

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 CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT

Quite often, when people observe that churches of Christ do not participate in interdenominational activities, they exclaim, "The church of Christ is just different." Let us see how the Lord's church differs from segments of the religious world.

(1) The church is different from paganism — by its faith in one true God. Paganism hardly presents a problem to us, but it was a problem in the first century. The answer to paganism is the "unknown God" whom Paul preached, the God who made the world and whose offspring we are. (Acts 17).

(2) The church is different from Judaism — by its faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. When Jesus came into the world, "He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not." (John 1:11). Why did Jesus' own people reject him? The Jews rejected him because they misunderstood the purpose and prophecies of their own religion. Their religion was a schoolmaster to lead them to Christ, and the prophecies of the Old Testament foretold the coming of the Messiah in great detail. Jesus told the Jews, "Ye search the

Scriptures (the Old Testament), because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me." (John 5:39). Misunderstanding their own religion, the Jews crucified the very one for whom they had prayed for centuries.

(3) The church is different from Roman Catholicism by its faith in the sufficiency of Christ. He is sufficient as the head of the church. God gave Christ "to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22-23). The office of pope is utterly unknown to the New Testament. Also, the Scriptures of Christ are sufficient as the only rule of faith and practice for the church. Yet, the Catholic Church emphatically denies this. Cardinal Gibbons states that the Scriptures alone are not sufficient, "because they do not contain all the truths necessary for salvation." (FAITH OF OUR FATHERS, p. 90). What a contrast with the declaration of Paul that the inspired Scriptures make the man of God complete, "Furnished completely unto

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Editorial . . .

"Be Ye Also Ready"

In Matthew 24:44 Jesus admonished his disciples saying: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." In writing to brethren in Christ Paul said: "Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (1 Thess. 5:6). In order to be ready, we must put forth effort and make sufficient preparation.

READ GOD'S WORD DAILY. In order to know God's will for us, we must "give diligence." Much study is essential if we would "divine aright the word of truth." (See 2 Tim. 2:15). We should sanctify the Lord in our hearts that we will be "ready to give an answer to every man" that asketh us. (See 1 Peter 3:15). The "blessed" man's delight is in the law of the Lord and in it he meditates day and night. (See Psa. 1:2). The Psalmist said: "O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day." (Psa. 119:97).

EXERCISE UNTO GODLINESS AND ENDURE HARDNESS. The apostle Paul says "refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4:7-8). Less time

should be spent on physical exercise and more on exercising unto godliness. Piety is a virtue much needed today. We further learn from 2 Tim. 2:3 that Paul exhorted Timothy saying: "Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Christians must be willing to courageously fight as soldiers in the Lord's army. We must with faith and patience bear whatever hardships may be ours. All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

ABIDE IN CHRIST. In John 15 Jesus taught his disciples a good lesson on the vine and the branches. He stated that He is the true vine and his disciples are the branches. He shows the essentiality of abiding in him in order to produce fruit. If we do not produce fruit we'll be taken away. We will be cast forth as a branch and burned. In order to abide in the love of Christ and produce much fruit and thus "be ready" we must keep his commandments.

DO GOD'S WILL. Jesus said in Matt. 7:21: "Not everyone that sayeth unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." James say "be ye DOERS of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (Jas. 1:22). Jesus said: "Blessed are they that DO HIS COMMANDMENTS, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Rev. 22:14).

YIELD TO RIGHTEOUSNESS UNTO HOLINESS. Paul says in Rom. 6:19 to ". . . yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." We should endeavor to present our bodies "a living sacrifice". To whom we yield ourselves servants to obey, his servants we are to whom we obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.

"And they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door

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every good work." (2 Tim. 3:17).

(4) The church is different from Protestant denominationalism by its faith in the authority of Christ. When Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," is it authoritative? Must we obey exactly what Jesus commands to be saved? Protestantism is now so dominated by modernism that it replies, "No". (Contrast Matthew 7:21 and Hebrews 5:8-9).

(5) The church is different from the irreligious by its faith in the life of Christ. There is virtue and reward in righteous living! Christ left "you an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin." (1 Peter 2:22). Jesus was kind, sympathetic, godly, devoted to God's work and interested in the lost. Follow His example and you will discover that the happiest life is the holiest life!

YOUR CHURCH AND MINE

As I read the Sunday paper

I ran across this line:

"Today you go to your church

And I will go to mine."

I've read the Bible o'er and o'er

And never found that line,

"Today you go to your church

And I will go to mine."

"Upon this rock: I'll build my church",

The Saviour said one day.

And before the dear Lord died

He humbly knelt to pray.

(Continued in next column)

A Voice From The Past

"Brethren, let the church do the work God requires of it. We do not need any other organization than the church to carry out the work of the church. Here is a command to teach the gospel which is the work of the church and we do not need to establish an organization to carry out that command. We do not need an organization to carry out the command to relieve widows and orphans except the church that Jesus built."

—G. K. Wallace in LECTURES
ON DENOMINATIONAL
DOGMAS, Pages 162-163

(Continued from left column)

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT

"May they be one as we are one,
All who believe on me,
So that the world may surely know
I'm loved and sent by Thee."

Yes, you may go to your church,
But let me tell you this:
Your worship will be void and vain
Unless you go to His!

Via GOSPEL DIGEST

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"BE YE ALSO READY"

was shut" are tragic words and very thought provoking. Are you ready? Do you read God's word often? Do you exercise yourself unto godliness and are you willing to endure hardness as a good soldier? Are you abiding in Christ? Is it your sincere desire to do God's will? Are you humbly submitting to God's righteousness as revealed in the gospel? If not, you are not ready!

The day is far spent and night is drawing nigh. Now is the time to prepare.

(CRS)

HAPPINESS

Happiness goes out from the heart before it comes in. It never by any chance stays home. You can harvest it for the common good, but you cannot store it for your individual use. You lend it, but you cannot borrow it. You can earn it, but you cannot buy it. You can spend it, but you cannot accumulate it. A man must contribute to the stock of human joys before he can participate in its profits. To seek happiness without giving it is a futile quest, and all our longings for it, if we have not learned to give it to others, are empty bottles in the wine cellar of the soul. Happinesses never really was any good in this world but to give away.

—Author unknown

"Lord, Hit Him Again"

L. L. Brigance once told his class about a congregation trying to finance a new roof for the meeting house. The men were meeting to see if the amount could be raised. One man said, "I'll give two dollars." Another, "I'll give three." Then all eyes turned upon Brother T. Wad, who was very wealthy. "I'll give a dollar," he said. About that time a piece of plaster overhead loosened by the leaking water, fell and hit the old brother on the head. He straightened up and said: "I'll give ten dollars." Then, an elder raised his eyes toward heaven and said: "Lord, hit him again."

—THE BANNER OF TRUTH

Sentence Sermons

The church is a workshop for wide-awake Christians; not a dormitory for sleeping ones.

Never give others a piece of your mind because you may need it yourself.

An old-timer is a person who can remember way back when a baby-sitter was called "mother."

You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves.

Some people worry more about where they'll spend a two weeks' vacation than where they'll spend eternity.

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