

# 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 13

JULY, 1976

Number 7

## MAKE IT AS SURE AS YOU CAN

After Christ had been crucified and placed in Joseph's new tomb, certain of the priests and Pharisees made their way to Pilate. It was their belief that an attempt would be made to steal the Lord away, so their purpose was to ask that further assurance be given that the Galilean would not be taken. At this time, "Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can." (Matthew 27:65).

We might borrow Pilate's statement, "Make it as sure as ye can," to emphasize a fundamental truth. Certainly, there is always a safe way, and that is the right way. There is no need for anyone to take a chance with his soul when he can be **sure** about it. Man wants the best in all other realms, so why not in religion? When it comes to a physician the best is sought. Parents want their children to have the finest in the field of education. Why should he settle for just any old thing in religion? If he wants the best in the physical world, he should settle for no less in the spiritual world. Think about it.

To illustrate the point that the sure thing is better than the questionable, consider the man who is offered a **check** for ten dollars or ten dollars in **cash**. Will he take the check or the cash? What would you do? In all probability he will reason that there is a question about a check. There is a

possibility that it is bad. But there is nothing wrong with a ten dollar bill—it's cash; it's good. So he refuses the check and takes the cash; who wouldn't?

Even so, with religious matters we should always want to take the safe course. We should want to make it as **sure** as we can. If we would take the sure thing over the questionable in material things, how much the more should we want to be on the safe side in dealing with eternal things!

Let me now illustrate this truth:

1. The atheist says that there is no God and no life beyond the grave. Now let's just **suppose** that he is right. If he is right in his contention, still the believer is safe because little will it matter what he believes in this life if there is no hereafter. But what if the atheist is **wrong** about it? Then what? He will be lost for his infidelity, but the Christian will be safe. It is therefore foolish to go the way of the atheist. He has all to lose and nothing to gain. No wonder the Psalmist said, "The fool has said in his heart, There is no God." (Psalms 14:1).

2. The modernist says that Christ was not born of the virgin Mary, that He was only another man. **Suppose** that the modernist is right. Although a person believes that Christ was born of the virgin Mary, that He

(Continued on page 3)

# THE INSTRUCTOR

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

CARROL R. SUTTON  
EDITOR

Send all questions, comments, and criticisms to the editor, Route 3, Highway 431 South, Albertville, Alabama 35950.

Second-class postage paid in  
Albertville, Ala. 35950

*Editorial — — —*

## Wisdom From Above

James 3:17 says: **"But THE WISDOM THAT IS FROM ABOVE is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."**

The word translated "wisdom" in the above passage is defined by THAYER'S LEXICON to mean **"wisdom, broad and full intelligence."** (p. 581). Mr. Thayer says it is "used of the knowledge of very diverse matters, so that the shade of meaning in which the word is taken must be discovered from the contest in every particular case." He suggests that in James 3:17 it means "the knowledge and practice of the requisites for godly and upright living."

We need **the wisdom that is from above!** We can obtain this wisdom through a diligent study and an application of the principles of truth and righteousness as revealed in the holy Scriptures.

### FIRST PURE

The wisdom that is from above **is pure.** It is not contaminated. It is pure from defilement. It is free from admixture of

impurities. It teaches us to think purity and to be holy. It is known by the actions it produces. It teaches us to be careful to avoid any defilement by sin and error and to cleave to truth and holiness. We should be free from idolatry. The wisdom that prompts us to "flee idolatry" is from God. As Agur said: **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness."** (Prov. 30:12). Jesus said: **"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."** (Matthew 5:8). We can not be pure in heart unless we possess **"the wisdom that is from above."**

### THEN PEACEABLE

The wisdom that is from above **is first pure, THEN PEACEABLE.** It teaches us to **"be at peace among"** ourselves and to **"live peaceably with all men."** (See Mark 9:50; Romans 12:18). There can never be genuine peace unless there is purity of wisdom!

The wisdom from above teaches us to **"follow after the things which make for peace."** (See Romans 14:19). It teaches us to follow peace with all men and to endeavor **"to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."** (Cf. Hebrews 12:14; Ephesians 4:3).

If we would have **"peace"** among ourselves and have **"the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,"** it is essential that we follow the God of peace and **"let the peace of God rule"** in our hearts. (See Col. 3:15). The wisdom that is from above influences men toward making and keeping peace so far as it is consistent with purity and may be done without sin.

If we are influenced by **"the wisdom that is from above"** we will be inclined toward making and keeping peace.

### GENTLE

THAYER'S LEXICON defines the word that is translated **"gentle"** to mean **"equitable, fair, mild, gentle."** (p.238). One who is influenced by the wisdom from above will be **gentle.** Such a one will be disposed to bear with the infirmities of others, to forgive injuries, and when possible, to interpret things for the best, in order to have peace. Gentleness is not harshness. It is not ugly. It is kind and mild. It shows meekness unto all men. However, we should keep in mind that the wisdom from above that teaches us to be gentle also teaches us not to compromise truth nor moral purity.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

## WISDOM FROM ABOVE

### EASY TO BE ENTREATED

The wisdom that is from above is "**easy to be entreated**." The word translated "**easy to be entreated**" means "**easily obeying, compliant**" according to THAYER'S LEXICON, p. 261. It causes one to yield to the persuasions of reason and good counsel. It prompts one to apply the proper principles to his actions. One who is influenced by the wisdom that is from above can be easily encouraged to obey God and to comply with sound advice. One who can not be "easily entreated" is influenced by the wisdom is "**earthly, sensual, devilish**." (See James 3:15).

