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Mammoth Spring, Arkansas

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THESE THINGS COMMAND AND TEACH

By Arthur C. Blackwell
Mammoth Spring, Arkansas

These things command and teach. (I Tim. 4:11). In all these things Paul told Timothy to teach can be applied to all God's children today. Hence, whatever was told Timothy to teach is to be taught by us now. Timothy was told refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise himself rather unto godliness. Thus, Timothy was told by Paul to refuse the things that would defile that which had been committed unto him. The things taught that is in opposition to the truth is a fable, and is to be refused by us now. In II Tim. 4:3-4 we read for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine: but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

The reason of a fable taught by some is that they cannot endure sound doctrine, so they heap to themselves teachers to teach that which is in opposition to the truth. But let us read the warning given to Timothy. II Tim. 4:5. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. Timothy was told to watch, so are we. He was told to endure, so are we, he was to do the work of an evangelist, so are preachers, he was to make full proof of his ministry, so are we. Timothy was not only told to offer proof of the things he taught, but was to make full proof of that which he taught. Hence, the only way that we know what we hear

is the truth is by comparing that we hear to the truth taught by the apostles of Jesus Christ. If in harmony with the teachings of the apostles, we can accept, but if in opposition to the truth is to be rejected and not only is it to be rejected, but also the one that brings it. II Jno. 9:11. 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. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God's speed; For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Paul told Titus 1:14 concerning those who taught things that was in opposition to truth. He was to turn from them.

In these things Paul told Timothy to do, not only did he tell him to stand against that which was not true, but told him to exercise himself unto Godliness.

Without the proper exercise in this life one will die. So it is in the Christian life, with out the proper exercise one will die spiritually.

In II Tim. 2:15 we read, Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. By studying God's word one learns how to exercise that which has been instructed to him. (Which is Godliness). Paul said, For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, that which is to come. I Tim. 4:8.

These things Paul told Timothy to teach was profitable for the life we now live and that which is to come. By putting the brethren in mind of these things, and he

who does is a good minister of Jesus Christ. (I Tim. 4:6).

All things Paul told Timothy it was given to Paul through the Holy Spirit by Jesus Christ. Thus, Timothy was told to commit these things to faithful men that they could teach others. (II Tim. 2:2).

More to follow.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PAPER

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NEWS

The meeting was well attended at the Mammoth Spring church of Christ. There were a number of visitors from different places attended. There were two baptized and two restored.

TAKES TIME

Take time to worship—it is the highway to reverence.

Take time to be friendly—it is on the road to happiness.

Take time to work—it is the price of success.

Take time to think—it is the source of power.

Take time to play—it is the source of perpetual youth.

Take time to read—it is the foundation of wisdom.

When you get into deep water, keep your mouth shut.

The glory of great men should be measured by the means they have used to acquire it.

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REVIEW NO. II

We shall continue our review of the tract "Spiritual Birth".

I want to impress upon your minds that our friend has taken three different positions as to what the water is in Jno. 3:5. His positions are: (1) Jesus is the water; (2) the Holy Spirit is the water; (3) Jehovah God is the water.

Now, I pointed out in our first review that Mr. England is inconsistent in taking all three positions. That he has contradicted himself in taking three different positions.

It is possible, however, for him to believe that there is no difference in the persons of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit. If he does, then perhaps he is consistent in his three positions, providing that he can prove that water in Jno. 3:5 should be interpreted to mean God, Christ or the Holy Spirit. If it means one, then it equally means the other. But he cannot prove that water in Jno. 3:5 means either of them.

If Mr. England does not recognize the difference in the persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, then he has contradicted Jesus. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." (Jno. 14:16).

We quote next from our friend's tract: "Do you really think that the Lord would use natural water in a spiritual birth? I say, no, a thousand times, no." Well, I wonder why our good friend failed to prove that God does not use natural water in bringing about a spiritual birth. You can say no a million times, and still you do

not prove what you asserted. Let me remind you again, we want proof for some of your wild assertions. You get down to the task of proving that God does not use natural water in the new birth.

Dear reader, the point which Mr. England wants us to get is that God uses nothing literal to bring about a spiritual accomplishment. But, friends, I maintain that he does. Upon one occasion Jesus used literal bread to feed 5,000. But why did he thus act. Obviously, to teach them a spiritual lesson. To bring about a spiritual accomplishment. It was effective too. (See Jno. 6).

Jesus declared "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Mat. 26:28). Now, do you really think that the Lord would use natural blood in bringing about a spiritual accomplishment? Why, yes you believe this. Then why can't you see that God can just as consistently use natural water as he uses natural blood? You could, sir, if you were not blinded by your little theory on spiritual water.

Further, the tract declares: "The Lord has great rivers and fountains of that good, living water for the purpose of a SPIRITUAL BIRTH." Now, friends, if the Lord is that water as you have so earnestly contended, then that renders passages such as Jno. 4:14 ridiculous. This passage indicates that the water is something that the Lord gives. One can bring a horse to the water, but it is an entirely different thing when he drinks.

