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GOSPEL ADVOCATE SERIES

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# Annual Lesson Commentary

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## PREFACE

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In this book the Gospel Advocate Company presents to students of the Bible its fifteenth annual volume of the Commentary on the Bible Class Lessons. The first ten volumes were published as "Elam's Notes"; the last five, all prepared by the present author, have appeared under the title, "Annual Lesson Commentary." The aim has been to supply, in book form, a satisfactory commentary at the cheapest price possible.

The lesson schedule followed in this book has been made by an international committee, but all the comments on the texts of scripture have been written by the author. In the preparation of these lessons it has been the constant purpose to give the exact meaning of the text as far as it could be determined but to make no applications that would conflict with plain, well-understood Bible teaching. All reasonings upon scripture statements, or suggestions based upon them, have been offered with the firm conviction that personal obedience to God is man's first and most imperative duty. With this in view special efforts have been made to emphasize those commands upon which man's salvation is said to depend.

The contents of this volume have been arranged in the same form as the preceding one. The cordial reception accorded the four that this writer has already prepared has been a matter of genuine gratification, and becomes the ground for the hope that this one may reach even a broader field in accomplishing good in the Lord's work. It is with this hope and prayer that the book is offered to the public.

JOHN T. HINDS.

# LESSONS FOR 1936

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### Jesus Meeting Human Needs Studies in Luke

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### Jesus Meeting Human Needs Studies in Luke and Corinthians

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## FOURTH QUARTER

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# BIBLE DICTIONARY OF PROPER NAMES

Arranged and Compiled by H. LEO BOLES

## A

- Aaron (bright or shining), Ex. 4: 14. Brother of Moses and first high priest.  
 Ab, Abba (father), Gal. 4: 6. Name given to God.  
 Abednego (servant of Nego), Dan. 1: 7. One of Daniel's companions.  
 Abel (breath, vanity), Gen. 4: 1. Second son of Adam.  
 Abiathar (father of abundance), 1 Sam. 23: 9. High priest and fourth in descent from Eli.  
 Abigail (father is joy), 1 Sam. 25: 14. Wife of Nabal; became David's wife.  
 Abimelech (Melech is father), Gen. 26: 1. King of Gerar in the time of Isaac.  
 Abishai (my father is Jesse), 1 Sam. 26: 6-9. The eldest of the three sons of Zeruiah, David's sister, and brother of Joab.  
 Abner (father is light), 1 Sam. 14: 50. King Solomon's captain.  
 Abraham, Abram (father of a multitude, exalted father), Gen. 12: 1. Founder of the Hebrews and father of the faithful.  
 Absalom (father is peace), 2 Sam. 15: 1. Third son of David.  
 Achaia (trouble), Acts 18: 12. A Roman province which included Greece.  
 Achan (trouble), Josh. 7: 19-26. Stole golden wedge, etc. Stoned by Joshua.  
 Adam (ruddy, one made or produced), Gen. 3: 15. Name of the first man.  
 Adonijah (my Lord is Jehovah), 2 Sam. 3: 4. Fourth son of David.  
 Agabus, Acts 11: 27. A Christian prophet who came from Jerusalem.  
 Agag, 1 Sam. 15: 8. Title of the kings of Amalek.  
 Agrippa, Acts 12: 20. One of the Herods.  
 Ahab (father's brother), 1 Kings 18: 19. Son of Omri, seventh king of Israel; very wicked.  
 Ahimelech (brother of Melech), 1 Sam. 22: 11. High priest at Nob; gave David the showbread to eat.  
 Ai (heap), Josh. 7: 2. City lying east of Bethel, destroyed by Joshua.  
 Alexander, Mark 15: 21. Son of Simon, the Cyrenian.  
 Alexandria (from Alexander), Acts 18: 24. Capital of Egypt.  
 Alpha (first letter of Greek alphabet), Rev. 1: 8. It means the beginning.  
 Altar, Gen. 8: 20. Place for worship and sacrifice.  
 Ambassador (messenger or agent), 2 Cor. 5: 20. A person commissioned.  
 Amen (true), Isa. 65: 16. Close of prayer.  
 Amos (burden), Amos 1: 1. Minor prophet.  
 Amphipolis (a city surrounded by the sea), Acts 17: 1. A city of Macedonia, through which Paul and Silas passed on their way from Philippi to Thessalonica.  
 Amram (an exalted people), Ex. 6: 18. Father of Moses.  
 Ananias (Jehovah hath been gracious), Acts 5: 1. Husband of Sapphira, smitten dead.  
 Anathema (cursed), Gal. 1: 9. A word used by Paul to show condemnation.  
 Anise (dill), Matt. 23: 23. A small garden plant.  
 Anna (grace), Luke 2: 36. A prophetess at Jerusalem.  
 Annas (humble), Acts 4: 6. The son of Seth; was appointed high priest A.D. 7.  
 Antichrist (opposed to Christ), 1 John 2: 18. Only John uses this word as applied to the enemies of Christianity.  
 Antioch (from Antiochus), Acts 11: 20. City in Syria, also in Pisidia.  
 Apollonia (belonging to Apollo), Acts 17: 1. A city in Macedonia.  
 Apostle (one sent forth), Matt. 10: 2-4; 2 Cor. 8: 23. The official name of the twelve disciples sent out by Jesus.  
 Apphia (fruitful), Phil. 2. A Christian woman addressed jointly with Philemon.  
 Aquila (an eagle), Acts 18: 2. A Jew whom Paul found at Corinth, husband of Priscilla.  
 Archelaus (prince of the people), Matt. 2: 22. Son of Herod the Great.  
 Archippus (master of the horse), Col. 4: 17. A Christian teacher in Colosse.  
 Areopagus (Mars Hill), Acts 17: 22. The rocky heights in Athens, opposite the western end of the Acropolis.  
 Arimathea (height), Matt. 27: 57. A city of Judea.  
 Aristarchus (the best ruler), Acts 20: 4. A companion of Paul on his third missionary journey.  
 Asa (physician, healer), 2 Chron. 14: 8. Third king of Judah; reigned forty years.  
 Asia ( ), Acts 19: 26. Continent, also Roman Province.  
 Athens (city of Athena), Acts 17: 21. The capital of Attica, and the chief city of Grecian learning.  
 Augustus (venerable), Luke 2: 1. The first Roman emperor.  
 Azotus (Ashdod, a stronghold), Acts 8: 40. City nearly midway between Gaza and Joppa.

## B

- Baal (owner, or lord), Num. 22: 41. The male god of the Phenician and Canaanitish nations.  
 Babel (confusion), Gen. 10: 10; 11: 1-9. Tower built on the Plain of Shinar.  
 Babylon (from Babel), Jer. 24: 5. The land of the Chaldeans.  
 Balaam (from Baal), Num. 23: 19. A prophet of Midian who tried to curse Israel.  
 Barabbas (son of Abba), John 18: 40. The robber who was released at the trial of Jesus.  
 Balak (making waste), Num. 22: 24. King of the Moabites.

- Baptist, the (the baptizer), Matt. 3: 1. The same as John the Baptist.  
 Barak (lightning), Judges 4: 1-24. Defeats Sisera's army.  
 Barbarian (any one not a Greek), Rom. 1: 14. Applied to those who were not of the Greek nation.  
 Bar-Jesus (son of Jesus), Acts 13: 6. A false prophet.  
 Barnabas (son of consolation or exhortation), Acts 4: 36. An early disciple of Christ and traveling companion of Paul.  
 Barsabbas (son of Sabas or rest), Acts 1: 23. Voted on as an apostle to take Judas' place.  
 Bath-sheba (daughter of the oath), 2 Sam. 11: 3. Wife of Uriah; became David's wife.  
 Belial (worthlessness), 2 Cor. 6: 15. An expression for lawlessness.  
 Belshazzar (may Bel protect the king), Dan. 5: 2. The last king of Babylon.  
 Benjamin (son of the right hand), Gen. 35: 16. The youngest son of Jacob.  
 Berea (well watered), Acts 17: 10. A city of Macedonia.  
 Bernice (bringing victory), Acts 25: 13. The eldest daughter of Herod Agrippa I.  
 Bethany (house of dates), Mark 11: 1. A village situated near the Mount of Olives.  
 Bethel (the house of God), Gen. 12: 8; 28: 11-19. City about twelve miles north of Jerusalem.  
 Bethesda (house of mercy), John 5: 2. Market place near Jerusalem.  
 Bethlehem (house of bread), 1 Sam. 17: 12. City of David, birthplace of Christ.  
 Bethphage (house of figs), Luke 19: 29. Place on the Mount of Olives, on the road between Jericho and Jerusalem.  
 Bethsaida (house of fish), John 12: 21. The home of Andrew, Peter, and Philip.  
 Bildad (Bel hath loved, or, son of contention), Job 2: 11. The second of Job's three friends.  
 Bilhah (timid, bashful), Gen. 29: 29. Concubine of Jacob, and mother of Dan and Naphtali.  
 Blasphemy (speak against), Matt. 12: 32. Speaking evil against God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit.  
 Blastus (sprout), Acts 12: 20. The chamberlain of Herod Agrippa I.  
 Boanerges (sons of thunder), Mark 3: 17. Name given to the two sons of Zebedee.

## C

- Caesar (Latin name), John 19: 12. In the New Testament, always the Roman emperor.  
 Caiaphas (depression), Matt. 26: 3. High priest of the Jews.  
 Cain (possession), Gen. 4: 1. Oldest son of Adam; killed his brother Abel.  
 Caleb (capable), Num. 13: 6. One of the faithful spies.  
 Cana (place of reeds), John 2: 1. Place of Christ's first miracle.  
 Canaan (low, flat), Gen. 10: 6. Fourth son of Ham; name applied to Palestine.  
 Candace (name of dynasty), Acts 8: 27. Not the name of an individual, but of a dynasty of Ethiopian queens.  
 Capernaum (village of Nahum), Matt. 4: 13. Village located on the western shore of Galilee.  
 Carpus (wrist), 2 Tim. 4: 13. A Christian at Troas.  
 Cesarea (Kaisareia, Caesar), Acts 8: 40. City on coast of Palestine.  
 Cesarea Philippi (from Caesar and Philip), Matt. 16: 13. City twenty miles north of the Sea of Galilee.  
 Chinnereth (lute, harp), Josh. 19: 35. Another name for the Sea of Galilee.  
 Chorazin, Matt. 11: 21. One of the cities in which Jesus did many mighty works.  
 Christ (anointed), 1 Tim. 1: 2. The same as Messiah.  
 Chuzas (the seer), Luke 8: 3. The house steward of Herod Antipas.  
 Cilicia (the land of Celiz), Acts 9: 30. A province in the southeast of Asia Minor.  
 Circumcision (cut around), Lev. 12: 3. A Jewish custom.  
 Claudius (lame), Acts 18: 2. Fourth Roman emperor; reigned from 41 to 54 A.D.  
 Cleopas (from Cleopatra), John 19: 25. One of the two disciples to whom Jesus talked on the way to Emmaus.  
 Colosse, Col. 1: 2. A city of Phrygia in Asia Minor.  
 Corinth, Acts 18: 1-18. City of Greece, about forty miles west of Athens.  
 Cornelius (of a horn), Acts 10: 1. A Roman centurion of the Italian cohorts stationed in Cesarea.  
 Crescens (growing), 2 Tim. 4: 10. An assistant of Paul, said to have been one of the seventy disciples sent out by Christ.  
 Crispus (curled), Acts 18: 8. Ruler of Jewish synagogues at Corinth.  
 Cummin, Matt. 23: 23. Small plant with an aromatic flavor.  
 Cyprus, Acts 4: 36. An island in the Mediterranean Sea, about a hundred and forty miles long and sixty miles wide.  
 Cyrene, Acts 2: 10. The principal city of that part of Northern Africa which was anciently called Cyrenaica.  
 Cyrus (the son), 2 Chron. 36: 22. The founder of the Persian Empire.

## D

- Damascus, Acts 9: 11. One of the most ancient cities in the world, located in Syria.  
 Daniel (God is my judge), Dan. 1: 3. The fourth of "the greater prophets."



- Darius (lord), Dan. 6: 1. The name of several kings of Media and Persia.  
 David (well beloved), 1 Sam. 16: 1. Youngest son of Jesse; second king of Israel.  
 Deborah (a bee), Gen. 35: 8; Judges 4: 5. Name of Rebekah's nurse; also a prophetess.  
 Decapolis (ten cities), Matt. 4: 25. A district east of the Jordan and south of the Sea of Galilee.  
 Delilah (languishing), Judges 16: 4-18. Delivered Samson to the Philistines.  
 Demetrius (belonging to Demeter), Acts 19: 24. A maker of silver shrines at Ephesus.  
 Demas (governor of the people), Col. 4: 14. Companion of Paul during his first imprisonment at Rome.  
 Denarius (containing ten), Matt. 18: 28. A Roman silver coin, worth about sixteen cents.  
 Derbe (juniper), Acts 14: 20. City not far from Iconium.  
 Deuteronomy (the giving of the law the second time), Fifth book of the Bible.  
 Diana (Latin name), Acts 19: 24. The Ephesian goddess.  
 Dispersion (scattered), James 1: 1. Applied to the Jews who lived out of Palestine.  
 Dorcas (gazelle), Acts 9: 36. A disciple raised from the dead by Peter at Joppa.  
 Doubter. One without faith.

