

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 7

MAY, 1970

Number 5

AUTHORITY FOR TRUE DOCTRINE

"By what authority do you do these things?" (Matt. 21:23). The chief priests put this question to Jesus as He was teaching in the temple. We may marvel at the audacity of these people questioning the authority of Jesus.

PRIMARY AUTHORITY

Authority may be divided into two classes—primary and delegated. The authority of heaven or of God is primary authority which is inherent by virtue of Him being the very fountain-head of all authority. Delegated authority is authority vested in another by the one holding primary authority.

God, the Father, holds primary authority, yet He has seldom chosen to govern man by the exercise of His primary authority. He has chosen as a rule to exercise His authority through chosen vessels to whom He has delegated authority. This idea is set forth in these words: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." (Heb. 1:1). God delegated au-

thority unto the prophets in ages past and in this dispensation delegated authority unto His Son. Jesus said: "The words which ye hear are not mine, but the Father's which sent me." (John 3:35). On the mount of transfiguration, the voice of God speaking from heaven gave the command to hear His Son, in whom He was well pleased. After the resurrection of Jesus, He declared all authority in heaven and earth is given unto Him. (Matt. 28:18). While Jesus was here on earth He exercised His authority personally. He could cast out demons, cure diseases, calm the storm-tossed sea, or forgive sins.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Knowing His earthly ministry would only be for a limited time. Jesus made preparation for the authoritative execution of His will. This was done by delegating authority unto the apostles. Matthew gives the delegating of this authority in these words: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18:18).

When authority was delegated unto

(Continued on page 3)

THE INSTRUCTOR

Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting on Highway 431 South in Albertville, Alabama.

CARROL R. SUTTON
EDITOR

Send all questions, comments, and criticisms to the editor, Route 3, Highway 431 South, Albertville, Ala. 35950.

Editorial . . .

Why Did Jesus Christ Come To Earth?

Have you ever seriously considered the reasons that prompted the Son of God to leave heaven with all of its purity and beauty and come to a sin-cursed earth? Since His coming was sacrificial on His part, the reason for His coming must be very great indeed. Let us now consider some of those reasons.

TO DO HIS FATHER'S WILL

We learn from John 6:38 that Jesus said: "For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." He told his disciples: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work," and "I must work the works of him that sent me . . ." (See John 4:34; 9:4). While in the garden of Gethsemane Jesus said in his prayer to the Father: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." Though Jesus were a Son, "yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." We learn from John 17:4 that Jesus "finished" the works that the Father gave him to do. He did not always please himself, but pleased the Father in all that He did. (See Rom. 15:3; John 8:29).

If we would be saved eternally, we

must be willing to please the Father by doing his will. (See Matt. 7:21).

TO FULFILL THE LAW

In Matt. 5:17-18 Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Jesus did not come to destroy or to make void the law or the prophets, but he came in fulfillment of the law and prophets. Observe the fact that no part of the law would pass TILL all be fulfilled. Since Jesus did what he came to do, the law was obviously fulfilled and it passed away. It was blotted out on the cross and Christ made peace by abolishing it. (See Col. 2:14-17; Eph. 2:14-16). The law was a school-master to lead men to Christ but now men are free from the law since it served its primary purpose. (See Gal. 3:23-27; Rom. 7:4). We cannot be justified by the law of Moses. (See Gal. 2:16; 5:4).

TO SAVE SINNERS

The apostle Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 1:15 that, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Lk. 5:32), and "for the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost." (Lk. 19:10). God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but that through him the world might be saved. (See John 3:17). In making salvation possible Jesus "tasted death for every man." (Heb. 2:9). Although the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, many will not be saved because they are not willing to believe and obey the true gospel of Jesus Christ. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe. (See 1 Cor. 1:21). One must believe that

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 1)

AUTHORITY FOR TRUE DOCTRINE

the Son, there was no danger of mistakes involved, for the Son was divine and infallible. However, the human element enters in when the Son makes His delegation unto the apostles. To avoid mistakes and error, Jesus would not allow these men to go forth executing His will upon their own initiative but charged them to wait until they received power from on High. The power was the Holy Spirit. It came upon them on Pentecost. (Acts 1: 1-8). Jesus said, "The Spirit will teach you ALL things. He shall testify of me. He will show you things to come. He will guide you into ALL truth." (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13). (EDITOR'S NOTE: The above is a paraphrase of the listed passages. Please read them in their fullness in their contexts.)

