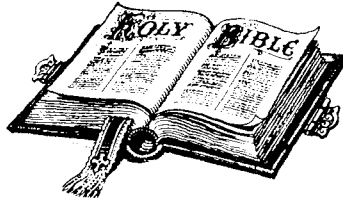


# THE INSTRUCTOR



*"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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Number 11

## SEEKING TO KNOW THE TRUTH

Truth has invested within it the power to make us free from the bondage of sin (John 8:32). Error is totally lacking in this power and thus leaves man enslaved by sin unto his destruction. For this cause it is very important that we have a proper attitude toward the truth. This attitude is described as a **"love of the truth"** (2 Thess. 2:10). As we study concerning this attitude toward the truth, we will note that a **"love of the truth"** will cause us to **seek to know the truth.**

A Proverb emphasizes the supreme importance of TRUTH by saying, **"Buy the truth, and sell it not"** (Prov. 23:23). This is a way of saying that truth is so important to us that there is no price great enough to buy it from us, without our being the loser. Understanding that truth is invested with saving power which is totally lacking in error, we can see why truth is of such great importance. Truth alone can save our soul and our soul is more valuable than the riches, combined, of the whole world. (Matthew 16:26).

Both the desire of salvation and the **"love of the truth"** should cause us to seek to know the truth. How diligent should be our search for truth! Again, the Proverbs tells us: **"My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou INCLINE THINE EAR UNTO wisdom, and APPLY THINE HEART TO understanding; If thou**

**SEEKEST her as silver, and SEARCHEST for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God** (Prov. 2:1-5). Notice carefully these words stressing the diligence of the search for wisdom, understanding, and discernment. This speaks not of the wisdom of men, but has reference to the **word of God**, for the next verse says, **"For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding"** (V. 6). That which proceeds **"out of his mouth"** is His word and His word is truth (John 17:17). Thus the diligence with which we should seek for truth is set forth in these verses. Jesus said: **"He that seeketh findeth"** (Matthew 7:8), and realizing how important it is for us to find or come to the knowledge of the truth, how diligently we should seek!

Examples make things plain and the Bereans set the example for us in this: **"This were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so"** (Acts 17:11).

We learn several important lessons from this (1) **They were seeking for the purpose of knowing the truth.** This is shown in the expression, **"searching . . . whether those things were so."** They were inter-

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## THE INSTRUCTOR

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### Editorial . . .

#### **"PROOF REQUESTED, PROOF GIVEN" (No. 20)**

In our last study we examined the statement that "A Christian may Scripturally swear." As the searchlight of God's truth was turned on, we learned that Jesus forbade swearing and the taking of oaths in Matthew 5:33-37. We also learned that James reiterated that Christians are **commanded not** to swear in James 5:12.

Those who advocate the teaching that "A Christian may Scripturally swear" are obligated to **prove** by the Scriptures that such teaching is true. We hereby challenge those who believe and teach that "a Christian may Scripturally swear" to enter into a series of public discussions with us on this question. We will be waiting to hear from anyone who is willing to do so.

Number **nineteen** is the next item in the list of twenty-five things that appeared in THE INSTRUCTOR, October, 1983, under "Specific Wickedness" for which **Scriptural proof** for the opposite view (than that stated in # 19) has been requested. It reads as follows:

**"19. It does not matter how a person worships God."**

COMMENTS: Most people in this country with whom we are acquainted will at some time or another express the idea that "It does not matter how a person worships God." They are usually critical of people who believe and teach that God is concerned about how people worship Him and that their worship is **in vain** unless it

is authorized in God's word. Some people say that as children may express their love for their mothers in any way that they may choose that we as God's children may express our love for God by worshipping him according to our own preferences and choosing. Is this idea the truth?

A careful consideration of the following statements and principles of truth should enlighten any honest person that the teaching that "It does not matter how a person worships God" is false.

#### FACTS TO CONSIDER

1. All that we know or can know about what kind of **worship** God will accept is revealed in the Scriptures. Paul said: "... even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:11). The apostles (and other **inspired** men in the first century) were **inspired** by the Spirit of God to **know** the things of God. They taught orally and they wrote down the things of God that we and others might **also know** the things of God. (Cf. John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:9-13 & Eph. 3:2-6.) The Scriptures will furnish us completely unto every good work. (Cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17). We have all things that pertain unto life and godliness. (Cf. 2 Pet. 1:3). **In Christ we are complete!** (See Col. 2:10).

2. Basically, **worship is reverence paid to God**. This reverence (or lack of reverence) is shown in **all** that we do. We do **not** show reverence for God when we do **not** listen to His word and obey His will. **Reverence** for God must be shown in what we do privately and publicly. In this study of worship, we are referring primarily to the acts we perform in our assemblies. Is God concerned about what we **say and do**? Must we follow His word? Is God pleased when we act contrary to what His word teaches? Does God care how we act and what we do?

