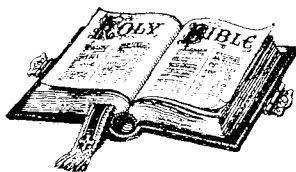


# THE INSTRUCTOR



*"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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## IS ONE CHURCH AS GOOD AS ANOTHER?

The kind of faith that purifies our hearts is he faith that comes by hearing the word of God. (See Acts 15:7-9; Rom 10:17). We should **"take heed WHAT we hear"** and we should **"take heed HOW we hear."** (See mark 4:24, Luke 8:18). Let us hear WHAT God's Word teaches as we consider the "idea" that "one church is just as good as another church". Is the "idea" by FAITH or OPINION? Is it taught in the Scriptures? We have no right to hold such an idea unless it is taught in God's Word.

**IF ONE CHURCH IS AS GOOD AS ANOTHER CHURCH, then:**

1. **One foundation is just as good as another.** Men serve as the foundation of all denominations. Christ is the foundation of His church. Paul said: **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."**

2. **One builder is just as good as another.** Denominations are built by men, but Christ said: **"...I will build my church..."** (Mt. 16:18)

3. **One blood is just as good as another.** Some men may have died in order to set up some denomination, but **Jesus purchased His church with His blood.** (See Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25-27). Jesus DID NOT purchase any denomination with His blood!

4. **One head is just as good as another.** All denominations have human heads, but **Jesus Christ is the head of His Church.** (See Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23).

5. **One gospel is just as good as another.** In order for a person to join a human

denomination he must accept a **human "gospel"**. Those who accept "another gospel" will be accursed. (See Gal. 1: 8-9). One MUST **"obey the gospel"** in order to be saved and be added to the Lord's church. (See Rom. 1:16; 6:17-18; Acts 2: 37-38; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

6. **One Saviour is just as good as another.** If denominations are saved, they will have to be saved by men because **Jesus Christ WILL NOT** save them. He said they **"shall be rooted up"**. (Mt. 15:13). Christ is the **Saviour of His Body, the church.** (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18).

The idea that "one church is just as good as another church" is definitely NOT taught in the Scriptures and is NOT of FAITH! It is mere assumption and OPINION!

Are you in the Lord's Church? Are you willing to follow Jesus? Remember Jesus purchased the Church with His blood. There is no way you can be cleansed by his blood unless you are willing to be added to His Church. If you are a member of a human denomination or a secret religious organization, you have no hope of eternal salvation--unless you are willing to obey the words of the Lord. (See Mark 16:15-16, Acts 2:38; Acts 2:47; Matthew 7:21; Heb. 5:19).

(CRS)

### A WISE SAYING

"Do not say, 'I will repay evil,' wait for the Lord, and He will help you."  
(Proverbs 20:22)

## THE INSTRUCTOR

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### Editorial . . .

#### IT IS BETTER

Several times in the Scriptures we find the expression **"it is better"**. We may think a thing is better than another thing but it may not really be better in God's sight. However when we read in the Scriptures that **"it is better"**, we should not doubt it. Let us consider some passages where we find the expression, **"it is better"**.

##### ECCLESIASTES 7:2

The Preacher said: **"It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to heart."** He gives a reason for it being better to go to the house of mourning. He says **"that is the end of all men and the living will lay it to his heart."** Death reminds us that we are weak creatures of the great God of heaven. The arm of flesh is weak. David said, **"Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak"** (Psalms 6:2). At the house of mourning we may learn to give thanks to God for the gift of life and may learn not to put trust in man nor in material possessions. Jeremiah 17:7 says: **"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is."** We may learn not to build our lives and hope around man regardless of whom it may be.

We are living in a busy age and a hurried world. Often men are so concerned with the riches, pleasures, and cares of the world that they do not stop to think about their spiritual needs. At the house of mourning we may learn the truth of God's word and resolve to fulfill our purpose in life, i.e. to

glorify God.

