

THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Timothy 3:16

Volume 6

SEPTEMBER, 1969

Number 9

DO YOUR EARS ITCH?

Having an allergy back about a year ago that caused me to have severe cases of itching when I ate the wrong thing, I constantly sought something that would give me relief. One day I came across an ad that read like this: "Stop itching in 15 minutes!" The product was called "Itch-me-not" and carried the usual money back guarantee if it did not do the trick!

Well, the ad stops right there as far as this article goes. It is none of your business whether it cured my itch or not! But as I read the ad and have recently run across it again, I thought about the kind of itch that Paul had in mind when he wrote to Timothy one day. He spoke of "itching ears." (2 Tim. 4:3). Now when our ears itch, we have to scratch them just like we would any other member of the body that itches. But Paul wasn't talking about our physical members itching. He had in mind a spiritual itch. I fear that the brotherhood is afflicted too much with this kind of itch.

The church is strong where strong teaching and preaching are done. The church is weak and struggling where "weak-as-water" teaching and preaching are done. One of the tendencies today that frightens me a bit is the

tendency to soften up and tread so cautiously that the sinner doesn't know that we are really after him. I never did believe that sin could be loved out of existence, and I don't believe it now. We must love the sinner but go after sin with all the weapons the Lord has given us.

The straight truth on the church, the plan of salvation, the purpose of baptism, the error of denominationalism, the essentiality of pursuing the Christian life faithfully, the non-compromising spirit of the New Testament truth, and a host of other subjects always cause outbreaks of itch among weak and half-converted members.

But, truth must be preached. Error must be condemned. Divisions must be exposed, and worldliness must be shown up for what it is. If our spiritual ears itch, let us scratch them with the truth, not with appeasement and compromise that will only cause them to itch worse. Scratch the ears with truth a few times and they won't itch any more. And, it won't take fifteen minutes for the truth to stop itching ears! There is a heaven-backed guarantee that the truth will get the job done.

(Continued on page 3)

THE INSTRUCTOR

Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting on Highway 431 South in Albertville, Ala.

CAROL R. SUTTON
EDITOR

Send all questions, comments, and criticisms to the editor, Route 3, Highway 431 South, Albertville, Ala. 35950.

Editorial

What Is Your Attitude Toward The Truth?

When Jesus was before Pilate, He said: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." (John 18:37). "For the law was given by Moses, but truth and grace came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17). Obviously, truth is very important. Jesus told the apostles that the Holy Spirit would guide them "into all truth." (See John 16:13). The truth is contained in the New Testament of Jesus Christ. It will make us free, (John 8:32), sanctify us, (John 17:17), purify our souls, (1 Pet. 1:22), and will save us. (James 1:21). The word of Jesus Christ will judge us at the last day. (John 12:48).

HUNGER AND THIRST

In the great sermon on the mount, Jesus said: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6). God's commandments are righteous. They are revealed in the gospel. (See Rom. 1:16-17). "In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." (Acts 10:35). We should sincerely hunger and earnestly thirst after God's righteousness! To learn and to do God's will should be of utmost concern to us. It is not a matter of pleasing self or men,

but of glorifying God. Peter tells us that we should "as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 Pet. 2:2). Christ has promised those who hunger and thirst after righteousness that "they shall be filled." If one is not "filled", it is because one does not "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

LOVE OF THE TRUTH

In 2 Thess. 2:7-12 we read: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." The psalmist said: "Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it." (Psa. 119:140). Many do not have a love of the truth. They prefer to practice the traditions of men. They prefer to follow the way that seemeth right in man's eyes, although it leadeth unto death. They are not as concerned about their salvation as they should be because they have "pleasure in unrighteousness." If they were, they'd have a "love of the truth." Because they do not have a "love of the truth" God may "send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Does this describe you? What is your attitude toward the truth? Do you really have a love of the truth? In all matters?

The truth should be received as
(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 1)

DO YOUR EARS ITCH?

Our elders have come around a number of times and said, "Prepare a sermon that will lift us up out of our seats! Make it strong!" They don't want ugly or unkind preaching — nor do I. But, they do want the kind of preaching that will strengthen the weak, restore the erring, and point the sinner to something that is sound, true and worthwhile!

If you have a spiritual allergy and itch occasionally, let me prescribe the straight truth as revealed by the Spirit through the apostles and given to us in the form of our New Testaments! The unvarnished truth is God's spiritual "itch-me-not!" Apply some of it and watch it work!

—Foy L. Smith in

FIRM FOUNDATION

(Continued from page 2)

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TRUTH

God's word. The apostle Paul wrote to those who were in Christ in Thessalonica saying: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God . . ." (1 Thess. 2:13). If the truth is received as if it were the word of men, it is received in vain. We must receive the truth "as it is in truth, the word of God." We dare not change, mutilate, despise, or refuse the truth of God!

What is YOUR attitude toward the truth? Do you have a love of it? Do YOU REALLY hunger and thirst after righteousness? What does TRUTH mean to you? Are you willing to receive it as the word of God? Do you have a profound respect for the truth? Are you willing to pay whatever it may cost to "buy the truth and sell it not?" ARE YOU WILLING TO SPEND AND BE SPENT FOR THE CAUSE OF TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS? If not, your attitude is not right, and you have no hope of eternal salvation! (CRS)

"AT JESUS' FEET"

The life of Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, is painted for us by the Gospels in three vivid pictures. In each appearance, Mary is found at the feet of Jesus. When Jesus visited in their home, Mary sat at His feet and heard His words; She chose the "one needful thing," the "good part," by listening to the Lord's words rather than worrying over material things as did her sister. (Luke 10:38-42). In the second scene her brother had died, and Mary fell at His feet saying, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Minutes later, our Lord having wept also, this appeal for sympathy and help was answered by the resurrection of Lazarus, who had been dead four days. (John 11:32-46). In the third instance, Mary anointed Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair; with discernment, she anointed the Lord's feet at the supper in Bethany "against the day of his burying." (John 12:1-9). Rebuked in the first instance by Martha and in the third by Judas, Mary yet realized the importance of service and learning at Jesus' feet.

What better description could be given of one's life—what greater tribute—than to be pictured in each appearance at the feet of Jesus. One fearful day every knee shall there bow and every tongue shall there confess. Why not THIS DAY, fall at the feet of Jesus in OBEDIENCE to gospel commands?

—Harold Hazelip in
"Religious Reminder"

A PROVERB

PROVERBS 16:31—"A hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness."

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

1. Thou shalt have no selfish pleasure before thy duty to God.
 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any personal engagements nor trifling excuses for being away from the service.
 3. Thou shalt not take the responsibility of the Christian life in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh lightly this God given task.
 4. Remember all the church services to keep them alive and growing.
 5. Honor God's Word that thy days may be long in the success which God hath given thee.
 6. Thou shalt not hurt the good name or influence of thy brother.
 7. Thou shalt not steal away the Lord's for thine own selfish use.
 8. Thou shalt not commit any act in business which might reflect upon the church of our Lord.
 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness before thy Lord by swearing His name while not following His teaching.
 10. Thou shalt not covet authority in the church which belongs only to Christ.
- Taken from the
"Jefferson Worker"
-

Sentence Sermons

Some men never go to work for a living until they have given everything else a fair trial.

Every saint this side of heaven ought to be concerned with every sinner this side of hell.

Children have more need of models than of critics.

A genuine Christian is the best evidence of the genuineness of Christianity.

If as a Christian, you are too busy to pray, you are too busy.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
Route 3, Highway 431 So.
Albertville, Alabama 35950

Entered as second-class matter at
Albertville, Alabama