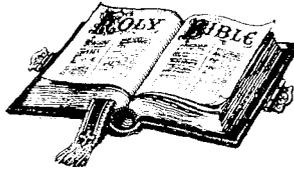


THE INSTRUCTOR



"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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CONVERSION

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." (Psa. 51:10-13).

The word "convert" is the English form of the Latin word that means "to turn." As used in reference to religion it means to turn to the Lord. This is clearly its meaning in the above Scripture and throughout the Bible. "Conversion" is the noun form of the same word and means: "Act of converting or state of being converted." (Webster).

MAN NEEDS TO BE CONVERTED

Of the Gentiles Paul said: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12).

While discussing the advantages enjoyed by the Jews in his letter to the Roman Christians Paul asks: "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of

the way, thy are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:9-12).

Unless a man is changed from this sinful state there is no hope for him of eternal salvation in heaven.

FIRST STEPS IN CONVERSION

Before a man can be induced to turn from his evil practices he must be convinced that his practices are evil, and that there is a way whereby he can turn from them to that which is right. In short, he must hear and believe the gospel.

"Sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4). If a man is to turn from sin he must learn what it is by becoming familiar with the law of God. Unless he believes that law when he learns it he will not be convinced of sins even though he knows that his actions violate that law. In order that he believes the law to be right he must have faith in the one who made the law.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17). If a man will diligently study the Bible with an open mind he will develop a faith in God, in Christ, and in the Bible as the word of God. But hearing and believing alone do not constitute conversion, for a man could do these and yet continue in sin just as the devils do: "The devils believe, and tremble."

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THE INSTRUCTOR

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Editorial . . .

TAKING UP COLLECTIONS

The practice of taking up collections in all public religious gatherings is widespread. Most people who attend such meetings are willing to contribute when asked to do so. Many of them think, no doubt, that they are doing God service by contributing. Some people may think that it would be impossible to get enough money to carry out the work that God intended that we do unless we subscribe to the practice of taking up collections in all our public meetings.

I would like to raise a question: "Is it Scriptural for the church to take up collections every time the church assembles?" Is such a practice "by faith?" Can it be advocated "By faith?" It is NOT "of faith" and can not be advocated "by faith" unless it is taught in God's Word since "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17). Is such an idea as taking up collection every time disciples assemble for worship taught in God's Word? Let us consider the following facts as we ponder the question.

1. There is NO DIVINE COMMAND for CHRISTIANS to give into a collection or common treasury of the church every time

the church assembles. **Neither** is there a **divine command** for the church to take up such a collection.

2. There is NO DIVINE EXAMPLE of Christians giving into a collection or common treasury of the church every time the church assembles. **Neither** is there a **divine example** of the church taking up such a collection.

3. There is NO NECESSARY IMPLICATION in the Scriptures that Christians should or may give into a collection or common treasury of the church every time the church assembles. **Neither** is there a **necessary implication** that the church should or may take up such a collection.

4. The apostle Paul said: "**Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come**". (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

NOTE: (A) This order or directive was of a general nature. It had been given to the churches of Galatia, and is now (at the time of Paul's writing) being given to "everyone of you." It was not a specific order given only to one specific person or church. (B) This is the ONLY passage that specifies the time or the day that a collection should or may be taken up. Paul said it should be done "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK." The A.S.V. says "ON THE FIRST DAY OF EVERY WEEK." (C) Since the command says "the first day of the week", we should respect God and stop within the scope of the command. We should limit our practice to the time stated in the command!

5. Those who practice taking up collections at other times than upon the first day of the week practice that for which they have no DIVINE EXAMPLE, NO NECESSARY IMPLICATION, NOR A DIVINE COMMAND OR STATEMENT. They act without authority from God when they so do and their actions are iniquitous. (Cf. Matt. 7:21-23).

NO, the practice of churches taking up collections every time they assemble is NOT OF FAITH and can NOT be advocated BY FAITH! When men become dissatisfied with God's directives, and allow their practices to go beyond the scope of God's authority, they establish their own righteousness and thus engage in activities which are sinful. (See 2 John 9).

(CRS)

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CONVERSION

(James 2:19). These two things are merely the first steps leading to conversion.

REPENTANCE

In Acts 3:19 Peter says: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out..." From this Scripture we can see that repentance is very closely related to conversion.

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance..." (2 Cor. 7:10). Paul taught people "that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." (Acts 26:20). Repentance, then, is that change of mind produced by godly sorrow that results in a change of works. This is so closely related to conversion that some people have confused the two and think they are synonymous terms.

