

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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BROAD MEN AT THE NARROW GATE

Have you ever watched a spider trying to pull a big bug into its den? The bug was too large for the entrance, so the spider turned away to find a den with a larger entrance. The spider's situation was similar to broad men who try to get through the strait gate, and walk in the narrow way. A lot of people who profess Jesus are having a hard time, because they try to take something with them that is wider than the road they travel. Wise disciples trim off everything that is wider than the narrow way. Others tug and pull at some favorite sin they are reluctant to give up.

One who was trying to follow Jesus said, "Lord are there few that be saved?" Probably he was aware that the security of his own soul was hanging in the balance. If only a few were going to be saved, he knew that his chance was not good. Jesus said, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." (Lk. 13:23-24.)

In the sermon on the mountain Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for

wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find." (Matt. 7:13-14).

The Lord's way is strait, but it is not straight. Strait means difficult. Straight means the shortest distween two points. Everyone who comes to the strait gate must lay something down. He cannot take everything he has through this gate. The practical meaning of repentance is leaving off something. No one can be saved just as he is. No one can enter the narrow way without repentance and baptism.

ONLY TWO WAYS

According to the words of Jesus there are only two roads in life for men to travel. One is narrow. The other is broad. One leads to life and the other to destruction. Some broad men try to walk in

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Editorial....

Studies Conducted – Challenge Ignored!

A series of lessons was presented at the building of the East Albertville Church of Christ, Nov. 17- Nov. 22, 1969. Some of the causes of division among churches of Christ were discussed in detail in the light of Scriptural principles. On Nov. 17th we studied "Scriptural Authority—Generic and Specific." In that lesson it was clearly shown that we have the right to act on religious matters **only IF and WHEN** the New Testament authorizes us to do so. Not only did we discuss the **need** for authority, but also **HOW** we can determine if God has authorized a thing. We showed that in order for a thing to be authorized, there must be a **STATEMENT, COMMAND, APPROVED EXAMPLE, or A NECESSARY IMPLICATION**. These may be either **generic or specific**. We concluded from a study of New Testament principles that **when God specifies a thing, other co-ordinates are eliminated. A failure to understand this principle or to make application of it has led to division in many instances.**

On Nov. 18th we studied a lesson on "Aids and Additions." A study was made of certain commands and of those things that might aid in carrying out the commands while noting that some other things would be **additions** to God's Word. We have the right to use things that will

aid us in doing what God say, **IF** in so doing, we do **NOT add** to what God has authorized. We emphasized that when God has authorized the church to act, but has not specified a particular method of doing that thing, that the church has the right to choose any method it may deem wise and expedient, so long as, some other New Testament principle is not violated.

On Nov. 19th, we discussed "How versus Organizations." In that lesson we showed there is a vast difference between "organizations" and the "methods" used by them in doing the work of the church. It was pointed out that the church is **God's** divine organization to do the work God has assigned his people in "organized capacity" to accomplish. The church is free to choose various "methods" of doing the work of evangelism, edification and relief, but there is **NO** divine authority for the church to build or make contributions to human organizations whether they are called missionary societies, Christian schools, homes for the aged or orphan homes. These are "**organizations,**" not "**methods**"! These **human organizations** cannot be justified as **methods**! They are **NOT aids** but must be condemned as **additions** to God's divine order!

On Nov. 20th, we considered a number of the arguments most often used by the proponents of church supported human institutions. These arguments were shown to be erroneous when Scriptural principles were considered.

On Friday evening Nov. 21st, we discussed the question: "Is the Herald of Truth Scriptural?" Such co-operative arrangements as in involved in the Herald of Truth were shown to be without divine authorization. It was pointed out how there is virtually no difference in principle in the Herald of Truth arrangement and the "missionary society" concept of church cooperation.

On Saturday evening, Nov. 22nd, we summarized much that had been said during the meeting and we added a dis-

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A VOICE FROM THE PAST

A simple church at a place — with its elders, deacons, and other members — is all the organizing and centralizing God has ever done for His church.

To turn away from God's church and church government now is to turn away from him; to reject these is to reject Him.