We need the lessons that are learned in the house of mourning. Many people have never learned that **"By the sadness of our countenance the heart is made better."** (Eccl. 7:3).

##### ECCLESIASTES 7:5

We also learn from Solomon the **"it is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools."** Rebuke does not always seem better. It may be unpleasant to give and receive. It may produce embarrassment or shame. The song of fools may be more appealing and pleasant. However it is better to hear the rebuke of the wise because we need rebuke. It is given by the wise for our good. We profit by it when we accept it with the proper attitude. It can cause us to repent and thus save souls. If we are wise, we will accept rebuke and appreciate those who give it. If we are wise we will also give rebuke when such is in order.

##### MATTHEW 18:9

Jesus said: **Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come: but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."**

We learn from the words of Jesus that offences will come but woe to the man who causes the offence. Jesus said **"it is better"** to enter into life crippled or blind than having two hands or two feet or two eyes to be cast into hell fire. Through the years there has been much discussion as to whether the Lord meant to literally be crippled and to literally pluck the eye out or to simply remove whatever causes the offence. Without discussing whether reference is made to being literally crippled or blind, the lesson all of us need to learn is that **it is better** for us to deprive ourselves of anything that causes us to sin or that causes others to sin.

##### MARK 9:42

Our Lord said: **"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea."** The Lord shows us how serious a matter it is for a person to offend a little one.

(Continued on page 4)

# THE CHURCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD

There are many people who fail to understand that the church is God's kingdom. They have an idea that the church is now in existence and that the kingdom will be established sometimes in the future. A close study of God's word will show that **the church that is now in existence is the kingdom of God.** Please consider the following facts:

1. Jesus used the expression **"my church"** and **"the kingdom of heaven"** interchangeably when he said unto Peter: **"...and upon this rock I will build MY CHURCH and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN..."** (Mt. 16:18-19)

2. During their personal ministry on earth, John the Baptist and Jesus Christ preached **"The kingdom of heaven is AT HAND."** (See Matthew 3:1-2; Matthew 4:17) NOTE: **"At hand"** means **"near in time"**. The church was set up on the day of Pentecost which was about 50 days after the resurrection of Christ. (See Acts 2).

3. When Jesus instituted **"the Lord's Supper"** he suggested that it would be observed in **"THE KINGDOM OF GOD"**. (See Luke 22:14-20). We learn from 1 Corinthians 11: 17-34 that **"the Lord's Supper"** was observed **in the church** in the first century. NOTE: It is quite obvious that **"the church is the kingdom!"**

4. As the head of the church, Jesus is **"head of all principality and power"** and therefore Christians are **"complete in him."** (See Col. 1:18; Col 2:10). He has **"all power"** in heaven and in earth." (Mt. 28:18). NOTE: **Jesus Christ IS NOW KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS!** (See Rev. 17:14).

5. In writing to "the seven churches" in Asia John told the Christians that he was their **"Brother, and companion in tribulation, and IN THE KINGDOM and patience of Jesus Christ"**. NOTE: This, too, indicates that the church and the kingdom are one and the same.

Yes, without any question whatever, the church is the kingdom of God and it is now in existence. Are **you** in God's kingdom? You are not in it unless you are in His church. If you are in a denomination of men you should leave it immediately and obey the gospel of Christ and the Lord will add you to His church. (2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rom. 1:16; Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-47). Otherwise **you will be lost forever.**

(CRS)

# IS DOCTRINE IMPORTANT?

Thousands of people in this country who claim to be Christians have the opinion that doctrine is not important. Christians teach the importance of believing, obeying and teaching true doctrine. As one studies the Word of God it becomes apparent that **"doctrine is important"**. Please consider the following facts:

1. **"Doctrine"** is **"teaching"** or what is taught. NOTE: if **doctrine** is not important, then **teaching** or what is taught is not important. If teaching is important, then **doctrine** is important.

2. MATTHEW 7:28-29 SAYS: **"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at HIS DOCTRINE: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."** (Also Matt. 22:33).

