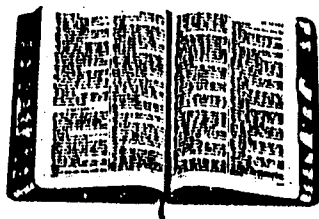


THE INSTRUCTOR



"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 38

JANUARY, 2001

Number 1

"SOME CALLS WHICH COME TO ALL" (NO. 1)

Mankind receives many calls. They may be physical or they may be divine. We can accept some calls or reject them, but there are other calls, which we have over which we have no control. Let us consider some calls which come to man.

I. THE CALL OF DEATH! As a result of Adam's sin death has been universally appointed. Hebrews 9:27 says: **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die,..."** Eccl. 3:2 says: **"A time to be born, and a time to die;..."** In Eccl. 9:5 we read: **For the living know that they shall die:..."** Yes, death is coming to all! Every one of us must die! The one exception to this is that the righteous who are living when Jesus comes will be changed in a moment. (See 1Cor. 15:50-57).

As we consider *the call of death*, let us reflect on *what is death?* Death is *not* a ceasing to exist. It is *not* going out of existence! *Death is a separation of the spirit from the body.* In Gen. 38:18 (referring to the death of Rachel as she gave birth to a son) says: **"And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she**

died) that she called his named Benoni:..." Speaking of death Eccl. 12:7 says: **"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."** James 2:26 says: **For as the body without the spirit is dead,..."** (Also see Luke 23:46). *Yes, death is a separation of the body and spirit!*

Death is a *cessation of all earthly activities!* Eccl. 9:10 says; **"...For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest."** NOTE: The *body*, not the *spirit*, is in the grave.

Death *destroys* earthly accomplishments such as secular education, the obtaining of money, etc. It *separates* from friends and loved ones! It *releases* from all earthly obligations.

Death *does not destroy* our influence for either good or bad. In Heb. 11:4 (speaking of the faith of Abel) we read: **"...and by it he being dead yet speaketh."**

Death is an "officer" that cannot be bribed and it is *a reality* that cannot be defied! Indeed, our lives are just vapors! (See Jas. 4:14). (CRS)

THE INSTRUCTOR

(USPS # 581680)

Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting at 4777 US Highway 431, Albertville, Alabama.

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Second-class postage paid in
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Editorial...

WRONG IS ALWAYS WRONG? (No. 11)

In our previous studies we showed by the Scriptures that *Wrong Is Always Wrong*. We pointed out the following. I. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN THOUGH MOST PEOPLE ACCEPT IT! II. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN IF YOU DON'T GET CAUGHT! III. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN THOUGH IT MAY GIVE A PERSON PLEASURE! IV. WRONG IS WRONG ALTHOUGH A PERSON DOES IT FOR SOMEONE ELSE! V. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN THOUGH A PERSON THINKS IT IS RIGHT. VI. WRONG IS WRONG ALTHOUGH IT IS DONE IN ANGER. VII. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN THOUGH IT IS DONE TO PLEASE OTHERS. VIII. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN IF IT IS CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE. IX. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN IF OTHERS ARE DOING WORSE. X. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN IF NO ONE CONDEMNS IT. XI. WRONG IS WRONG ALTHOUGH ONE IS PERSECUTED FOR CONDEMNING AND OPPOSING IT. XII. WRONG IS WRONG ALTHOUGH IT IS AUTHORIZED (or in some cases, even

commanded) BY CIVIL RULERS. XIII. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN IF IT IS DONE FOR A "GOOD" CAUSE. XIV. WRONG IS WRONG E-VEN IF A POLITICAL LEADER OR A RELIGIOUS LEADER DOES IT. XV. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN IF IT IS DONE IN IGNORANCE. XVI. WRONG IS WRONG ALTHOUGH IT IS DONE TO HELP OTHERS, and, XVII. WRONG IS WRONG EVEN IF IT IS DONE IN WEAKNESS. Let us continue our study.

XVIII. WRONG IS WRONG ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE DONE IN AN EFFORT TO "FEEL GOOD AND BE HAPPY!" We are living in an age where "feeling good" and "being happy" are frequently emphasized. In an effort to justify wrong doing (sinful activity) some will say, "It makes be feel good. I am so happy and God wants me to be happy."

It is certainly true that God desires our happiness. In fact, over and over again He tells us in His Word to *rejoice (i.e. be happy)*. (See Rom. 12:15; 15:10; I Cor. 12:26; Phil. 31; 4:4; I Thess. 5:16; James 1:9). NOTE: Words such as *delight, pleasure, gladness, felicity* and *bliss* are synonyms of both *happiness* and *joy*. In fact, *joy* and *happiness* are synonyms of each other. God not only desires our happiness but He teaches us what we need to do (and what we need) in order for us to have true or genuine happiness. Moses chose to suffer affliction with God's people, rather than to "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" because he esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect for the recompence of the reward." (Heb. 11:24-26). NOTE: This indicates that there may be temporary pleasure in sin.