## E

- Easter (passover), Acts 12: 4. Translated "Passover" in the Revised Version.  
 Eden (pleasure), Gen. 2: 8-14. The first residence of man.  
 Edom (red), Gen. 32: 3. Name given to Esau and his country.  
 Egypt (land of the Copts), Ex. 1: 14. Place where Israel was held in bondage.  
 Egyptian (native of Egypt), Acts 21: 38. An inhabitant of Egypt.  
 Elder (old man), Gen. 24: 2. Name applied to rulers of the city and officers of the church.  
 Elijah (Jehovah is my God), 1 Kings 17: 1. Prophet in the days of Ahab.  
 Elisabeth (God is an oath), Luke 1: 36. Wife of Zacharias and mother of John the Baptist.  
 Elisha (God is my salvation), 1 Kings 19: 16. Prophet who succeeded Elijah.  
 Elymas (a wise man), Acts 13: 6. A sorcerer who opposed Paul.  
 Endor (fountain of Dor), 1 Sam. 28: 7. Home of the witch with whom Saul communed.  
 Enoch (dedicated), Gen. 4: 17. Walked with God and was translated.  
 Epaphras (lovely), Col. 1: 7. A fellow laborer and prisoner with Paul.  
 Ephesus (permission), Acts 19: 29. The capital of the Roman province of Asia.  
 Ephraim (double fruitfulness), Gen. 41: 50. Younger son of Joseph.  
 Epicureans (from Epicurus), Acts 17: 18. Those who believed in getting the greatest pleasure out of life.  
 Erastus (beloved), Acts 19: 22. One of Paul's attendants at Ephesus.  
 Esau (hairy), Gen. 25: 25. Twin brother of Jacob.  
 Esther (a star), Esth. 7: 3. Jewish wife of King Ahasuerus.  
 Ethiopia (burnt faces), Acts 8: 27. The country south of Egypt.  
 Eunuch (bed keeper), Acts 8: 34. A man deprived of his virility.  
 Euodias (fragrance), Phil. 4: 2. Christian woman at Philippi.  
 Euraculo, Acts 27: 14. Compounded from two words meaning east and north.  
 Eutyclus (fortunate), Acts 20: 9. A youth of Troas who went to sleep and fell out the window. Paul restored him to life.  
 Eve (life), Gen. 2: 21. Name given to the first woman.  
 Exodus (a going out). Name given to the second book of the Bible.  
 Exorcist (casting out), Matt. 12: 27. One who pretended to cast out evil spirits.  
 Ezekiel (God is strong, or God doth strengthen), Ezek. 1: 3. The third of the major prophets.  
 Ezra (help), Neh. 12: 1. Wrote the book which bears his name.

## F

- Felix (happy), Acts 24: 26. A Roman officer who held Paul in prison.  
 Festus (festival), Acts 24: 27. Roman officer who succeeded Felix.  
 First-born, Ex. 13: 12. First male born into the family, who inherited the name and property of the father.  
 First Fruits, Ex. 22: 29. First ripe fruit given to Jehovah.  
 Frankincense, Ex. 30: 34-36. A sacrificial fumigation.

## G

- Gabbatha (a platform), John 19: 13. Place where the judgment seat of Pilate was.  
 Gabriel (man of God), Luke 1: 19. The angel that appeared to Elisabeth and Mary.  
 Gadarenes (Gerasenes), Mark 5: 1. Place where Jesus healed two demoniacs.  
 Gaius (Latin name), Acts 19: 29. A Macedonian who accompanied Paul in his travels.  
 Galatia (land of the Gauls), Acts 18: 23. The central district of Asia Minor.  
 Galilean (an inhabitant of Galilee), Acts 2: 7. The people of the northern part of Palestine or province of Galilee.  
 Galilee (circuit), Luke 17: 11. The northern country of Palestine.  
 Gallio (Latin name), Acts 18: 12. The Roman proconsul of Achaia when Paul was at Corinth.

- Gamaliel (recompense of God), Acts 5: 24. A noted teacher of the law in Jerusalem; Paul's teacher.  
 Gaza (the fortified), Acts 8: 26. One of the cities of the Philistines.  
 Gennesaret (garden of the princes), Matt. 14: 34. A name given to the fertile plains on the western shore of the Lake of Galilee.  
 Gentle (nation), Acts 11: 18. Any one who was not of the Jewish race.  
 Gethsemane (an oil press), Matt. 26: 36. Garden near Jerusalem.  
 Gideon (he that cuts down), Judges 6: 34. The fifth recorded judge.  
 Gilboa (a bubbling spring), 1 Sam. 28: 4. Mountain where Saul was killed.  
 Golgotha (skull), Matt. 27: 33. The Hebrew name of the spot where Christ was crucified.  
 Goliath (an exile), 1 Sam. 17: 4. The famous giant whom David killed.  
 Gomorrah (submersion), Gen. 14: 2-8. The city which was destroyed with fire from heaven.  
 Gospel (good message), Rom. 1: 16. Good tidings of joy.  
 Greece, Greeks, Grecians, Dan. 8: 21; Isa. 66: 19; Acts 20: 2. Names of the country and people who preceded the Roman Empire.

## H

- Hadad, Gen. 25: 15. An early king of Edom.  
 Hades (hell), Matt. 16: 18. Used in the Revised Version for "hell."  
 Hagar (flight), Gen. 16: 1. An Egyptian handmaid of Sarah, concubine to Abraham, and mother of Ishmael.  
 Ham (black), Gen. 14: 5. The name of one of the three sons of Noah.  
 Hannah (grace), 1 Sam. 1: 2. One of the wives of Elkanah, and mother of Samuel.  
 Hazael (whom God sees), 2 Kings 8: 7-15. A king of Damascus, anointed by Elisha.  
 Heber (alliance), Gen. 46: 17. Grandson of Asher.  
 Hebrew (from Eber, beyond, or on the other side), Gen. 14: 13. Posterity of Abraham.  
 Hebron (alliance), Josh. 15: 54. City about twenty miles south of Jerusalem.  
 Hell (Gehenna), Matt. 5: 22. Place of torment for the wicked.  
 Hellenist (Grecian), Acts 6: 1. Term applied to Greek-speaking Jews, or Grecian Jews.  
 Herod (hero like), Luke 3: 19. The Herod family were alien by race and Jewish in faith; Roman rulers over Palestine.  
 Herodians (from Herod), Matt. 22: 15. Party among the Jews who were supporters of the Herodian family.  
 Herodias (from Herod), Matt. 14: 8-11. Granddaughter of Herod the Great.  
 Hezekiah (Jehovah strengtheneth), 2 Kings 18: 5. Thirteenth king of Judah and son of Ahaz.  
 Hierapolis (holy city), Col. 4: 13. A city of Phrygia.  
 Hiram, 2 Sam. 5: 11. The king of Tyre, who sent workmen and material to help build the temple.  
 Hittites (descendants of Heth), Josh. 9: 1. One of the Canaanitish tribes.  
 Hophni, 1 Sam. 2: 12. One of the wicked sons of Eli.  
 Horeb (desert), Ex. 3: 1. A mountain. (See Sinai.)  
 Hosanna (save, pray), Matt. 21: 9. The cry of the multitude on Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem.  
 Hosea (salvation), 2 Kings 15: 30. One of the minor prophets.  
 Hoshea (salvation), Isa. 7: 16. Same as Hosea or Joshua.  
 Hymeneus (belonging to Hymen, the god of marriage), 1 Tim. 1: 20. He denied the true doctrine of the resurrection.

## I

- Ichabod (inglorious), 1 Sam. 4: 21. The son of Phineas and grandson of Eli.  
 Iconium, Acts 14: 1. Paul visited this city with Barnabas on his first missionary tour. Located north of Antioch, in Pisidia.  
 Illyricum, Rom. 15: 9. District lying along the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea.  
 Immanuel (God with us), Matt. 1: 23. The name applied to Christ.  
 Inn (lodging place), Luke 2: 7. Similar to our rooming houses or hotels.  
 Isaac (laughter), Gen. 35: 27. The son of Sarah by Abraham.  
 Isaiah (Jehovah is salvation), Isa. 1: 1. One of the major prophets of the Old Testament.  
 Ishmael (may God hear), Gen. 16: 15. Son of Abraham by Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid.  
 Israel (persevere with God, prince to God), Gen. 32: 28. Name given to Jacob and the nation which came from the twelve tribes.  
 Issachar (there is a reward), Gen. 30: 18. The ninth son of Jacob; one of the twelve tribes.  
 Italy, Acts 18: 2. A well-known country.

## J

- Jachin (he doth establish), 1 Kings 7: 21. One of the two pillars which was set up in the porch of the temple.  
 Jacob (supplanter), Gen. 25: 26. Son of Isaac and Rebekah, twin brother of Esau.  
 Jambres, 2 Tim. 3: 8. One of the Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses.



- James (the Greek form of "Jacob"), Matt. 10: 2. Son of Zebedee, brother of John, and one of the twelve apostles.
- Jannes, 2 Tim. 3: 8. An Egyptian magician who joined Jambres in opposing Moses.
- Jason, Acts 17: 5. Entertained Paul and Silas; attacked by Jewish mob.
- Jebusites (from Jebus), Num. 13: 29. One of the Canaanitish tribes in Palestine.
- Jehoiada (Jehovah knows), 2 Sam. 8: 18. High priest at one time.
- Jehoshaphat (Jehovah hath judged), 1 Kings 15: 24. Fourth king of Judah, son of Asa.
- Jehovah (I Am, the Eternal Living One), Lev. 24: 15. One of the names given to God.
- Jehu (Jehovah is he), 2 Kings 9: 2. Founder of the fifth dynasty of the kings of Israel.
- Jephunneh (it will be prepared), Num. 13: 6. Father of Caleb, a good spy.
- Jeremiah (whom Jehovah appoints), Jer. 1: 1. One of the major prophets.
- Jericho (place of fragrance), Josh. 13: 16. First city destroyed by Joshua; its walls were thrown by faith.
- Jeroboam (whose people are many), 1 Kings 11: 28. The first king of the divided kingdom of Israel.
- Jerusalem (the city of peace), 2 Chron. 25: 23. The religious and political capital of the Israelites.
- Jesse (wealthy), Ruth 4: 18-22. The father of David, and son of Obed, the son of Boaz, by the Moabitess, Ruth.
- Jesus (Jehovah is salvation), Matt. 1: 21. One of the names given to Christ, the Messiah.
- Jew (a man of Judah), Mark 7: 3. A name applied to members of the kingdom of Judah after the separation of the ten tribes; later applied to all Israelites.
- Joab (Jehovah is Father), 2 Sam. 14: 1-20. Nephew of David and captain of his hosts.
- Job, Job 1: 1. Probably one of the patriarchs.
- Joel (Jehovah is God), 1 Sam. 8: 2. One of the minor prophets.
- Johanna (grace or gift of God), Luke 3: 27. The name of a woman.
- John the Baptist (Jehovah's gift), Matt. 3: 1. A forerunner of Christ.
- John (from Johanan), Luke 1: 11. Name given to son of Zacharias, later called "John the Baptist."
- Jonah (dove), 2 Kings 14: 25. The fifth of the minor prophets.
- Joppa (beauty), Acts 11: 5. A town on the southwest coast of Palestine.
- Jordan (the descender), Josh. 2: 7. The river which bounds the eastern border of Palestine.
- Joseph (may he add), Gen. 37: 2. The elder of the two sons of Jacob by Rachel.
- Joshua (Jehovah is salvation), Ex. 17: 9. Moses' minister and successor as leader of the children of Israel.
- Jot (the English form of the Greek iota, the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet), Matt. 5: 18. It was formed like an English comma (,).
- Jubilee (joyful shout), Lev. 25: 11. Every fiftieth year was called the year of Jubilee.
- Judah (praised), Gen. 37: 26. The fourth son of Jacob by Leah.
- Judas Iscariot (Judas of Keriath), John 6: 71. The name of the betrayer of Jesus.
- Julius (fr. Greek), Acts 27: 1. A Roman centurion.
- Jupiter (a father that helps), Acts 14: 12. The national god of the Hellenic race.
- Justus (just), Acts 18: 7. A Christian at Corinth with whom Paul lodged.

## K

- Kadesh, Kadesh-Barnea (holy), Num. 13: 3. Place where Miriam died, and the farthest point reached in the wandering in the wilderness.
- Kidron, or Kedron (turbid), Luke 22: 39. Name of brook or valley, southeast of Jerusalem.
- Kish (a bow), 1 Chron. 23: 21. The father of Saul.
- Kothath (assembly), Ex. 6: 16. One of the three sons of Levi.