3. **ONE MAY WORSHIP GOD IGNORANTLY**. In addressing the Athenians in Acts 17:23-24 the apostle Paul said: "**For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.**" God did not accept

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## **PROOF REQUESTED, PROOF GIVEN**

the worship of the Athenians but commanded them to repent. It certainly mattered with God how they worshipped!

4. Worship is **vain** unless one's heart is right with God. The Pharisees and Scribes of Mark 7:1-13 honoured God with their lips but their hearts were far from God. They taught for doctrines the commandments of men. Jesus said: "**Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**" (Mk. 7:7). When one's heart is right with God he will **not** teach the commandments of men for doctrine. Worship is indeed in vain when one teaches for doctrine the commandments of men. (Also see Matthew 15:1-9).

**TRUE WORSHIP.** Jesus said: "**But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.**" (John 4:23-24).

(1) The fact that **true** worshippers shall worship the Father in **spirit** and in **truth** suggests that those worshippers who do not worship the Father in **spirit** and in **truth** are **false** worshippers!

(2) Jesus very plainly says that those who worship God **must worship Him in spirit and in truth!**

(3) If one does not worship God in spirit and in truth he is **not** a **true** worshipper!

(4) To worship God **in spirit** is to worship God with **reverence** and **godly fear** from the heart!

(5) To worship God **in truth** is to worship God **according to truth**, i.e., **as truth directs!** We must give diligence to God's word to learn what He wants us to do. If his word does **not** authorize an action, we dare not engage in such!

(6) Our worship must be offered in or by **faith!** The Hebrew writer said: "**Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that**

**diligently seek him.**" (Heb. 11:6). In 2 Cor. 5:7 we read: "**For we walk by faith, not by sight.**" Hebrews 10:38 says "**Now the just shall live by faith . . .**" One cannot worship in or by faith **unless** he hears the word since "**faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**" (Rom. 10:17).

## **CONSEQUENCES**

**IF IT DOES NOT MATTER HOW A PERSON WORSHIPS GOD, THEN:**

1. A person may worship God by playing mechanical instruments of music today — and God would be pleased!

2. A person may worship God by counting beads — and God would be pleased!

3. A person may worship God by burning incense — and God would be pleased!

4. A person may worship God by being circumcised today — and God would be pleased!

5. A person may worship God by offering animal sacrifices today — and God would be pleased!

6. A person may worship God by cutting his body with a knife and beating himself with chains — and God would be pleased!

7. A person may worship God by slapping and beating other worshippers — and God would be pleased!

8. A person may worship God by practicing licentious acts — and God would be pleased!

9. A person may worship God by chanting slogans honouring Satan — and God would be pleased!

10. A person may worship God by cursing God, His word and His people — and God would be pleased!

**CONCLUSION:** Without question, the word of God teaches that it **does** matter how a person worships God!

When a person **presumes** to speak the doctrine that "**It does not matter how a person worships God**" in the name of Christ, he is speaking **presumptuously** and is teaching **false** doctrine because such is **not** taught in God's Book! **The person who so speaks is guilty of wickedness!** We should be careful and **so** "speak" and **so** "do" as those who will be **judged** by the law of liberty! (See James 2:12).

— (CRS)

(To be continued)

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## SEEKING TO KNOW THE TRUTH

ested in whether it was truth or error. So many today show little concern, if any, for this. (2) **They were willing to listen to what others had to say.** They were not of a closed mind, but **"received the word"** of Paul and Silas **"with all readiness of mind."** Many do not show a readiness of mind to hear what another has to say, but is content to hear only one side. We should have the readiness of mind of the Bereans. (3) **They used the Scriptures as the criterion to determine what is truth.** They did not decide whether the word spoken by others was truth or not on the basis of respect for the speaker or any other man. They used the Old Testament Scriptures to verify the things spoken by Paul and Silas, not then having the complete revelation in written form. Today, we have both the Old and New Testament and thus the complete will of God and these Scriptures should be our criterion for deciding whether that spoken by

men be truth or error. We should not decide on the basis of friendship, education, social status, or the like, but by our diligent search of the Word of God.

Let us have such a **"love of the truth"** that it will cause us to **"search for her as for hid treasures."** If not, then be reminded that it was concerning those **"who received not the love of the truth"** that God said he would send them **"strong delusion, that should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."** (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12).

—Dave Bradford  
in LIGHT IN DARKNESS  
April, 1970

### SOLOMON SAID:

**"Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: . . ."** Eccl. 9:9

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## — SENTENCE SERMONS —

Man's noblest efforts, without Christ, is only dust building on dust.

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Even though the outlook is sometimes dark, the uplook is always bright.

\* \* \* \* \*

God encourages men to be upright, but Satan urges men to be lowdown.

\* \* \* \* \*

"It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools." (Eccl. 7:5).

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"Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." — **Jesus Christ**

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