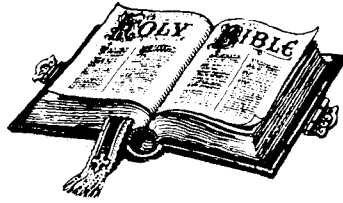


THE INSTRUCTOR



"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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GOD HATES DIVORCE

"I'm getting a divorce, but I don't plan to marry again." These words are being heard with increasing frequency. Usually the spokesman is thinking that God allows the right to divorce, but would disapprove remarriage. The truth is, however; **Divorce itself is sinful unless it is for the cause of fornication.**

Consider Matthew 19:3-6. The question originally asked Jesus by the Pharisees was not concerning remarriage, but concerning divorce: Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Jesus' reply to that question: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." It was only after further questioning that Jesus discussed the problem of remarriage and adultery.

Consider Malachi 2:16. "For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away." Even under the old covenant God did not approve of indiscriminate divorce. It is likely that the "tears" of verse 12 which "covered the altar" and caused the Lord to refuse their offering, were the tears of those who had been wrongfully put away.

Consider Matthew 5:32. "Who-soever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery." Observe the words, "causeth her" or "maketh her" (ASV). This writer understands this verse to say that if one divorces his wife for any cause other than fornication,

he places her in a position of temptation to commit adultery, and shares the guilt when she does commit adultery. On the other hand, if he puts her away for the cause of fornication, he has put her away legitimately, and shares no guilt in whatever adultery she may subsequently commit.

Consider I Cor. 7:16: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband." Observe the word "command" or "charge" (ASV). The following verse (verse 11) does not negate or nullify this command, but simply recognizes that one might disobey the Lord's command (in which case he sins — I John 3:4), and states his options if he has disobeyed.

Not only does the Lord command husband and wife to live together, but he commands them to meet one another's physical needs (I Cor. 7:3-5) and to love one another (Eph. 5:25; Titus 2:4-5).

If one companion in a marriage fails along these lines, the other must still be obedient to God, seeking to be what he would have him (or her) to be in the marriage relationship. Never should the thought of divorce or separation ever enter the mind unless fornication occurs

We are not suggesting that divorce itself is "adultery," but we are saying that divorce for any cause other than

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CARROL R. SUTTON
EDITOR

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Editorial - - -

"PROOF REQUESTED, PROOF GIVEN" (No. 24)

In THE INSTRUCTOR last month we examined, in the light of the Scriptures, the statement that "**Churches have a Scriptural right to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities for the young people**" and concluded that it is **false!** The fact that most denominations and many churches of Christ have been "caught up" in such activities does **not** change the fact that God has **not** authorized such.

We hereby challenge those who practice and promote such activities to **prove** by the Scriptures that such activities are Scriptural. We are willing to engage in a series of discussions on this subject with those who advocate such activities. Will we hear from someone on these matters?

Number **twenty-five** is the last item in the list of twenty-five things that appeared in THE INSTRUCTOR, October, 1983, under "**Specific Wickedness**" for which **Scriptural proof** for the opposite view (than that stated in # 25) has been requested. It reads as follows:

"25. The blood of Christ will cleanse the child of God of the sins he commits either through weakness or ignorance without repentance and prayer."

COMMENTS: **Presuming and asserting** that "The blood of Christ will cleanse the child of God of the sins he

commits either through weakness or ignorance without repentance and prayer" does **not prove** that such is the case. The person who teaches the above doctrine has the **obligation to prove by the Scriptures** that such teaching is true. **Desiring** that such teaching be true does **not** prove its truthfulness. The fact that it seems "reasonable" does **not** prove that it is right! The fact that "old" or "popular" preachers advocate such teaching is no indication that **God** accepts it! Even the fact that such doctrine is "very full of comfort" does **not** prove it to be sound doctrine. **Our only standard for determining what God's will is on this and on all other subjects is the Word of God as revealed in the Scriptures!** (See 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 John 9 & 1 Peter 4:11).

SALVATION IS BY GRACE

Let us consider these facts:

1. The apostle Paul affirms in Ephesians 2:1-10 that the Ephesians were saved by the **grace of God.**

2. In writing to Titus, Paul stated the fact that salvation is brought by the **grace of God.** (See Titus 2:11-12).

3. We learn from acts 20:24 that the gospel is "the gospel of the **grace of God.**"

4. Justification is by the **grace of God.** (See Romans 3:24 & Titus 3:7).

5. The **grace of God** that saves teaches us. (See Titus 2:11-12).

CONCLUSION: Salvation is by the grace of God! Without God's grace there is no salvation!

CLEANSING IS BY THE BLOOD

Let us consider these facts:

1. Jesus shed His blood for the remission of sins. (See Matthew 26:28).

2. Redemption is through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins. (See Col. 1:13-14; Eph. 1:7 & 1 Peter 1:19).

3. Justification is by the blood. (See Romans 5:9).

4. Jesus Christ washes people (sinners) from their sins in His own blood. (See Rev. 1:5 & Rev. 7:14).

5. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. (See 1 John 1:7).

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CONCLUSION: Cleansing from sin is by the blood of Jesus Christ! Without the blood of Christ there is no cleansing from sin!

