

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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THE NEED FOR PATIENCE

Jesus told His disciples, "In your patience possess ye your souls." (Luke 21:19). Is there something here for me?

To "possess" here means to "gain" or to "win"; and refers to the preservation or saving of the soul. In the immediate context it may have reference to escaping alive out of the destruction of Jerusalem, for that was under direct consideration. But careful study of the word "patience" will convince us that this is essential to the building of character and eventual salvation of the soul in eternity.

"Patience" gives many the idea of repose; calmly, even phlegmatically waiting for the traffic light to turn green. But this is not its real meaning. Coming from a word meaning "to abide under" it more nearly corresponds to "steadfastness" or "endurance"; or our coined word "stickability." In the larger sense, we can save our souls only by **being faithful to the death.** (Rev. 2:10).

Patience is a virtue, added to our character as we grow spiritually. (2 Pet. 1:5-11). It must be developed, built up and strengthened; and this requires exercise. Our physical muscles will not develop properly unless pitted against opposition. We improve flabby muscles by lifting weights, knowing that as we overcome an opposing force we prepare to meet greater future obstacles. Patience

needs much the same sort of exercise.

"Consider it a joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials; knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect (mature) and complete, lacking in nothing." (Jas. 1:2-4, NAS). These verses refer not to the temptations that are due to man's own lust (vs. 13-f), but to external trials that discourage, dismay and buffet us. And they affect not a fixed, unchanging truss, that bears a weight or is broken under it, with character unaltered; but these trials affect a living, pulsing, vital faith; that is made stronger, more mature in nature and character, as its sinews flex to meet the challenges of life.

Patience is not the brute strength to "take" punishment, not a "thick skin" that may indicate only an insensitive nature. "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." (1 Pet. 2:20).

When our sense of justice is outraged; when we are reviled, and our instinct leaps to fight a carnal battle, then patience is taxed. Remember, "hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suf-

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Editorial.....

What Is Your Attitude?

(NUMBER 4)

Those who are interested in being saved eternally will be deeply concerned about their attitude. They will be cognizant of the consequences of an improper attitude. In our past studies we have discussed **God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Scripture, the church and the gospel, the truth and preachers of truth** and the attitude that we should have toward each. Let us further examine our attitude.

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD FALSE DOCTRINES?

Some people say that "it doesn't matter what we believe or teach. Doctrine is not important." They have the idea that we should "preach the gospel and leave other people and their doctrines alone." Is the correct concept? Should this be our attitude?

Speaking to his disciples Jesus said: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." (Matt. 16:6). We learn from Matt. 16:12 that "then understood they how he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the DOCTRINE of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Here is a warning given by the Lord to **beware of false doctrine!** Hebrews 13:9 says: "**Be not carried about with divers and STRANGE**

DOCTRINES....." Doctrines that are foreign or alien to God's Word are **STRANGE DOCTRINES**. We should not accept them. Paul warned of men who would arise, "**speaking PERVERSE THINGS, to draw away disciple after them.**" (See Acts 20:28-32). He also wrote concerning some who would "**depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and DOCTRINES OF DEVILS.**" (See 1 Tim. 4:1-5). These DOCTRINES would be contrary to TRUTH! Peter mentions some "**who privily shall bring in DAMNABLE HERESIES.**" (See 2 Pet. 2:1-3). This sounds like **false doctrines will damn**, doesn't it? 2 John 9 says: "**Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, hath not God. He that abideth in the DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, he hath both the Father and the Son.**" **Doctrine DOES MATTER.** Unless one abides in the doctrine of Christ, he does NOT have God!

What is **your attitude toward false doctrines?** Do you **KNOW truth** from error? Do you condone error? Does error have your approval? Do you encourage error? Do you wage an aggressive battle against false teaching, or do you silently consent when error is propagated? The Psalmist said: "**Through thy precepts I get understanding: Therefore I hate every false way.**" (Psa. 119:104). Do you **hate error** or do you love it? Do you hate "**every false way?**"

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD FALSE TEACHERS?

Some people have the idea that false teachers should not be openly and specifically exposed, but should be left alone. It is sometimes suggested that we do not have proper love for people if we expose false teachers. Is this **your attitude?**

During his personal ministry on earth Jesus said: "**Beware of FALSE PROPHETS, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, of figs of thistles?**" (Matt. 7:15-16).

In Matt. 22 Jesus "**put the Sadducees to silence**" by exposing their false teaching. In Mark 7 Jesus called the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes **hypocri-**

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WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE?

