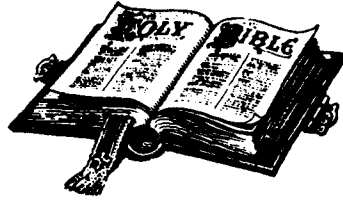


# THE INSTRUCTOR



*"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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## TOM SUTTON

(1906-1990)

Thomas Emmitt Sutton was born April 11, 1906 and was married to Irene (Doll) Carter Sept. 18, 1927. To this union five sons and one daughter were born. Tom Sutton obeyed the gospel and endeavored to serve God for the most part of his adult life. He made mistakes, but he feared God, loved the truth, his family and his brethren. He especially appreciated preachers who would **preach the word uncompromisingly**. He wanted the truth taught "like it is."

Reading, studying and discussing God's Word was an enjoyable part of Tom Sutton's life, esp. the last 25 to 30 years. His life touched and influenced the lives of many. He and Mom had their 63rd wedding anniversary a few days before his death on Oct. 11, 1990, at the age of 84 years. He is survived by his wife, five sons, 18 grandchildren, 27 great grandchildren, one sister and a host of brethren in Christ and friends.

Services were conducted at Spry Funeral Chapel in Athens, AL on Oct. 13, 1990. **Hiram Hutto** and **Dick Ward** spoke and **Bob Mitchell** directed congregational singing. **Alvin Holt** spoke at the cemetery. The body was laid to rest in the Limestone Cemetery (about a mile from his home) to await the resurrection and judgment.

Dad is gone from us. We miss him. We sorrow, but with hope. He taught

us many good lessons by word and by example. We have many precious memories. May God bless and comfort Mom and all who grieve. May each of us who remain **listen to, learn, believe and obey God's Word which is God's power to save us!** (See John 6: 44-45; Rom. 1:16; 2 Thes. 1:7-9; James 1:22-27; Heb. 5:9 and James 2:12).

(CRS)

### GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Through the years in which I have labored with the saints here at East Albertville, a number of godly men and women have departed this life here on earth. Several of them have been mentioned in this paper. Among those who have not been mentioned are ED CHARLES, CLENT SHEDD, T. C. GUNTER, J. B. and CARRIE HOLSONBACK, ORVEAL GARRARD, SUE ROWE, GERALD ROWE, LULA BURGESS, JOHN LEATH, WAYNE PEGUES, WILLODEAN SORTER, WILLIE STEWARD and MAE WATSON.

All of our lives were touched and affected in various ways by these **loved ones** who worshipped with and labored among us in the Lord's Kingdom. We are thankful to have had the privilege of knowing these men and women. Their influence for good continues. May God continue to bless the families of those who have gone one.

(CRS)

## THE INSTRUCTOR

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### *Editorial . . .*

## AN ELDER'S CHILDREN IN TITUS 1:6 — SINGULAR OR PLURAL? (No. 2)

In our previous study it was pointed out that one of the qualifications of a bishop (elder) is “. . . **Having faithful CHILDREN not accused of riot or unruly**” (Titus 1:6). First Tim. 5:4 says: **“One that ruleth well his own house, having his CHILDREN in subjection with all gravity.”**

The term CHILDREN is a translation of the Greek word TEKNA and both TEKNA and CHILDREN are plural in form. It was also shown that a word that is plural in number indicates **more than one**. We stated and illustrated that we should adopt the **primary, ordinary** meaning of words (rather than **secondary, abnormal** meanings) **unless** it is **forbidden** by the context or by some other Scriptural statement or principle. Since the **primary, ordinary** meaning of CHILDREN is **more than one** and this **primary** meaning is not forbidden either by the context or some other Scriptural statement or principle, we have no right to adopt a **secondary, abnormal** meaning such as “**class**” or “**categorical**” usage. To arbitrarily place a **secondary, abnormal** meaning on CHILDREN (such as “**plural of class**” and thus means **one or more**) is **without** justification either grammatically or Scripturally.

CHILDREN in these verses obviously mean CHILDREN! Since CHILDREN is plural, “**more than one is meant.**”

## QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

Let us now consider some questions that are asked and objections that are raised in an effort to justify men being elders who have **only one child** each.

1. “Is the Greek word translated CHILDREN in 1 Tim. 3:4 and Titus 1:6 **singular or plural** in form?”

REPLY:

A. The Greek word TEKNA is the word translated CHILDREN and it is plural in form.

B. TEKNA is the plural form of TEKNON which is singular.

2. “Does the Greek word TEKNA mean “**child or children**” as some have supposed?”

REPLY: NO, it does not mean “**child or children.**” TEKNA means “**children.**” Incidentally, that is why the translators translated it “**children.**” **Note:** It is sometimes translated “**sons.**”

3. “These passages do **not** say **how many** children an elder must have. Therefore, we have no right to say **how many**?”

REPLY:

A. It is true that these passages do **not** say **specifically** as to **how many** children an elder must have, but they do say “**children**” which is plural in form. Words that are plural in number indicate **more than one**. So, we conclude that an elder must have **at least two** children. He may have more. We cannot bind the exact number.

