

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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HONESTY AND BACKBONE

It is indeed most difficult to be honest with one's self. This statement is made with the realization that when the time comes that we begin to make decisions with regard to religious matters, that we have already lived several years and been greatly influenced by our environment. By our environment we mean our parents, other family, friends and associates. These will instill within us their knowledge, beliefs, and opinions. As our environment assists in molding our lives, we will partake of its prejudices which in turn will make it difficult for us to be honest with ourselves.

Often one hears another say upon hearing another advance his belief, "If this is so then my mother is lost." Again, as one searches for truth and seeks to arrive at a conclusion he might say, "If this is so then our preaching and practice in another area is not according to truth." Our relatives, our beliefs, and our practices do **not** change **truth**, but they do tend to prejudice us, making it difficult to be honest with ourselves, even if we have a love of the truth. Only by continual scripture-searching, soul-searching and proper life changing can we manifest that we are truly seeking to be honest with ourselves. This we have a duty to do for "the love of the truth" demands it. (2 Thessalonians 2:10). "The love of the truth" will cause us to seek diligently to know the truth and thus will cause us to endeavor to consider the evidence **HONESTLY** in our search for the truth.

For example, let us notice the events surrounding the miracle of Jesus healing a man born blind. (John 9). This miracle was the evidence to prove to the people of the occasion that Jesus was the Son of God. Instead of considering the evidence honestly, the Pharisees were prejudiced by their tradition concerning the Sabbath and said, "This man is not from God, because he keepeth not the sabbath." (vs. 16). Their tradition completely disclosed the miracle from their view. The parents of the man born blind were **afraid** to consider the evidence honestly "for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him." (Verses 22-23). This shows how difficult it is for us to not let other things influence us besides the **FACTS** in the case.

However, in the midst of those who were motivated by fear, blinded by tradition and impervious to evidence because of a closed mind, we see one standing out from the rest because of his honest consideration of being moved from it by force of his environment. Upon being questioned concerning the origin of Jesus, the man born blind showed honest consideration of the evidence by replying, "Why, herein is the marvel, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he opened mine eyes. We know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and do his

(Continued on page 3)

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Editorial . . .

What Is Your Life? (No. 3)

In the January issue of THE INSTRUCTOR the question of "What Is Your Life" was discussed from the standpoint of its origin. It was clearly shown from the Scriptures that man originated with God. Man is the offspring of God. God is the "Father of spirits." God is our Creator!

The question of "What Is Your Life with reference to its purpose" was discussed in the last issue of THE INSTRUCTOR. It was studied from a negative viewpoint. We shined from the Scriptures that the purpose of man on earth is not: (1) To obtain worldly wisdom, or (2) To gain earthly wealth or accumulate material riches, or (3) To enjoy worldly pleasures, power, fame or honor.

Let us now consider the question that James asked in James 4:14 when he said: "For what is your life" from a positive standpoint with reference to its purpose.

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE WITH REFERENCE TO ITS PURPOSE?

THE PURPOSE OF MAN ON EARTH IS TO GLORIFY GOD. The Psalmist said: "Ye that fear the Lord, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel." (Psalm 22:23). Thus we can see that God

expected the Israelites to glorify him back in Old Testament times. During his personal ministry on earth, Jesus told his disciples to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16). In writing to saints in Romans 15:6 Paul said: "That ye may with one mind and one mouth GLORIFY GOD. . . ." and in 1 Corinthians 6:20 Paul said: ". . . therefore, GLORIFY GOD in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Peter said: "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed: but let him GLORIFY GOD on this behalf." (1 Peter 4:16). In 1 Cor. 10:31 Paul said: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD."

HOW DOES ONE GLORIFY GOD? One can glorify God by fearing God and obeying His will. Solomon said: ". . . Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (See Eccl. 12:13). One can glorify God by letting his light so shine before men that they may see his good works and glorify God. One can glorify God by suffering as a Christian and not being ashamed of it. One may glorify God by "eating or drinking" and doing all that he does to the glory of God!

THE PURPOSE OF MAN ON EARTH IS TO PREPARE FOR ETERNITY. The reason why Solomon said to fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" is because "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (See Eccl. 12:13-14). Paul said: "For we must all appear before the JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST . . ." (2 Cor. 5:10), and "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. 14:12). Jesus said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 7:21). It is quite obvious from the reading of these passages that **ONE MUST OBEY GOD in order to prepare for eternity and thus be saved eternally.** (Also see Hebrews 5:8-9).

Primary obedience to the gospel involves faith, repentance, confession, and

(Continued on page 3)

Purposeful Preaching

Nathan's subject was adultery, murder, and kindred lusts; but he spoke of a little ewe lamb which a rich man took from the bosom of its owner. (2 Samuel 12). The problem was that of application—getting the audience to apply to **self** the standard by which others were readily condemned.

Nathan's audience deplored "sin," and could list many sins. Nathan's courage as a "preacher" was little tested by a rip-snorting sermon on "Adultery"; but when he told the King, "**Thou art the man**" — aye, here was his moment of truth.

