

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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PREACHER'S WORK

Highly vexed with the idea of visiting pastors, T. W. Caskey, a pioneer gospel preacher, said the following in a meeting of preachers:

"I beg to differ from the brother who has preceded me on this question. There are certain kinds of people in the church who have been brought into it by certain kinds of schemes, who cannot be kept in it without some men eternally trotting at their heels. When I find such stock as that in the church which I am preaching for, I give them plainly to understand that, if they haven't enough religion to come out to the Lord's house and worship their God without being driven up every Sunday like a parcel of stray cattle, they may jump over the fence and starve to death in the wilderness. Brethren, I'm not coming down from the intellectual work in the pulpit to make a common herd-boy out of myself. If I must do such work as that, I will quit preaching and hire out to some man to herd sheep or cows. Church members who cannot be brought out to the house of the Lord except by pastoral visitations, are not worth standing room in a potter's field anyway. I have recently had some valuable experience myself in pastoral visitation. I tried it in a sickly little church in a fashionable town.

I tramped the streets through dust and heat for three miserable days. I found only one old wanderer on the mountains of sin, wild and bare, and he had grazed on the devil's commons till he couldn't tell clover from sneeze weed. He had lost his bell and shed his fleece, and herded with the goats till he was not worth driving home.

"Brethren, let me speak freely about this professional visiting, as a means of building up a church. The sick and the poor, the troubled and the distressed, the fatherless, ought to be visited ... by all the saints. No one is readier than I to encourage such visiting.

"Pastoral visiting and clerical clap-trap may popularize a church and fill it with the irreligious and worldly minded, but such things will neither convert sinners nor add to the spirituality of the worship. If you convert sinners and build up churches humoring spiritual weaklings and flattering simpering sentimentalists, in pastoral visiting, without preaching the gospel, you may as well throw away the Bible, get a fashionable preacher and rent hell out for a calf pasture. People who attend the meetings of the saints from the love of the 'pastor,' have

(Continued on page 3)

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EDITORIAL

What Is Your Attitude?

(NUMBER 3)

In my judgment, the importance of one's attitude cannot be overemphasized. Outward actions are not acceptable to God unless they are prompted by sincere motives. In our last two studies, we suggested that all of us should have the proper attitude toward God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Scripture, the church, and the gospel. In the first study it was pointed out that to have the proper attitude, we must fear and reverence God; we must believe that Jesus is truly the Son of God and has all authority in heaven and earth; we must believe that the Holy Spirit is one of the three personalities of Deity and that He inspired men to speak and write the truth. In the second study it was suggested that to have the proper attitude, we must accept the Scripture as being inspired of God; we must recognize the church as having Christ as its builder, purchaser, head and Saviour and realize that we should glorify God in the church by Jesus Christ; we must accept the gospel as being God's power to save and that all who "obey not the gospel" will be lost! Let us further examine our attitude.

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD TRUTH?

In his prayer to the Father, Jesus said: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." (John 17:17). Your attitude toward God's word will deter-

mine your conduct and hence your eternal destiny. Truth came by Jesus Christ. (See John 1:17). Truth is very valuable because it makes free. (See John 8:31-32). Truth sanctifies, (See John 17:17), purifies, (See 1 Pet. 1:22), and it saves. (See James 1:21).

You and I should desire to KNOW the truth. God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2:4). Some people are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. 3:7).

Not only should we KNOW the truth, but we must LOVE the truth. The apostle Paul mentions those who "perish" because "they received not the LOVE of the truth." He further said, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (See 2 Thess. 2:10-12). Do you have a LOVE OF THE TRUTH? What if truth contradicts your present opinions or those of your friends or relatives? What if truth makes demands of you that require courage and sacrifice? Are you still willing to embrace it?

The truth must be OBEYED by us if we would be saved by it. Peter tells us that souls are purified in obeying the truth. (See 1 Pet. 1:22). Paul says "indignation and wrath" will be "unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness." (Rom. 2:8). We should live by and walk in the truth, (See Matt. 4:4; 3 John 4), and be willing to earnestly contend for the faith. (See Jude 3).

Are you ashamed of the truth? If you are, Jesus will be ashamed of you "when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (Mark 8:38)

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD PREACHERS OF TRUTH?

Preachers have the responsibility of proclaiming the truth. Their message is not political or social. It is not philosophy or vain deceit. (See Col. 2:8). The doctrines and commandments of men have no place in the sermons of gospel preaches. (See Matt. 15:9; Tit. 1:14). The gospel must be preached! (See Matt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16). The word must

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)
WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE? (No. 3)

be proclaimed **"in season, out of season"** (See 2 Tim. 4:2). **"All the counsel of God"** must be declared. (See Acts 20:26-27). **"Sound doctrine"** must be spoken. (See Tit. 2:1-8). False doctrines must be exposed. Error must be condemned. There must be some **"reproving"** and **"rebuking."** (See 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 4:1-4).