Peter said: "Repent ... and be converted." (Acts 3:19). Paul said: "Repent and turn to God." (Acts 26:20). Hearing, believing, and repenting merely lead to the complete conversion. These changes on man's part are essential to conversion and may in a sense be considered a part of it, but something else must be changed besides man's own will and practice: his state must be changed. Hence the above Scriptures speak of conversion or turning to God as something that follows repentance.

THE NEW BIRTH

"That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6). Conversion is here described as a new birth. When one is born of the Spirit he is then converted into a child of God. Just before the verse quoted above Jesus explained this birth more in detail by saying, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:5). The American Revised Version on this verse is, "born of water and the Spirit." This birth of the Spirit then is also a birth of water. Both water and Spirit play a part in it.

Before Jesus left the earth He promised His disciples that God would send the Holy Spirit to guide them in what they taught. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

(Continued in right column)

He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16:13-14). Being thus guided by the Holy Spirit Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38). Paul, guided by the same Spirit, said, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body..." (1 Cor. 12:13). "Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? (Rom. 6:3).

The Holy Spirit speaking through the apostles told men that they should be baptized. When they were baptized by the Spirit's direction they were "born of water and the Spirit." They were then born or converted into the family of God, into the body, into Christ.

SERVANTS

"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." (Rom. 6:17-18).

These Roman Christians had changed their state from servants of righteousness by submitting themselves to the form of the gospel. In that form there was a death, a burial, and a resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:1-4). They died to sin, were buried in baptism, (Rom. 6:4), and arose to walk a new life.

From these Scriptures it is clear that conversion consists of hearing the gospel, believing it, repenting of sins, and being baptized. The conversion is not complete until one's state is changed by being baptized "for the remission of sins", (Acts 2:38), and "into one body", (1 Cor. 12:13), "into Jesus Christ." (Rom. 6:3).

-Elam B. Kuykendall in
Gospel Digest, August, 1956

J. RAYMOND SCHMIDT said: "Is drinking a personal matter? A matter which is responsible for crime, poverty, insanity, accidents to others, shattered homes, hungry children, disrupted morals, and countless other kinds of social degeneration can never be a personal matter, and sane people can hardly make such a claim.

TENDER YEARS

How wonderful it is today to see a young person obey the Lord and give his life to God. Yet, oft times those older in Christ forget that he will need encouragement and teaching. The young person faces temptations that are hard for him to resist. His schoolmates may be interested in dancing and fun from a worldly standpoint. It is very hard to say, "No," and be considered a "sissy" or "stuffed shirt" by your age group. If this young Christian does not get the proper training and help at home or if he doesn't have any young Christian friends, he may easily slip into the broad way of the world.

How sad it is that we often lose our own young people by not giving them a sound Christian home and the aid that they need as babes in Christ. "Train up a child in the way that he should go, and (even) when he is old he will not depart from it."

--H. Porter in THE FLORAL HEIGHTS MIRROR

I think all of us should have learned a lesson from the proposed HILL—SUTTON DEBATE: **Some men in the church do not regard their own words very highly. Their word is not their bond.**

NEEDED IN THE CHURCH! There is a dire need in the church for men and women who are as careful about their spiritual affairs as they are their business and social affairs. Such would be a great asset to the Cause of our Lord Jesus Christ. Do you qualify?

SOFT PREACHING

Preaching in many places, has become so soft that people look forward to sitting down in a plush seat relaxing from all responsibilities. The soothing qualities of the lesson, mild tones of the groomed preacher and the husband silence of a refrigerated sanctuary soon has the desired effect. After a peaceful moment of rest and a sweet dream of walking on the clouds of glory, the comer may gently arise and leave the building, being assured that his visit was a blessing to God and that the total cost of the entire service was much less than a theatre ticket.

--Wilson M. Coon in GOSPEL MINUTES

THE BIBLE

"The Bible is the oldest and the best book in the world. It is translated into more languages and read by more people than any other volume ever written. Its history and its prophecy comprehend the entire destiny of the world. It presents to us man in his natural, prenatal, and supernatural conditions and characteristics. It records the three great religious ages of the world by developing three dispensations of religion - the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian. Man, as he was, man as he is, and man as he shall hereafter be, are its three great themes. It reveals God by unfolding the mysterious relations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the three great works of Creation, Providence, and Redemption."

--Alexander Campbell in GOSPEL DIGEST

Sentence Sermons

Self-restraint is the flange that keeps character on the track.

It is not enough just to be busy. What are you busy about?

Our daily bread is incomplete without the "Bread of Life."

The men who move the world are men who the world cannot move.

A saint is like a window — he lets the light shine through.

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