Likewise one can be led to God, but if he fails to drink of the water God has to give him he can not be benefited. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come, and let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17). "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." (Jno. 7:37). Thus, we see from these passages that one "Comes" first; then he "Drinks".

Now the author says this water is "For the purpose of a Spiritual

Birth." When one "comes" to God he is "Born" of God. We have already seen that there is a difference in Coming to God, and drinking of the living water of God. (See again Rev. 22:17; and Jno. 7:37).

Jesus declared that one must be born of water in Jno. 3:5. When one is born of water he comes to God. Hence, there must be a difference in the water of Jno. 3:5 and the living water which God gives to those who come to him and drink. So the "Living Water" is not "for the purpose of a Spiritual Birth" as our author contends. This spiritual, living water is that which one receives after he has been born of water and of the Spirit.

Our friend quotes I Jno. 5:1 which reads: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Then he says "You are born of God... and God is that spiritual water. Jno. 3:5." Well, our friend is desperately trying to get us to accept his absurd interpretation of Jno. 3:5. Still we must insist that he prove that water in Jno. 3 is God.

No one, as far as I know, denies that one is born of God. But the question—How? Paul declared in I Cor. 4:15—"I have begotten you through the gospel." When the gospel is preached and men receive it they obey it. And as a consequence of this they are born of God. They are begotten by the Gospel, the seed then born of water and the Spirit. One cannot be born without first having been begotten.

Next we quote: "After you read this tract and then go on preaching a spiritual birth in natural water, you are doing evil." No, I am not doing evil when I continue to preach that God uses natural water in bringing about a spiritual (accomplishment) birth.

Why did not you prove that he does not use natural water? If you read my review and then continue to preach that God does not use natural things in bringing out spiritual accomplishment, then you do evil. For I have abundantly proved that God uses the natural

to bring about the spiritual. The Blood of Jesus was literal, natural blood, and it washes away the sins of all who obey him. (Heb. 5:8-9). So, my friend, since you have not given any evidence to the contrary, I must continue to preach that water is just ordinary water in Jno. 3:5.

The writer of this tract continues by quoting a portion of Jer. 2:13:—"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water and hewed them out cisterns broken cisterns, that can hold no water." I agree that this passage refers to God as the living waters. But, my friend, this is a far cry from teaching that the water in Jno. 3:5 is the same as the living water in Jer. 2:13. It is just a mere assertion on the part of the writer of this tract.

Jeremiah points out two evils of which God's people were guilty. First, they forsook God; Secondly they hewed out broken cisterns which would hold no water. This is the exact predicament in which we find the author of this tract. First, he has forsaken God in his absurd interpretation of Jno. 3:5. Secondly, he has hewed himself out a theory which is, as it were, a broken cistern. It just won't hold water! I am sure my friend realizes this by now. I have taken every passage and every quibble he has made and turned it against him.

I have no animosity in my heart for the writer of this tract. For I do not even know him. But I know that he knows that Jesus and the apostles taught that water has something to do with our salvation. He is deathly scared of water. He is like the mother who told her little boy not to get near the water until he learns to swim.

And if you want to get into Christ you must get not only near the water, but in it. As the little boy could not learn to swim, so likewise you can not be a Christian by staying out of the water.

Mk. 16:16; Mat. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; I Pet. 3:21; Acts

"A PRINCIPLE OF COMMON SENSE"

By Lowell Blasingame

"It may be laid down as a principle of common sense, which commends itself to every candid mind, that a commission to do a thing **AUTHORIZES ONLY THE DOING OF THE THING SPECIFIED.** The doing of all other things is virtually forbidden. There is a maxim of law, that **THE EXPRESSION OF ONE THING IS THE EXCLUSION OF ANOTHER.**" This quotation is taken from "Church Manual designed for the use of Baptist Churches" by J. M. Pendleton, D. D., page 81, and the capitalization is mine for emphasis. Pendleton simply states that a command authorizes only what is specified and excludes or cuts out everything else.

The following two examples illustrate the lesson. God authorized Noah to build an ark of gopher wood. Gen. 6:14. The expression of the kind of wood, gopher, eliminated all other kinds; pine, cedar, oak, etc. The command to offer a lamb. Num. 6:14, excluded pigs, dogs, cats, etc.

Since this maxim of law is true would it not also work in the New Testament? Since the specified command is to sing, Eph. 5: 19, would that not exclude all mechanical instruments? The name specified is Christian, I Pet. 4:16. Does this not exclude all denominational names, Baptist included? Since the specified book is the Scripture. 2 Tim. 3:16-17, would that not include all manuals and human creeds? These things ought not be difficult to see.

Learn to take joy out of your work so that you can concentrate all your energies, time and talents upon it without effort.

You can shut out the sun with a copper cent if you hold it too close to your eye.

The surest steps toward happiness are the church steps. Tread them often.