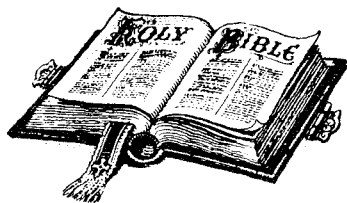


# THE INSTRUCTOR



*"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 22

FEBRUARY, 1985

Number 2

## **"SET THINE HOUSE IN ORDER"**

Many times we have planned, and made arrangements for expected guests, sometimes having weeks, or even months, to set things in order. But how many times have you suddenly learned that otherwise unexpected visitors are to arrive in a very short time? You rushed around to "set the house in order," to tidy up things. Even if you manage to get things looking "decent," chances are that you are not nearly so pleased to invite your guests in when they arrive, as when you had been forewarned earlier, and therefore had more time to "get ready."

### **But That Is Not The House Of Which We Ask!**

Although we cannot expect God to give us a special warning, as He did Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:1), He is, in His Word, warning us to set our **spiritual** house in order. He shows us what it means to be ushered into eternity, either prepared or unprepared, in Luke 16. Lazarus had made proper preparations, and was at rest "in Abraham's bosom," while the rich man had failed to "make ready," and therefore awoke in flaming torment!

So many of us have things "deranged" in our spiritual houses: Envy, strife, bitterness, etc. have moved into our hearts, crowding out the "furnishings" of love, forgiveness, sober thinking, meekness, etc. still others, through **unfaithfulness**, indicate they are not really concerned about the appearance of their **spiritual** house. And, of

course, there are so many, many others, some of whom will read this, who have made no preparation at all — they have not obeyed the gospel of our Saviour! (See 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

**Stop!** Take a good look at your spiritual house. The Lord will return without warning, other than found in His word, and then you will find that it is too late to "straighten up things!" Have you obeyed the gospel? Are YOU **living faithfully to Christ**? Would you be happy to have Christ come and find your house in its present condition? If not, then **why do you wait?**

**"Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." Do it now!**

— Charles G. Maples in  
GOSPEL GUIDE, March, 1981

### **N. B. HARDEMAN SAID:**

"Again, I say to you, with caution and thought, that it is not the work of the church to furnish entertainment for the members. I have never read anything in the Bible that indicates to me that such was the work of the church." Taken from HARDEMAN'S TABERNACLE SERMONS, page 50.

## 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.

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Second-class postage paid in  
Albertville, AL 35950

### Editorial . . .

#### **"PROOF REQUESTED, PROOF GIVEN"** (No. 11)

In our study last month we gave **proof from the Scriptures that the doctrine that "Sinners are saved by faith only" is in opposition to some clearly stated Passages in God's Word and therefore it is false teaching!** The fact that a number of intelligent, "respected" (by Satan and those influenced by him) denominationalists and apostates from the faith believe and teach that **"Sinners are saved by faith only" does not prove** that it is true. Neither does the fact that false teachers say it over and over and over **prove** that such is the truth. A **false doctrine does not become truth!** Repeating **false** doctrines millions of times does not change it into God's **truth!** We must be content to believe and advocate **only** what is taught in God's Word!

Those who advocate this doctrine are obligated to **prove that it is taught in the Scriptures.** We hereby **challenge** those who advocate the doctrine of **"salvation by faith only"** (including apostates from the faith like Ed Fudge, Carl Ketcherside, Arnold Hardin and you if you advocate such a doctrine) to **prove** by God's Word that such teaching is true. What about a series of public discussions on this question? **We are ready!**

We will now consider item **seven** in the list of twenty-five things that appeared in THE INSTRUCTOR, October, 1983, under **"Specific Wickedness"** for which **Scriptural proof** for

the opposite view (than that stated in #7) has been requested. It reads as follows:

**"7. One church is just as good as another church."**

COMMENTS: In an effort to justify the existence and propagation of denominational churches and to condemn true Christians and to belittle the church of Christ, many people will say that **"one church is just as good as another church."** No doubt, most, if not all, of you have heard this statement made.

Usually, when people make this statement, they do so without any appeal whatever to the Scriptures. Their appeal is based more on tradition, preference, prejudice or emotions than on information gained from a reading of the Scriptures.

A careful investigation of the following facts and Scriptures should convince every sincere seeker of truth that the above statement is false.

1. There is **no command** in the Scriptures for anyone to either build, be a member of, or justify the existence of a religious denomination of any kind.

2. There is **no example** in the Scriptures that justifies anyone either building, being a member of, or justifying the existence of a religious denomination of any kind.

3. There is **no statement** in the Scriptures that authorizes anyone to either build, be a member of, or justify the existence of a religious denomination of any kind.

4. There is **no necessary implication** in the Scriptures that God ever authorized anyone to either build, be a member of, or justify the existence of a religious denomination of any kind.