Many people confuse temporary pleasure with true happiness. Some people think they are really happy because they enjoy a sinful gratifications of the flesh momentarily.

For example, a person who is living in an adulterous marriage may “feel good” and exclaim, “we are so happy.” Or a drunkard may say, “I feel so good” and “I am so happy.” Or a homosexual may say, “we have such a wonderful relationship and we are so happy.” Or a liar, or a cheater or a gambler may claim to “feel good” and claim to be happy, but this does not mean any of the above have true or genuine happiness. Neither does it justify their sins because *wrong is always wrong* and they will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. (See Col. 3:5-7; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:18-32 and Rev. 21:8, 27). Even an idolater may feel good and may say, “I am happy in my religion. Please leave me alone” but this does not justify his sin of idolatry (see 1 John 5:21; Col. 3:5-7; Rev. 21:8). *Wrong is always wrong!* People in denominationalism may feel good and claim happiness but this does not mean that they are pleasing to God! (See Eph. 4:4-6; 2 John 9-11; Mt. 15:7-13). *Wrong is always wrong!*

God who made us knows what it takes to have true or genuine happiness. To be truly happy, we fear the Lord (Prov. 28:14), trust in the Lord (Prov. 26:20), keep His law, i.e., obey His commandments and be reproached for the name of Christ. (Prov. 28:19; Eccl. 12:13). Also read Mt. 5:1-12; 1 Peter 3:10-14; John 13:17; 1 Peter 4:12-16; 1:8). In fearing, trusting and obeying the Lord we will glorify Him and in so doing it will bring genuine happiness to us here in this life and we will be saved eternally in heaven!

**XIX. WRONG IS WRONG
EVEN IF IT IS DONE TO
PROVIDE FOR ONE'S SELF
AND FOR HIS OWN FAMILY!**

Without question, we have the

responsibility to provide for our ourselves and for our own families. In teaching that people should work Paul said, **“For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not the power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.”** (2 Thes. 3:7-10). In 1 Tim. 5:8 Paul said, **“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”** NOTE: Yes, we must provide for ourselves and for our families but we have no right to do wrong in order to do so.

There are many who will not work to provide for themselves nor for their families. They rely upon others to provide for them and their families. Of course, this is wrong. They may try to justify their not working by saying, “I ‘m not able to work” when in reality they are able but are lazy. Or some may say, “I can't find a job” when they are not seeking a job. But *wrong is always wrong!*

Regardless of why a person says he did it, *wrong is always wrong!* For example, a car dealer may “roll back” the odometer on a used car so that it will bring more money. (See Romans 12:17). Or he may lie about the condition of the car in order to make a sale. (See Eph. 4:25). In either case, he has done wrong. He may try to justify his actions by saying, “I have a responsibility to (Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

provide for my family.” However, *wrong is always wrong!* An insurance agent may lie about the policy he is selling and when questioned about it, he may say, “I have to feed my family. That is my responsibility.” He has done wrong. (See Col. 3:9; Rev. 21:8).

A person may rob or steal in order to provide for himself and his family but this is still sinful. (See Rom. 13:9; 12:17; Eph. 4:28).

A person may gamble and try to justify it by saying, “I must feed my family and I am hoping I hit the jackpot”. However, gambling is still sinful. It is not providing things honest in the sight of all men. (See Rom. 12:17). It violates several other Bible principles. It is still wrong although one claims he is doing it in order to provide for his family.

A person may spend most of his waking hours working to the extent that he does not have time left to fulfill other responsibilities that are his.

He may not have time to properly teach and train his children, help the needy, to be a neighbor to others, to assemble with the saints to worship God, etc. He may try to justify his negligence in all other areas of his responsibilities by saying, “I don’t have time for those things. I must work to provide for my family”. He has done wrong because He does not endeavor to put the Lord first in his life. (See Mt. 6:33; Col. 1-2). *Wrong is always wrong regardless of why it is done!* (CRS)

A NEW YEAR BEGINS

As this year of 2001 AD begins, each of us *should reflect on the past* long enough to see our mistakes and failures and *make corrections in our lives as needed*. But we should *not dwell too much on the past* but should *live in the present and look forward to the future*. Paul said: “...**forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things where are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**” (Phil. 3:13-14). (CRS)

SENTENCE SERMONS

To stand fast in the faith, one must firmly believe the faith.

* * * * *

Those who do not cross rivers before they get to them have fewer rivers to cross.

* * * * *

A true and prudent friend is a wonderful blessing.

* * * * *

We need knowledge and wisdom to know and make proper decisions.

* * * * *

We need faith and fortitude to stand for truth and to practice what is good.

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