

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

VOLUME 20

AUGUST, 1983

Number 8

WHY HAVEN'T YOU OBEYED THE TRUTH?

If you are one of the thousands of people in this country who have not obeyed the truth of God, please examine your heart and search your soul to see if you can determine **why** you haven't. **Is it because:**

1. **YOU DON'T KNOW THE TRUTH?** If this is the reason you haven't obeyed the truth, let me assure you that you **can** know the truth if you are willing to give diligence (study). In John 8:32 Jesus said to some Jews that believed on him, **"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."** In 2 Timothy 2:15 Paul exhorted Timothy to **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** In Ephesians 5:17 Paul says: **"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."** (See also John 5:39; John 17:17; Acts 17:11-12). Christians would be willing to come into your home (or go elsewhere) and study God's Word with you. **May they?**

2. **YOU DON'T BELIEVE THE TRUTH?** If you know the truth and don't believe it, you have a serious problem. The only way you can receive faith is by hearing the Word of God. (See Romans 10:17). Only **you** can believe for you. You will make up your

mind to believe or not to believe. It is a matter of choice. But in order for you to have eternal life, **you must believe!**

3. **YOU DON'T LOVE THE TRUTH?** If this is your problem, you have a very serious one. You had better change your heart (mind) or you will be lost forever! Many will 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."** (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). You may be among those described in this passage! Are you?

4. **YOU DON'T WANT TO BE HAPPY HERE?** Surely, you desire a life of happiness here on earth. The only way you can have genuine happiness is by obeying the truth. Please read and study 1 Peter 3:10-11; Luke 11:28; John 13:17; Psalms 1:1-6; Psalms 23; and Eccl. 12:13-14).

5. **YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO HEAVEN?** Surely you desire to go to Heaven, don't you? But your going to Heaven is conditioned upon your obedience to the truth. (Revelation 22:14). If you haven't obeyed the truth, **WHY HAVEN'T YOU?**

— (CRS)

THE INSTRUCTOR

Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting at 1107 Highway 431 South, in Albertville, Alabama.

CARROL R. SUTTON
EDITOR

Send all questions, comments, and criticisms to the editor, 1107 Highway 431 South, Albertville, Alabama 35950.

Second-class postage paid in
Albertville, AL 35950

Editorial . . .

SPECIFIC WICKEDNESS

As long as we discuss and condemn wickedness in a general way, no one will become too disturbed. Most people who claim to be Christians will probably approve of such discussion and condemnation of wickedness. Some sincere people may not be aware of the fact that certain attitudes and deeds are wicked. The world has "glamorized" and promoted wickedness and has tried to remove the shame from it. Many people frown on those who specifically identify sin and wickedness by name. Others are openly critical of those who do. Those who are truly seeking to serve God faithfully appreciate and encourage those who specifically point out wickedness and expose it for what it is.

Here are some things that are specifically mentioned in the Scriptures as being wicked.

1. **IDOLATRY.** When people do not fear God and obey His voice and keep His commandments, but serve other gods, they are guilty of idolatry. The object of one's devotions is their god. In Deuteronomy 13:1-11 idolatry is spoken of **wickedness**. In the New Testament **covetousness** is called idolatry. Let us read in Colossians 3:5. It says: "**Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.**" Idolatry is listed in Galatians 5:19-21 as a work of the flesh.

We learn from Colossians 3:6 that the wrath of God will be upon idolaters. Idolaters have no "**inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God**" according to the apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:5. Don't be deceived by this wickedness. Idolaters "**shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**" (Galatians 5:21).

2. **FORNICATION.** This sin is specifically referred to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 5 as being **wickedness**. In verse thirteen Paul said: ". . . **Therefore put away from among yourselves that WICKED PERSON.**" In speaking of fornication Joseph said: ". . . **How then can I do this great WICKEDNESS, AND SIN AGAINST God?**" (Genesis 39:9). Fornication is a work of the flesh according to Paul in Galatians 5:19-21. In 1 Corinthians 6:18 Paul said. "**Flee fornication . . .**" Do not let Satan deceive you. **Fornication is WICKEDNESS!** Fornicators "**shall not inherit the kingdom of God!**" (See Galatians 5:21.)

3. **HOMOSEXUALITY.** From reading and studying Genesis 19:4-7 and Judges 19:22-25 we learn that **homosexuality** was classified as **WICKEDNESS** under the Old Testament and before the Old Testament was given. In Romans 1:26-32 Paul describes **homosexuality** and tells us that those who "**commit such things are worthy of death.**" Don't go along with the current philosophy of some who say that "homosexuality is different, but it is a natural and accepted life style." Don't let anyone deceive you. **It is against nature! Homosexuality is WICKEDNESS!**

4. **HYPOCRISY.** In Matthew 22:15-22 the Pharisees "**took counsel how they might entangle Him (Jesus) in His talk.**" They sent out their disciples with the Herodians acknowledging Him as master and asked him to tell them what He thought. "**Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?**" But Jesus perceived their **WICKEDNESS** and said: "**Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?**"

Deceitful pretence is hypocrisy. It has the wrong motives. It comes forth from a wicked heart. It may do the right

(Continued on Page 3)

SPECIFIC WICKEDNESS

(Continued from Page 2)

things for the wrong reasons. Hypocrites may give alms to the poor, pray and fast, but they do so for the wrong reasons. They may be seeking self glory and praise. They may love, draw nigh to God with their mouths, and may compass sea and land to make one proselyte. However, their heart is far from God and in truth they **“are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”** Hypocrites will have their portion where **“there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”** (See Matthew 23:1-33; Matthew 24:51).