IS SALVATION BY GRACE CONDITIONAL?

Is salvation by grace **conditional** or is it **unconditional**? Some people contend that it is **conditional**, but others contend that it is **unconditional**. How can we know? There is no passage in God's Word that says specifically, "Salvation by grace is conditional," or "Salvation by grace is unconditional." If there are **no** conditions stated anywhere in God's Word, then we must conclude that salvation is unconditional. However, if there is one condition (or more) stated in the Word of God, we must conclude that salvation is conditional.

If salvation by grace is conditional, what are the conditions? In reply to the question by the jailor, "**Sirs, what must I do to be saved,**" Paul and Silas said: "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**" (Acts 16:31). **Belief** (or faith) is here stated as a condition! Hence salvation is conditional! **Confession** of the Lord Jesus with the mouth and **belief** are stated in Romans 10:9-10 as conditions of salvation. **Repentance** and **baptism** are given in Acts 2:38 as conditions of salvation from or remission of past sins. Without question, **salvation from past sins is conditional!** How do we know? **God's Word says so!** Faith, repentance, confession and baptism are conditions of salvation. How do we know? **God's Word says so!** There is no promise of salvation to those who do **not** meet the conditions.

IS CLEANSING BY THE BLOOD CONDITIONAL?

Does the blood of Christ cleanse the child of God of the sins he commits either through weakness or ignorance conditionally or unconditionally? Some people contend that the blood of Christ cleanses the child of God conditionally, but others contend that it

cleanses unconditionally. How can we know? There is no passage in God's Word that says specifically, "The blood of Christ cleanses the child of God conditionally," or "The blood of Christ cleanses the child of God unconditionally." If there are **no** conditions of cleansing (of the child of God of the sins he commits) stated anywhere in God's Word, then we must conclude that such cleansing is unconditional. However, if there is one condition (or more) stated in the Word of God, we are forced to conclude that such cleansing by the blood is conditional.

Cleansing by the blood is **conditional**, but before we notice some conditions a few observations are in order.

1. Such expressions as "forgiveness of sins," "remission of sins," "sins . . . blotted out," "salvation (from sins)," "washed (in the blood)," cleansed by the blood, etc. basically suggest the same idea. They suggest that a person's sins are no longer held against him, but they are forgiven by the God of heaven.

2. There is **no** conclusive evidence that God makes such a distinction in sins committed either through weakness or ignorance and other sins that He forgives the sins of "weakness or ignorance" unconditionally, but He forgives other sins conditionally.

3. Appeals to hypothetical situations do **not** prove a teaching to be true.

4. The fact that someone labels a teaching as a "yo-yo" religion or as one being "in-grace, out of grace" does **not** prove that such teaching is false.

5. Salvation (remission of sins) can **not** be received on any **less** conditions than may be stated in one passage of Scripture. However, we may learn from other passages that there are additional conditions. Let us remember that David said to Jehovah: "**The SUM of thy word is truth; . . .**" (Psalms 119:160 ASV). Also see Psa. 139:17.

IS REPENTANCE AND PRAYER ESSENTIAL?

If cleansing of the sins of a child of God by the blood is conditional, what are the conditions? In Acts 8:22 when a child of God sinned, the apostle Peter said: "**Repent therefore of this thy**

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GOD HATES DIVORCE

fornication is sin. Christians must not be influenced by the loose standards that prevail in the world in which they live.

— Bill Hall

Editor's Note: This article needs to be read and re-read. The truth it teaches should be emphasized over and over again. It seems that many brethren (including a number of preachers) do not understand the fact that **divorce is sinful** (unless for the cause of fornication) and that **God hates divorce!** Every preacher (as well as others) who encourages a woman to separate from or divorce her husband or remain separated from her husband by saying: "There is no sin involved as long as you do not remarry" is guilty of encouraging a person to violate the law of God and will have to give an account to God for so doing in the day of judgment — unless he repents! Brethren, instead of encouraging women to leave their husbands (when fornication is not the cause), **reprove them!**

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wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." **Repentance** and **prayer** are here stated as conditions of forgiveness for a child of God. Hence cleansing of sins for a child of God by the blood of Christ is **conditional!** How do we know? **God's Word** says so! **Confession of sins** and **prayer** are mentioned in James 5:16 as conditions of spiritual healing (forgiveness). I John 1:9 also gives **confession of sins** as a condition of forgiveness or cleansing by the blood for a child of God. Repentance, confession of sins and prayer are conditions of cleansing by the blood of Christ of sins (including those committed either through weakness or ignorance) committed by a child of God. How do we know? **God's Word says so!** There is **NO PROMISE** to a child of God of cleansing by the blood of Christ of his sins (including those committed either through weakness or ignorance) without repentance, confession and prayer!

(CRS)

(To be continued)

— SENTENCE SERMONS —

If you hold the truth lightly, you are likely to let it slip.

* * * * *

The trouble with little sins is they cause people to be lost!

* * * * *

Truth profits only if it is properly used.

* * * * *

The city of happiness is in the proper state of mind.

* * * * *

Please remember: When you take another person's time, you take a part of his life!

CHURCH OF CHRIST
1107 Highway 431 South
Albertville, Alabama 35950