

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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AN EVER PRESENT DANGER

One of the greatest dangers confronting the Christian is that he will fail to cultivate the proper attitude toward material possessions. This danger is emphasized by the large proportion of Bible teaching devoted to this matter. Some one has estimated that nearly one half of Jesus' sayings have to do with the getting and spending of wealth. Did Jesus pay too much attention to it? Surely not! If the Lord's church is to survive and grow in the world, covetousness and devotion to Christ can no more exist together than fire and water.

Jesus and the apostles frequently warned of the danger of covetousness. Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12:15). Paul said, "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil." (1 Timothy 6:9-10). Paul plainly teaches that the covetous man is an idolater, and that he has no "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." (Col. 3:5; Eph. 5:5).

In view of such pointed Bible teaching,

each of us needs to make frequent and searching examinations. We dare not permit covetousness to rob us of a heavenly home. But, what is covetousness? Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines "covet" to mean: "To desire, to long for; to crave, esp. something belonging to another person." Thayer defines "covetousness" as a "greedy desire to have more." A desire for material things is not, necessarily, covetousness. Nor is it the mere possession of wealth. One who does not have possessions may, nevertheless, be covetous. Covetousness is an unlawful, avaricious desire for possessions. It is "to desire for oneself."

Covetousness manifests itself, not merely in an improper desire to obtain, but also, in the improper use of that which is obtained. One does not have to acquire his wealth dishonestly, not spend it viciously, to be covetous. The Christian who has an all-consuming desire to "get" is covetous. So is the one who, having "gotten," declines to give generously to the work of the Lord. He who

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Editorial

"The Wiles of the Devil" (No. 4)

Satan, who is the god of this world, will have an advantage over us if we are "ignorant of his devices." To be forewarned is to be forearmed. We should know what Satan's devices are and arm ourselves so as to be able "to stand against the WILES OF THE DEVIL."

In our past studies **WORLDLY WISDOM, THE LOVE OF MONEY, FALSE DOCTRINES, LYING, FLATTERY and IGNORANCE** have been shown to be "wiles" used by the Devil in an effort to curse people and thus cause people to be lost. Let us now consider another "WILE" used by Satan.

HYPOCRISY. In his **CONCORDANCE**, Mr. Cruden defines "hypocrisy" as "a false assumption of virtue; canting pretence of goodness or religion." He further states that "the word is frequently used in the Bible with the meaning of godlessness." **WEBSTER** says it means "a feigning to be what one is not or to believe what one does not; esp.: the false assumption of an appearance of virtue or religion." (**WEBSTER'S SEVENTH NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY**). A hypocrite is a "pretender." He is not genuine. He is insincere. He is not what he appears to be. Ungodly motives

prompt his hypocritical actions. Satan uses the **WILE** of **HYPOCRISY** to cause many people to be used for ungodly purposes and to be lost eternally.

Some of the Scribes and Pharisees of the first century were hypocrites. Jesus said to them: "Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." (Matt. 23:28). On one occasion "certain of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians" were sent unto Jesus in an effort "to catch him in his words." They complimented Jesus and then asked him a question about giving tribute unto Caesar. However, they were insincere and had ulterior motives. They were guilty of "hypocrisy." (See Mark 12:13-17; Matt. 16:15-22).

Jesus warned his disciples to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." (Matt. 16:6). Later the disciples understood "how he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." (See Matt. 16:11-12). In Luke 12:1 Jesus warned his disciples to "Beware . . . of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is HYPOCRISY." A number of "woes" were pronounced upon and a number of scathing rebukes were given to some of the religionists ("scribes and Pharisees") who lived during the personal ministry of Jesus Christ on earth. (See Matt. 23).

Paul warned that some "in the latter times" would "depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy . . ." (See 1 Tim. 4:1-2).

Hypocrites appear righteous, but "are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." (See Matt. 23:28). A man who appears righteous and then destroys his neighbor "with his mouth" is a hypocrite. (See Prov. 11:9).

Men are hypocrites who "devour widows houses, and for a pretense make long prayer." (See Matt. 23:14).

A man is a hypocrite who gives alms that he may be seen of men. (See Matt. 6:1-4).

Men who fast in such a way as to appear
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"THE WILES OF THE DEVIL"

pear unto men to fast are hypocrites. (See Matt. 6:16-18).

It is quite possible for a person to preach Christ in pretence rather than in truth. Hypocrisy is evident when one preaches Christ "of envy and strife." Contention and insincerity may cause one to preach "in pretense." Hypocrites use "feigned words" to make "merchandise" of others. (See 2 Peter 2:1-3). Love will cause one to preach "in truth."