What is **your attitude** toward preachers of truth? Herodias had John beheaded because he exposed her sin. (See Mk. 6:17-28). Those to whom Stephen preached in Acts 7 **"stoned"** him to death because he condemned their wickedness with the truth he taught. Some of the Athenians of Acts 17 called Paul a **"babbler"** and some said he was setting forth **"strange gods"** because **"he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection."** Because of their preaching at Philippi, Paul and Silas had their clothes torn off, were beaten and put in prison. (See Acts 16).

Paul specifically named **Alexander** the coppersmith and warned Timothy of him because he had **"withstood"** Paul's preachings. (See 2 Tim. 4:14-18). Paul Paul specifically named **Hymenaeus and Alexander** as having made **"shipwreck"** of their faith and had delivered them **"unto Satan."** (See 1 Tim. 1:19-20). He specifically named **Phygellus and Her-mogenes** as having **"turned away from me,"** (See 2 Tim. 1:15), and **Demas** as having **"forsaken me, having loved this present world."** (2 Tim. 4:10). He rebuked Peter **"before them all"** because of his hypocrisy and later mentioned this fact when he wrote the Galatian letter. (See Gal. 2:11-14).

Dear reader, what is **your attitude** toward **preachers of truth**? Do you **resent** them? Do you **envy** them? Do you **criticize** them to others? Do you try to **hurt** their influence? Do you try to get them to **compromise** their convictions? Do you try to make their lives **miserable**? Do you **persecute** them? A self-examination may reveal an improper attitude.

We should not **"glory"** in preachers or in any man. (See 1 Cor. 3:21). We should not show loyalty to preachers at the expense of loyalty to Christ and His word. We should not form a **"party"** or **"faction"** around any man. But it is

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PREACHER'S WORK
(Continued from page 1)

neither faith nor piety and their pretended worship is but a hollow mockery that will militate against the piety of any church and prove a stench in the nostrils of our God.

"The best way to build up a church, therefore, is to return to the apostolic order of preaching and worship."

—Seventy Years in Dixie
 via THE RESTORER

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE (Cont'd)
 equally as important that we do not **"condemn the just."** (See Prov. 17:15). We should always bear in mind that Jesus said, **"for the laborer is worthy of his hire,"** (Luke 10:7), and Paul said: **"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."** (Rom. 10:15).

Remember, **your attitude** will determine your actions here and your eternal destiny!

(To be continued)

THE TONGUE

"I've gossiped about my neighbor," said the woman to her minister. "One day I saw her stagger across the yard, so I told a few friends that she had been drunk. Now I find that her staggering was caused by a leg injury. How can I undo this gossip I started?"

The minister excused himself for a moment, returned with a pillow and asked the woman to follow him to a side porch. He took a knife, cut a hole in the pillow and emptied the feathers over the railing. A small breeze soon scattered tiny feathers all about the yard, among shrubs, flowers, even up in the trees. A few feathers floated across the street heading for unknown destinations. The minister turned to the woman and said, "Will you go out now and gather every one of the feathers?"

The woman looked stunned, and said, "Why, that would be impossible."

"Exactly," replied the minister sorrowfully, "and so it is with your gossip."

—Author unknown, taken from
KNOW THE TRUTH

THE WARNING

The antediluvians would not be warned by the preaching of Noah, and suspected nothing till the flood came, and swept them all away. The Jews in like manner would not be warned by our Lord and his apostles, and could not be aroused from their apathy and indifference till their devoted city was invested with armies. So shall it be at the coming of the Son of man. Great trials are upon those who intend to maintain truth and righteousness. May we be able to stand the coming to the surface. Let us not slumber, but watch and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die. Let us hold fast and be faithful, lest the trying hour comes on us unexpected. Let us sing, and sing with the spirit and the understanding: "Nearer, my God, to thee." May we find grace to stand in the evil day, and have done all to stand.

—BOOK OF GEMS, page 390

A SERIES OF GOSPEL MEETINGS

Raymond Harville of Mt. Pleasant, Tn. will preach in a series of meetings at East Albertville Nov. 5-11, 1973 at 7:00 p.m. You are invited!

Sentence Sermons

People who wonder where this younger generation is headed will do well to consider where it came from.

Patience is the ability to count down before blasting off.

A modern bathing suit is the difference between not very much and nothing at all.

If fifty million people say a foolish thing over and over, it is still a foolish thing.

A lie may take care of the present, but it has no future.

A lot of people waste too much sympathy on themselves.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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