

# 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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## WHERE IS YOUR INFLUENCE?

A short time back brother Ferrell Jenkins visited with an aged disciple, brother Henry S. Ficklin, who studied at the feet of J.W. McGarvey years ago. We let brother Jenkins tell his story:

"In the 19th century when the church was divided over the use of instrumental music and the missionary society, McGarvey took what might be described as a "middle-of-the-road" position. He opposed the use of the instrument, but favored the society. But even though he opposed the organ in worship and moved his membership when the Broadway church, Lexington, Ky., adopted the organ by majority vote, he continued to fraternize with those who used it. What about his students whom he taught that the instrument in worship was wrong? Did they follow his Scriptural advice? No!

Brother Ficklin commented that **McGarvey's influence went with his fellowship and not with his teaching.**"

In 1950 brother J.P. Sewell, in a Harding College lecture, recalled the following advice, given to him by brother McGarvey away back in 1902. It is advice preachers today might ponder.

"You are on the right road, and whatever you do, don't let anybody persuade you that

you can successfully combat error by fellowshipping it and going along with it. I have tried it. I believed at the start that was the only way to do it. I have never held membership in a congregation that uses instrumental music. I have, however, accepted invitations to preach without distinction between churches that used it and churches that didn't. I've gone along with their papers and magazines and things of that sort. During all these years I have taught the truth as the New Testament teaches it to every young preacher who passed through the College of the Bible, yet, I do not know of more than six of those men who are preaching the truth today. It won't work!"

**Our influence goes with what we do rather than with what we say!**

**Robert F. Turner** in PLAIN TALK,  
May, 1967.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Each of us should endeavor to teach the truth and do our best to bring our practice into complete harmony with the truth. **John said:** "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evildeeds." (2 John 10-11).

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## Editorial

### NAAMAN AND HIS CLEANSING

Much can be learned from a study of Old Testament characters. **"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."** (Romans 15:4). A study of Naaman in 2 Kings 5 can prove interesting and profitable to us. Let us now consider some salient facts:

1. **NAAMAN WAS A GREAT MAN!** Naaman was captian of the host of the king of Syria and was a great man with his master. He was honourable and a mighty man of valor, but he was afflicted with leprosy which was a dreaded disease. Today we find many people who are great, famous and mighty in many ways, but they are not Christians. They are afflicted with sin! They are lost!

2. **A LITTLE MAID WAS INTERESTED IN NAAMAN'S CLEANSING.** This Israelite maid told her mistress that she wished that Naaman was with the prophet in Samaria so he could be cleansed of his leprosy. Today Christians are interested in those who are lost being saved. They preach the gospel and encourage others to listen and obey the gospel. (See Romans 1:13-18; Mk. 16:15-16; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

3. **NAAMAN REALIZED HIS LEPROUS CONDITION.** In order for sinners to be saved today they must realize their lost condition and put forth effort to be spiritually cleansed.

4. **NAAMAN WAS MISLEAD.** The king of Syria lead Naaman to believe that he should take a letter and go unto the king of Israel. Today many are lead to believe they can be saved by going to a Catholic priest, a Jewish rabbi or a Protestant pastor. They, too, are misled.

5. **NAAMAN WENT TO THE WRONG PLACE FOR HELP.** He went to the king of Israel instead of the prophet of God. The king of Isreal had no way to cleanse Naaman of his leprosy. Today there are many people who go to the wrong place for spiritual healing or salvation. They go to denominational church, secret orders and men instead of going to God's Word to learn God's will. It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. (Ser Jer. 10:23). A way may seem right and yet the end thereof be the ways of death. (See Prov. 14:12). We are completely furnished unto every good work by the Scriptures. (See 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

6. **ELISHA TOLD NAAMAN TO WASH SEVEN TIMES IN JORDAN.** The instructions were simple and could not be misunderstood. **"Go and wash in Jordan seven times,"** was easily understood. The terms of salvation for the alien sinner are plain and simple. They are easily understood. They are **faith, repentance, confession, and baptism for the remission of sins!** (See Heb. 11:6; John 20:30-31; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30-31; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27).

7. **NAAMAN BECAME ANGRY!** Naaman resented the instruction given to him by Elisha. He thought another way would have been better. Today, there are many who resent God's instructions and they want to do things their way in religion. **"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."** (Prov. 16:25).