## L

- Laban (white), Gen. 24: 10. Father of Leah and Rachel; father-in-law of Jacob.
- Laodicea (justice of the people), Col. 4: 16. A town in the Roman province of Asia.
- Laodiceans, Col. 4: 16; Rev. 3: 14. The inhabitants of Laodicea.
- Lazarus (whom God helps), John 11: 1. Brother of Martha and Mary; lived at Bethany; raised from the dead by Jesus.
- Leah (weariest), Gen. 29: 16. Daughter of Laban; first wife of Jacob.
- Lebanon (white), Deut. 1: 7. Mountain range north of Palestine.
- Levi (joined), Gen. 29: 34. Name of the third son of Jacob by Leah.
- Levite (joined), Luke 10: 32. One of the tribe of Levi.
- Leviticus. Third book of the Bible.
- Libertines (from liberty), Acts 6: 9. Applied to Jews who had been taken prisoners and then set free.
- Lois (agreeable), 2 Tim. 1: 5. The grandmother of Timothy.
- Lord's Day (first day of the week), Rev. 1: 10. Corresponds to our "Sunday."
- Lot (veil, or covering), Gen. 11: 27. The son of Haran and nephew of Abraham.
- Lucius, Acts 13: 1. One of the teachers at Antioch.
- Luke (light-giving), Acts 13: 1; Col. 4: 14. Traveled with Paul and wrote the book that bears his name.
- Lycaonia (landing of Lycanion, or wolf land), Acts 14: 11. A province in Asia Minor.

- Lydia (strife), Acts 16: 14. First European convert at Philippi.  
 Lysias (fr. Greek), Acts 23: 26. A Roman officer.  
 Lystra, Acts 16: 1. One of the cities visited by Paul on his first and second missionary tours; home of Timothy.

## M

- Macedonia (extended land), 2 Cor. 8: 1. A province in Europe, north of Greece; Gospel first preached there by Paul.  
 Magdalene (inhabitant of Magadan), Matt. 27: 56. Mary Magdalene, present at crucifixion of Christ.  
 Magi (wise men), Matt. 2: 1-12. Those who visited the babe Jesus.  
 Malachi (my messenger). Author of the last book of the Old Testament.  
 Malchus (king, or kingdom), Matt. 26: 51. The name of the servant of the high priest whose right ear Peter cut off in the garden of Gethsemane.  
 Mammon (riches), Matt. 6: 24. Word used to personify wealth.  
 Manaen (comforter), Acts 13: 1. Foster brother of Herod and teacher and prophet in church at Antioch.  
 Manasseh (forgetting), Gen. 4: 51. The oldest son of Joseph.  
 Manna (What is this?), Ex. 16: 14-36. Food given the children of Israel in the wilderness.  
 Mark, Acts 12: 12. One of the evangelists and writer of the book that bears his name.  
 Martha (a lady), Luke 10: 38. Sister of Lazarus and Mary.  
 Mary (a tear). A common name in the New Testament; mother of Jesus.  
 Matthew (gift of Jehovah), Matt. 10: 3. One of the twelve apostles and writer of the first book of the New Testament.  
 Matthias (gift of God), Acts 1: 26. The apostle elected to fill the place of the traitor, Judas.  
 Melchizedek (king of righteousness), Gen. 14: 18-20. King and priest of God; type of Christ as priest.  
 Melita (premeditate), Acts 28: 1. An island in the Mediterranean Sea.  
 Mercury (herald of the gods), Acts 14: 12. The god of commerce and bargains.  
 Meshach (guest of a king), Dan. 1: 4. One of Daniel's friends in captivity.  
 Mesopotamia (between the rivers), Deut. 23: 4. Country between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.  
 Messiah (anointed), Matt. 20: 20. A prophetic name applied to Jesus.  
 Methuselah (man of the dart), Gen. 5: 25. The son of Enoch, and the oldest man recorded among the patriarchs.  
 Midian (strife), Gen. 25: 2. A son of Abraham by Keturah.  
 Miletus, Acts 20: 15. City on the coast, thirty-six miles to the south of Ephesus.  
 Mint, Luke 11: 42. An herb which the Jews used as their tithe.  
 Mite, Mark 12: 41-44. A coin current in Palestine in the time of Jesus, worth about one-fifth of a cent.  
 Moab (of his father), Deut. 2: 11. Son of Lot by his eldest daughter.  
 Molech (king), Jer. 49: 1. The god of the Ammonites.  
 Moriah (chosen by Jehovah), Gen. 22: 2. The mount where Abraham offered Isaac.  
 Moses (drawn), Ex. 2: 5. The leader of God's people.  
 Myrrh, Ex. 30: 23. One of the ingredients of the oil of holy ointment.  
 Mysia (land of beech trees), Acts 16: 7. Region about the frontier of the provinces of Asia and Bithynia.

## N

- Naaman (pleasantness), 2 Kings 5: 18. Captain of the army of Syria; a leper, cleansed by Elisha.  
 Nabal (fool), 1 Sam. 25: 3. First husband of Abigail, one of David's wives.  
 Naomi (my delight), Ruth 1: 2. Wife of Elimelech and mother-in-law of Ruth.  
 Naphtali (wrestling), Gen. 30: 8. The fifth son of Jacob; son of Bilhah, one of Rachel's handmaids.  
 Nathan (a giver), 2 Sam. 7: 2. Name of the prophet who rebuked David.  
 Nathanael (gift of God), John 1: 47. An early disciple of Jesus; some think the same as Bartholomew.  
 Nazarene (from Nazareth), Matt. 2: 23. A name sometimes given to Jesus.  
 Nazareth (the guarded one), Matt. 2: 23. A village in Galilee and home of Jesus.  
 Nazarite (one separated), Num. 6: 1-21. Person who takes a peculiar vow to be set apart from others for the service of God. Sometimes spelled "Nazirite."  
 Neapolis (new city), Acts 16: 11. First place Paul landed in Europe, about twelve miles from Philippi.  
 Nebo (prophet), Num. 32: 3. Mountain on the east side of the Jordan.  
 Nebuchadnezzar (may Nebo protect the crown), Jer. 46: 2-12. The most powerful of the Babylonian kings.  
 Nehemiah (consolation of the Lord), Ez. 2: 2. One of the leaders of the first expedition from Babylon to Jerusalem.  
 New Testament (new covenant). Name given to the Holy Scriptures after the advent of Christ.



- Nicodemus (conqueror of the people), John 3: 1. A Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews and teacher of Israel who visited Jesus at night.  
 Nicolaitans (followers of Nicholas), Rev. 2: 6. A sect whose deeds were severely condemned.  
 Niger (black), Acts 13: 1. One of the teachers and prophets in the church at Antioch.  
 Nile (blue, dark), Gen. 15: 8. The principal river of Egypt.  
 Nimrod (rebellion, or the valiant), Gen. 10: 8. A grandson of Ham.  
 Nineveh (abode of Ninus), Gen. 10: 11. The capital of the ancient kingdom of Assyria.  
 Ninevites, Luke 11: 30. The inhabitants of Nineveh, to whom Jonah preached.  
 Numbers. The fourth book of the Old Testament.  
 Nymphas (bridegroom), Col. 4: 15. A wealthy Christian in Laodicea.

## O

- Old Testament. Name given to the Holy Scriptures before the advent of Christ.  
 Olives, Mount of, 2 Sam. 15: 30; Acts 1: 12. Mount near Jerusalem.  
 Omega, Rev. 1: 8. Last letter of the Greek alphabet.  
 Onesimus (profitable, useful), Col. 4: 9. The name of the servant of Philemon.  
 Ophir (abundance), 1 Chron. 29: 4. A seaport from which Solomon obtained gold for the temple.

## P

- Padan-aram (table-land of Aram), Gen. 28: 2. Name applied to country which bordered on the Euphrates to distinguish it from the mountainous district.  
 Palestine (land of strangers), Ex. 15: 14. One name for the land of Canaan.  
 Palsy (contracted from paralysis), Matt. 12: 10-13. A disease which caused the loss of the power of motion.  
 Pamphylia (of every tribe), Acts 13: 13. One of the provinces on the coast of Asia Minor.  
 Paphos (boiling or hot), Acts 13: 6. City on Island of Cyprus, which Paul and Barnabas visited on first missionary journey.  
 Parable (placed beside, a comparison), Matt. 24: 32. A form of teaching by comparison.  
 Paradise (orchard of pleasure, pleasure ground), 2 Cor. 12: 4. A term applied figuratively to the celestial dwelling of the righteous.  
 Parthians (from Parthia), Acts 2: 9. People who lived in Parthia.  
 Passover (commemorating the death angel's passing over the houses of Israel in Egypt), Ex. 12: 1-51. The first of the three great annual feasts of the Jews, held on the fourteenth day of the first month.  
 Patmos, Rev. 1: 9. Name of an island in the Aegean Sea, twenty miles south of Samos; place where John was banished.  
 Patriarch (father of a tribe), Acts 7: 8. Name given to the head of a family or tribe in Old Testament times.  
 Paul (small, little), Acts 23: 6. Name given to the apostle to the Gentiles.  
 Pentateuch (five). Greek name given to the first five books of the Old Testament.  
 Pentecost (fiftieth), Acts 2: 1. Feast which came fifty days after the Passover.  
 Perga (fr. Greek), Acts 13: 13. A city in Pamphylia.  
 Pergamos (height, elevation), Rev. 1: 11. A city of Mysia, about three miles to the north of the River Caicus.  
 Pergamum, Rev. 1: 11. Same as Pergamos.  
 Persia (pure, splendid), Ezek. 38: 5. Name given to an ancient empire.  
 Peter (a rock or stone), John 1: 42. Name given to Simon, the brother of Andrew, one of the twelve apostles.  
 Pharaoh, Ex. 1: 8. Common title of the kings of Egypt.  
 Pharisees, Matt. 15: 7. A religious sect among the Jews. They believed in a resurrection of the dead.  
 Philadelphia (brotherly love), Rev. 3: 9. Town on the borders of Lydia and Phrygia.  
 Philemon (loving), Col. 4: 9. Name of Christian to whom Paul addressed his Epistle in behalf of Onesimus.  
 Philetus (beloved), 2 Tim. 2: 17. Associated with Hymeneus.  
 Philip (lover of horses), John 1: 44. One of the twelve apostles.  
 Philistines (immigrants), Jer. 47: 4. One of the tribes that inhabited Caphtor, or Crete.  
 Phebe (radiant), Rom. 16: 1. The name of a Christian woman.  
 Phrygia (dry, barren), Acts 16: 6. Name of a province in Asia Minor.  
 Pilate (armed with a spear), Luke 13: 1. Judge of Roman court who permitted Christ to be crucified.  
 Pisgah (peak), Num. 21: 20. Highest point of Mount Nebo.  
 Pontus (the sea), Acts 2: 9. Province of Asia Minor.  
 Pretorium (palace), Matt. 27: 27. Place where court was held.  
 Priest, Gen. 14: 18. One who officiated at the altar.  
 Priscilla (from Prisca, ancient), Acts 18: 26. Wife of Aquila.  
 Prophet (one who speaks for another), Ex. 15: 20. God's mouthpiece to the people.  
 Proselyte (a stranger, a newcomer), Matt. 23: 15. Name given by Jews to foreigners who accepted the Jewish religion.  
 Proverbs (a comparison), Num. 21: 27. Books supposed to have been compiled by Solomon.

Publican (Roman taxgatherer), Luke 3: 13. Name of one who gathered taxes for the Roman government.

Pyrrhus, Acts 20: 4. The father of Sopater of Berea.

## Q

Quartus (fourth), Rom. 16: 23. A Christian of Corinth.

Quaternion, Acts 12: 4. A guard of four soldiers.

## R

Rabbi (master), Matt. 23: 7. Title signifying "teacher."

Raca (fool), Matt. 5: 22. A term of reproach.

Rachel (ewe, or sheep), Gen. 29: 31. Younger daughter of Laban, and beloved wife of Jacob.

Rahab (fierceness, pride), Isa. 51: 9. A name sometimes given to Egypt.

Rebekah (ensnarer), Gen. 22: 23. Sister of Laban, wife of Isaac.

Red Sea (a seaweed resembling wool), Ex. 14: 2. Body of water crossed by Israelites.

Rehoboam (enlarger of the people), 1 Kings 14: 21. Son of Solomon and first king of Judah.

Reign (to rule), 2 Tim. 2: 12. To govern, to rule over.

Reuben (behold a son), Gen. 29: 32. Jacob's eldest son.

Revelation. Last book of the New Testament.

Rhoda (rose), Acts 12: 13. The name of a maid who announced Peter's arrival.

Rome, Rev. 17: 9. The name of a world empire.

Rue, Luke 11: 42. A garden plant tithable in the time of the Savior.

Rufus (red), Mark 15: 21. Name of an early Christian.

Ruth (a female friend), Ruth 1: 4. The Moabitess who became the wife of Boaz.

## S

Sabaoth (armies), James 5: 4. Name applied to the Lord.

Sabbath (a day of rest), Ex. 16: 22. The seventh day of the week.

Sabbath Day's Journey, Acts 1: 12. About three-fourths of a mile.

Sabbatical Year, Ex. 23: 10. Each seventh year.

Sadducees (followers of Zadok), Matt. 3: 7. Religious sect opposed to the Pharisees.

Salamis (salt), Acts 13: 5. City in the eastern part of the Island of Cyprus.

Samaria (watch mountain), 1 Kings 16: 23. Name of a city thirty miles north of Jerusalem; also of the country surrounding it.

