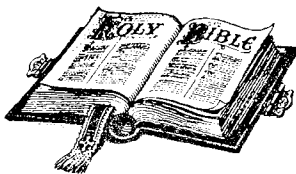


THE INSTRUCTOR



"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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RESTORING SIMPLE NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP

When men set out a century and a half ago to restore the New Testament church upon the precepts of the Bible and the Bible only, so-called Christianity was full of corruptions in worship. Over the centuries leaders of the apostate churches had borrowed from paganism, Judaism, and their own misguided "wisdom" to fill the religious bodies with unauthorized innovations, modernism of every kind, and rituals which had caused the people to completely lose sight of the simplicity which is in Christ. The worship of God has in many cases been changed from the reverent, pure, holy service He intended into a place of actual entertainment for the people. Others had changed the worship of God through Christ into a system which elevated the "clergy" to a position of mediator. Such men as the Campbells, B.W. Stone, John Smith, and many others could see that the systems of worship of their day were far removed from the purity of the New Testament pattern. They could see that if the New Testament church was ever to be restored, many sweeping changes would have to be made in the acts of worship as practiced by men of that day, as well as in the people's attitude toward the worship. So they set out to destroy all the innovations of men with the plea, "Back to the Bible." They began to urge men to do away with all their own ideas on worship, and to begin worshipping just as the New Testament reveals that the Christians of the first century worshipped.

In a few short years thousands of people across the country had rallied to this effort. The same conditions still exist today, and the effort is still going on.

From Genesis to Revelation the Bible is full of warnings that men are not to change the commands, arrangements and plans of God. In the very first record we have of men worshipping God, we see one of the participants, Cain, changing God's order and being punished for it. (Gen 4). The New Testament writer speaks of those who are presumptuous and choose their own manner of worship and says they have "gone in the way of Cain." He pronounces a woe upon such for walking after their own lusts. (Jude 11-16). The history of the nation of Israel is full of their corrupting and changing the worship God demanded of them and the punishments they received for so doing. (Mal. 3:7-9; Joel 1:5-20). Isaiah said of that nation, and Christ also applied the words to the Jews of His day, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:9).

It has always been fatal for man to add his own methods or ideas to the commands of God. David tried to move the Ark of the Covenant in the wrong way, and his failure was marked by the death of Uzzah. David himself said it was because they did not seek God "after the due order." (1 Chron. 15:13).

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THE INSTRUCTOR

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Editorial — — —

PUTTING FIRST THINGS FIRST

A failure to realize the need of **putting first things first** is characteristic of many who profess to be faithful to the Lord. Unless we give diligence in our service as Christians, we will fail to put **first things first**.

FIRST OF FIRSTFRUITS

Under the Old Testament, God demanded the **first of the firstfruits**. Through Moses God commanded Israel saying: "**The first of the firstfruits** of the land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God." (Exodus 23:19; Cf. 34:26). God not only desired the **first of the firstfruits**, but **He demanded the first!** This Old Testament example should teach us a profitable lesson.

FIRST HIS BROTHER

Andrew followed Jesus after he had heard John the Baptist declare: "Behold the Lamb of God!" Concerning Andrew, John 1:41-42 says: "He **first** findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he (Andrew—CRS) brought him (Simon—CRS) to Jesus." After becoming a follower of Jesus, Andrew wanted his brother Simon to follow Jesus. So he brought him to Jesus. Not only should we follow Jesus, but we should encourage others to follow him. Surely we desire that our kinsmen in the flesh follow the Lord. We should put forth earnest effort to teach others the gospel of Christ.

FIRST BE RECONCILED

In His sermon on the mount Jesus said: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; **First** be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Matthew 5:23-24). The teaching from this for us is that we must be **pure in heart** in order for God to accept our worship. We must treat others right. We must manifest the proper attitude toward others. When we assemble to worship God, there is no place in our hearts for malice, envy, hatred, or ill-will of any kind. We have no right to mistreat a brother and then assemble and expect God to accept our worship. We must **first be reconciled** to our brother and then come and worship God.

FIRST CAST OUR BEAM

In condemning hypocrisy, Jesus said: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thy own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in the thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, **first cast out the beam out of thine own eye**; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." (Matthew 7:3-5). We should not be hypocritical. Neither should we be "fault finders." Our motives should not be malicious, but pure. A self-examination is always in order for all of us. Our own lives should be cleaned up **first** and hindrances removed. **Then** we can clearly see how to help others remove obstacles from their lives. Unless we practice what we teach, our teaching will not be as effective as it should be.

FIRST CLEANSE INSIDE

In denouncing the scribes and Pharisees because of their religious inconsistencies and hypocrisy, Jesus said: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, **cleanse first** that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful

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PUTTING FIRST THINGS FIRST

outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." (Matthew 23:25-28). Hypocrisy is pretence. It is **"having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."** The hypocrite is a stickler for little things while omitting the **"weightier matters of the law"** such as **"judgement, mercy and faith."** He insists on outward acts, but neglects inward purity. The hypocrite feigns love for God while disregarding sincerity and true holiness. The hypocrite may desire vainglory and pre-eminence among men. He may be envious of others. The church is plagued with hypocrites. Many people are deceived by hypocrites. Others who are not deceived bid them godspeed in their ungodly actions.