The apostles were under divine guidance of the Holy Spirit as they exercised the authority given them in executing the will of Christ. There is no evidence in the divine record that the apostles ever delegated this authority to anyone else. When the New Testament was completed, there was no more need for special inspiration. All things pertaining to life and godliness had been given. (2 Pet. 1:3). It is the perfect law of liberty. (James 1:25). For it to remain perfect, nothing can be added to it or nothing taken from it. (Gal. 1:6; Rev. 22:18-19).

The words of the apostles stand as authority today. Their teaching is Jesus' teaching. Their authority is the authority of Jesus. "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me and he that receiveth me received him that sent me" (John 13:20).

THE NEW TESTAMENT, OUR AUTHORITY

The New Testament is our authority in

doctrine today. Any doctrine or teaching not found in the New Testament must be rejected as false. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess. 5:21). If this principle were followed today, it would revolutionize the religious world. It would mean the end of Catholicism, Protestantism, and all other schisms, and unity would prevail. It would mean everyone speaking the same thing, being of one mind, and being of the same judgment, (1 Cor. 1:10), and all walking by the same rule. (Phil. 3:16).

From the many doctrines in the world today, it is evident that men have forgotten Christ has authority and that all teaching is to come from the oracles of God. (1 Pet. 4:11). To excuse the contradictory doctrines that prevail and to make all men feel that they are acceptable with God, the cry is heard everywhere, "We can't all see alike." This is tantamount to saying, "We can't all believe alike."

The true Christian walks by faith and not by sight. (2 Cor. 5:7). This faith is obtained from the word of God. (Rom. 10:17). In the Lord's prayer (John 17:20-21), Jesus prayed for all to be one who believed on Him through the words of the apostles. We must conclude, then, if our faith has come from the Word of God we will all believe alike.

His Word cannot produce the confusion that exists today. (1 Cor. 14:33). If we look to the Word of God for His will toward us, we find it. If we look to His Word for an endorsement of our own will, we will be deceived. Will you accept the authority of the New Testament as the one for true doctrine?

—These fundamental thoughts are from the pen of Jim Watson as they appeared in GOSPEL TIDINGS, Feb., 1960.

(Continued from page 2)

WHY DID JESUS CHRIST COME TO EARTH

God is, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Heb. 11:6; John 8:24). One's faith must be strong enough to lead him to **repentance** because God commands all men every where to **repent**. (See Acts 17:30-31; 3:19; 2 Cor. 7:10). When one **confesses** Christ as Lord and as God's Son, (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37), he then must be **baptized for the remission of sins** as Peter taught in Acts 2:38.

If you haven't obeyed these commands, you are not saved! If you die in sin, you will be eternally lost and as far as you are concerned, Jesus left heaven and came to earth in vain.

(CRS)

HOW TO KEEP SECRETS

There are two ways to keep secrets: one is to keep them to yourselves and the other is to keep them going. The only successful way to keep a secret is to keep it to yourself. If you tell it to anyone, you have not kept it to yourself. When anything gets away from us, we can never know when nor where it will stop I sometimes think it strange that a brother would try to bind me to keep a thing secret who is not willing or able to keep it himself. When one binds me not to tell a thing which he is telling himself, it rather suggests the idea that he wants to do all the telling of it . . .

—F. B. Srygley via
THE RESTORER

Sentence Sermons

Some "Christians" are like trailers—they have to be pulled along.

The Devil is pleased when you get peeved and refuse to speak to someone.

If you are given to wobbling, you can't stay in the narrow way.

Though a lie runs like lightning, the truth will eventually overtake it and "lick" both the lie and the liar.

The church boss is likely to be the Devil's hireling.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
Route 3, Highway 431 So.
Albertville, Ala. 35950

Entered as second-class matter
at Albertville, Ala.