

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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FORSAKING FATHER AND MOTHER

All of us love and respect our parents and we should. In most cases, they have done much to help us. First, they brought us into the world. Then they cared for, nurtured and trained us. We should honor them (cf. Eph. 6:2-3). However, we must NOT exalt them above Christ! Let us consider the following.

I. THE ISRAELITES WERE NOT TO SET LIGHT BY THEIR PARENTS! Dt. 27:16 says: "**Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.**" Our parents are not the standard by which we should live. Christ is!

II. GIDEON DESTROYED HIS FATHER'S PLACE OF WORSHIP! This was done according to God's will. (See Judges 6:25-31). We must condemn all false systems of worship! The fact that our parents may approve of a system does not mean it has God's approval. (See Mt. 15:7-9; 2 Cor. 10:3-6).

III. SAUL TURNED AGAINST THE RELIGION OF HIS FATHERS! (See Acts 23:1; 26:4-6, 9-11; Gal. 1:13-14 and Gal. 1:21-23). When we learn that the religion of our parents is not pleasing to God, we should have enough faith and courage to turn away from it.

IV. WE MUST FORSAKE OUR

FATHERS AND MOTHERS TO FOLLOW CHRIST! Jesus said: "**So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.**" (Luke 14:33). Also consider Luke 14:25-32 and Mark 1:16-20.

V. WE ARE NOT WORTHY OF CHRIST IF WE LOVE FATHER OR MOTHER MORE THAN WE LOVE HIM! Jesus said: "**He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: . . .**" (Matthew 10:37). Although our love for our parents is very great, our love for Jesus Christ must be greater! NOTE: The expression "hate" in Luke 14:26 suggests "love less." It does not suggest "bitterness" or "ill-will." (Cf. Gen. 29:30-31).

What is our reward for forsaking father and mother and following Christ? In Mark 10:29-30 Jesus said: "**. . . There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or FATHER, or MOTHER, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But that he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.**" (CRS)

THE INSTRUCTOR

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Editorial . . .

A BROTHER SEES A DANGER AND ASKS FOR AUTHORITY (Concluded)

[Editor's Note: Since the following is a continuation of a study that was prompted by a letter received by the editor, it is suggested that you read (or re-read) the editorial that appeared in THE INSTRUCTOR last month.]

As stated in our study last month, our respected brother asked: "Where is the authority for the elders of one congregation to begin a program that assumes feeding the flocks of other congregations?"

If by "feeding" our brother means teaching God's Word (and there is no doubt that he does) such as is done when the church here sends out THE INSTRUCTOR to saints (including some of other congregations) as well as to sinners, I believe that such is authorized in the New Testament. Please consider very carefully the following facts and principles of truth.

1. The church is "the pillar and ground of the truth." (Cf. 1 Tim. 3:15). The church (universally) does not (and can not) act in a "collective" sense. The "local" church is the only "organization" (or "collectivity") through which God's people are to function in "organized capacity" in fulfilling responsibilities assigned to them as a flock or as a church. The church in East Albertville is simply making an effort to teach people (sinners and saints) the truth since we have a responsibility to do so. As far

as I can determine, there are no geographical lines nor "church boundaries" that limit any local church (or individual) as to whom instruction in truth may be given.

The Christians in Thessalonica were examples to believers in Macedonia and Archaia because they (of Thessalonica) had "sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place . . ." (Cf. 1 Thess. 1:7-8).

2. Churches (other than at Corinth) gave wages to Paul to enable him to preach the truth to the saints at Corinth. (See 2 Cor. 11:8). NOTE: Those churches were NOT going beyond the authority of Christ in so doing. Those churches were NOT assuming the "feeding" (i.e., tending, ruling or shepherding) of the flock of God at Corinth!

3. The elders of the church in Jerusalem (along with the apostles and the whole church) sent a letter to "the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia" to teach them the truth about certain things. They sent Judas and Silas (chosen men of their own company) with Paul and Banabas to Antioch and "when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle." The people rejoiced when they read (or heard read) that letter. (See Acts 15:22-35). From this passage we conclude that:

(1) The "elders" of one congregation may send instructional truth to members of other churches and by such teaching NOT go beyond the restriction to "feed the flock of God which is among" them, "taking the oversight thereof, . . ." nor infringe upon the rights and responsibilities of the elders to whom those members are to be in submission.