Let us all take heed and **"beware of hypocrisy"** because beneath the paint of hypocrisy there is iniquity that will cause the hypocrites to be unable to **"escape the damnation of hell!"** Yes, we should first **cleanse the inside** and the outside will be clean.

Spiritual values do not mean as much to us as they should unless we are willing to learn what God wants us to **put first**, and then earnestly strive to **put first things first**.

(To be continued) (CRS)

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RESTORING SIMPLE NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP

Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, died because they substituted their own fire for that which came out from the Lord, thus corrupting the worship of the tabernacle. (Num. 3:4). Thus we see that God has always punished those who refused to do what He commanded in **exactly the way He commanded it**.

The New Testament teaches that this principle is just as true as concerns the worship of the church. We must do **what** God tells us in the **way** He tells us. To deviate from the New Testament pattern in worship will cause God to have no respect for our worship. Paul wrote to the Colossians and

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RETORING SIMPLE NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP

said, "And whatsoever ye do, **in word or deed**, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Col. 3:17). "In the name of" simply means "by the authority of" or "by the direction of." Therefore, we are to perform all our religious acts only as we are commanded and directed by Jesus Christ in His word. Christ has, through His inspired apostles, given us certain acts to perform as worship or service to Him. They are: singing, (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19), praying (Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17), eating the Lord's Supper, (1 Cor. 11:23-26), giving into a common treasury for the work of the church, (1 Cor. 16:1-2), and teaching the gospel. (Matt. 28:18-20; 1 Cor. 14). These are acts which can be performed in caves or in beautiful church buildings. They are acts which can be performed by any mentally responsible person, regardless of race, education, or station in life. They are acts which are much more beautiful and reverent when done as simply as humanly possible, without adding any of man's trappings to make them more entertaining or interesting to the people. The purpose of these acts of worship is to give glory to God, (Eph. 3:21), not to any man or set of men. It is useless to do these things unless they are done from the heart, with a full desire to be pleasing unto God.

When the day comes that all religious people are united on the basis of doing these acts of worship, and these only, in the way the New Testament teaches, New Testament worship will be restored completely in the earth. This is far from being done yet; there are still many obstacles to overcome. But by the help of God all Christians must press toward the mark of one day seeing the true worship of God restored throughout the earth in all its purity, glory, and simplicity.

——Van Ledbetter in THE RESTORATION HERALD, May, 1958

THE MANNER OF THE MATTER?

A young preacher said to me once: "My delivery bothers me. I have not a good delivery." I told him not to worry about his delivery, if he had anything to deliver. There is too much importance put on the manner, and not enough on the matter that is being delivered today.

—— John T. Lewis, via TIMELY ADMONITION

WILL HE HAVE A COMPLEX IF I TELL HIM "NO"?

David tried to rear his son Adonijah without any "no's." "And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?" (1 Kings 1:6). A study of Adonijah's life as recorded in 1 Kings will reveal the neurotic misfit that resulted.

Telling a child "no" will not give him a complex but letting him grow without restriction will certainly do just that. A child needs many things from his parents. Two of the more important are a sense of direction — a pointing toward God — and some guideposts to keep him on the road. These guideposts must include some "do not's" as well as some "do's." Christian parents will find the basis for both affirmative and negative commands in God's Word. The child without such restraint has no means of learning except by his own trial and error and the road becomes doubly long and doubly hard.

Parents today are trying, like David, to rear a child without any "no's" are similar to a person who would turn a pet canary or a parakeet loose in the outside world and expect it to survive. The world our children must live in has many "no's." Obedience to these is a necessary prerequisite for successful living in it. When we "turn a child loose" who has no respect for a negative command, we can expect him to fail himself and us.

———Avanelle E. Baird in **20th Century Christian**.

THE HILL—SUTTON DEBATE

Although it has been **two years** since the West Hobbs Street "**elders**" and **Albert Hill** agreed to re-schedule the debate within a short time, they still have not done so. If these men were members of a "denominational church," we might expect them to act as they have, but these men **claim** to be members of the body of Christ. They **claim** to be just Christians! They **claim** to know and believe the truth!

Would someone who is closely acquainted with them please approach them about courtesy, honesty and common decency? They need help. I am pleading for someone to come to their rescue — before they perish!

GOSPEL MEETINGS

A SERIES OF GOSPEL MEETINGS IS TO BE CONDUCTED AT THE EAST ALBERTVILLE CHURCH BUILDING beginning July 12th and continuing through July 18th. Sewell Hall of Atlanta, Ga. will be preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. Services will begin each evening at 7:30. Please tell others and make your plans to be with us.

THE PSALMIST SAID: "I am a companion of all them that fear thee because of thy righteous judgements."
(Psalms 119:63)

Sentence Sermons

Honest mistakes need correction just as others do.

It is much easier to give advice than to lend a helping hand.

To err is human, but when the eraser wears out before the pencil, you're over-doing it.

Faith must have adequate evidence or else it is mere superstition.

Compromise is always wrong when it means to sacrifice a principle of truth.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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