5. A WRONG THOUGHT. In Acts 8:4-24 we have the record of the conversion of the Samaritans. Peter and John went down from Jerusalem to Samaria and imparted the Holy Spirit (a miraculous gift) to the Samaritans by the laying on of their hands. **“When Simon (who also had believed and was baptized — CRS) saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast THOUGHT THAT THE GIFT OF GOD MAY BE PURCHASED WITH MONEY. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for THY HEART IS NOT RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF GOD. Repent therefore of THIS THY WICKEDNESS and pray God if perhaps THE THOUGHT OF THINE HEART may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.”** Then Simon requested Peter to pray for him.

A wrong thought caused Simon to have neither part nor lot in the matter. A wrong thought caused Simon to be in the gall of bitterness. A wrong thought caused Simon to be in the bond of iniquity. A wrong thought caused Simon to be in a perishing condition. This wrong thought prompted the wrong action. This wrong thought is specifically called WICKEDNESS!

It is crystal clear from the above passage that a person may be guilty of

IS IT REALLY TRUE?

(No. 4)

IS IT REALLY TRUE that the heart of man is deceitful? Yes, it is true because Jeremiah 17:9 says: **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? Do you really believe this passage of Scripture?”**

IS IT REALLY TRUE that all have sinned? Yes, it is true that **“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”** (Romans 3:23). The apostle Paul also said: **“But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin.”** (Galatians 3:22). Do you believe that all have sinned?

IS IT REALLY TRUE that the wages of sin is death? Yes, it is really true that **“the wages of sin is death . . .”** (Romans 6:23). Spiritual death is a separation from God. The second death is being cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone to be eternally separated from God and tormented forever. (See Revelation 21:8). Do you really believe that this is so?

IS IT REALLY TRUE that Jesus died for our sins? Yes, it is really true that Jesus **“tasted death for every man.”** (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus said: **“For this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”** (Matthew 26:28).

IS IT REALLY TRUE that men must believe and be baptized in order to be saved from past sins? Yes, it is true because Jesus said: **“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”** (Mark 16:16).

— (CRS)

WICKEDNESS because he **thinks** the wrong thing!

Don't let anyone deceive you into thinking that your thoughts will not make you wicked! They may! **“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”** (Proverbs 4:23). — (To be Continued).

— (CRS)

DOES GOD KNOW YOU?

In the judgment, Jesus will say to many people: **“I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”** (Many religious people will be among those who hear those words. (See Matthew 7:21-23).

Obviously, God does **not know** those who are alien sinners. They are **not His children**. They are **not Christians** although they may claim to be. They are without Christ and **they have no hope!** In order to be saved and thus become a child of God, a Christian, one must **hear, believe and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ;** (Please read and candidly consider the following passages of Scripture: Romans 1:16; Romans 10:17; Mark 16:15-16; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26-27; Acts 17:30-31; Acts 22:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Claiming an “experience”, professing that you have salvation or promoting some denominational cause is no evidence of your being a child of God.

If you are not a Christian, **GOD DOES NOT KNOW YOU AND HE WILL NOT KNOW YOU IN THE JUDGMENT DAY!**

We learn from Matthew 25:1-13 that Jesus will say to some who are in the kingdom (which is the church, the body of Christ) and thus are God’s children: **“Verily I say unto you, I know you not.”** He will not say to these that He **never knew** them, because at one time He did know them, but in the judgment He will **not know** them. In order for Christ to know even those who are God’s children **they must be faithful to the Lord!** (Please read and candidly examine the following passages of Scripture: Matthew 10:22; 1 Corinthians 10:12; 15:58; Revelation 2:7; Revelation 2:10; Revelation 7:14; Hebrews 5:9; Revelation 22:14).

If you are not a faithful child of God when you die, **GOD WILL NOT KNOW YOU IN JUDGMENT!** You can not die in the Lord unless you get **into** the Lord and remain therein. **Does God really know you?** Be honest! If He doesn’t, do something about it while you can!

— (CRS)

— SENTENCE SERMONS —

We should be channels of blessings, not mere reservoirs!

A half-hearted follower of Christ can never render whole-hearted service.

Your reputation is valuable, but your character should be priceless.

Satan doesn’t care **how** we worship so long as we do not worship as God says.

If you are more concerned about “peace and harmony” among the people of God than you are about **the truth of God**, you won’t be worth much to the cause of Christ.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
1107 Highway 431 South
Albertville, AL 35950