But what if the elders of the church will not do the work? Let it be remembered that Samuel's wicked sons failed to do their work; still it was a rejection of God to reject His system of government, even when perverted by mean men. Why not "turn the rascals out" and select honest and righteous judges?

The wickedness of Samuel's sons furnished a pretext for asking for a king, and a failure on the part of elders and the church now to do the work God requires furnishes a pretext to those not satisfied with the New Testament order of things for asking for a change of God's ways.

—E. A. Elam, May 6, 1933

Putting The Lord First

During the depression years, a financial problem arose in a certain congregation. It was necessary for the church to raise a seemingly impossible amount of money each week for that era of economic poverty. At a business meeting of the church one of the elders, a barber promised to give an amount each week which seemed a stupendous sum for those years.

A close friend visited him at the barber shop and asked him how he could promise and give so much when he did not even know how much he would make each week. He opened the cash register where he put his barber tickets and said, "Jim, on each customer I make a small commission. Well, I just put the commission checks over here until I have set aside the amount I promised. Then, the rest of the commission that I earn I can use for myself." He was **putting the Lord first.**

—Adapted by

"THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR"

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BROAD MEN AT THE NARROW GATE

the narrow way, but they make a failure.

The broad way has several attractions for those who esteem themselves broad-minded. It is wide, smooth, and constantly downward. There are no hills to climb. All that one has to do is to put himself in neutral, and drift the downward way. The person who is neutral has no convictions. He agrees with everybody. He discusses no subject of controversy.

Some people think they are in the narrow way just because they are religious. But there is a lot of religion in the broad way. Many of those who go this way have Bibles in their hands. Cain was a religious person. He offered sacrifice to God, but it was the wrong kind. Cain was broad-minded, and thought he could modify the will of God to suit his own convenience. He offered a vegetable sacrifice instead of an animal.

The narrow way leads constantly upward. Not one step of this way is down hill. No one lowers himself by doing the will of God. Going to heaven is like climbing a ladder "heaven is not reached by a single round." Our safety is protected by taking just one step at a time.

His choice of these ways determines a man's ultimate destiny. He can't go to heaven by walking in the broad way. At a station in Chicago there used to be two trains standing about six feet apart. When each finished its journey, they were more than four thousand miles apart. The Golden State Limited went to Los Angeles. The Twentieth Century Limited went to New York City. Two people may go hand in hand along the road of life. But one is in the narrow way, while the other is in the broad way. As close together as they are in life, their distance apart in eternity is the distance from heaven to hell. We must keep our feet out of the broad way.

—W. M. Davis in

FIRM FOUNDATION 9-3-57

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STUDIES CONDUCTED— CHALLENGE IGNORED!

cussion of the problems among churches over church-sponsored recreation, social and entertainment projects, and secular businesses. We discussed "God's Way versus the Ways of Men." We showed that churches are **not** authorized by the Lord to engage in secular business, entertainment, social, and recreational projects.

Preceding and during the week of our studies, we placed an article in some of the newspapers in the area in which we not only "advertised" our studies but also challenged anyone who thought we were advocating error to come and enter a series of discussions with us con-

cerning these matters. We also extended an invitation from the pulpit for anyone to come and point out wherein they believed us to be wrong. But until now, **NO ONE**, including the **PREACHERS** and **"ELDERS"** in this area, has had sufficient courage and conviction to accept our challenge. It still stands. Truth does not fear investigation, but welcomes it. Error often runs from open investigation. Ignoring truth does **not** make the truth nor does it justify error.

We again **challenge** anyone, but especially the **PREACHERS** AND **"ELDERS"** in this area to meet us in a series of public discussions on these matters. If these brethren continue to ignore our challenge, the error they espouse will still not be justified by the Scriptures. What would they do if they were challenged by a denominational preacher on the plan of salvation?
(CRS)

-Sentence Sermons-

"Satan trembles when he sees the weakest Christian on his knees.

Bad habits are like a comfortable bed; easy to get into, but hard to get out of.

Some folks don't look up until they are flat on their backs.

The one thing worse than a quitter is the man who is afraid to begin.

When you meet temptation, be sure to turn to the right.

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