Samaritan (watch mountain, Samaria), Luke 10: 33. An inhabitant of Samaria.

Samson (like the sun), Judges 15: 20. One of the strongest men; one of the judges of Israel.

Samuel (asked of God), 1 Sam. 3: 1-18. The last judge of Israel.

Sanhedrin (a council chamber), Matt. 26: 57. The supreme court of the Jewish nation.

Sapphira (bright color, beautiful), Acts 5: 1-11. Wife of Ananias.

Sarah (princess), Gen. 20: 12. Wife of Abraham, mother of Isaac.

Sarai (my princess), Gen. 11: 29. First name of Sarah.

Sardis (red), Rev. 1: 11. A city of Asia Minor, and capital of Lydia.

Satan (adversary), Matt. 16: 23. Name applied to the devil.

Saul (desired), 2 Sam. 1: 23. Name of the first king of Israel; first name of the apostle Paul.

Sevea (implement), Acts 19: 14. A Jew residing at Ephesus when Paul visited that city.

Scribes (to write), 1 Kings 4: 3. Those who transcribed the law.

Scythian, Col. 3: 11. Name applied to the people who lived north of the Black Sea.

Septuagint (the seventy). The Greek Version of the Old Testament.

Sergius Paulus, Acts 13: 7. Name of the proconsul of Cyprus.

Sheba (an oath), 2 Sam. 20: 1-22. Name of queen who visited Solomon.

Shem (name), Gen. 5: 32. The eldest son of Noah.

Shiloh (place of rest), Judg. 21: 19. A city in Ephraim.

Shittim (the acacias), Num. 25: 1. Name of country opposite Jericho; also species of wood.

Silas (woody), Acts 15: 22. Traveling companion of Paul; same as Silvanus.

Siloam (sent), John 9: 7. Name of pool in the days of Jesus.

Simeon (heard), Gen. 29: 32. Second son of Jacob; common name among the Jews.

Simon (hearing), Luke 4: 38. Another name for Peter.

Sinai (thorny), Ex. 19: 1. Mountain where the law was given.

Smyrna (myrrh), Rev. 2: 8-11. A city of Asia Minor, situated on Aegean Sea, forty miles north of Ephesus.

Sodom (burning), Mark 6: 11. Ancient city of Syria, destroyed by fire.

Solomon (peaceful), 2 Sam. 12: 24. David's son who succeeded him to the throne.

Sopater (savior of his father), Acts 20: 4. One of the companions of Paul.

Stephen (crown), Acts 6: 5. Name of one of the seven chosen at Jerusalem; the first Christian martyr.

Susanna (a lily). One of the women who ministered to Jesus.

Sycamore (mulberry), Amos 7: 14. A fruit tree in Palestine.

Symeon (Simon), Acts 13: 1. A teacher and prophet in the church at Antioch.



Synagogue (congregation), Matt. 13: 54. Place where the Jews met for worship.  
 Syntyche (with fate), Phil. 4: 2. Female member of the church at Philippi.  
 Syria, Judg. 10: 6. Name of country.  
 Syrophenician, Mark 7: 26. A mixed race of people.

## T

Tabernacle (tent), Ex. 25: 9. Constructed by Moses as a place of worship.  
 Tabitha (gazelle), Matt. 9: 25; Mark 5: 41. Also called "Dorcas."  
 Tares (darnel), Matt. 13: 25. A weed similar to wheat in its early stages.  
 Tarsus, Acts 9: 11. Chief town of Cilicia, home of Paul.  
 Taverns, the Three (inn), Acts 28: 15. On the Appian road, where Paul lodged for a time.  
 Temple, 1 Kings 7: 15-22. House built by Solomon for worship.  
 Ten Commandments, Ex. 34: 28. The name given to the Decalogue.  
 Tertullus (fr. Greek), Acts 24: 1. A Roman orator.  
 Tetrarch, Matt. 14: 1. Name given to the governor of the fourth part of the country.  
 Theophilus (friend of God), Luke 1: 3; Acts 1: 1. Person to whom Luke wrote his Gospel and Acts of Apostles.  
 Thessalonica, Acts 17: 2. Town in Macedonia where Paul established a church; wrote two letters to the church.  
 Thomas (twin), Matt. 13: 55. One of the apostles.  
 Thyatira, Rev. 2: 20. A city on the borders of Mysia.  
 Tiberias, John 6: 1. Another name given to the Sea of Galilee.  
 Timothy (worshiping God), Acts 16: 1. Paul's companion. Paul wrote two letters to him.  
 Titus (honorable), Gal. 2: 1. An early Christian to whom Paul wrote one letter.  
 Transfiguration, Matt. 17: 1-13. The event in the earthly life of Christ which marked his glorified state.  
 Troas, Acts 16: 8. A seaport of Asia Minor.  
 Trogyllium, Acts 20: 15. A town in Asia Minor.  
 Trophimus (nutritious), Acts 21: 27. Accompanied Paul to Jerusalem.  
 Tychicus (fateful), Acts 20: 4. Companion of Paul on some of his journeys.  
 Tyrannus (sovereign), Acts 19: 9. Paul taught in the school of Tyrannus.  
 Tyre (a rock), Matt. 15: 21. City on the east coast of the Mediterranean.

## U

Ur (light, or the moon city), Gen. 11: 28. The land of Abraham's nativity.  
 Uriah (light of Jehovah), 2 Sam. 23: 39. One of David's brave men.  
 Uzzah (strength), 2 Sam. 6: 6. Priest who touched the ark and died.

## V

Version. A translation.  
 Vision, Luke 2: 25, 26. A revelation.  
 Vows, Gen. 28: 18-22. A solemn promise made to God to perform or to abstain from performing a certain thing.  
 Vulgate, The. The Latin version of the Bible.

## W

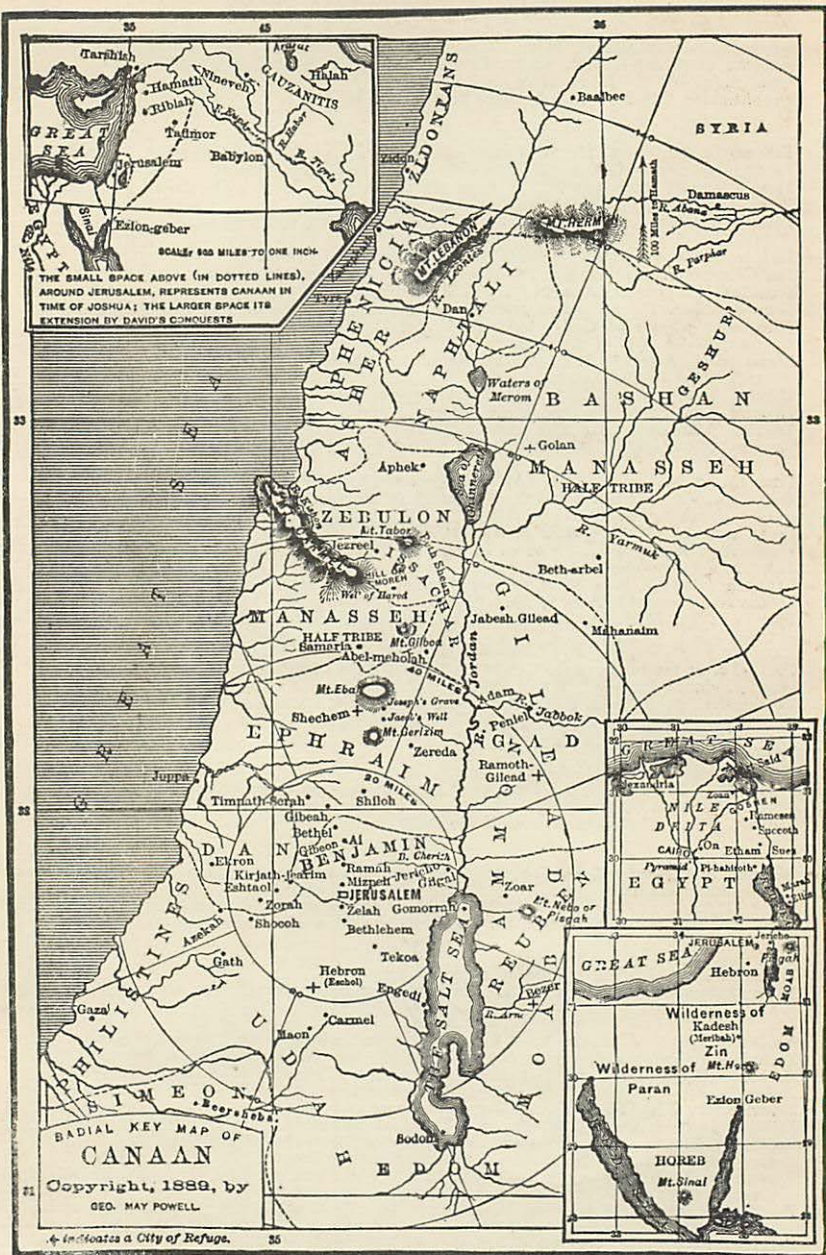
Watches of Night, 1 Sam. 11: 11. The Jews divided the night into military watches instead of hours.  
 Wave Offering, Ex. 29: 34. An offering which accompanied the peace offerings.  
 Way, Acts 19: 9. A term used for the Gospel or Plan of Salvation.

## Y

Year, Gen. 1: 14. The highest division of time.  
 Yoke (subjection), 1 Kings 12: 4. An implement for working oxen; sign of authority

## Z

Zacchaeus (pure), Luke 19: 5. A tax collector, publican who lived near Jericho.  
 Zachariah (remembered by Jehovah), 2 Kings 10: 30. Fourteenth king of Israel.  
 Zacharias (Greek form of "Zachariah"), Luke 1: 5. Father of John the Baptist.  
 Zadok (just), 1 Chron. 24: 3. Name of priest in time of David.  
 Zebedee (my gift), Matt. 4: 21. Father of James and John.  
 Zebulun (a habitation), Gen. 30: 20. The tenth of the sons of Jacob.  
 Zechariah, Ex. 5: 1, 6. The eleventh in order of the twelve minor prophets.  
 Zenas, Tit. 3: 13. A believer who is described as "the lawyer."  
 Zephaniah (hidden by Jehovah), Zeph. 1: 1. The ninth in order of the twelve minor prophets.  
 Zerubbabel (born at Babel, Babylon), Ez. 6: 18. The head of the tribe of Judah at the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity.  
 Zeruiah (Balsam), 1 Sam. 26: 6. Mother of Joab, sister of David.  
 Zidon, or Sidon, Gen. 10: 15; Luke 6: 17. An ancient city of Phenicia on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.



SCALE: 500 MILES TO ONE INCH.  
THE SMALL SPACE ABOVE (IN DOTTED LINES),  
AROUND JERUSALEM, REPRESENTS CANAAN IN  
TIME OF JOSHUA; THE LARGER SPACE ITS  
EXTENSION BY DAVID'S CONQUESTS

RADIAL KEY MAP OF  
**CANAAN**  
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\* indicates a City of Refuge.





## FIRST QUARTER

## JESUS MEETING HUMAN NEEDS

*Studies in Luke*

(FIRST HALF OF A SIX MONTHS' COURSE)

AIM: *From a study of Luke's gospel to learn the love, sympathy, and helpfulness of Jesus in meeting human needs; to set forth the ways in which he meets these same needs today; and to inspire his followers to service for others in the name and spirit of Jesus.*

Lesson I—January 5, 1936

## A MOTHER'S SONG

Luke 1: 46-58.

- 46 And Mary said,  
 My soul doth magnify the Lord,  
 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
 48 For he hath looked upon the low estate of his handmaid:  
 For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.  
 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things;  
 And holy is his name.  
 50 And his mercy is unto generations and generations  
 On them that fear him.  
 51 He hath showed strength with his arm;  
 He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart.  
 52 He hath put down princes from their thrones,  
 And hath exalted them of low degree.  
 53 The hungry he hath filled with good things;  
 And the rich he hath sent empty away.  
 54 He hath given help to Israel his servant,  
 That he might remember mercy  
 55 (As he spake unto our fathers)  
 Toward Abraham and his seed for ever.  
 56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned unto her house.  
 57 Now Elisabeth's time was fulfilled that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.  
 58 And her neighbors and her kinsfolk heard that the Lord had magnified his mercy towards her; and they rejoiced with her.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."* (Luke 1: 46, 47.)

TIME.—About 5 B.C.

PLACE.—At the home of Zacharias and Elisabeth, the parents of John the Baptist, in the hill country of Judea, probably Hebron.