B. The scriptures do **not** say **how many elders** a church must have. Therefore, we have no right to say **how many**. Does this fact **prove** that it is right for a church to have **only one** elder? No! Since “**elders**” is plural in number in Acts 14:23; 20:17 and 1 Peter 5:1-4 we conclude that “**more than one**” is meant.

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# AN ELDER'S CHILDREN IN TITUS 1:6 – SINGULAR OR PLURAL

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4. "The **plural (children)** includes the **singular (child)**. Therefore, an elder with one child has **children**."

REPLY:

A. Since **plural** words include the **singular** it is **true** that "**children**" includes a **singular** "child." But since it is **plural** it also includes "**more than one**" (child).

B. The **plural "churches"** in "**The churches of Christ salute you**" in Rom. 16:16 includes the **singular** (church of Christ). However, there is no way that the expression in Rom. 16:16 can mean "**only one**" church of Christ.

C. The **plural "elders"** in Acts 14:23; 20:17 and 1 Peter 5:1-4 includes the **singular** (one elder). But that does **not** prove that a church with "**only one elder**" has "**elders**."

5. "Genesis 21:7 says: And she (Sarah-CRS) said, **Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.**" Sarah bore **one son** named Isaac, but in the text just quoted she referred to **him** as "**children**." Hence the English word **children** is used here to denote the **singular** number. Therefore, **children** in Titus 1:6 means **one child** as well as **more than one**."

REPLY:

A. For the sake of argument let us grant that the **plural** word **children** is used here in Gen. 21:7 to denote the **singular** number. This does **not** prove that **children** in 1 Tim. 3:4 and Titus 1:6 denotes the **singular** number.

B. If **children** here denotes **only one child** it is because of **context** and thus is a **secondary**, abnormal application of **children**. It is **not** the **primary** meaning of **children**. So, the use here of **children** would **not** determine the meaning and use of **children** in Titus 1:6.

C. Personally, I am **not** convinced that **children** (plural) has a singular application in Gen. 21:7. This verse says Sarah bore "**a son**." Simple, isn't it? One son! **Not children** which would be **more than one**, but **one son**!

D. Why may have some said, "**That Sarah should have given CHILDREN suck?** Because she bore children? **Not necessarily**. Why then? Because Sarah bore **a son**. **Note:** The fact that Sarah bore **a son** was proof that she **could** give **children** suck. She was now able to suckle **children**. She **could** suckle **children** although she might not have done so.

E. Even if "**children**" in Gen. 21:7 is "**class**" or "**categorical**" usage, this does **not** prove that "**children**" in 1 Tim. 3:6 and Titus 1:6 or "**elders** in Acts 14:23 is so used to denote **singular** application.

6. "In Matthew 22:24 the Sadducees (referring to Dt. 25:5-6) said: '**... Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.**' Question: If the brother left **one child** would his brothers be obligated to marry his wife? Obviously, **no**. Then '**having no children**' means the same as '**have no child**' (as Dt. 22:5 says). Therefore, '**children**' means '**child**'."

REPLY:

A. If the above argument is true, then "**children**" is **not** used in its **primary** sense of a **plural** number, but in a **secondary** sense of "**class**" or "**categorical**" usage. It would then have a **singular** application.

B. However, this "**fact**" would **not** prove that "**children**" in Titus 1:6 and 1 Tim. 3:4 and "**elders**" in Acts 14:23 are "**plurals of class**" and thus are **singular** in application.

C. However, it may **not** be proven that "**children**" in Mt. 22:24 is used **by inspiration** to denote the **singular** (child). The **singular** (child) is found in Dt. 22:5 and **not** the **plural**

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# AN ELDER'S CHILDREN IN TITUS 1:6 — SINGULAR OR PLURAL?

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(children). The Sadducees said "Having no CHILDREN" (and Matthew by inspiration recorded what they said), but Dt. 22:5 says "Have no CHILD." So if a brother left one child then there would be no need for his brother to marry his widow.

D. It is true that the expressions, "No child" and "No children" basically mean the same thing although "child" and "children" do not mean the same thing. "No child" means "Not one child." "No children" means "Not any children; no one (child) of more than two children." So the end result is that both expressions allow for not one child. But this does not prove that "children" means "child."

*(To be continued)*

(CRS)

# THE INSTRUCTOR — 27 YEARS!

With this issue, the INSTRUCTOR has been published for 27 years. Our mailing list has increased to an all time high and it continues to grow. Each month we mail out several thousand copies. It goes into most of the States of the U.S. and into several foreign countries. Although printing and mailing costs continue to rise, we believe the good being done (teaching God's Word) through this medium far outweighs the costs.

We praise God and give Him the glory for any and all good accomplished by our efforts. It is "God that giveth the increase."

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## — SENTENCE SERMONS —

He who has a "why" to live can put up with the "how."

\* \* \* \* \*

A lot of folks need to give their minds a bath.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sleeping saints serve Satan — but should awake into righteousness.

\* \* \* \* \*

God has included you in His plans. Have you included God in your plans?

\* \* \* \* \*

We should temper our temper and be tender hearted.

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