(2) The "elders" of one church (along with the church) may

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also send messengers to **other** churches to tell **“the same things by mouth”** that are contained in written form. (See Acts 15:27). Obviously this would **not** be in violation of 1 Pet. 5:1-3.

(3) The messengers sent by one church to another church may **“exhort”** the brethren **“with many words”** and **“confirm”** them. (See Acts 15:32). Obviously this would in no way violate the teaching of 1 Pet. 5:1-3.

4. The church (saints and faithful brethren) at Colosse was admonished: **“And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.”** (Col. 4:16).

NOTE: In view of this verse it is clear that the church (saints and faithful brethren which certainly **includes** the elders) at one place has the right to **“cause that it (an epistle teaching the truth — CRS) be read”** in other churches! This would not be in violation of 1 Peter 5:1-3 within and of itself.

CONCLUSION: A church is authorized to teach the truth to others (including members of other congregations as well as alien sinners). The method of teaching is not bound in God’s Word. Neither should we attempt to bind or prohibit a particular method as long as no Scriptural principle is being violated.

CONSEQUENCES

If it is not Scriptural for a church (with elders or without elders) to teach the truth to “members” of another congregation, there are certain **conclusions** and **consequences** that would follow. Let us consider some of them.

(1) It **would** be sinful for a church (with its elders) to send a publication (such as THE INSTRUCTOR) to a “member” of another congregation!

(2) It would **also** be sinful for a church to put on a radio program or a TV program that teaches “members” of other congregations!

(3) It would be sinful for a church to send a tract of any kind to a “member” of another church!

(4) It would be sinful for a church to even send a New Testament to a “member” of another church!

(5) It would be sinful for a church to **send** a preacher (i.e., pay him wages to preach to and teach) to teach “members” of another congregation!

(6) It would be sinful for the elders of one church to teach and encourage a wayward “member” of another congregation to repent!

(7) It would be sinful for a church to invite “members” of another congregation to attend a series of gospel meetings arranged by the first church!

(8) It would be sinful for a church to allow a “member” of another congregation to visit their assembly on the Lord’s Day and be taught!

(9) It would be sinful for a church to allow a “member” of another congregation to attend a Bible class arranged and provided by that church!

(10) Before the elders of a church could hand a tract or a copy of the New Testament to **any** person, they would need to make sure that the person was **not** a “member” of another congregation!

(11) Before the elders of a church could invite **any** person to attend an assembly of the church, they would need to make sure that the person was **not** a “member” of another congregation!

(12) **No Christian** would be allowed to teach the truth on any subject to a “member” of another congregation **UNLESS** a Christian who is **not** an “elder” would have the right to **“undertake, at least in part, the teaching of another congregation”** according to the reasoning of our brother, but neither the elders nor the congregation under its elders would

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have that right. NOTE: This would mean that an **individual** would have the right to cross "territorial boundaries" but elders (or a congregation) would **not** have the right to do so.

If it is **not** Scriptural for a church (with its elders) to teach the truth to "members" of another congregation, **WE SHOULD NOT PRACTICE SUCH REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES!** However, I trust that a consideration of the above "consequences" will help us to see that in the light of Scriptural principles that **it is Scriptural for a church (with its elders) to teach other saints as well as alien sinners!**

SUMMARY: A local church (under the oversight of its elders) has a

Scriptural right to send preachers to teach the truth, even to other churches! A local church has a Scriptural right to send the truth in written form to brethren of other churches! THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED HERE WOULD CERTAINLY AUTHORIZE CHURCHES TO TEACH THE TRUTH BY RADIO, TV, TRACTS, BULLETINS, CLASSES AND IN ASSEMBLIES TO SAINTS (local and elsewhere) AS WELL AS TO SINNERS! However, let us always keep in mind that A LOCAL CHURCH (under its elders) MUST NOT TAKE THE OVERRSIGHT OF ANOTHER CHURCH and "TEND" or "RULE" IT! (Cf. 1 Peter 5:1-4).

(CRS)

The bound volumes (1982-1990) of THE INSTRUCTOR should be ready soon.

— SENTENCE SERMONS —

He who will not forgive others thereby burns the bridge over which he must pass.

* * * * *

A man has the right to do as he pleases **only** as long as he pleases to do right.

* * * * *

The pleasures of sin are seasonal but the wages of sin are eternal.

* * * * *

For each person killed by a mad dog thousands are killed by liquor. However, in this "enlightened age" the dog is shot and the liquor is licensed!

* * * * *

When you throw mud you lose ground.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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