

THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," Timothy 3:16

Volume 6

MARCH, 1969

Number 3

"AND THE LORD ADDED"

In this age people are added to a great many churches. All will admit that the church to which the Lord added those on Pentecost is that to which all should be added now. On this there can be no controversy. To be added to it is to be where the Lord wants us. To be added to something else is of no value. It is important, therefore, to determine whether the church to which we belong is that to which the Lord added the first converts.

I want you to turn to the second chapter of Acts and read again the incidents of that memorable day. Peter was the chief spokesman. In his sermon he showed that Christ is the promised Messiah and that God made Him both Lord and Christ. The people who heard the sermon were "pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? . . . And Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Then in verse 41 we read: "They that received his word were baptized:

and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." Now verse 47: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Please notice the scriptural teaching. When the people heard the gospel and obeyed the words of Peter they had the promise of salvation. When they were saved, the Lord added them to the church. The word of God nowhere intimates that a man is saved by one process and joins the church by another. The Lord takes care of both.

If man cannot save man, neither can they add him to the Lord's church. When a person obeys the Gospel he does not need to seek membership in the church of his choice. The Lord saves him and adds him to the church of GOD'S CHOICE. No man nor group of men can keep a saved man out of the Lord's church, nor can they vote an unsaved man into the church. For men to claim the authority to open and close the doors of the church is to claim authority nowhere taught in the Bible and is to usurp authority which

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Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting on Highway 431 South, Albertville, Alabama. 35950.

CARROL R. SUTTON
EDITOR

Send all questions, comments, and criticism to the editor, Route 3, Albertville, Alabama 35950.

Editorial . . .

Daily Religion

Religion is not something we merely feel or get, but it is what we DO. Pure religion is DOING the will of God. James tells us that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this. To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (Jas. 1:27). Unless we "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction," we are not practicing pure religion. But there is another aspect to true religion that James mentions here that we must concern ourselves with that of keeping ourselves "unspotted from the world." Religion that is pure is a way of life. It is practiced day by day.

DAILY STUDY

Just as sure as the body requires daily food and water, so the soul needs spiritual food daily. Jesus said: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4). He further said: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6). The apostle Peter said: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Referring to the law of God, the psalmist said: ". . . It is my meditation all the day." Luke said of the Bereans of old; "These were more noble than those in

Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11). The true Christian meditates in God's law both day and night.

DAILY CROSS BEARING

In Luke 9:23 Jesus said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me." The word "cross" as used here suggests duty. We have certain obligations to meet and burdens to bear. We must meet our obligations, bear our responsibilities and bear our burdens daily, and follow Christ. The trying of our faith worketh patience. We must bravely persevere. We must endure to the end and be faithful unto death in order to receive the crown of life.

DAILY TEACHING

We learn from Heb. 5:12 that we should for reason of time be teachers. The servant of the Lord must be "apt to teach." "And he (Jesus) taught daily in the temple." (Luke 19:47). "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they (apostles) ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Acts 5:42). The apostle Paul disputed "in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him." (Acts 17:17). We further learn from Acts 19:8-10 that for two years Paul disputed daily in the school of Tyrannus. The salvation of others should so burden our hearts that we would endeavor daily to teach others.

DAILY PRAYER

Jesus said "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." (Luke 18:1). Paul suggests that Christians should "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17), continue instant in prayer, (See Rom.

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12:12), and pray always. (See Eph. 6:18). The psalmist David said, "Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily." (Psa. 86:3). Our blessings as well as our needs are daily, therefore we should pray daily. We should pray often and regularly.

DAILY MINISTRATION

In Acts 6:1-6 reference is made to "the daily ministration." The congregation in Jerusalem had the business (or duty) of "serving tables." In other words, the needy among them were helped. Their needs were supplied. This was done on a daily basis since obviously there was a daily need. The church (in a collective sense) has the responsibility of "relieving widows indeed" (1 Tim. 5:13-16), and other needy "saints" or "brethren." (See Acts 4:32-34; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8 & 9). All Christians (individually) has the obligation "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" (Jas. 1:27), and to "do good unto all men." (Gal. 6:10). Of course, our responsibility is determined by our ability and opportunity. We must be compassionate and merciful toward others.

