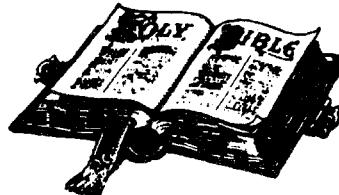


THE INSTRUCTOR



"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 34

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Number 5

"A FAITHFUL MAN"

Many men will proclaim their goodness, but faithful men are not easily found. (Cf. Prov. 20:6). However, as we inspect their fruit in light of the truth we soon learn that not all who claim to be faithful are truly faithful. (Cf. Mt. 7:20). Let us consider some characteristics of a faithful man.

1. A FAITHFUL MAN WILL NOT LIE! Solomon said: "A faithful man will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies." (Proverbs. 14:5). Paul admonished saints to "Lie not one to another, ..." (Col. 3:9). God said: "...And all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." (Rev. 21:8). Are you faithful?

2. A FAITHFUL MAN WILL BE FAITHFUL OVER THINGS ENTRUSTED TO HIM! This can be clearly seen from a study of the parable of the talents in Mt. 25:14-30. Each man was given talents "according to his several ability". The first man was told: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make the ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.: Likewise the second man was told the same thing. They were faithful over the

talents given to them! God expects us to be faithful over the things he has entrusted to our care and keeping. Our souls and our possessions are included in the things God has entrusted to us. Let us be faithful over everything entrusted to our care and keeping. Whatever we do we should do it "faithfully". (Cf. 3 John 5).

3. A FAITHFUL MAN WILL ABOUND WITH BLESSINGS! A long time ago Solomon said: "A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent." (Prov. 28:20). Faithful people abound with blessings! Not only blessings in this life, but also in the world to come. Jesus said: "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mothers, or wife, or children, or lands, for may sake, and gospel's, But he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." (Mk. 10:29-30). The fact that a faithful man will abound with blessings does not mean (necessarily) that he will have

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Editorial ...

HOW MAY A PERSON KNOW HE IS SAVED?

The Word of God teaches that a person can be saved from past (or alien) sins (i. e., be forgiven of his past sins and can be saved eternally in heaven).

A PRESENT SALVATION! This means a forgiveness of past sins! It means we have been washed in the blood of Christ! It means we have been saved from our past sins, i. e., sins committed prior to our obedience to the first principles of the gospel of Christ. We believed and obeyed what Jesus said do in order to be saved! (See Mark 16:15-16, Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27). We have this salvation now in actuality! The following passages speak of this salvation.

2 Timothy 1:9 – “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, ...”

Titus 3:5 – “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, ...”

1 Cor. 1:18 – “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” Also read Acts 2:47; 11:14 & Eph. 2:8-9.

A FUTURE SALVATION! In Mt. 10:22 Jesus said: “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but

he that endureth to the end shall be saved.” (Cf. Mt. 24:13). NOTE: This refers to a future salvation! Please read and consider the following passages.

Rom. 5:9-10 – “Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Here again we see a future salvation!

Rom. 13:11 – "...for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

Please read and consider 1 Thess. 5:9; 2 Tim. 2:10; Heb. 5:8-9; 1 Pet. 1:3-9 & Heb. 10:39.

We have this future salvation in promise and in hope! (See 1 John 2:21 & Titus 1:2). If faithful to the Lord, we will in the future receive this salvation in heaven!

HOW MAY WE KNOW THAT WE ARE SAVED! Since the Scriptures instruct us in righteousness, our appeal must be to the Word of God that we may know that we are saved. (See 2 Tim. 3:16-17; James 1:25; 2:12; 1 Cor. 4:6).

There are many misconceptions about how we may know that we are saved.

First, let us consider this question from a negative viewpoint.

I. WE CANNOT KNOW BY THE TRADITIONS OR COMMANDMENTS OF MEN! In Mt. 15:7-9 Jesus showed that the worship of the Scribes and Pharisees was in vain because they taught "... for doctrines the commandments of men." We learn from Titus 1:13-14 that we are not to give "... heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth." In view of these and other

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HOW MAY A PERSON KNOW HE IS SAVED?

verses in the Bible we should be able to see that we cannot trust traditions, doctrines or commandments of men to assure us of salvation!