PERSONS.—Mary, Elisabeth, and God.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 1: 68-79.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

December 30.	M.	-----	A Mother's Song (Luke 1: 46-56)
December 31.	T.	-----	A Mother's Joy (Luke 1: 57-66)
January 1.	W.	-----	A Mother's Heart (Luke 2: 41-52)
January 2.	T.	-----	A Mother's Dedication (1 Sam. 1: 21-28)
January 3.	F.	-----	A Mother's Confidence (John 2: 1-10)
January 4.	S.	-----	A Mother's Sorrow (Luke 7: 11-17)
January 5.	S.	-----	The Mercy of God (Luke 1: 68-79)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Mary Praises the Lord (Verses 46-48).
  - II. God's Favors and Mercies Extend to All (Verses 49, 50).
  - III. God Humbles and Exalts (Verses 51, 52).
  - IV. God Helps His Servants (Verses 53-55).
  - V. The Birth of John (Verses 56-58).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—Time was not calculated from the birth of Christ till long after he was born. The monk Dionysius Exiguus in A.D. 526 fixed what he thought was the correct date. Since that time all calculations have been based upon that date as A.D. 1. Later it was learned that he placed the time four years too late; hence, Jesus was four years old at the time now referred to as the year of his birth. It was, therefore, only A.D. 8 when he was in the temple at twelve years of age, and A.D. 30 when he was crucified in his thirty-fourth year. The dates in this book are computed on his actual age, according to the corrected chronology.

*Connecting Links.*—After his introductory words (1: 1-4) Luke gives in detail a description of the birth of John the Baptist, saying that the angel made the promise of a son to Zacharias in the days of Herod the king. Later an angel appeared to Mary and promised her a son, and telling her his name should be called Jesus. (1: 30, 31.) The birth of Jesus occurred six months later than that of John. Mary and Elisabeth were kinswomen (probably cousins), which made Jesus and John kinsmen in the flesh. The simple facts as detailed in the record show that both were born through the intervention of miraculous power; both, therefore, stood in a special divine relationship to God.

*Lesson Settings.*—Luke, who is called "the beloved physician" (Col. 4: 14), is conceded to be the author of this book. As he proposed to give an accurate account of the things believed about Jesus, he, like Matthew, gives a genealogy of Jesus to show that he was the proper person to become their Messiah and the rightful one to sit upon David's throne. That Luke wrote this book before the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, is clear from 21: 20-22. It was written before Acts (Acts 1: 1-4), which record was not finished till Paul had been in the Roman prison two whole years. (Acts 28: 30.) This was probably about A.D. 63. Luke does not profess to be an eyewitness of what he records, but to have learned the true facts from those who were eyewitnesses. In association with those who were with Jesus he received firsthand information, and traced the course of everything accurately.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Mary Praises the Lord (Verses 46-48)

"*Doth Magnify.*"—Literally the word "magnify" means to make great, but man cannot make his Creator great, but he can praise or exalt his name. (Psalm 34: 3.) In doing this man will increase his



own estimate of God. Mary had every reason from the Jewish viewpoint for rejoicing and praising God. To bear a son meant the possibility of being the mother of the promised Messiah—the highest honor that could come to any Jewish woman. The angelic promise that she would bear a son who would save his people (Matt. 1: 21), and to whom would be given the throne of his father David (Luke 1: 32, 33), meant nothing less than that the coveted honor would fall to her lot. Like others of her race, she probably thought only of the national redemption of her people, yet that was enough to fill her soul with thanksgiving and call forth the song of this lesson.

*Spirit Rejoiced.*—In accord with the Jewish method of emphasizing important truths Mary used two sets of words—parallel expressions—to declare the same thought. "My spirit hath rejoiced" has the same meaning as "my soul doth magnify." Here the words soul and spirit refer to what is sometimes called the "inward man"—the intelligent and responsible part of man's nature. We should also note that the word Lord means the same as "God my Saviour." This also shows that both Lord and Savior may refer to God, though they ordinarily refer to Christ in the New Testament.

*To Be Called Blessed.*—In this expression Mary contrasted her lowly condition with the exalted position she was to occupy as the mother of man's Redeemer. She recognized that this exaltation would come through the favor of God. This was calculated to call forth her deepest gratitude. The mother of Israel's Redeemer would have been called blessed, if he had given only temporal freedom to his people. It was this reasonable and natural praise that Mary had in mind, not the later idolatrous idea that she should be worshiped as a saint. That she was not to have any such position is clear from Jesus' own words in Matt. 12: 46-50. In saying that "all generations shall call me blessed" Mary expressed more than she understood. Such was often the case in making prophetic statements.

## II. God's Favors and Mercies Extend to All (Verses 49, 50)

*The Mighty One.*—Mary could well say from the history of her own people that Jehovah was the mighty one; he had done great things in delivering the Jews from bondage and preserving them against their enemies when they were obedient; they had ample proof of the limitless nature of his power. But to her, personally, none of the manifestations of his power meant so much as making her the mother of the Jews' Messiah. Though not understanding the true mission of the Messiah, she could, and doubtless did, understand that divine power was necessary if that promise were to be fulfilled.

*"Holy Is His Name."*—In this expression Mary evidently was trying to bestow upon God the proper praise for his favor to her. Perhaps she could think of nothing higher than to ask for his name to be made holy—that he should be honored as one free from fault or impurity. Saying that his name is holy meant that God himself is holy, the name being put for the one it represents. This is a common mode of expression, as when we are said to be baptized into the name of Christ (Acts 19: 5), which is the same as being baptized into Christ (Gal. 3: 27).

*"Unto Generations."*—Mary further declared that God's mercy would be extended unto generations. God's mercy to the Jews in the



past was sufficient proof that in a general way it would continue to be extended to them, but she evidently meant his special mercy was to come to them through her promised son. Again her words carried a deeper meaning than she had any means of fully understanding. Unto generations and generations meant that God's mercies were to be continuous, a strong intimation of the perpetual nature of the kingdom Christ would establish. The prophet had said that when the Lord's house should be established all nations should flow into it. (Isa. 2: 2.) On the day of Pentecost, Peter said: "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him." (Acts 2: 39.) In these words we have the full expression of what Mary but dimly predicted. She declared another great spiritual truth by saying that God's mercies are "on them that fear him."

### III. God Humbles and Exalts (Verses 51, 52)

*"Scattered the Proud."*—The expression, "showed strength with his arm," means that God had given abundant evidences of his power. The word arm is a symbol of strength. She does not here have reference to his special favors to her or what would come through her son to generations, but rather to those demonstrations of his power that had been given so often in his past dealings with Israel. These well-established facts she assigned as proof that his favors would still be gloriously manifested. Those proud in the "imagination of their heart" he had humbled. This not only applied to other nations, but to Israel as well. When Israel feared Jehovah, the Assyrians, Egyptians, or Babylonians that came against them were scattered in defeat. When Israel sinned outrageously against God, he allowed them to be taken captive and scattered among their enemies. The most striking example was the destruction of Jerusalem and their seventy years' captivity in Babylon.

*"Put Down Princes."*—This means that God had caused sinful rulers to be dethroned. Among Gentile nations Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian monarch, was a noted example of this debasement. (Dan. 4: 28-33.) Among the Israelites their first king—Saul—lost his kingdom and his life in battle because of his sins. (1 Sam. 13: 13, 14; 31: 1-6.) This is in perfect harmony with God's promises made at Mount Sinai. (Ex. 20: 5, 6.) God's promises were to those who would love him and keep his commandments. This truth runs through the entire Bible.

*Exalt the Lowly.*—This will be true of those who worship God with true humility. James says: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you." (James 4: 10.) In verse 6 he says that "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." Jesus himself was the world's greatest example of being exalted from a humble station to the most exalted position. (Phil. 2: 5-11.) Mary, however, was praising God for what he had already done. Selecting their first king from the smallest tribe, and David from the sheepfolds to be his successor on the throne were probably events she had in mind. Their history furnished many other examples, but none would be more readily remembered.

### IV. God Helps His Servants (Verses 53-55)

*The Hungry Fed.*—Mary's words here would be strictly true, if they were construed to mean only that God had made provision for

the needs of our body through the food that nature supplies. Feeding the Israelites with manna forty years in the wilderness was another example of God's provision in giving daily food, but in a miraculous way. Her words, however, seem to have a more general application, for she says he had filled the hungry with "good things." God's supply of good things for his servants had satisfied their general wants just as food does those who are hungry. The hungry means those who are sensible of their need just as hunger shows the need of food. Jesus says that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. (Matt. 5: 6.) God's promise of satisfaction does not apply to those who do not realize their need. Daily hunger prepares us for the reception of God's blessings daily. The rich who did not feel their need of God's good things and had unreasonable desires God had sent away empty. This will be the final state of all such people, as the story in Luke 16: 19-31 clearly shows.

*"Might Remember."*—Mary next refers to the fact that God had given help to Israel his servant. The truth of this statement is verified by the entire history of God's dealings with them as his own people. This he did that Israel might have unmistakable evidences of God's love, and might be influenced to remember him through his mercies. These mercies are said to have been received according to what he had spoken to their father Abraham. This doubtless referred to the great promises made in Gen. 12: 1-3, including not only the good things promised to them as a national people, but also that of which Jesus was himself the fulfillment. If Israel should have remembered God for his mercies, we should now with the full revelation of his mercies far surpass them in grateful remembrance for his greater mercies to us.

### V. The Birth of John (Verses 56-58)

*The Announcement Made.*—After remaining three months in the home of Elisabeth Mary returned to her own home. Evidently both Zacharias and Elisabeth had been grieved because they had no son. The angel had told Zacharias he would have a son, and his name should be called John. (Luke 1: 13.) Verse 57 of our text records the fulfillment of that promise, saying that John was born. When he was eight days old the friends wanted him to receive the name Zacharias after his father, but Elisabeth refused and said his name should be John.

*Neighbors Rejoiced.*—Elisabeth may have told her neighbors about the promise the angel made of John's work (Luke 1: 17); but, if she had not done so, they would still rejoice with her at the birth of a son. They would consider that, in the gift of a son, God's mercy had been magnified to her. They would also be interested in the fact that this son might be the one to redeem Israel.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. That the humble will be exalted is a truth running all through the Bible teaching. Peter commands all Christians to gird themselves with humility and serve one another, assigning as a reason that "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." (1 Pet. 5: 5.) He says the exaltation will come in "due time."
2. To fear God and keep his commandments is said to be man's



whole duty. (Eccles. 12: 13.) This is not to fear him as a cruel and unmerciful master, but as a loving heavenly Father; fear that we may offend him or render ourselves displeasing to him.

3. Men are often raised from very humble surroundings to exalted positions. In temporal things the road to success requires talent, industry, and honor. In the matter of divine exaltation it comes through faith and obedience to God.

4. God's help for Israel as his special people is sufficient proof that his divine mercy will be with his children if they put their trust in him. With deep gratitude we should accept what comes to us, knowing that in due time our joy will be complete.

5. The birth of John, according to divine promise, shows that God's promises are fulfilled. It is upon that truth we base our hope of everlasting life.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. State the general facts regarding the parents of John the Baptist. (Luke 1: 5-10.)
2. Give the message of the angel to Zacharias. (Luke 1: 11-19.)
3. Give the angel's message to Mary regarding the position that her son was to occupy. (Luke 1: 28-33.)
4. Give the leading points in the prophecy of Zacharias concerning John the Baptist. (Luke 1: 67-79.)
5. Discuss Isaiah's prophecy concerning John. (Isa. 40: 3, 4.)
6. Assign topics for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, time, place, and persons.  
Repeat the Golden Text.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### *I*

How could Mary "magnify" the Lord?  
Why did she rejoice at the promise of a son?  
How are the words "soul" and "spirit" here used?  
In what sense was Mary to be called "blessed"?

#### *II*

What did Mary say God had done?  
What is meant by "holy is his name"?  
What was meant by "generations and generations"?

Who are recipients of God's mercies?

#### *III*

How did God show strength "with his arm"?  
What was meant by "put down princes"?  
What does the Bible teach on being exalted?

#### *IV*

What was meant by being filled with "good things"?  
Why did God give help to Israel?

#### *V*

Why did Elisabeth's neighbors rejoice with her?  
What does verse 57 show?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
In what sense should we fear God?



## Lesson II—January 12, 1936

## A PROPHETIC VISION

Luke 2: 25-35, 40.

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

26 And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law,

28 Then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord,

According to thy word, in peace;

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;

32 A light for revelation to the Gentiles,

And the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And his father and his mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning him;

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against;

35 Yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples.*” (Luke 2: 30, 31.)

TIME.—4 B.C., about forty days after the birth of Jesus.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, in the temple.

PERSONS.—Simeon, Joseph and Mary, and Jesus.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 49: 6-13.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

January 6.	M.	-----	The Promise to Simeon (Luke 2: 25-35)
January 7.	T.	-----	The Savior Promised (Matt. 1: 18-25)
January 8.	W.	-----	A Happy Future Promised (Isa. 35: 1-10)
January 9.	T.	-----	Everlasting Salvation (Isa. 51: 1-8)
January 10.	F.	-----	A New Day (Isa. 65: 17-25)
January 11.	S.	-----	A New Heaven and a New Earth (Rev. 21: 1-7)
January 12.	S.	-----	Righteousness and Peace (Isa. 11: 1-9)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. The Revelation to Simeon (Verses 25, 26).
  - II. Simeon Sees the Lord's Salvation (Verses 27-32).
  - III. Simeon Predicts the Future (Verses 33-35).
  - IV. The Growth of Jesus (Verse 40).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—In Luke 1: 26-32 we have the account of the angel Gabriel appearing to Mary in Nazareth of Galilee to announce to her the birth of a son. She was told that he would be called the

Son of the Most High and be given the throne of his father David. From verses 25 and 26 we learn that Christ was born six months after the birth of John the Baptist. John was already in his public ministry when Christ was baptized and began his teaching at the age of thirty. (Luke 3: 23.) It seems probable that John began his ministry about six months before Christ was baptized.

