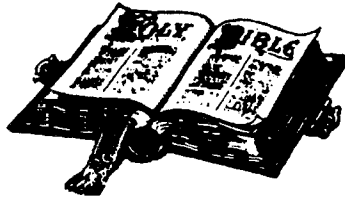


THE INSTRUCTOR



"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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BORN AGAIN

In John 3:3-5 Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Except a man be **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus asked: "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus replied: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Consider these salient facts:

1. Jesus was discussing being born again, not being born the first time.

2. Jesus was discussing a being born again, being born from above, a new birth, a spiritual birth!

3. Obviously Nicodemus was wrong in thinking Jesus was talking about a physical birth!

4. The new birth (being born of water and of the Spirit) is essential to entering the kingdom of God!

5. To be born again a person must be "born of water and of the Spirit." Jesus was not discussing two births, but two elements

involved in the one birth of being born again! Jesus said: "Except a MAN (not an infant - CRS) be born of water and of the Spirit..."

In 1 John 5:1 John said: "Whosoever BELIEVETH that Jesus is the Christ is born of God..." NOTE: Belief is essential to being born again!

In 1 John 4:7 we read: "...Everyone that LOVETH is born of God, and knoweth God." NOTE: Love is essential to being born again!

1 John 2:29 says: "...Everyone that DOETH RIGHTEOUSNESS is born of him." NOTE: Doing righteousness is essential to being born again!

According to 1 Pet. 1:23 we are born again "by the word of God."

Belief, love, doing righteousness are essential to being born again! We must take all the truth! Summed up: To be born again a person must **hear** the gospel, **believe** it, **repent**, **confess** faith and **be baptized** in water! (cf. Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:38). Have you been "born again"?

(CRS)

THE INSTRUCTOR

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Editorial ...

MOTIVES

The word **motive** suggests "that which incites to action; that which determines the choice or moves the will; cause; object; inducement; prevailing design..." according to The New Webster Dictionary of The English Language.

Motives are very important! Motives may be proper or improper. They may be righteous or wicked. We must do the right things with the proper motives. Our purpose for doing things must be pure. In other words, we must do the right things for the right reasons!

FLATTERERS

A flatterer acts with improper motives. Solomon declared that "**A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet**" (Prov. 29:5). The Israelites of old "**did flatter him (i.e., God - CRS) with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.**" (Psalm 78:36). We learn from Prov. 26:28 that "**...a flattering mouth worketh ruin.**" Those who speak "**with flattering lips**" and "**with a double heart**" are speaking "**vanity**"!

Paul and his companions were not guilty of using flattery. In writing to the church of Thessalonians Paul said: "**For**

neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness;..." (1 Thess. 2:5).

We learn from Psalm 12:3 that "**The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things.**" Flattery is prompted by improper motives.

HYPOCRITES

A **hypocrite** is a pretender! He lacks true honesty and sincerity. His actions are prompted by impure motives! Solomon said: "**An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor...**" (Prov. 11:9). Isaiah prophesied of those who would draw nigh unto God with their mouths and honour God with their lips but their heart would be far from Him. He said their worship would be in vain. They taught for doctrines the commandments of men. (See Matthew 15:7-9).

In Mark 12:13-17 we learn that "**certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians**" acted hypocritically in an effort to "catch" Jesus "**in his words.**" However, Jesus, "**knowing their hypocrisy**" responded in such a way that "**they marveled at him.**"

In Matthew 23 Jesus gave some scathing denunciations and rebukes to the scribes and Pharisees because of their hypocrisy. They made clean the outside, but within they were "**full of extortion and excess.**" Outwardly they appeared "**righteous unto men**" but within they were "**full of hypocrisy and iniquity.**" After devouring widows' houses, "**for a pretense**" they made long prayers.

Hypocrisy is prompted by improper motives!