II. WE CANNOT KNOW BY OUR LIVING A GOOD MORAL LIFE (apart from faith and obedience to Christ)! Certainly, God demands a good moral life! The Hebrew writer admonished: "**Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.**" (12:14). The grace of God teaches us that, "**denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.**" (Titus 2:11-12). (Also see Jas. 1:27; Rom. 12:2 & 1 John 2:15-17). Although we are required to live morally pure, a study of Cornelius should convince us that morality alone will not save. (Acts 10 & 11). One must obey the gospel in order to be saved! (See Rom. 1:16; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rom. 6:17-18).

III. WE CANNOT KNOW BY OUR "HONESTY"! Certainly, we must be honest! (Cf. Rom. 12:17; 2 Cor. 8:21). However, "honesty" alone will not save! It did not save Saul! (Cf. Acts 9:1-6; 22:19-20 & 26:9-19; 22:16).

IV. WE CANNOT KNOW BY OUR FEELINGS! Our feelings are the result of our beliefs, whether they are true or false. Feelings are not evidence of salvation! Isaac blessed Jacob instead of Esau because he felt like Esau. (Cf. Gen. 27). Jacob felt like his son Joseph was dead and mourned for him many days but Joseph was not dead! (Cf. Gen. 37:33-35). Although Saul of Tarsus felt like he was doing right he was not! (Cf. Acts 26:9).

V. WE CANNOT KNOW BY OUR CONSCIENCE! Many people will say: "Let your conscience be your guide. It will tell you whether or not you are

saved." Not so! It will reveal its feelings but the conscience is not the standard by which salvation can be determined! The conscience condemns or justifies based on what is believed whether it is true or false.

In Acts 9:1-6 we learn that Saul of Tarsus persecuted Jesus Christ by persecuting His disciples. In Acts 22:20 Saul said: "... Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." (Also read Acts 26:9-19). While persecuting the Lord Jesus by persecuting His disciples Saul had a good conscience! (Read Acts 23:1). Although his conscience was clear, Saul was a lost man!

HOW MAY A PERSON KNOW HE IS SAVED? From a positive viewpoint, A PERSON CAN KNOW HE IS SAVED BY WHAT IS WRITTEN! 1 John 5:13 says: "**These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, ...**" How may we know? By what is written! Not by traditions of men! Not by merely living a good moral life! Not by our "honesty"! Not by our feelings! Not by our conscience! How then may we know? God's Book says "**these things have I written ... that ye may know ...**" God said it! That settles it! We are responsible to believe it! A study of James 1:21; Rom. 1:16; 1 Pet. 1:22-23; 1 John 2:3-6; 3:7; 3:24; 4:6; 5:2-3; Heb 11:6; John 20:30-31; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16; Acts 8:22; Rev. 2:10; 22:14; etc. Should tell us what God expects us to do in order to be saved from past sins and sins we commit as His children!

(CRS)

"A FAITHFUL MAN"

everything he wants, but he is promised to have all his needs supplied. Not only his physical needs, but also his spiritual needs will be supplied! What more could we ask?

4. A FAITHFUL MAN WILL BE ABLE TO TEACH OTHERS ALSO! Paul exhorted Timothy saying: "**And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.**" (2 Tim. 2:2). Faithful men are deeply concerned about teaching others the gospel of Christ because "... it is the power of God unto salvation to every man that believeth;..." (Rom. 1:16). God draws men to Christ by a teaching process. (See John 6:44-45; Romans 10:13-18). Those who are faithful will endeavor to teach others the gospel of Jesus Christ! It is able to save! (See Mk. 16:15-16; James 1:21;

1:25; 2:12).

5. A FAITHFUL MAN IS ONE WHO HAS FAITH IN GOD AND OBEYS HIM! To be faithful we must believe in God and in Jesus Christ as the Son of God! (See Heb. 11:6; John 20:30-31). We must confess Jesus Christ as Lord, as the Son of God and repent and be baptized for the remission of sins! (See Rom. 10:9-10; 1 John 4:15; Acts 2:38; etc.). Then as a child of God we must continue to have faith and obey God! (See Rev. 22:14; Heb. 5:9; etc.). QUESTION: Are you a faithful person? If not, why?

(CRS)

GOSPEL MEETINGS

EAST ALBERTVILLE – June 1-6, 1997 at
7:30 p.m. (except Sunday) – J. F. Dancer

115 W. High, Woodbury, TN
June 15–20, 1997 – Carroll R. Sutton

— SENTENCE SERMONS —

"Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools." (Eccl. 7:9).

Study and learn the truth! When you understand it, dare to be different, and obey it!

Some churches grow by leaps and bounds – backwards!

We are known by the company we keep, and by the company we do not keep.

Sometimes the loudest talkers are the slowest walkers, and workers!

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