*Lesson Links.*—Zacharias was struck dumb that he might know that the angel's promise of a son in his old age would certainly be fulfilled, and that the fulfillment would show that the angel was sent of God. When the son was born and named John, the power of speech was restored to Zacharias. (Luke 1: 18-20.) He then predicted the future career of John as one who would prepare a people for the Lord. (Luke 1: 68-79.) Augustus Cæsar, Emperor of Rome, had issued a decree that all should be enrolled. This required all the Jews to return to their ancestral cities, and brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. There the shepherds came to present to him their offerings. He was circumcised, as the law required, at eight days of age, and presented to the Lord at forty days old as was the law in the case of a first-born son. (Luke 2: 21-24.)

*Lesson Settings.*—As the law required that the first-born be presented to the Lord at the temple, it is evident that the words of this lesson were spoken in Jerusalem. The law required the offering of a lamb unless poverty made that impossible (Lev. 12: 6-8), then a dove or young pigeon might be substituted for it. The text indicates that they offered the cheaper sacrifice, which shows that they were probably among the poor. This harmonizes with Christ's words years later that birds and beasts had their places of abode, but he had no place to lay his head. (Luke 9: 58.) The divine and sinless nature of Jesus could easily have excused him from observing the rites of their law, so far as any personal need was concerned, but failing in these things would have prevented his entering their synagogue to teach, and would have kept him from being able to reach his own people. This would have closed all doors of approach to his own nation, and spoiled his ministry as man's Redeemer.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Revelation to Simeon (Verses 25, 26)

*"Righteous and Devout."*—The name Simeon (or Simon) was a common one among the Jewish people. Nothing more is known about this man than what is related here. It is not surprising that such revelation was made to him when we recall that he was said to be both righteous and devout—a man approved of God because he was faithful to man and true to the worship of God. Such men are specially fitted to become the agents through whom divine messages shall be delivered. It is worthy of note that we always think of divine truth coming through worthy means. Wicked men do not willingly bear witness to the truth.

*"Consolation of Israel."*—The statement that he was "looking for the consolation of Israel" means that he was waiting for the Messiah to come, called the "consolation of Israel" because they expected him to give them comfort by removing the bondage to the Roman government. This was the devout wish of all Jews, and doubtless one of



the main reasons why every Jewish woman desired to be the mother of a son, a possibility that her son might redeem Israel.

*"By the Holy Spirit."*—Verse 26 says this revelation was made by the Holy Spirit; verse 25 says "the Holy Spirit was upon him." These two expressions refer to the same thing. It means, of course, that the Spirit enlightened his mind regarding what was to transpire before his death. That is just what is understood by a revelation; it is something that God's Spirit makes known. This circumstance shows that revelations are made known through men as the agents. This has to be, of course, so that they can be expressed in words and understood by men. The words that he should not die till he had seen the "Lord's Christ" indicate that he was probably an old man then. To "see death" simply meant to die. Christ is a Greek word that means the same as the word Messiah which is Hebrew. Our word "anointed" is the English meaning of these Greek and Hebrew terms. Paul declared that God had anointed Jesus as his Son "with the oil of gladness" above his fellows. (Heb. 1: 9.) He also crowned him "with glory and honor," and set him over the works of his hands. (Heb. 2: 7.)

## II. Simeon Sees the Lord's Salvation (Verses 27-32)

*In the Temple.*—The record says he "came in the Spirit into the temple." Of course the temple exercises were ordained and put into practice by the direction of God's Spirit. Simeon, like Joseph and Mary, was probably there for some part of the service. But it is also probable that he was led by the Spirit into the temple at the exact time that Joseph and Mary were to be there to present Jesus to the Lord. The parents were there to carry out one specific requirement of their law as our text states. This particular service brought them to the temple. They were in the outer court that surrounded the temple proper, but not in it. Anywhere within the enclosure was called being in the temple. Into the temple building could go only those in the tribe of Levi who had been consecrated to the priesthood. Christ being of the tribe of Judah could not enter either the holy or most holy part of the temple.

*"Blessed God."*—Luke says that Simeon received Jesus into his arms and "blessed God." This expression simply means that he thanked God and praised him for his blessings to Israel. This naturally included thankfulness for God's favor in allowing him to live till he saw the Messiah. When he said his eyes had seen the salvation of the Lord, he meant that he had seen the one who would save them. Saying "lettest thou thy servant depart" did not mean that Simeon was asking to die, but rather God was letting him depart in peace because he permitted him to see the Savior first. It was according to God's word, because the event happened in harmony with the predictions about the coming of the Messiah. He could satisfy the cravings of his pious heart because he could realize that Israel's hope of redemption was soon to be realized. It was a glorious consummation of a righteous life to know that the promise to Abraham was about to be fulfilled; that the kingdom was "at hand."

*A Light to Gentiles.*—In saying that God had prepared his salvation "before the face of all peoples" Simeon expressed more than he understood. Isaiah had said that all nations would flow into God's house, but that important feature of divine teaching had not

then been developed. This salvation (Savior) was to be a light for revelation to the Gentiles. The margin says "the unveiling of the Gentiles." Of course, the gospel light was to go to the Gentiles in due time, which we now know from the apostolic history has been accomplished. According to the margin translation, Simeon may have meant that Christ would reveal the Gentiles as a people worthy of salvation; that is, entitled to be saved. That they were to have the gospel preached to them is true. Matthew reports Jesus himself as saying that "the people that sat in darkness saw a great light." (Matt. 4: 16.)

*The Glory of Israel.*—Because Jesus was a Jew, born under their law, he brought everlasting glory to Israel as God's people. In spite of all their sin and rebellion, they deserve great honor for giving to the world its Savior. In harmony with this natural glory for them the first offer of salvation was made to the Jewish people. One of the most astonishing things in the history of the world is the fact that after giving the world a Savior the Jews in the main rejected him. It is equally astonishing that after seeing what he has done for the world they still refuse to believe him.

### III. Simeon Predicts the Future (Verses 33-35)

*"Blessed Them."*—Joseph and Mary very naturally were amazed at what Simeon was saying about the future of Jesus. It could hardly have been otherwise with their hope of a coming Redeemer. The text says that Simeon "blessed them." Evidently this means that he asked for the blessings of God to be upon them. The expression here does not mean the same as verse 28, where he is said to bless God.

*Falling and Rising.*—The falling and rising refer to two different classes in Israel. Those Jews who would reject Jesus were to fall, be rejected; those who would accept him were to rise. In referring to the fall of some he probably had in mind Isa. 8: 14, 15, to which Jesus doubtless referred in Matt. 21: 44. Later Paul presented the same thought by showing that those who fell—those who refused to believe in Christ—were cut off; that is, they lost God's favor. (Rom. 11: 19-23.) Jesus was "set," constituted, or appointed for that purpose. His being appointed as the Redeemer furnished the occasion for those rejecting him to fall, as well as the opportunity to believers in him to rise. Regarding those who fell, Paul says, "They stumbled at the stone of stumbling." (Rom. 9: 32, 33.) A rock is not responsible because people fall over it, neither is Jesus responsible because people ignore or reject him.

*"For a Sign."*—A sign is something conspicuous enough to represent what is accepted or rejected. Jesus and his followers were bitterly persecuted, and after his departure his church was charged with all kinds of crime. Even till the present enemies of the truth continue their slanders against Jesus. Being the head of the church, his name would be the sign against which evil would be spoken. He told his disciples that such slanders would be uttered, but that they would be blessed when they were spoken against falsely. Simeon told Mary that a sword would pierce her own soul. He knew what sufferings had been predicted for the coming Messiah (Isa. 53: 1-12), and that these would fill her soul with anguish when she witnessed his torturing death. This would have been the case, if he had been



just an ordinary criminal execution; but, with her unquestioned righteousness and the angel's prediction regarding his rule on David's throne, there must have been added the grief of disappointment. We have no means of knowing how much the words of Simeon may have helped her in bearing her sorrow. Doubtless a great deal, if she remembered them when the ordeal was being endured. This may have been the divine purpose in Simeon's being directed to utter them. The expression "that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed" refers to the preceding statement that Christ was to be made a sign that would be spoken against. The "thoughts" evidently refer to evil ones. Speaking against Jesus would reveal what evil thoughts can be harbored in the minds of sinful men.

#### IV. The Growth of Jesus (Verse 40)

*In Body.*—We have in these few words all that is said regarding most of the first thirty years of Jesus' life. After the record of his birth only one incident is mentioned till his public ministry began. (Luke 2: 42-52.) Having a fleshly body he would grow physically just as other boys. His divine nature would not change that, else there would not have been any need for the human body. His body grew naturally over the length of time ordinarily required.

*"Waxed Strong."*—Not only did his body grow, but his spirit developed and his life expanded in the normal way. There was no reason why it should be otherwise. It is possible, even probable, that his purity and obedience to pious parents may have given him greater knowledge of the great truths he was to discuss than the ordinary young men of the time. Such differences easily manifest themselves among the developing young in any age. This would account in large measure for the words "filled with wisdom." The time when his divine wisdom may have become fully manifest, or to what extent it may have guided him earlier, are questions that have no practical value. It is enough for us to know that his proper development prepared him for a sinless ministry, and resulted in his providing for us a faultless plan of salvation.

*Grace Was Upon Him.*—The favor and approval of the Father was upon him. In all this he became the great example to us. Proper respect for parents, obedience to them and to God as we grow physically, mentally, and spiritually, is the acceptable course to pursue. God's favor will rest upon those who live that way.

#### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Simeon was "looking for the consolation of Israel"; Joseph of Arimathea was "looking for the kingdom of God." (Mark 15: 43.) Righteous and devout men are always looking for the favors and comforts that are promised in God's word. Like Simeon, they shall ultimately be satisfied.

2. Simeon was at the house of God when his eyes were permitted to see Jesus, whom he calls God's salvation. We should be constantly engaged in God's service if we expect to enjoy the salvation which can be obtained only through Jesus. The joy of service is only a foretaste of the greater joys awaiting in heaven.

3. The Jews should be everlastingly grateful that through them the world was given a Savior; he was their glory, honor, and true

light. To Gentiles Christ's coming is a matter of especial gratitude. If he had not come in their behalf, they would never have had a door opened for their salvation.

4. Growth is a basic and vital law of nature, equally so in the realms of morals and spirit. Without growth, trees could never bear fruit; without development of mind, babes could never become men and women; without spiritual growth, we can never become full-grown in Christ, ready to depart in peace and satisfaction.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell the story of the wise men visiting Jesus in Bethlehem. (Matt. 2: 1-12.)
2. Give the story of Herod's having the children in Bethlehem killed. (Matt. 2: 13-18.)
3. Describe Jesus' visit to Jerusalem when he was twelve years of age. (Luke 2: 42-51.)
4. Tell the full story regarding the shepherd's visit to Bethlehem to see Jesus. (Luke 2: 8-20.)
5. The teacher should assign topics for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, time, place, and persons.  
Repeat the Golden Text.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

What is known of Simeon?  
What of his name?  
What is meant by the "consolation of Israel"?  
What is meant by the "Spirit was upon him"?  
What three words mean the same thing?

#### II

Why were Joseph, Mary, and Simeon at the temple?  
What is meant by being in the temple?

Why could Christ not enter the temple building?  
What is meant by Simeon blessing God?  
What may be meant by a light to Gentiles?  
How could Christ be the glory of Israel?

#### III

In what sense did Simeon "bless" Joseph and Mary?  
Who would fall and rise through Christ?  
How was Christ to become a "sign"?  
How would this show the thoughts of many?

#### IV

What is meant by "grow"?  
What is the meaning of "waxed strong"?  
In what was Christ our example?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson III—January 19, 1936*

### JESUS PREPARES FOR HIS WORK

Luke 3: 21, 22; 4: 1-13.

21 Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,  
22 And the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led in the Spirit in the wilderness

2 During forty days, being tempted of the devil. And he did eat nothing in those days; and when they were completed, he hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become bread.

4 And Jesus answered unto him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone.



5 And he led him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

10 For it is written,  
He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee:

11 And,  
On their hands they shall bear thee up,  
Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God.

13 And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Luke 4: 8.)

**TIME.**—Probably A.D. 27.

**PLACE.**—The wilderness of Judea, probably southeast of Jerusalem.

**PERSONS.**—John the Baptist, Jesus, and Satan.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Heb. 2: 10-18.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

January 13.	M.	Jesus Baptized (Luke 3: 21, 22)
January 14.	T.	Jesus Tempted (Luke 4: 1-13)
January 15.	W.	A Leader's Preparation (Ex. 3: 1-10)
January 16.	T.	A Ruler's Preparation (2 Kings 3: 4-14)
January 17.	F.	A Prophet's Preparation (Isa. 6: 1-8)
January 18.	S.	A Young Man's Preparation (Psalm 119: 9-16)
January 19.	S.	Conquerors Through Christ (Rom. 8: 31-39)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. The Baptism of Jesus (Verses 21, 22).
  - II. Jesus Faces Temptation (Luke 4: 1, 2).
  - III. An Appeal to Appetite (Verses 3, 4).
  - IV. An Offer to Satisfy Ambition (Verses 5-8).
  - V. An Offer to Gratify the Desire for Vainglory (Verses 9-13).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—There is a period of eighteen years between the last event recorded in the second chapter of Luke and the events of this lesson. Luke 2: 52 is a brief general statement that covers this entire period. It is remarkable that Luke uses only one verse to cover this period, and refers to no specific event. The time between last lesson and this is thirty years lacking forty days. According to the corrected chronology, it was A.D. 27, though Jesus was thirty years old as our lesson text shows.