PREACHERS

It is possible for a person to be a preacher for the wrong reasons. He may be motivated to "preach" for the wrong

(Continued on page 3)

MOTIVES

reasons. One may be motivated to “preach” to please men rather than God. He may have a desire for acceptance with (or by) certain people. He may desire popularity or he may “preach” for show. Others may “preach” because it can be financially rewarding. These are impure motives! None should “preach” for any of these reasons.

Paul declared that **“Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will; The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.”** (Phil. 1:15-17). NOTE: A person may preach Christ “even of envy and strife.” He is preaching “of envy and strife”. He is preaching “of contention, not sincerely...” His motive is wrong! Others preach “of good will” and “of love.”

All (of us) who preach should do a lot of soul-searching as to our motives in preaching! We must take heed to ourselves as well as to the doctrine we preach if we are to “save” ourselves and those who hear us. (See 1 Tim. 4:12-16). All that we do (including our preaching) should be done **“to the glory of God.”** (See 1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Cor. 6:20).

RIGHT THINGS FOR RIGHT REASONS

We must not only do the right things, but we must do the right things for the right reasons! Our actions must be motivated by a desire to please God and to glorify Him! It must not be for show or to impress men. If we assemble with the saints, preach, lead singing, lead in prayer, etc. for a show, to impress men and not to glorify God our motives are impure.

Consider the following:

1. **It is right to give alms, but our motives must be pure!** This is taught in Mt. 6:1-4. Jesus warns against doing alms “to be seen of men.” We are not to be like hypocrites who do alms “that they may have the glory of men.” The Father rewards openly those who do their alms in secret.

2. **It is right to pray, but our motives must be pure!** This is taught in Mt. 6:5-8. Jesus warns against praying like hypocrites do “to be seen of men” and to “be heard for their much speaking.” Those who properly pray in secret are rewarded openly by the Father!

3. **It is right to fast, but our motives must be pure!** This is taught in Mt. 6:16-18. Jesus warns against fasting as hypocrites do, of a sad countenance (disfiguring their faces) “that they may appear unto men to fast”. Those who fast should anoint their heads and wash their faces that they may not appear unto men to fast. The father will openly reward those who secretly fast.

4. **It is right to observe the Lord’s supper, but we must do so with pure motives!** As we do so we must discern the Lord’s body and show the Lord’s death till He comes. (See 1 Cor. 11:23-34)

5. **It is right to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, but we must do so with proper motives!** (See Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19; James 5:13; etc.)

6. **It is right to read and study God’s Word, but we should do so with proper motives!** We should read and study **to learn truth, receive understanding, receive faith, rightly divide the word of truth and to be ready to give an answer to others!** (See John 6:44-45; Eph. 3:2-6; Rom. 10:17; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:15; Prov. 15:28; etc.). NOTE: An elderly

gentleman who had spent a lot of time reading the Scriptures was commended and was asked: "What have you learned?" He replied: "Not anything yet. I have been trying to find out what Job did for his boils." Wrong motive!

7. **It is right to give (lay by in store), but our motives must be proper!** (See 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; etc.).

8. **It is right for a penitent believer to be baptized, but it must be with proper motives!** It must be **"for the remission of sins"** (Acts 2:38), **to get into Christ** (cf. Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27), **to wash away sins** (cf. Acts 22:16), **to be saved** (cf. Mark 16:15-16; 1 Pet. 3:21)! It is improper for a person to be

baptized because he thinks he is saved, to get into denominational church or to please men!

Each of us should earnestly endeavor to glorify God and in so doing prepare for the judgment! Let us always keep in mind that we must not only do the right things, but we must also have the proper motives! Let us remember that **"the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the hear."** (1 Sam. 16:7).

(CRS)

NOTICE: A beloved brother, Bill Davis (633 Rock Springs Rd., Glencoe, AL 35905) requests the prayers of the saints as he battles cancer.

– SENTENCE SERMONS –

He who thinks most of heaven will do most for earth.

It is said that someone prayed: "Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff, And nudge me when I've said enough."

A wishbone is not a proper substitute for a backbone.

It takes both sunshine and rain to make a rainbow.

The best way to win an argument is to start out by being right.

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