John (the Immerser) could decry the awful sins of the times, and call upon people to "REPENT" — out there in the wilderness — and King Herod be unmoved. But John said unto Herod, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." (Mark 6:18).

Several years ago one of "our" ultra-liberal preachers criticized John's direct "approach" — suggesting John need not have "lost his head." In a sense he was right about it. John could have spoken in generalities, kept his head, and perhaps his "job" — **but he would have failed his appointed purpose, and lost his soul.**

Nathan and John used different ways of reaching their targets; and different means of presenting truth are needed today. **But both presented and applied the truth.** When they were finished the audience knew what was wrong, and felt the sting of rebuke.

Today preachers speak of "secretarianism" without explaining that this spirit lives in the "party" concept of the church. They cry for "unity" but refuse open discussion of issues that divide, with God's word the final authority. This is hypocrisy.

Tell the people they must "Do Bible Things in Bible Ways" — and they will love you. Tell them a church-sponsored skating party is not a Bible thing; and church support of human institutions is not a Bible Way; and you may lose your "job," but you will have served your purpose as a preacher.

Oh, John! Nathan! Your kind are sorely needed in these generations.

—Robert Turner via
PAR PROCLAIMER

(Continued from page 1)

HONESTY AND BACKBONE

will, him he heareth. Since the world began it was never heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. **IF THIS MAN WERE NOT FROM GOD, HE COULD DO NOTHING.**" (Verses 30-33). Let us remember that the threat of being cast out of the synagogue applied to him as well as his parents. Also it is most probable that he had learned of the Pharisees' tradition of the Sabbath which they bound as law. Yet he went contrary to their tradition, and showed no fear of their threats when he boldly confessed Jesus as being of God. An honest consideration of the evidence builded within him conviction that would not sway to fit the environ. Even when the threat became a reality and "they cast him out" of the synagogue, he still stood by his conviction and confessed Jesus as "Lord." (Verses 24-35, 38).

This world and the Lord's church badly need men who will honestly consider the evidence in their search for truth, and then men who will stick by their conviction regardless of the consequences brought by men. Too many are willing to be molded simply by their environ and are unwilling to fight against the current. We need **HONESTY** and **BACKBONE.**

—Dave Bradford

(Continued from page 2)

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

baptism "**for remission of sins.**" (See Romans 1:16; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Mark 16:15-16; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 2:37-38; Gal. 3:26-27). As a child of God, faithfulness is required. (See 1 Cor. 4:2; Rev. 2:10; 1 Cor. 15:58). One must be faithful in his worship to God and in his daily life as a Christian in all areas in order to **glorify God and prepare for eternity.**

What is YOUR life with reference to its purpose on earth? Is it YOUR desire to **glorify God and prepare for eternity?** Are YOU fulfilling your God given purpose here on earth? If not, it is **imperative that you begin today!** Tomorrow may be too late. It may be later than you think. **NOW IS THE TIME TO BEGIN TO SERVE GOD THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!**

(CRS)

JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

Some time ago there was a faithful dog, who was a constant companion of a small child. One day, both dog and child disappeared. A diligent search by parents, friends, and neighbors proved to be fruitless. The child could not be found.

After several hours the dog returned home, but was covered with blood. Naturally, the father jumped to the conclusion that the dog had become vicious and killed the child. The dog must be destroyed, so he got his gun and killed the dog.

A little later, the child was found in the woods unharmed. Nearby was the body of a panther that the dog had killed in his struggle to protect the child.

So often we are guilty of conclusion jumping. We take action, or at least express our opinion **before considering all the facts**. The result is usually unpleasant and at times irreparable damage is done.

So, be careful about what you think, say and do. You might be guilty of shooting a dog that ought to be praised.

—Selected from

TIDINGS OF TRUTH

SOLOMON SAID: "An ungodly man diggeth up evil; and in his lips there is a burning fire." (Prov. 16:27).

A Troubled Conscience

"As the stag which the huntsman hits flies through bush and brake, over stock and stone, and thereby exhausts its strength, but does not expel the deadly bullet from its body; so does experience show that they who have troubled consciences run from place to place, but, wherever they go, bear with them their dangerous wounds."

—Gotthold

The Hill-Sutton Debate

The Hill-Sutton Debate still has NOT been re-scheduled although Albert Hill and the West Hobbs Street brethren in Athens, Alabama agreed last April that they would set a date for it in a short time.

Albert Hill signed to affirm that "It is Scriptural for a church to permit the use of her building for Bible-centered schools, kindergartens and for fellowship meals and social gatherings." **Question:** Have the Hobbs St. brethren and Albert Hill learned that their proposition is NOT Scriptural? Is that the reason for the **delay** and **silence** relative to setting a date for the discussion? I have been sorely disappointed in them.

Sentence Sermons

Others may ruin your reputation, but only **you** can damage your character.

It is far more important to make a good life than a good living.

If you expect to draw true interest, you should have true principle.

Godly talk does not always imply a godly walk, but it should.

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