

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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"GOOD . . . IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN BORN"

"Good . . . if he had never been born." (Matthew 26:20-25; Mark 14:17-21). This statement was made by the Lord about Judas who betrayed Him. This is certainly saying a lot; it would have been better for Judas if he had never been born. WHY? Because he missed heaven and will wind up in hell. In Acts 1:25 it says that **"he might go to his own place"** which is hell. This means there is a hell and it is such a terrible place it would be better for one to never be born than to be born and go to hell.

We read about many people in the Bible who will go to hell and it would have been better if they had never been born. In Luke 16:19-31 we read about the rich farmer. In Matthew 23:33 we read about some Pharisees. In Matthew 7:22-23 we read about some "religious people."

Would it have been better if you had never been born? Certainly, if you miss heaven and go to hell. This is not only true of Judas, but would be true of any person.

Some of you may be thinking; why Judas was a "devil from the beginning-called "fellowship meals," etc.) and

ning." That is what the Bible says. Friend, I would like to cast my eyes on this verse. Give me book, chapter and verse, please. No, Judas could cast out devils along with the other apostles when they went out on the limited commission, (Matthew 10:1-15), and Jesus said in Matthew 12:22-28 that Satan does **not** cast out Satan.

The problem with Judas was the same that many have today — love of money. (1 Tim. 6:10). He was the treasurer and stole from it. (John 12:1-6 etc.).

Judas allowed Satan to **"enter into him,"** (Lk. 22:3-6; John 13:2, 27, etc.) and Satan was not **always** in him. Ananias and Sapphira had the same problem. (Acts 5:2). Judas, **"by transgression fell,"** (Acts 1:25), and you cannot fall from something you do not have as would be the case if **"he were a devil from the beginning."**

What about John 6:70-71? Notice the verse says **is**, not **always was**. As we have noticed, Satan **entered** into him.

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THE INSTRUCTOR

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Editorial . . .

IS THE CHURCH BUILDING SACRED?

Frequently, in an effort to justify churches sponsoring and/or arranging and/or providing facilities for entertainment, recreation and social activities (such as weddings, showers, so-called "fellowship meals," et.) and secular activities as blood drives, town meetings, political rallies, etc., someone will say, "**The church building is NOT sacred.**" Whether or not the church building is "**sacred**" does **not prove** that it is Scriptural for churches to provide facilities for entertainment, recreation, social and secular activities. It is **not** a question **necessarily** as to whether or not the church building is "**sacred,**" but whether or not churches are **authorized** by the Lord to provide facilities for such activities.

Let us assume momentarily that the church building is **not** sacred. Does that **prove** that churches may **Scripturally** provide their facilities for political rallies, wrestling matches, raising rabbits, swimming lessons and prisons for criminals? Of course not!

In order to justify churches sponsoring, arranging, or providing facilities for such activities as already mentioned, we must find **authority** in the Scriptures for such (Cf. Ephesians 5:23-

27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9; Eph. 5:10 & 1 Thess. 5:21).

To illustrate the point that whether or not the church building is sacred does **not** prove that churches may Scripturally provide facilities for the above mentioned activities, please consider the fact that "**relief is not necessarily**" "sacred" but the church is **not** to be charged with relieving the widows that have children to relieve them. (Paul said: "**If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and LET NOT THE CHURCH BE CHARGED: that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.**" 1 Tim. 5:16). NOTE: The fact that something is not sacred does not prove that churches may sponsor, arrange or provide such.

I have no idea who first stated that "**The church building is not sacred**" and therefore argued that churches may provide their buildings and facilities for entertainment, recreation and social activities such as weddings, showers, so-called "fellowship meals" and secular activities such as blood drives, town meetings, political rallies, day care services, etc., but many have apparently **repeated** that statement without recognizing the need of **proving** it. A number of well-meaning brethren have agreed with the statement and have repeated it **without proving** it.

As far as I can determine, the word "**sacred**" is **not** found in the Scriptures.

WEBSTER'S SEVENTH NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY defines "**sacred**" as follows:

"1 a: **set apart for the service or worship of deity** b: **devoted exclusively to one service or use (as of a person or purpose)** 2 a: **worthy of religious veneration**: HOLY b: **entitled to reverence** 3: **of or relating to religion**: RELIGIOUS 4 obs: ACCURSED."

(Continued on page 3)

IS THE CHURCH BUILDING SACRED?

