

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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THE CHURCH

Many descriptive phrases and titles are applied to the people of God in the New Testament Scriptures. These titles give emphasis to various features of the people of God and set forth their nature. Each title describes their work or standing in the sight of God.

For instance, in the New Testament the people of God are referred to as the "church." This is a title describing a peculiar feature. It describes them as the ones "called out." The actual term used by Jesus and His apostles in the New Testament in Greek is "ekklesia"; when translated means "church" and actually means "the called out." (See THAYER, Page 195). So when the term "church" is used in the New Testament Scriptures the literal meaning of the term is "a called out body of people." We misuse the term "church" when we apply it to a building of any kind. Its original use was that of describing a group of people, rather than a building.

In the light of this definition the "church" is used in relation to God's people. Indicating that men and women have been called out of the world by the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 2:14) unto the fellowship of Jesus Christ. (1Cor. 1:9)

When Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18), we can

understand Him to say He would claim those people as His, who became separate from the world to serve God, and to stand on the rock. This is what happened on the day of Pentecost. When Peter preached to the multitude of Jews at Jerusalem, he laid the rock on which Christ said, "I will build my church." He preached Christ! Peter said, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:36). When the people heard this they desired to know what to do. Peter then told them to be separated from their evil, by saying, "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." (Acts 2:38). These people became separated from their wickedness by gladly receiving his word and being baptized (Acts 2:41): "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47). Thus, the "church" was a called out body of people, separated from their wickedness for service to the Lord. And as many as answered the call of the gospel of Christ were added to the "church" or to the group of those called out.

When the apostle Paul wrote to the "church" of God at Corinth, he condemned

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Editorial---

"THESE THINGS" (No. 2)

In our study last month, we pointed out that **"these things"** of 2 Peter 1:5-12 should be added or supplied to the **"faith"** of Christians. **Virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity (love)** were shown to be **"these things"** that should be added. They were discussed in some detail as to what was involved in them. Let us now consider:

WHY SHOULD WE ADD THESE THINGS TO OUR FAITH?

1. NOT TO BE BARREN OR UNFRUITFUL. We, as Christians, should add **"these things"** to our faith because if they are **"in"** us and **"abound,"** they make us that we **"shall neither be barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."** (See 2 Peter 1:9). If we add **"these things"** we can be **useful** and **fruitful** in the true knowledge of our Lord. In order for us to be true disciples and glorify the Father, we must bear much fruit. Every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. But every branch that beareth not fruit the Father taketh away. (See John 15: 1-8)

2. NOT TO BE BLIND. Peter tells us that **"he that lacketh these things is blind and can not see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."** (2 Peter 1:9). One who fails to add **"these things"** is blind and shortsighted. He has also forgotten that he has been cleansed from his old sins. Unless he remembers that the Lord has purged him from his old sins, he will not have the spiritual interest nor make the spiritual growth that he should.

3. TO MAKE CALLING AND ELECTION SURE. Christians are urged to **"give diligence"** or **"earnestly endeavor"** or **"be the more zealous"** (R.S.V.) to make their **"calling and election sure."** (See 2 Peter 1:10). We have been **"called"** by the gospel of Jesus Christ. (See 2 Thess. 2:14). We are the **"elect"** of God. However, in order to be saved eternally, we must serve God faithfully. We must endure to the end. Unless we add **"these things"** we will not make our calling and election sure. God expects us to grow and develop into spiritual maturity. He wants us to **"seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."** (See Matthew 6:33).

4. TO NEVER FAIL. If we **"give diligence"** to add **"these things"** we **"shall never fail!"** (See 2 Peter 1:10). Although there are some people who teach that a child of God can not so fall as to be eternally lost, this passage certainly shows the possibility of that occurring. Please note that the following passages teach the same things:

(1) 1 Cor. 10:12- "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

(2) Gal. 5:4- "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; **ye are fallen from grace.**"

(3) Hebrews 4:11- "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man **fall** after the same example of unbelief."

(4) Hebrews 12:14-15- "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man **FAIL** (comes short NASV) OF THE GRACE OF GOD; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby may be defiled."