**Lesson Links.**—As the sacred historians are silent on the events of Christ's life for nearly thirty years, with one exception (Luke 2: 41-51), there are no connecting links to record other than that one. If it had been necessary to know that part of Christ's life, it would

have been recorded, of course; but, as it in no way affected his claims of being God's Son, or the plan of salvation through him, it was not written. Men are prone to make much out of little and regard as insignificant things of vital importance. Recording minor details would probably have led to giving them undue importance. It was necessary to have the facts regarding his genealogy and birth to know he was entitled to David's throne. His public ministry gave proof of his divinity. These two vitally necessary things are recorded. This is no mean proof that the records are divine productions; for human historians do not write biography and give only vital facts about their characters. Prominent careers are usually presented with great detail, much of which has little to do with the real worth of the persons described.

*Lesson Settings.*—As we have already learned, John the Baptist had been preaching in the wilderness of Judea for probably six months when Jesus was baptized by him. The records indicate that many people came to hear John preach; some were baptized but some were not. (Matt. 3: 5-12.) It was evidently while John was attracting people from Judea and surrounding districts to his work in preparing a people for the Lord that Jesus presented himself for baptism. John must have known something of the pure life of Jesus or he would not have objected to baptizing him, saying that it was he rather than Jesus that needed baptism. This John would not have said if he had not been baptizing for "remission of sins." (Mark 1: 4.) It was the sinlessness of Christ that prompted the objection to his baptism; others had been confessing their sins when baptized (Mark 1: 5), but Jesus had none to confess. As sinners we should be baptized for remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38.)

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Baptism of Jesus (Verses 21, 22)

*The Fact Stated.*—Luke here mentions the simple fact that Jesus had been baptized without any description of that baptism. As he records the things that transpired immediately after the baptism, he probably referred to it to furnish the occasion for describing them. He says it occurred when all the people were being baptized. As John was baptizing to manifest Christ to Israel, it seems appropriate that his own baptism should take place when others were submitting to it, and in their presence. Mark tells us that John was baptizing in the river Jordan (Mark 1: 5), and that Jesus after his baptism came "up out of the water" (verse 10). One cannot come out of the water who is not in it; hence, it follows that Jesus was baptized in the water. Only a prejudice that refuses to see plain facts would deny this. Good people should not refuse to do what Christ's example clearly shows should be done. He must have gone into the water because baptism requires it. We had better follow him.

*"Praying."*—The statement that Jesus was praying is mentioned by Luke only. It is not stated whether the prayer was audible or silent. While he may have been praying when he was being baptized, certainly an appropriate state of heart to accompany any act of service to God, the language indicates that he was praying after the baptism. Luke mentions several occasions when Jesus prayed. This, at the beginning of his ministry, is the first. At the end upon the



cross he prayed for his enemies. (Luke 23: 34.) Other instances were: for his disciples (Luke 6: 12); at his transfiguration (Luke 9: 29); and in the garden the night of his arrest (Luke 22: 41). This all shows the importance of earnest prayer, especially on important occasions. We should follow Jesus' example in this as in baptism.

*God Well Pleased.*—The text states that while he prayed the Spirit descended upon him in bodily form as a dove. Assuming some visible form was probably to show that it was a reality, something that could be observed. Some think the form of a dove was to suggest purity and harmlessness. (See Matt. 10: 15.) The visible form enabled John the Baptist to testify that he had seen the Spirit descend upon him. (John 1: 33, 34.) The voice was also heard which was another proof that there could be no delusion. It should not be overlooked that this first public acknowledgment of Jesus by the Father was just after his baptism. That he will acknowledge us after our baptism is guaranteed by the plain promise of Jesus himself. (Mark 16: 16.)

## II. Jesus Faces Temptation (Luke 4: 1, 2)

*"Led in the Spirit."*—Matthew says "then" and Mark says "straightway." (Matt. 4: 1; Mark 1: 12.) This shows that Jesus went immediately from his baptism to face Satan's temptations. From the highest honor to the greatest danger is the way life's path often leads. "Full of the Holy Spirit" means that he possessed the full measure of it (John 3: 34), as might be necessary in any case. Mark says "the Spirit driveth him forth," but that can mean only that he was led or influenced by the Spirit to go forth to meet the temptation. This proves that he was not going out deliberately to show his power of resisting evil—a spirit wholly inconsistent with the divine nature.

*Forty Days' Fast.*—Our text says that Jesus ate nothing during forty days. Matthew's account, like that of Luke, says that he hungered at the end of that period. Mark and Luke both indicate that the temptation continued during the forty days, but Matthew describes only the three special offers that Satan presented after the forty days. We have no means of knowing how strong were the temptations as the pangs of hunger and increasing weakness came upon him, but the record indicates that hunger came upon him at the end of his long fast, probably with its most distressing power. At that critical time Satan presented three of the strongest temptations known to mankind. The wilderness where the first temptation occurred was a mountainous region lying along the western coast of the Dead Sea. The exact place of the temptation is not known.

## III. An Appeal to Appetite (Verses 3, 4)

*Plausibility.*—Satan not only came to Jesus when the power of resistance would likely be the least, but in a most plausible way. Forty days before he had been declared God's Son. By using the conditional word "if" Satan suggests two plausible reasons why Jesus should turn stones into bread and satisfy his hunger. As there was nothing wrong in breaking his fast by eating bread, the temptation was only in the manner of getting the bread. One implied reason can be stated thus: "Since God says you are his Son, turning stones

into bread will be proof that God's word is true; a proof for both you and others." This putting God to proof, on Jesus' part, would have been to distrust his word. That was exactly what Satan wanted. Another reason implied in the "if" is this: "If you really are God's Son, you have power to turn stones into bread. Why suffer with hunger when you have the power to supply yourself with food?" Creating bread miraculously when good could be accomplished was right and Jesus did it (John 6: 10-13), but doing so at the suggestion of the evil one was to distrust God's power to protect. Satan's words also carried the hint: "You are not God's Son or you would do it." This wicked challenge Jesus could not accept without showing a lack of faith in his Father.

*Jesus' Reply.*—Jesus promptly answered, "It is written." He then quotes from Deut. 8: 3 the statement that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4: 4.) In this passage Moses referred to the manna in the wilderness. Israel lived upon the manna instead of bread of their own making; Jesus in the wilderness would depend upon his Father instead of creating bread at Satan's suggestion. Besides man does not live only by the material bread that sustains the body; he has a higher life that is sustained by spiritual food that comes through obedience to God's words. Jesus' answer also implied that, if it were God's will, he could be sustained by other means than material bread. He was safe in committing himself to the Father's care rather than accepting the suggestion of a mortal adversary.

#### IV. An Offer to Satisfy Ambition (Verses 5-8)

*"Kingdoms of the World."*—This temptation is the third in order as Matthew records them, which is probably the order of occurrence. As they are separate incidents, the order in which they are recorded is immaterial. Satan led Jesus up into a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms in a moment of time. There is no means of knowing what mountain it was, but it must have been very high to give such a general view. Probably nothing more was meant than Palestine and those kingdoms immediately around it. Even that would have been wealth incalculably greater than what a homeless Galilean could hope to receive for himself.

*Authority and Glory.*—Satan offered to give Jesus all authority over them, and the glory that would come from it. It has been suggested that Satan offered to give what he did not have, for the kingdoms were not his. If they were not his in any sense, then there was no temptation in the offer. Rightfully, of course, all those kingdoms belonged to God. Satan did not say they were his by right, but that this authority had been delivered to him. Men by their rebellion to God had brought themselves in subjection to the devil; hence, they were under his authority. It was a usurpation of divine privileges, but the power of Satan was nevertheless real. Receiving a kingdom by gift rather than through suffering and death was a strong appeal to human ambition; but Jesus did not come to establish a worldly kingdom, and accepting Satan's offer would have defeated his purpose. "Every attempt to establish Messiah's as an outward, worldly dominion is an effort to convert the kingdom of heaven into the kingdom of the devil." (*Fourfold Gospel*, page 98.)



*"Worship Before Me."*—This world authority Satan offered to give on the simple condition that Jesus would worship him. From a temporal viewpoint, and as a mark of gratitude, the demand was reasonable; but it could not be met without rejecting God. (Ex. 20: 3-5.) The decision had to be made between unholy ambition with personal gain and the salvation of souls. Jesus relied upon what had been written, honored his Father, and ordered Satan out of his presence. (Matt. 4: 10.)

## V. An Offer to Gratify the Desire for Vainglory (Verses 9-13)

*"Cast Thyself Down."*—Satan placed Jesus on some high point of the temple and said, "If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence." The first temptation was to distrust God's protection or put it to the test; this was to overtrust God's promises in supposing he would protect the presumptuous in their acts. Satan attempted to make his suggestion plausible by quoting scripture that apparently promised protection from any harm. The strong urge for display and vainglory, if assured of divine protection, would be one of the hardest temptations to meet. There could have been but two reasons for acting on Satan's suggestion: (1) To test the certainty of God's promise; (2) to gain the praise of men for the accomplishment. Neither could have been a worthy motive for the act. A divine being could not act from impure motives.

*Jesus' Reply.*—There was nothing wrong with the scripture Satan quoted, but much wrong with the application he made of it. That it promised God's protection is true, but not his protection in wrongdoing. Neither should it be applied in conflict with any other statement in God's word. Promptly Jesus referred to Deut. 6: 16, saying, "Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God." Casting himself down to test the promise of God was doing the very thing that the scripture said should not be done. Satan's perversion was revealed; his defeat was complete and he left Jesus for a season.

## THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. If Jesus, God's Son and without sin, insisted on being baptized "to fulfil all righteousness," what excuse can those who are confessedly sinners have for refusing to be baptized at his command? If Jesus pleased God in his obedience, can we please him with disobedience?

2. Adam was subjected to temptation, fell and involved the world in ruin; Christ, the second Adam, also faced temptation, overcame the tempter and brought life and salvation to a lost race. Like the Savior we should not voluntarily seek temptation, but trust the heavenly Father when it comes.

3. Satan's temptations are usually plausible, for which reason they are all the more deceptive. He may even suggest that what he proposes is for the glory of God. According to Paul, he transforms himself into an angel of light. Only vigilant watch care will enable us to detect his devices and protect ourselves from ruin.

4. One of Satan's most effective schemes is to ask us to divide our devotion between him and God. He would make us believe that we can serve him and God both, though he well knows that such a thing is a violation of God's word and impossible. He depends on our ignorance.

5. Persuading us that we are safely in God's care regardless of our sins is another fatal delusion that Satan has sown in many hearts. Perverted scripture makes it plausible.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Briefly relate the story of Naaman's getting the cure of his leprosy as recorded in 2 Kings 5: 1-7.
2. Give the facts regarding Job's first great trial as recorded in Job 1: 6-22.
3. Give the facts in his second great trial. (Job 2: 1-10.)
4. Give the discussion of temptation as found in James 1: 12-16.
5. Assign topics for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, time, place, and persons.  
Repeat the Golden Text.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

How does Luke introduce the baptism of Jesus?  
Where do we find a description of his baptism?  
What does Luke say of Jesus' prayers?  
What indicates that the incident was real?  
What was said at his baptism?

#### II

How do we know when the temptation occurred?  
What does "led in the Spirit" show?  
How long did the temptation last?

#### III

What plausible reasons for Satan's suggestion?  
How harmonize Jesus' refusal with John 6: 10-13?  
What reply did Jesus make?  
What further was implied in Jesus' words?

#### IV

Where did this temptation occur?  
What offer did Satan make?  
How did Satan get possession of the kingdoms?  
What decision had to be made?

#### V

What was the point in this temptation?  
Give Jesus' reply.

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.

Lesson IV—January 26, 1936

### JESUS DECLARES HIS PURPOSE

Luke 4: 16-30.

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book, and found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor;  
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,  
And recovering of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty them that are bruised.

19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth: and they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

23 And he said unto them, Doubtless ye will say unto me this parable, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here in thine own country.



24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own country.  
 25 But of a truth I say unto you, There were many widows in Israel in the day of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land;

26 And unto none of them was Elijah sent, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27 And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.

28 And they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue, as they heard these things;

29 And they rose up, and cast him forth out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong.

30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4: 18, 19.)

