

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 10

SEPTEMBER, 1973

Number 9

WAS JOHN THE BAPTIST A CHRISTIAN?

No, John the Baptist was not a Christian. He lived and died before the Christian system was established. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by Esaias the prophet saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (Matt. 3:1-3).

John the Baptist—or, more correctly, John the Baptizer, or, still more literally, John the Immerser—was the fore-runner of Jesus. He was the friend of the Bridegroom. The work of John the Immerser was to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah. This he did by calling on them to repent, warning them the kingdom was at hand.

This significant testimony concerning John the Immerser is preserved. "Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the groom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:28-30).

John completed his work, and went

the way of all flesh before the Christian system was established. At least six months after John was dead and buried, Jesus of Nazareth stood on the coasts of Caesarea Philippi and announced, "Upon this rock I will build my church....." (Matt. 16:18) — affirming to build his church in the future. That plan was accomplished on the first Pentecost following his resurrection. The church was then established and the gospel in its fulness was that day preached for the first time.

There is a popular idea that John was the founder of the church. Not only is such a conception completely erroneous, but the truth is that John the Baptist was never even a member of the church. Jesus shows this plainly in these words, "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11). John was not in the kingdom; he died before the church was established.

John lived and died under the Old Testament system of Judaism, which was not abolished until Jesus died on the cross. Therefore, he, like all faithful Jews

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

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

Second-Class postage paid in
Albertville, AL. 35950.

Editorial.....

What Is Your Attitude?

(NUMBER 2)

Since what a person **is** and what he **does** is determined by his attitude, it is essential that we have the **proper** attitude. In our study last month we suggested that all of us should have the proper attitude toward **God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit**. We do not have the correct attitude toward God unless we **fear and reverence Him**. We do not have the right attitude toward Jesus Christ unless we believe that He is truly **God's Son** and that He has **all authority** in heaven and earth. Neither do we have the proper attitude toward the Holy Spirit unless we believe that He is one of the three **personalities of Deity** and that He **inspired men** to speak and write the truth. Let us further examine our attitude.

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SCRIPTURE?

Is the Bible just another book? Or is it **inspired of God**? What is your attitude toward the Scripture? Paul said; **"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."** (2 Tim. 3:16). The Scripture is **inspired of God!** Holy men of God spake and wrote **"as they were**

moved by the Holy Ghost." (See 2 Pet. 1:21; Eph. 3:2-6). The Bible has been given to reveal **God to man, to reveal man unto man, to produce faith, and to teach us how to work, worship and live as children of God**. We need to learn **"not to think of men above that which is written....."** (See 1 Cor. 4:6). The Sadducees of old erred because they did not **know** the Scripture, nor the power of God. (See Matt. 22:29). John tells that **"the dead were judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works."** (See Rev. 20:12). Your attitude toward the Scripture may cause you to be lost eternally, **"Give diligence"** to show yourself approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth.

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CHURCH?

The church is **NOT** a denomination, it is no part of any denomination. Neither is it a combination of denominations. The church is composed of the saved ones who have been called out of the world into the marvelous light of Jesus Christ. The church was purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ and has Jesus Christ as its builder, head, and Saviour. (See Acts 20:28; Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 5:23-25). Do you believe that the church was according to God's eternal purpose? (See Eph. 3:9-12). Are you willing to glorify God **"in the church"** by Christ Jesus? (See Eph. 3:21). You can only do this by having the proper attitude toward God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit and be willing to follow the teachings of God as revealed in the Scripture.

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE GOSPEL?

Men are lost in sin. **"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."** (Rom. 3:23). **"The wages of sin is death."** The apostle Paul also said: **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also the Greek."** (Rom. 1:16). Unquestionably, the GOSPEL is GOD'S POWER to save! Obviously, this is **why** Jesus gave the commission that the GOSPEL was (and is) to be preached. (See
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WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE? (No. 2)
Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). Referring to the **gospel** Paul said, "**by which also ye are saved...**" (See 1 Cor. 15-2). We learn from Romans 2:16 that God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to the **gospel**.