5. **One church is not as good as another church UNLESS:**

A. **One FOUNDER is as good as another founder.** Different churches have different founders. Jesus Christ is the founder (the builder) of His church. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said: **"... I will build my church . . ."** His church is **"the pillar and ground of the truth"** according to 1 Timothy 3:15. There is **no** evidence that He built any denomination. They **all** are **human** churches with **human** founders. They have been built in vain. (See Psalms 127:1). **All** of them are destined to **"be rooted up."**

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## **"PROOF REQUESTED, PROOF GIVEN"**

(See Matthew 15:13). **Is any other founder as good as Jesus Christ?**

**B. One FOUNDATION is as good as another foundation.** In 1 Cor. 3:11 Paul said: **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."** (Also see Ephesians 2:20). Jesus Christ is not the foundation of any denomination. They all have mere human foundations. **Is any human foundation as good as Jesus Christ?**

**C. One HEAD is as good as another head.** Human churches (denominations) have human heads. One church may have a pope as its head. Another church may have a general overseer or a superintendent or someone (or more than one) who is recognized as its head. However, Paul declared that Christ **"... is the head of the body, the church..."** (Col. 1:18). Paul also informs us that God **"... hath put all things under His feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body..."** (Eph. 1:22-23). In Eph. 5:23 Paul said; **"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church."** Being the head of a church of human origin apparently feeds the human ego. **Is any human head as good as Jesus Christ?**

**D. One BLOOD is just as good as another blood.** The Apostle Paul informs us in Acts 20:28 that the Lord purchased the church **"with his own blood."** Titus 2:14 says that Christ **"gave himself for us..."** Jesus said that his blood was shed **"for the remission of sins."** (Matthew 26:28). Revelation 1:5 says: **"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."** The blood of Jesus Christ did not purchase any denominational church. The blood of no one (except Jesus Christ) purchased the church of the New Testament! No other blood (than that of Christ) can wash away sins! Is one blood as good as another? **Is the blood of any man as good as the blood of Jesus Christ?**

**E. One BAPTISM is as good as another baptism.** We learn from 1 Cor. 12:13 that by the teaching of the

Holy Spirit **"are we all baptized into one body."** The body is the church! Thus we are baptized into **"one"** church! Denominational baptism (i.e., baptism authorized by a denomination and not by Jesus Christ) does not put one into the Lord's Church! Baptism in the name of Christ (i.e., by his authority) puts one into the Lord's church. If one church is as good as another, then one baptism is just as good as another baptism. **Is denominational baptism just as good as the baptism authorized by Jesus Christ?**

**F. BEING LOST is as good as being saved!** Acts 2:47 says: **"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."** There is absolutely no evidence that the Lord has ever added, or will ever add, one saved person to any denomination! Only men add people to denominations! The saved are added to the Lord's Church by the Lord! Men are reconciled **"unto God in one body"** (which is the church) by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. (Cf. Ephesians 2:13-17). Paul declares in Ephesians 5:23 that **"... He (Christ) is the Saviour of the body."** Since **"the body"** is **"the church"**, Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the church! None can be saved who remain outside of the church! There is no evidence that God will save any accountable person who dies in a denominational church! **Is being lost as good as being saved?** If not, then one church is not as good as another church!

## **OBSERVATIONS:**

1. If one church is just as good as another church, why do people praise some churches and criticize others?

2. If one church is just as good as another church, why do some people choose one church above another?

3. If one church is just as good as another church, why do some people choose to drive past the place where one church assembles in order to go to another?

4. If one church is just as good as another, why do people build new churches and teach new doctrines?

5. If one church is just as good as another, then surely the Lord's church is just as good as denominational churches!

6. If the Lord's church is just as good

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### **"PROOF REQUESTED PROOF GIVEN"**

as denominational churches, why do people in denominational churches often join together to oppose the Lord's church?

7. If the Lord's church is as good as denominational churches, why do some people get disturbed when people obey the gospel, are saved and are added to the Lord's church?

8. If one church is just as good as another, then the Catholic Church and the Mormon Church is just as good as the Baptist Church and the Presbyterian Church!

9. If one church is just as good as another, then the "Jehovah's Witnesses'" denomination is just as good as the Methodist Church!

10. If one church is just as good as another, then the church of the "Moonies" is just as good as the Church of the Nazarene!

11. If one church is just as good as another, then the church of Jim Jones

is just as good as the Pentecostal Church!

12. If one church is just as good as another, then the Catholic, Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, "Moonie," and Jim Jones' Churches are just as good as the **church** of the New testament which was built by Jesus Christ and purchased with His blood! Do you **really believe** that one church is just as good as another?

God's Word does **not** teach that "one church is just as good as another church!"

When a person **presumes** to speak the doctrine that one church is as good as another in the name of Christ, he is speaking presumptuously and is teaching **false** doctrine because such is **not** taught in God's Book! **The person who so speaks is guilty of wickedness!**

We should "**so speak**" and "**so do**" as those who will be **judged** by the law of liberty! (See James 2:12).

(CRS)

(To be continued)

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## ***SENTENCE SERMONS***

If you trim yourself to suit everybody, you will soon whittle yourself away.

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Alcohol takes the brakes off every passion. It cripples self-control.

\* \* \* \* \*

If there is true righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character.

\* \* \* \* \*

To know what is right and not do it is cowardly.

\* \* \* \* \*

Shadows are proof of a shining sun.

\* \* \* \* \*

No man has the right to do wrong.

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