(CRS)

*(To be continued)*

(Continued from page 1)

### MAKE IT AS SURE AS YOU CAN

is divine, he is just as safe as the modernist. But what if the modernist is wrong — we know that he is — the Christian is still safe! While the modernist will be lost for his rejection of Christ, the Christian will be saved for his faithfulness. The **safe** way is the best way. (John 3:16; 14:6).

3. The universalist says that all will be saved. Just **suppose** that is true. The Christian is safe because he will be counted in that number. But what if the universalist is wrong, and Christ was right when He said that only baptized believers will be saved? (Mark 16:16). Then those men will be lost for expounding a false doctrine, but the Christian is still safe, inasmuch as he believes the Bible when it says that only the righteous will be saved. (Matt. 25:46).

4. The denominationalist argues that one church is as good as another. Let us **suppose** that this is true. Those who believe that there is only one church, and are members of Christ's church, are safe because they are members of a church. But what if the denominationalist is wrong and all churches will not be saved? Then it just means that he will be lost, but note that the Christian is safe because he is a member of the one true church. Christ said that He would build His church. (Matt. 16:18). Paul says that there is but one. (Eph. 4:4). So one is safe only by being a member of that church.

(Continued in right column)

(Continued from left column)

### MAKE IT AS SURE AS YOU CAN

5. It is said that one can be saved without baptism. **Suppose** that is true. In that case, the Christian is safe because even the denominationalist says that one can be baptized if he wants to. But what if such a doctrine is not the truth? Then those who follow it will be lost because they have not been baptized scripturally, but the Christian will be saved because he was baptized as commanded. (Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). He therefore takes no chance.

6. It is also said that one can worship as he pleases. **Suppose** that this be the truth; the Christian is safe in his worship because he **worships**. But what if such a teaching is false, as the New Testament sets forth? Then those who worship as they please, although honest and sincere, will be lost. Since the Christian takes no chance, but worships according to the Bible, he will be saved. (John 4:24).

7. Again, it is said that there are many ways to heaven. **Suppose** this is true. The Christian is all right because he is on one of those ways. But what if there is but one way, and Christ was right when he said that He is the way? (John 14:6). Those who teach that there are many ways will be lost, but the Christian will be saved because he is on the one and only way. (Matthew 7:13-14).

There is a safe way in all the things mentioned; yea, there is a safe course in all things, even in the Christian life itself. There is no need for taking a chance. Whenever the questionable things are put before that which is **sure** and **right**, then one is in danger. The Lord doesn't ask us to do anything that we can't do. He only asks that we do our best, and we have His promise that if we will do that much, all will be well with our souls. His desire for us is that we should all be saved.

**Make it as sure as you can.** Do right and you'll always be right. Don't listen to man — submit to the will of God. Your soul is too precious to accept any old thing and act any old way. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14:12). Again, Christ says, "I am the way." (John 14:6).

---J.C. Choate via GOSPEL DIGEST

## SOMEONE HAS SAID:

I asked God for strength, that I  
might achieve;

I was made weak, that I might  
learn humbly to obey. . . .

I asked for health, that I might do  
greater things:

I was given infirmity,  
that I might do better things. . . .

I asked for riches, that I might be  
happy;

I was given poverty,  
that I might be wise. . . .

I asked for power, that I might have  
the praise of men;

I was given weakness, that I  
might feel the need of God. . . .

I asked for all things, that I might  
enjoy life;

I was given life, that I might  
enjoy all things. . . .

I got nothing that I asked for —  
but everything I had hoped for;

Almost despite myself, my unspoken  
prayers were answered.

I am, among all men, most richly blessed!

--Author unknown

## THE HILL-SUTTON DEBATE

The Hill-Sutton Debate has not yet been rescheduled although it has been more than **two years** since **Albert Hill** and the West Hobbs Street "**elders**" promised to set the date in a short time.

If they have the **truth** on the subjects that we agreed to debate, why are they so reluctant to discuss these matters? Or if they **really believe** that they have the **truth** on these matter, why aren't they willing to debate **as they agreed to do?**

As soon as the date is set, we will get the word to you.

## THE SECRET

Why did Samuel say to Saul, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams?" (1 Sam. 15:22). Because God would rather have us obey than to accomplish the most astounding feats or offer the most lavish praise. There is no substitute for obedience. God will produce the results He wants if we will but provide the obedience He requires. But when we take it in hand to get the results that we think are good and desirable by our own means instead of always being careful to obey the voice of the Lord, we have sinned. Let us obey.

--Jere E. Frost

---

## Sentence Sermons

No man's character is better than his word.  
-----

The heart of education is the education of the heart.  
-----

No smutty stories are told in heaven — or on the way to heaven.  
-----

The law of love is quite harmonious with the love of law.  
-----

A beautiful heart more than offsets the handicap of a homely face.  
-----

---

CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Route 3, Highway 431 South  
Albertville, Alabama 35950