"As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife."** It "goes without saying" that a contentious man will cause strife and contentions.

"The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with." (Prov. 17:14). Are you a contentious person? If so you are a potential cause of strife and contention.

THE RESULTS OF STRIFE AND CONTENTION

1. It Makes Our Plea to the World for Unity Ineffective.

We call attention to the prayer of Jesus for unity in John 17:20-23. When we have strife and contention among us, it is difficult for people of the world to see that we are sincere and consistent. Our plea for unity falls on ears that do not hear.

In John 13:35 Jesus said: **"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."**

2. It Produces Confusion.

James said: "**But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.**" (Jas. 3:14-17).

Where there is strife, contentions and divisions, you will always find confusion.

3. It Gives the Word Brother a Hollow Sound.

"**Now he (Judas) that betrayed him (Jesus) gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master;**

and kissed him." (Mt. 26: 48-49). On this occasion when Judas addressed Jesus as "Master", it had a hollow sound. Judas had deception in his heart.

4. It Causes Many to be Lost.

Since these things that we have discussed that cause strife, contentions and divisions are sinful, it is obvious that many will be lost because of these things and their effects. (Also read Rom. 2:8).

It is *sinful* for one to cause strife, contentions and divisions among the people of God. Are you guilty? Let us watch and pray and ask God to strengthen and give us wisdom. (CRS)

Bound Volumes (Jan. 2000 thru Dec. 2008) of THE INSTRUCTOR are still available. Hear the Word alive over the internet as it is preached at East Albertville each Lord's Day at 10:30 am and 6:00 pm. Go to: <eastalbertvillechurchofchrist.com>

SENTENCE SERMONS

We should endeavor to forget injuries and to remember kindnesses and love shown.

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Sin is a short word that carries a long sentence—if a person dies unforgiven of it.

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It takes a lifetime to build a good reputation; but one reckless deed can destroy it.

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It is good to speak for, write for, fight for and die for the truth, but it is better to live for it!

* * * * *

Hating others brings misery to the hater.

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