8. **NAAMAN SAID: "BEHOLD I THOUGHT!"** Naaman thought Elisha should lay his hands on him and pray for him. He also thought the rivers of Damascus were better than all the waters of Israel. He saw no reason for not washing in them if he needed to wash. **"So he turned and went away in a rage."** Today many think their way is better than God's way. They think they can

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### NAAMAN AND HIS CLEANSING

be saved if someone will lay hands on them and pray. If they have to be baptized they think one action and one purpose is just as good as another. So they go away in a rage when they hear God's simple plan of salvation.

**9. NAAMAN WAS CLEANSED WHEN HE OBEYED THE INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN BY ELISHA THE PROPHET!** We read: **"Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.** (2 Kings 5:14). When one lays aside his pride and humbly obeys the gospel of Christ today, he is washed in Christ's blood and thus cleansed from his sins! (See Romans 1:16; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 5:29; 1 Peter 1:22-23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

**10. NAAMAN'S FAITH WAS SHOWN IN HIS OBEDIENCE!** When Naaman considered the words of the prophet and obeyed them, his faith resulted in his cleansing. There was no power in the river Jordan, but he was cleansed of his leprosy when his faith obeyed God's instructions! Today, there is no power in water to cleanse us from sin, but when our faith obeys God's instructions to **"repent and be baptized ... in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"** (Acts 2:38) we will be washed in the blood of Christ and thus be saved from sins! **Our faith must obey to save us!**

**HAVE YOU BEEN CLEANSED FROM SIN?** If not, if you will believe and obey God's will, He will wash you and make you white in the precious blood of Jesus Christ! (CRS)

### I AM NOT BOUND TO WIN

I am not bound to win,  
But I am bound to be true.  
I am not bound to succeed,  
But I am bound to live up to what  
Light I have.  
I must stand with anybody that stands  
right;  
Stand with him while he is right,  
And part with him when he goes wrong.  
**Abraham Lincoln**

### SERMONS WE SEE

I'd rather see a sermon than hear one  
any day,  
I'd rather one should walk with me than  
merely show the way.  
The eye's a better pupil and more willing  
than the ear;  
Fine counsel is confusing, but example's  
always clear;  
And the best of all the preachers are the  
men who live their creeds.  
For to see the good in action is what  
everybody needs.  
I can soon learn how to do it if you'll let  
me see it done.  
I can watch your hands in action, but  
your tongue too fast may run.  
And the lectures you deliver may be  
very wise and true;  
But I'd rather get my lesson by observing  
what you do.  
For I may misunderstand you and the  
high advice you give,  
But there's no misunderstanding how  
you act and how you live.

**Edgar A. Guest**

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## HUMAN ORGANIZATIONS

Human organizations through which to do the Lord's work reflect upon the wisdom of God. Since the Lord's church has been designed by the wisdom of God, it is sufficient to accomplish His purposes. When men build human organizations as an aid or substitute for God's organization they give evidence of their lack of faith in the sufficiency of that which God has provided and their dissatisfaction with God's ways. (Isaiah 55:6-9). Men have the same right to write a chapter and add it to the Bible as to build an anteroom on the church of God.

Since God has given by divine wisdom an organization to the church, the congregation, and has made it sufficient to accomplish His purpose, it is the only medium of work and worship through which the Christian can accomplish His purpose, and we must be satisfied with His will, His way and His word.

Roy E. Cogdill

## THE HILL-SUTTON DEBATE

THE HILL-SUTTON DEBATE will be re-scheduled just as soon as **Albert Hill** and the "elders" of the West Hobbs Street church in Athens, Alabama muster up enough "courage" to keep their word. It will, indeed, take a "ton of courage" for them to "go through" with their agreement to **deny** that "**It is not Scriptural for churches of Christ to offer contest, picnics, parties and free gifts to all bus riders as incentives to encourage attendance at services.**"

If you will analyze the above proposition you may see why it is taking **Albert Hill** and the "elders" so long to muster up the needed courage. Is it any "wonder" that they might be "**so busy saving souls**" that they just don't have time to discuss and decide on a date for the debate? Yes, we are still waiting for a date to be set so we can proceed with preparation for the debate.

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# Sentence Sermons

If you wish to dwell in the house of many mansions, you must make reservation in advance.

When you are through learning, you are through.

Unless and until a man trusts God with his money, he really doesn't trust God at all.

A house without books is like a house without windows, **Horace Mann**

There is nothing so frightful as an active ignorance. **Goethe**

You may think that alcohol peps you up, but in the end it lets you down.

A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love. **St. Basil**

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CHURCH OF CHRIST

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