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tes because they taught **"for doctrines the commandments of men."** They made the word of God **"of none effect"** by laying aside the commandments of God that they might keep their **"own tradition"**. For a detailed account of the scathing rebukes Jesus gave the scribes and Pharisees, please read Matthew 23. In denouncing false teachers, Jesus was truly **"the lion of the tribe of Judah."**

While in Paphos, the apostle Paul called Elymas the sorcerer a **"child of the devil,"** an **enemy of all righteousness.**" (See Acts 13:4-13). When certain men from Judea taught the brethren, and said, **"Except ye be circumcized after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved,"** Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them." (See Acts 15:1-2). In Athens, Paul condemned idolatry and preached Jesus. Some mocked, some said he was a **"babbler"** and some accused him of being **"a setter forth of strange gods"** and some **"believed."** (See Acts 17:16-34). In Romans 16:17 Paul urges brethren to **"mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine"** which they have learned and **"avoid them."** Paul named Hymenaeus and Philetus, **"who concerning the truth" erred.** (See 2 Tim. 2:16-19). Titus was charged to **"rebuke"** SHARPLY those who taught things which were erroneous. (See Tit. 1:10-14).

John, the beloved disciple, called some people LIARS in 1 John 2:18-23. In 1 John 4:1 he said: **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God because many false prophets are gone out into the world."** In 2 John 10-11 John said: **If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."**

Dear reader, what is YOUR attitude toward false teachers? Do you **reprove** and **rebuke** them? You should! Do you **silently consent**? You should not! Do you try to **justify** them? Do you speak

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A FATHER'S PRAYER

Dear God, my little boy of three
Has said his nightly prayer to Thee
Before his eyes were closed in sleep
He asked that Thou his soul would keep.
And I, still kneeling at his bed,
My hand upon his tousled head,
Do ask, with deep humility,
That Thou, dear Lord, remember me.
Make me, kind Lord, a worthy dad,
That I may lead this little lad
In pathways ever fair and bright,
That I may keep his steps aright.
O God, his trust must never be
Destroyed, or even marred by me;
Let Christ in all my actions shine,
To guide this little lamb of thine.
So for the simple things he prayed
With childish voice so unafraid,
I, trembling, ask the same from Thee;
Dear Lord, kind Lord, remember me!

—Taken from

THE STEVEN AVE. SOWER

The True Church

Some say that they will just join the church that is nearest like the true church. But how can one know if a church is like the true one unless he knows the true one? And if he knows the true church why does he want to settle for something nearly like it when he can by obedience to the gospel be added by the Lord to His one true church. (Acts 2:47).

—Jimmy Thomas

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE? (Cont'd.)

well of them? Or do you **"contend"** with them." Do you **criticize** preachers of truth in an effort to take pressure off the advocates of error?

It takes **courage** to expose false doctrines and rebuke false teachers. Do you have sufficient courage to do so? Remember, YOUR **attitude** toward false doctrines and false teachers will determine your eternal destiny!

(To be continued)

(CRS)

SAY AMEN CHURCH!

While reading an article in a recent Sunday paper about a colorful Negro preacher in Atlanta, I paused and gave thought to a practice that is observed in every Negro congregation I have visited with, as well as many rural white congregations—the habit of the assembly saying “Amen” during a lesson and at the close of prayers. I thought, “why don’t the rest of us do that?”

Immediately there comes to mind Paul’s statement in 1 Cor. 14:16: “Else if thou bless with the spirit, how shall he that filleth the place of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest?” We use the verse to encourage clarity of speech when prayers are offered, and rightly so, but why not also use the verse to encourage people to say “Amen?”

I can think of advantages in following such a practice. (1) If a man or woman audibly says “Amen” at the close of the prayer, it may cause them to listen more attentively since they will audibly add their agreement before God and man; (2) the one leading the prayer will give more careful thought to his

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fered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.” (1 Pet. 2:21-25).

By “patient continuance in well doing” we shall find eternal life. We must “hear the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.” It is with patience we must “run—the race that is set before us.” (Rom. 2:7; Lk. 8:15; Heb. 12:1).

How challenging the words, “IN YOUR PATIENCE POSSESS YE YOUR SOULS.”

—Robert F. Turner
in PLAIN TALK

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SAY AMEN, CHURCH! (Cont’d.)

words if he knows that his fellow-worshippers are really paying close attention and thus fully participating with him; (3) It will serve to give a spirit of enthusiasm and active involvement to the whole service. It will also mean something to a preacher for the audience to respond with a hearty “Amen” to an emphatic statement of truth. The only disadvantage I can see is that it might give the preacher a scare, but he’ll get over it. Why not try it, men and women?

—J. D. Tant
in ANCIENT LANDMARKS

Sentence Sermons

Some people develop eye strain looking for trouble.

The man who forgets he was once a boy is the man whom the boys dislike.

Lies, like chickens, come home to roost.

Some people are like rocking chairs—full of motion, but they make no progress.

A half-truth and a whole lie are congenial companions.

It is good to be wise, and it is wise to be good.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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