What is **your** attitude toward the **gospel**? Have you **obeyed the gospel**? Do you really **believe the gospel**? Do you fully realize that **you will be judged by the gospel**?

Dear reader, please consider seriously the words of Paul in 2 Thess. 1:7-9 when he said: **And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."** Do you want to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord? Unless **your attitude** is such that you "**obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ**" **YOU WILL BE ETERNALLY LOST IN HELL!** Yes, your attitude will determine your eternal destiny! (To be continued)

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WAS JOHN THE BAPTIST A CHRISTIAN?

who lived under the law of Moses, looked forward to the atonement to be made by the Messiah. He was not a Christian; he was a Jew who anticipated the establishment of the church of the Lord.

—**Bonds Stocks**

in GOSPEL DIGEST, October, 1949

A SERIES OF GOSPEL MEETINGS

Raymond Harville of Mt. Pleasant, Tn. is scheduled to preach in a series of gospel meetings at East Albertville November 5-11, 1973 at 7:00 o'clock each evening.

YOU ARE INVITED!

A SPIRITUAL INVENTORY

ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:

1. If each member attended as many services as I do, how often would the building be closed?

2. If each member reached the services at the same time as I do, how many would be late?

3. If each one attended Bible Study as I do, how many would be present?

4. If each one studied the Bible as I do, how much study would there be?

5. If each one prayed as I do, how much praying would be going on?

6. If each member tried to sing as hard as I do, what kind of singing would there be?

7. If each member gave as I do, how much would the contribution be?

8. If each member sacrifices just like I do, how much sacrificing would there be?

9. If each person visited the sick as I do, how many of the sick would be visited?

10. If each one ministered to orphans as I do, how many orphans would be cared for?

11. If each member invited others to services like I do, how many guests would attend?

12. If each person stayed at home with company like I do, how many would attend worship?

13. If each member tried as hard as I do to lead the lost to Christ, how many of the lost would be reached?

14. If each member complained as much as I do, how much complaining would there be?

15. If each person worked as I do, how much work would be done?

16. If each person gave as many excuses as I do, who would do the Lord's work?

17. If each member put the Kingdom first, just as I do, what would be the condition of the church?

18. If each person loved unity as I do, how much division would there be?

—**W. A. Bradfield**

(EDITOR'S NOTE: It is certainly in order for us to read and heed Paul's words in 2 Cor. 13:5. He said: "**Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?**")

HARBORING GRUDGES

One of the most immature and petty of human practices is that of harboring a grudge against our fellowman. The nature of the offense is even more aggravated when we observe its practice among brethren in Christ.

What is a grudge? It is merely the leftovers of an unforgiving heart; it is a clear manifestation of a lack of love. The following passages from the word of God deal with the subject:

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4:32).

"Forebearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man hath a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Col. 3:13).

"If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." (I John 4:20-21).

If these and a host of other similar passages were observed, the harboring of grudges and its antecedent evils would

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HARBORING GRUDGES

not exist.

All sins have a deteriorating effect upon those who commit them. But none seems to effect such a rapid corruption of character and personality as that of harboring grudges. Unfortunately, the guilty party is usually the last one to realize that any change has taken place.

May God help us avoid this evil.

—Rober H. West

What's In Your Bucket?

If you were walking from the well carrying a bucket of water and someone jostled you, there could be spilled from the bucket only what it contained. As you walk along the way of life people are constantly bumping into you. If your life is full of ill-nature, bad temper, and ugly disposition, those things will be spilled from it. If it is full of Christian spirit, you will spill a smile or pleasant remark.. **You can spill from your bucket only that which it contains.**

—Author unknown

Sentence Sermons

Jealousy is to the soul what sickness is to the body.

Loose conduct will get a person in a tight spot.

Courtesy is said to be contagious, and what we need is a good epidemic.

Some folks aren't interested in anything unless it is none of their business.

If revenge is so sweet, why does it leave such a bitter taste?

It is better to have a bad breath than a sour disposition.

Some men who boast that they are self-made must look pitiful in God's eyes.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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