3. JOHN 7:16 SAYS: **"Jesus answered them and said, MY DOCTRINE is not mine, but HIS that sent me"**.

4. The early disciples of the Lord **"Continued steadfastly in the APOSTLES' DOCTRINE..."** (Acts 2:42).

5. Christians should **"take heed"** unto themselves and unto **"THE DOCTRINE"** in order to save themselves and those who hear them. (See 1 Tim. 4:16).

6. Christians should **"speak"** the things which become **SOUND DOCTRINE**. (See Titus 2:1).

7. Paul exhorts Christians **not to be "carried about with every wind of DOCTRINE,..."** (See Eph. 4:14-15).

8. Paul urged saints to **"mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the DOCTRINE which ye have learned; and avoid them"**. (See Rom. 16:17).

9. Paul warns us against **"DOCTRINES OF DEVILS"** in 1 Timothy 4:1-4.

10. 2 JOHN 9 SAYS: **"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, hath not God. He that abideth in the DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, he hath both the Father and the Son"**.

Yes, doctrine is very important. We should take heed unto the doctrine that we might save others as well as ourselves. Do you believe the pure doctrine of our Lord? Or do you stand against the Lord by standing against His doctrine?

(CRS)

(Continued from page 2)

## IT IS BETTER

From Matt. 18:1-6 it seems that "the little ones" who believed in Jesus were little children. The same may be true of these little ones. Others have thought that it refers to "new converts". "To offend" means "to entice to sin". (THAYER'S LEXICON, p. 5760). Whether we entice new converts to sin or little children (by saying and doing evil things that would entice them when they become accountable to God), it would be better for us that a millstone were hanged around our necks and we were cast into the sea.

I PETER 3:17

The apostle Peter said: "**For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.**" Both the righteous and unrighteous suffer. Sometimes we suffer for well doing and sometimes for evil doing. Peter also says: "**But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf.**" (1 Peter 4:15-16). When we suffer for evil doing we ought to be ashamed. However, when we suffer shame for the name of the Lord, we ought not be

### A SERIES OF GOSPEL MEETINGS

You are invited and urged to HEAR THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST at the EAST ALBERTVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST July 31 thru Aug. 6, 1978 at 7:30 each evening. **Roy E. Cogdill** will be doing the preaching.

Please make plans to attend and tell others about it. THANKS!

## THE SUTTON-HAWK DEBATE

THE SUTTON-HAWK DISCUSSION is scheduled to be conducted in Hobart, Indiana on July 24 & 25 in Lake Station, Indiana on July 26 & 27, 1978. **Carrol R. Sutton** will affirm that "**the Scriptures teach that the church may arrange, oversee, and provide the needs for those who are its obligation in the field of benevolence, and this arrangement is not a benevolent organization (institution) such as the Paragould Children's Home, Shults-Lewis Children's Home, and Homes for the Aged.**"

**Ray Hawk** will affirm that "**the Scriptures teach that church of Christ may contribute (transmit money to) to orphan's homes such as the Paragould Children's Home, Shults-Lewis Children's Home, and Homes for the Aged.**"

ashamed, but we should rejoice because we are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. (See Acts 5:41). Yes, if the will of God be so, it is **better that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.**

God has given us intelligence to learn and discern and the power of choice. We can choose those things which are better and be genuinely happy in this world and in the world to come receive eternal life. Or we can reject them and be eternally lost. What will you choose?

(CRS)

THE HILL-SUTTON DEBATE still has not been re-scheduled due to a failure of Albert Hill and the West Hobbs "elders" to honor their commitment.

## Sentence Sermons

Gossip is like mud on the wall - you can wipe it off, but it leaves a print.

Too many people are trying to **shine** for Jesus without **burning** for Him.

If you do not stand for something, you will fall for anything.

You can not decide **when** or **where** you will die, but you can decide **how** you will die.

Action is the only true test of faith and love.

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