(Continued from page 2)

OBSERVATIONS ON DEFINITIONS

1. The definition under "4" is obsolete and does **not** apply today.

2. The definition under "2" would **not apply to "church buildings"**. Church buildings are **not** worthy of religious veneration nor entitled to reverence. NOTE: If by "sacred" a person means "worthy of religious veneration" or "entitled to reverence", the church building is **not** sacred. HOWEVER, "holy" is defined by WEBSTER to mean "1 set apart to the service of God or a god: SACRED . . ." The church building is set apart to the service of God. It is **holy in that sense!**

3. The definition under "1 b" certainly be descriptive of the church building. The church building is **devoted exclusively to one service or use**, i.e., the worship and work of the church. The purpose for which the church building is provided is to aid the church in its worship and work. NOTE: If by "sacred" a person means "**devoted exclusively to one service or use**", the church building is **sacred!**

4. Under "1 a" the word "**sacred**" is defined as "**set apart for the service or worship of deity.**" This is certainly descriptive of the church building. It has been **set apart for the service or worship of deity**. NOTE: If by "**sacred**" a person means "**set apart for the service or worship of deity**", the church building is **sacred!**

5. The definition under "3" certainly describes the church. The church building, without question, **relates to religion**. It is a "**religious**" (i.e., it relates or is devoted to the divine or that which is held to be of ultimate importance) **building**. Coliseums, courthouses, recreational buildings, police stations, fire

halls, etc., are **not** sacred. They are **not "of or relating to religion."** They are **secular** buildings! They are "of" or "relate to the worldly or temporal (concerns)." NOTE: If by "**sacred**" a person means "**of or relating to religion: RELIGIOUS**", the church building is **sacred!**

CONCLUSIONS

1. If the church building is **not** sacred, then it is **not "set apart to the service or worship of deity!"** Is it?

2. If the church building is **not** sacred, then it is **not "devoted exclusively to one service or use (as of a person or purpose)."** In other words, it is **not** devoted exclusively to the work and worship of the church! Is it? Should it be?

3. If the church building is **not** sacred, then it is **not "of"** nor does it **relate to religion**. Is it **of** or does it **relate to religion?** Should it?

4. **Yes, the church building is sacred!**

5. If a person is going to "**justify**" churches providing facilities for such activities as those mentioned, he must do so on some other basis than merely asserting that "**The church building is not sacred.**"

6. The church building is **not** sacred in the sense that it is "**worthy of religious veneration**" or "**entitled to reverence.**" NOTE: This fact does **not** prove that "The church building is not sacred" in the **primary** use (as well as other uses) of the word. **It is!**

SOME FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

Although the church building is **sacred** in the senses that we have already shown:

(1) God has **not** commanded us to buy or build a "church building."

(2) God has **not** commanded us to meet in a "church building." NOTE: God has commanded Christians to assemble. (See Heb. 10:25) God has

(Continued on page 4)

IS THE CHURCH BUILDING SACRED?

(Continued from page 3)

authorized a church building in the command to assemble. We cannot assemble without a **place** to assemble. A church building is a **place** and may serve as that **place** to assemble.

(3) We may spend unwisely in building a church building. We **should** not.

(4) There is **no** efficacy or power to cleanse a sinner or to save a saint in the "church building."

(5) The work and worship of the church cannot be carried on without a **place**, but it may be carried on without a "church building." NOTE: Compare preaching the gospel without a radio station.

(6) We may place too much emphasis on a "church building," but we should not!

(CRS)

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I am respectfully requesting that someone who believes that "**The church building is not sacred**" in the **primary** sense (and other senses) of the word to write an article (preferably, not to exceed 700 words) PROVING that such is the case and it will be printed in THE INSTRUCTOR.

Let us **prove** all things and hold fast

SUTTON-FROST DEBATE

The fourth debate between **Carrol R. Sutton** and **Jack L. Frost** is scheduled to be conducted **November 16, 17, 19 and 20, 1987.**

The discussion is to begin each evening at **7:30** o'clock.

It will be conducted in the **United Mine Workers building** located near the Post Office in **BERRY, ALABAMA.**

Sutton will be **affirming** that **WATER BAPTISM IS ESSENTIAL TO THE FORGIVENESS OF ALIEN SINS** and **Frost** will be **affirming** that **WATER BAPTISM IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO THE FORGIVENESS OF ALIEN SINS.**

Jack L. Frost is the founder and president of a **new** denominational body known as **THE END TIME SOCIETY OF FREE HOLINESS CHRISTIANS, INC.**

Make plans to attend! TELL OTHERS!

to that which is good! Let us remember that Jesus said: "... **And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.**" (Mt. 15:14).

GOSPEL MEETINGS — You are invited to attend a series of gospel meetings at the East Albertville Church building Nov. 1-6, 1987 at 7:30 each evening except on Lord's Day. Mr. Shirley Mullins of Clintwood, Virginia will be preaching.

— SENTENCE SERMON —

We should consider the cost of not considering the lost.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
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