(5) 2 Peter 3:17- "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, **FAIL FROM YOUR OWN**

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their looseness in respect to their spiritual connections. They were the "church" of God, ones who had been "called out" of their wicked surrounding to separate themselves for service unto God. But they still held on to some of the things from which they were "called out." Thus Paul commanded them to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2Cor. 6:17-18). "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 7:1).

To all of us who in the "church" is this lesson, which Paul wrote to the Corinthians, If the term "church" described God's people at that time, then it shold be used to describe His people today. If the Corinthians could

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"THESE THINGS"

STEDFASTNESS."

(6) **James 5:19-20-** "Brethren, if any of you do ERR FROM THE TRUTH, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

5. TO GAIN ENTRANCE INTO THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM. The apostle Peter suggests that "an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" if you "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" by adding "these things." (See 2 Pet. 1:8-12). It is quite obvious from the reading of this passage that "the everlasting kingdom" is the eternal abode of the righteous. We read in Rev 22:14; "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

If you are a child of God and haven't added "these things" you should begin now.

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not be loose in respect to turning again to their wickedness, neither can we. If they were to be separate from unclean or evil things, then so are we. Let us, too, cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

This deceptive term of God's people might be explained further in Paul's letter to the Romans. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:1-2). The people of God here are thought of as presenting a sacrifice, and that sacrifice is the sanctifying of their own bodies to holiness; being called out of the world to prove the will of God.

Again this being "called out" is explained by Paul to the Colossians as being "delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1:13-14).

It is evident, therefore, from the above considerations that the "church" of the New Testament is that group of God's people which was established by Jesus Christ in the world, over which He presides as head and Lord. It is composed of those who have been called out of the world into the service of Him who gave His life for them.

--Londal Wilks in GOSPEL DIGEST, Oct., 1960

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE

The best and sweetest things in life
are things you can not buy:
The music of the birds at dawn,
the rainbow in the sky.
The dazzling magic of the stars,
the miracle of light.
The precious gift of health and strength,
of hearing, speech and sight.
The peace of mind that crowns
a busy life of work well done.
A faith in God that deepens
as you face the setting sun.
The boon of love, the joy of friendship.
As the years go by, You find the
Greatest blessings are the things you
cannot buy.

Author Unknown

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

"But if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." (1 Cor. 11:16). Except for the fact that the words 'the church of God' appear in this quotation, it has little to do with our subject for today. This statement occurs at the close of Paul's argument in 1 Cor 11, Touching the proper headdress of women in the assembly. Four arguments have already been offered why women should wear some artificial covering on their heads in the worship, and this is a fifth argument in support of that view, urging that none of the churches of God followed the practice of allowing the women to appear uncovered. Far from teach that the whole matter is of little moment and may be disregarded if some are contentious about it (as it is so often "explained"), its teaching is exactly the reverse. In effect, Paul there says that if the brethren are disposed to call in question all that he has said about the matter, they will at least hesitate to follow a course utterly without precedent in the churches of God, none of them allowing women to appear with heads uncovered..."

Guy N. Woods in ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY by Gospel Advocate Co., 1946

THE HILL-SUTTON DEBATE

The Hill-Sutton Debate has not been re-scheduled yet. We're waiting for Albert Hill and the "elders" of the West Hobbs Street church in Athens, Alabama to muster up enough "courage" to honor their agreement. Of course, it will take a "ton of courage" for them to "go through" with their covenant to **affirm** that **"It is Scriptural for a church to permit the use of her building for Bible-centered schools, kindergartens, and for fellowship meals and social gatherings."**

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?

WHY DO YOU LIVE?

I live for those who love me;
For those who know me true;
For the God who reigns above me,
And the good that I can do.

Sentence Sermons

Much may be known of a man's character by what excites his laughter.

Swallowing your pride will not give you indigestion.

Train up a child in the way he should go-and go the way yourself.

The reason worry kills more people than work is that more people worry than work.

The reason the dollar does not do as much as it used to do, is because people don't do as much for the dollar as they used to do.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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