What is the hope of the hypocrite? "the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment." (See Job 20:5). It is "woe" to the hypocrite! Hypocrites are "children of hell" and will "receive the greater damnation." (See Matt. 23:14-15). They will have their "portion" because they cannot "escape the damnation of hell!" (See Matt. 23:33).

Satan is very deceitful. He uses every available "wile" to bring about the downfall of as many people as possible. Hypocrisy is truly a "wile of the Devil."

"Wisdom that is from above is first PURE, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without HYPOCRISY." (James 3:17).

(CRS)

(To be continued)

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AN EVER-PRESENT DANGER

puts the acquiring of riches before his service to God is guilty. So is he who desires to keep his possessions for his own selfish uses. He who is stingy and penurious in his giving is covetous — for even the bestowing of gifts may betray this sin in the giver. (2 Cor. 9:5). The Christian's conception of life needs to be based on the idea of stewardship. He must not think of holding property with a sense of absolute and irresponsible proprietorship, but should regard his blessings as entrusted to him to be used for the honor of God and the extension of His kingdom. He needs to recognize God as the giver of every good and perfect gift and count himself a privileged co-worker with Him to accomplish His will,

Jesus and the apostles condemned cov-

etousness more frequently, and more severely, than any other sin. Perhaps, there is no sin which offers greater danger to the Christian. First, covetousness extends its blight over the whole life. Other sins spoil different aspects of life; this one chills it at the center. The covetous person is more unlike Jesus Christ than any other sinner. The habitual drunkard may often be characterized by a good bit of goodness and generosity. Even one who, in a fit of passion, takes the life of another, may sometimes have good qualities. But, the covetous man is more unlike Christ than either of these. Christ gave up the glories of heaven, came to earth and gave up all that men consider good here, and gave His life, for the benefit of others (2 Cor. 8:9), but the covetous man wants everything for himself!

Secondly, the danger of covetousness is seen in that no sin is harder to detect. There is a sharp warning in the statement of a Catholic priest that he had had every conceivable sin confessed to him except the sin of covetousness. One knows when he has been drunk, committed murder, or been guilty of fornication; but finds it difficult to detect when he is covetous. Men cloak this sin under other names, and thus, make it appear virtuous. Under the guise of "thrift," "diligence," or "prudence," it is warmly welcomed and applauded, rather than shunned and condemned. As it coils tightly about the heart to strangle the ideals of unselfish service, sacrifice and generosity, it is difficult to recognize. Enmeshed in its coils are many who do not realize it. Many who think themselves to be "thrifty" and "careful" are, in reality, covetous.

Since "covetousness . . . is idolatry," and "no . . . covetous man . . . hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God," then every Christian must make it his business to detect and eliminate this sin from his life. To eliminate covetousness: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33), "and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

(Continued in right column)

—Paul C. Keller

Following Instructions

God instructed Israel to gather manna daily, except on the Sabbath; not to leave it till the morning, except the sixth day. Some looked in vain for it on the Sabbath; others found what they had left spoiled. There was a disappointment every time they deviated from the instruction. Men are disappointed when they disregard God's laws regulating society. The bandit usually lands in prison. It is not uncommon for the immoral to suffer violence or disease. "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house." (Proverbs 15:27).

God, through the Scriptures has instructed that one believe what the Bible established about Jesus Christ, repent of sins, confess the Lord with the mouth before men, be buried in baptism with the Lord for the remission of sins, observe the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week, discerning the Lord's body, give regularly and voluntarily as one has been prospered, and live soberly, righteously, and godly.

Israel's experience with the manna is too pointed and suggestive for one to turn aside from the commandments.

—John W. Pigg

The Sutton-Hill Debate

The date for the Sutton-Hill Debate has not been re-scheduled yet. The Eastside church in Athens and Carol Sutton (and no doubt many others) are anxiously waiting for the West Hills St. church in Athens and Albert Hill to set the date for the discussion as they promised at the time of the postponement that they would do. As soon as the date is set, we will spread the news!

SOMEONE HAS SAID:

The difference between a wise man and a fool is in their hides—the fool can be skinned more than once.

Sentence Sermons

Anger is the wind that blows out the light of reason.

No power on earth or under the earth can make a man do wrong without his consent.

Circumstances don't make a man; they serve him.

We may not know what a day holds, but we know who holds the day.

You are truly poor if you have more dollars than sense.

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