

# 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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A VOICE FROM THE PAST –

## "GETTING RELIGION"

Many people have been taught that "a person must get religion in order to be saved." Is this really so? Is this what the Bible teaches? Is it OF FAITH? Can it be taught BY FAITH? It cannot be OF FAITH or taught BY FAITH unless God's word teaches it since "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17). Let us consider the following facts.

1. The word "religion" does not appear in the Old Testament Scriptures.

2. The word "religion" appears five times in the New Testament Scriptures. (See Acts 26:5; Gal. 1:13; 1:14; James 1:26 and 1:27). The "religion" of the Jews is referred to in the first three passages, *vain "religion"* in Jas. 1:26 and *pure "religion"* in James 1:27.

3. The word "religion" was never used in the Scriptures to describe something that a person "gets", but it describes what a person *does* or *practices*.

4. No inspired writer of the Scriptures ever taught men to "*get religion*."

5. Christ did not teach men to "*get religion*". He did not teach that "a person must get religion in order to be saved."

6. "*Pure religion*" is NOT something a person gets, but *it is doing God's will!* (See James 1:26-27).

7. *To be saved, one must obey Christ!* (See Heb. 5:8-9; Mt. 7:21-29; James 1:21-27; Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 10:9-10; 6:17-18; Acts 2:38-41; 10:34-35; Rev. 22:14; John 12:48; 2 Thess. 1:6-9).

NO, the idea that "a person must get religion in order to be saved" is NOT OF FAITH and thus it cannot be taught BY FAITH! It is "an imagination" that exalts itself against "the knowledge of God."

NOTE: The above article by Carrol R. Sutton appeared in THE INSTRUCTOR, April, 1978

### A VOICE FROM THE PAST

"The public swimming pools are conditioning plants for people to go naked. If the New Testament means anything when it speaks of "**dressing in modest apparel**", there is not an excuse a Christian can offer for participating in this form of recreation." –**REX TURNER**

in *Sound Doctrine*, 3-25-47

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### *Editorial...*

#### **REACTIONS TO THE PREACHED WORD**

Without question, it is God's will that His word, the truth, the gospel, the faith, be preached. See Mt. 28:18-20; Mark. 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Cor. 1:21, etc.

There was much preaching in the first century. The apostles began to carry out the commission to them to preach the gospel as we learn from Acts 2. When threatened by the "authorities" and commanded to stop preaching, Peter and John said, "**we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard**" (Acts 4:18-20). We further read: "**And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ**" (Acts 5:42). We learn from Acts 8:1 that "**there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the**

**regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.**" We learn from Acts 8:4 that "**they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.**" Acts 8:5 says: "**Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.**" Throughout the book of Acts we learned the apostles and others preached the gospel of Christ in many places.

Writing to the saints in Colosse within about 35 years of the day of Pentecost mentioned in Acts 2, the apostle Paul said: "**...whereof ye have heard before in the word of the truth of gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world...**" and "**...be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven...**" (Col. 1:5-6, 23). NOTE: By the time Paul wrote this letter, the gospel of Christ had been preached to every creature under heaven in all the world! What an accomplishment this was in such a short time and that without the means or aid of the modern technology that we have!

#### **HOW DID THE HEARERS REACT?**

There were various reactions to the word of God when it was preached in the first century like there are today when it is preached. Let us consider some of the reactions when God's word was preached in the first century.

#### **PETER'S PREACHING TO THE JEWS ON PENTECOST IN ACTS 2**

Read Acts 2:14-36 and see what Peter preached to the Jews who were present on that occasion. We learn from Acts 2:37

how they reacted. It says: **"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"** Verse 38 says: **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."**

NOTE: Both the question they asked and the answer given by Peter were clear. Peter then testified and exhorted them with many other words saying, **"Save yourselves from this untoward generation."** Verse 41 says: **"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."**

OBSERVATION: It is obvious from the text that those Jews were lost, but were sincere, truth-seeking sinners who desired salvation. When they learned the truth they gladly received and obeyed it. This was the first time the gospel was preached in fact after the ascension of Jesus into heaven.

#### **THOSE WHO LISTENED TO STEPHEN IN ACTS 7**

Please read Acts 7:1-53 carefully and learn exactly what Stephen preached and then consider how the hearers reacted to it in Acts 7:54-60.

NOTE: Instead of accepting the message as truth (as they should have, since it was), they attacked the messenger and killed him!

OBSERVATION: Although the messenger (Stephen) was killed,

the message which is the word of God was not destroyed. It cannot be destroyed but it lives and abides forever! (See 1 Pet. 1:23-25; Mt. 24:35).

#### **THOSE OF THE SYNAGOGUE IN BEREA TO WHOM PAUL AND SILAS PREACHED IN ACTS 17**

Read Acts 17:10-15. We read in verse 11-13 that: **"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people."** We learn from verse 14 that **"then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as far as the sea..."**

NOTE: The Bereans showed their nobility by receiving the word of God **"with all readiness of mind"** and searching the scriptures daily, **"whether those things were so"**. Today, we should do likewise when we hear the word of God preached.

#### **THOSE TO WHOM PAUL PREACHED IN ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA IN ACTS 13**

Read Acts 13:14-52. After preaching one sabbath, the Gentiles desired that **"these words might be preached to them the next sabbath."** The next sabbath the Jews were **"filled with envy, and spake against those things that were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the**

(Continued on page 4)

word of God should first be spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (vv 45-46). When the Gentiles heard the Word of God they were glad and became believers.

We learn from verse 49 that the "the word of the Lord" was preached throughout all the region, "but the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts." (v 50).

**PAUL'S SERMON IN ATHENS IN ACTS 17**

Read Acts 17:16-34. We learn from verse 32 that "...when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter."

NOTE: We learn from v 34 that some also believed.

OBSERVATION: We see there were different reactions to the same truth when it is preached by inspired men in the first century! Today, when the same Word is preached by uninspired men, there will be different reactions!

(To be cont'd)

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** Carrol R. Sutton will be preaching at the **Market St. Church of Christ in Athens, AL on November 13, 2011. Service times will be: 9:45 am; 10:30 am & 5 pm. All are invited. Plan to be with us!**

**TENT MEETINGS in Collinsville, AL – October 17 – 21, 2011 @ 7:00 pm**  
Carrol R. Sutton will be preaching.  
Make plans to attend! Please tell others! Tent will be located at 14284 County Road 51

Bound Volumes (2000 – 2008) are still available  
LIVE SERMONS over internet each Lord's Day!  
<eastalbertvillechurchofchrist.com>

**SENTENCE SERMONS**

If you are on the wrong road, you are on the way to hell! Get on the right road now!

\* \* \* \* \*

We need more men with more "bone" in their backs and less "bone" in their heads.

\* \* \* \* \*

Cleaning up the environment will not remove the pollution of the soul.

\* \* \* \* \*

Higher morals are much more important than higher incomes.

\* \* \* \* \*

We should be more concerned about adding life to our years than years to our lives.

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