DAILY EXHORTATION

With many other words Peter testified and exhorted saying, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Acts 2:40). Today sinners need to be exhorted to obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. Saints need to be exhorted daily to be faithful to the Lord. At Antioch Barnabas "exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord," because he was a good man who was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 11:22-24).

Jude said in verse 3 that "it was needful" for him to write to saints and "exhort" them to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The Hebrew writer

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APRIL 6-13th 7:00 P.M. Daily
SUNDAY 11 A. M.: DICK WARD: "Salvation: Past, Present & Future".

SUNDAY 6 P. M.: ROLAND PERSALL: "Spiritual Worship".

MONDAY: GENE FROST: "Crisis in Authority".

TUESDAY: LEONARD TYLER: "Six Essentials for Unity".

WEDNESDAY: LEO PLYLER: "Christian's Responsibility in Recreation".

THURSDAY: TONIS DAVIS: "The Lost Book".

FRIDAY: FRANKLIN PUCKETT: "The Value of Trials".

SATURDAY: LOWELL BLANKENSHIP: "The Whole Duty of Man".

SUNDAY 11 A.M.: JOHN CLARK: "Jesus & The Scripture".

SUNDAY 6 P.M.: ULES REID: "What Kind of Epitaph Do You Want?."

East Albertville
CHURCH OF CHRIST
Highway 431 South
Albertville, Alabama

DAILY RELIGION Cont'd

said, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Heb. 3:12-13). All Christians need exhorting by others and they also have the responsibility of exhorting others.

It doesn't matter how religious a person may appear,, unless there is a daily practice of God's Word there is no "pure and undefiled religion." Pious display, vain philosophy, and deceit will not constitute nor adequately substitute for "pure religion." To be genuine religion, the word of God MUST be practiced. Congregations of Christ will increase "in numbers daily" where and when there is a daily practice of the last will and testament of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

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"AND THE LORD ADDED"

belongs to God alone.

From the day of Pentecost on, the Lord has added to the church those being saved. They were saved and added at one and the same time by one and the same Lord. They BELIEVED the gospel, REPENTED of their sins, were BAPTIZED into Christ and then the Lord forgave their sins, and added them to HIS church. We have no intimation that God ever changed His plan. Throughout the New Testament we find not a single departure from that model. He adds people today as He added them then. Consequently, if we are added as they were added on the day of Pentecost, we may rest assured that the Lord does it. If we are added in some other way, we have no such assurance. Nay, verily, we can be assured that it is neither the Lord's do-

ing nor the Lord's church.

Today, therefore, we have but to place our hand in His and walk in the footsteps of those first converts. This we can do, and with this we have divine assurance. We need ask no group of men to vote upon our case. The Lord will add us to His church and no man nor group can tell Him, nay!

—Howard Horton in THE GRANNY
WHITE BULLETIN March 14, 1957

Interest

"I can't get interested in the church", remarked a young lady.

"NO," was the reply given her. "You can hardly expect to. It is somewhat like getting interest at the bank. You have to put in something first, and the more you put in — time or money or prayer — the more the interest grows."

—Selected via GOSPEL MINUTES

Sentence Sermons

If absence really makes the heart grow fonder, some people must really love the church.

It is a sickly faith that is shaken because some frail human being goes wrong.

Remember, young lady, that the man attracted by cosmetics isn't worth attracting.

The difference between stumbling blocks and steppingstones is the way in which you use them.

A lot of people who buy on time, sure don't pay that way.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
Route 3, Highway 431 So.
Albertville, Alabama 35950

Entered as second-class matter at
Albertville, Alabama