**TIME.**—Perhaps A.D. 28.

**PLACE.**—Nazareth, the home of Jesus during his childhood and youth.

**PERSONS.**—Jesus and the people of Nazareth.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Isa. 61: 1-3, 10, 11.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

January 20.	M.	.....	A Scriptural Ministry (Luke 4: 16-21)
January 21.	T.	.....	A Faithful Preacher (Luke 4: 22-30)
January 22.	W.	.....	The Way of Life (Mark 12: 28-34)
January 23.	T.	.....	What Jesus Came to Do (John 5: 30-38)
January 24.	F.	.....	A Life Purpose (Phil. 1: 12-21)
January 25.	S.	.....	A Life Investment (Luke 18: 18-30)
January 26.	S.	.....	The Spirit of Christ (Isa. 61: 1-3, 10, 11)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

Introductory Study.

- I. Jesus Returns to Nazareth (Verses 16-19).
  - II. Jesus Applies the Prophecy (Verses 20-22).
  - III. Reasons Why They Rejected Him (Verses 23, 24).
  - IV. Other Cases of Rejection Cited (Verses 25-27).
  - V. Jesus Escapes Their Vengeance (Verses 28-30).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—Jesus was baptized early in A.D. 27 and his temptation followed immediately. Matt. 13: 54-58 and Mark 6: 1-6 apparently refer to the same event as our lesson. A comparison of these texts will show that considerable time elapsed between the temptation and the incident recorded in this lesson. It is clear from this fact that Luke did not put this lesson story in its chronological order. There is no way to fix the exact length of the interval between this and last lesson, but it is probably considerably more than one year. Luke 4: 14, 15 is a general statement that covers this whole period.

*Lesson Links.*—Many more events happened in the interval already mentioned than we have space to record here. The following will show the proper connection of the lesson. After the temptation Jesus went to Bethany east of the Jordan where he selected his first disciples. (John 1: 28, 35-51.) On his way to Galilee he attended the marriage in Cana (John 2: 1-11), and then made a brief stay in Capernaum (John 2: 12). He returned to Jerusalem for the Passover, A.D. 27, and had his conversation with Nicodemus. (John 2: 13-25; 3: 1-21.) After a short ministry in Judea (John 3: 22-36), he returned to Galilee. (John 4: 1-3.) His labors in teaching and miracles continued till his return to Jerusalem for the Passover in A.D. 28. Again returning to Galilee he continued the general work, as formerly, making different trips to cities and villages. Sometime, perhaps in midsummer or later, he made the visit to Nazareth which is described in our lesson text.

*Lesson Settings.*—From Luke 4: 14 we learn that Jesus returned to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit." This doubtless means the power of the Spirit to perform miracles, and offers the explanation of the fact that "a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about." It seems that the friends and neighbors where one was reared would receive him gladly on his return. Jesus spent a long time in preaching to others before he went to his own city. It seems hardly possible that they had not heard something of one who had done so many wonderful things, but, unreasonable as it may seem, they were not willing to receive his teaching. Our lesson text contains the most uncomplimentary thing that has been said about Nazareth—they rejected their most renowned citizen and the world's greatest man.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Jesus Returns to Nazareth (Verses 16-19)

*Entered the Synagogue.*—The preceding verse says "he taught in their synagogues" and was "glorified of all." His success in teaching in the synagogues throughout Galilee having been mentioned probably prompted Luke to tell of his being rejected at Nazareth. Reaching Nazareth he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath "as his custom was." This shows that he regularly attended the synagogue service. This, as a pious Jew, he would have done if he had not been the Savior. It doubtless had been his custom during most of the thirty years that Nazareth had been his home, at least after he was twelve years old. In the synagogue service parts of the Old Testament scriptures were read and explanations were offered. They stood up to read and sat down to talk. This custom Jesus observed.

*Book of Isaiah.*—It appears to have been a custom to invite strangers in synagogues to speak. (See Acts 13: 15.) It is not said that the ruler of the synagogue asked Jesus to speak, but it is not likely he would have done so without being invited. Being well known in Nazareth, and famous through his teaching, indicates that an invitation was extended. It had been his custom in teaching to use these opportunities to preach his kingdom. He was handed the book of Isaiah's prophecy and read from the sixty-first chapter. This indicates that the different books of the Bible were kept separate. The expression, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," meant that he was speaking by divine appointment; applying Isaiah's words to him-



self showed he claimed divine authority. Kings, prophets, and high priests were anointed in being set apart to their work. (Ex. 29: 7; 1 Sam. 9: 16.) Those set apart were called the "Lord's anointed." Hence, being anointed to preach meant that God had appointed him to that work. He was prophet, priest, and king all in one.

*His Mission Stated.*—The prophecy sets forth the purpose of Christ's mission by stating what he would do. His work was both temporal and spiritual. His message of good news was for the poor, the class that was usually neglected. He was to proclaim release to captives. This was a reference to the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25), when liberty was proclaimed throughout the land and captives set free. Jesus came to free those from their sins who were in bondage to Satan. He often gave sight to those literally blind (Matt. 11: 4, 5), but this prediction is not to be limited to physical blindness. Opening blind eyes was but the evidence of his power to open the mind to see the truth by which men are saved. Liberty to the bruised means he would give comfort to the brokenhearted. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord could not mean less than that he would declare the time and terms of salvation that would be pleasing to God.

## II. Jesus Applies the Prophecy (Verses 20-22)

*Eyes Fastened on Him.*—After reading the prophecy Jesus closed the book and gave it back to the attendant, who probably placed it in an ark or chest. The value of copies of the scriptures then made it necessary that they be carefully preserved. The eyes of all in the synagogue were intently fixed upon him waiting for any explanation that he might give. Doubtless there was something about his calm and majestic bearing that held them in tense expectation. Then the fame of his miracles that had spread over the country probably prepared them to look for something more than what was commonly said.

*Scripture Fulfilled.*—By the word fulfilled he meant that the particular passage he read to them had been fulfilled, or was coming to pass. He did not mean that everything involved in what the prophet said was fulfilled in its fullness that very day, but that the great system which the prophet foretold was about to be accomplished. Only through him as the Savior of men could the prophet's words be accomplished. He was personally giving such temporal relief as might be implied in the prediction, but its full spiritual significance could not be achieved till he had paid the price of man's redemption by the shedding of his blood. It was fulfilled that day in the sense that the one through whom it was to be done was in their presence.

*"Words of Grace."*—That he must have delivered his message in a charming manner is evident from the fact that they all bore witness to his "words of grace," wondering at his wisdom, mighty works, and whence he received such power. (Matt. 13: 54.) His marvelous works had to be admitted, but how to account for such in one they knew so well was puzzling. Knowing the humble station of his family they could not give due credit for his mighty works. Matthew (13: 57) says "they were offended in him"; they were not willing to admit his claims, yet were unable to explain his power. The result was they became intensely angry.

### III. Reasons Why They Rejected Him (Verses 23, 24)

*"This Parable."*—The word "parable" here is evidently used in the sense of a proverb, and it is so given in the King James Version. "Physician, heal thyself" was probably a common saying among them, meaning that one who proposed to heal others ought to heal himself first, if he had the same disease. The application of it here is this: "You claim to be the Messiah and to have done great things in Capernaum; do the same things here in Nazareth that we may have the evidence that your claims are true." They may have used some such expression in a contemptuous way, meaning that "you can't deceive us by what you claim to have done in Capernaum."

*"In His Own Country."*—In reply to their criticism, expressed or implied, Jesus said: "No prophet is acceptable in his own country." This general truth Jesus mentions, not to endorse it, for it is essentially bad, but to show the reason they were rejecting him in the face of facts that should convince them. In Nazareth he was one in a very poor family; elsewhere he was considered a prophet. The same miracles among them, because of jealousy, would not have received the same credit as abroad. The same fact in a broader sense accounts for his rejection by his own people—the Jews. (John 1: 11.) Unfortunately, the same thing is still a fact. Jesus condemned the practice of the rejection of a prophet by his own people or house, giving that as the reason he could do but few miracles in Nazareth. Home people now are usually as ready to refuse their own as Nazareth was to reject Jesus. There is no more excuse for the practice now than there was then. It is shameful that we are prone to do what Jesus clearly condemned.

### IV. Other Cases of Rejection Cited (Verses 25-27)

*Widow of Zarephath.*—The expression "of a truth" means that he could give them a genuine case worthy of their belief. Elijah was a prophet of God accepted by the Jews without question. There were many needy widows in Israel in his day who should have come to him for advice and help, yet he received so little honor among his own people that he was sent unto none of them, but rather to the Sidonian widow at Zarephath. (1 Kings 17: 8-16.) A stranger in a Gentile country received the prophet when his own people at home rejected him. Even the distress of famine did not change them. This incident was a well-known bit of their history which they would readily accept as true. It illustrated the fact that they were treating him just as their ancestors had treated their most famous prophet. Later in his history, when he entered a foreign country for the first time, Jesus bestowed a blessing upon the Syrophenician woman in the same territory. (Mark 7: 24-30.) At this day millions of Gentiles admit that Jesus is the Son of God, while the Jews—his own people—reject him as nothing more than a good, but deluded man.

*"Naaman the Syrian."*—Another example equally well known and as fully believed was the healing of Naaman. (2 Kings 5: 1-14.) Leprosy was such a common disease among the Israelites that God gave a special law of cleansing for it. It was such a loathsome affliction that lepers were forced to live apart from others. Nothing probably was more desirable than a cure of it. Notwithstanding their need and the prophet's power, only Naaman, a foreigner, sought the help of Elisha for relief. The application was plain. They, his



kinsmen and neighbors, were treating him just as the widows and lepers of Israel had treated the two great prophets. That their ancestors deserved condemnation was unquestionable. They were acting with no more reason and were equally worthy of rebuke.

### V. Jesus Escapes Their Vengeance (Verses 28-30)

*"Filled with Wrath."*—When truth fails to convert it often enrages. Jesus' illustrations classed them with widows and lepers and himself with two famous prophets. This alone was enough to arouse their anger. They saw that he meant for them to understand that they were guilty of rejecting him and deserved to lose a blessing. Praising Gentiles above his own people, as his examples did, was too much for their narrow Jewish exclusiveness. Comparing the one Gentile with a multitude of rebellious Jews was the limit of insult to them. The cases cited showed that it was a part of God's design to have the truth presented to the Gentiles. This was in direct conflict with their notion that the Messiah was only to relieve Israel of her intolerable burdens. Such thoughts naturally resulted from the examples given, and their unrestrained wrath was no surprise.

*"Cast Him Forth."*—When people cannot answer arguments based on facts, they often resort to violence. The audience in the synagogue apparently became furious and cast Jesus out of the city. Just how they did this is not stated, but the text shows that they meant to kill him. There was a precipice somewhere near the city toward which they led him intending to throw him down headlong. It is not certain just where the place was. Different places have been suggested by travelers. Luke says he passed through their midst and went his way. It is remarkable that he escaped with such apparent ease. No explanation is found in the record. Others who did not hear his discourse in the synagogue may have interfered, and in the confusion, he walked away; or, his divine power may have overcome their rage.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. That Jesus was accustomed to attend the synagogue worship while engaged in his public ministry shows that he had proper respect for the religion of God that was then in force. His coming to establish another covenant did not justify his ignoring the one then binding. We should follow his example and honor the new covenant—the one now in force.

2. Jesus sustained his own ministry by an appeal to the scriptures, as he protected himself in temptation by "It is written." We should depend upon the same for our defense, for it will furnish us unto every good work.

3. The law of consistency demands that the physician should heal himself, if he attempts to heal others. The same law requires that the followers of Jesus shall practice what they preach to others. They should not become angry if their inconsistency is pointed out.

4. Prejudice may cause us to reject those who are far better than we are, but God is no respecter of persons. He will accept those in every nation who fear him and work righteousness.

5. Getting angry at those who tell us the truth will not change the facts, or prove that they are false teachers. Trying to destroy

the messenger will not prove his message wrong. Only the truth will avail when we meet our Lord in judgment.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Give the story in full regarding the widow of Zarephath. (1 Kings 17: 8-16.)
2. Give the story in full regarding the blessing of the Canaanitish woman as recorded in Matt 15: 21-28.
3. Describe the cure and healing of the leper as it is recorded in Mark 1: 40-44.
4. Describe other instances when the Jews attempted to kill him. (John 8: 56-59; 10: 29-39.)
5. Assign topics for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, time, place, and persons.  
Repeat the Golden Text.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

What was Jesus' custom regarding synagogues?  
How was the synagogue service conducted?  
What scripture did Jesus read?  
What works did he come to do?

#### **II**

What caused them to look so intently?  
What did Jesus say to them?  
What was meant by the scripture being fulfilled?

What caused them to be offended in him?

#### **III**

What was meant by "Physician, heal thyself"?  
Why did they reject him?

#### **IV**

What is the lesson in referring to the widow?  
What other similar example is mentioned?

#### **V**

What effect did his words have on them?  
Why did it have this effect?  
What did they purpose to do to him?  
How account for his escape?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson V—February 2, 1936*

### JESUS ENLISTS HELPERS

Luke 5: 1-11, 27, 28.

1 Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret;

2 And he saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing their nets.

3 And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the multitudes out of the boat.

4 And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answered and said, Master, we toiled all night, and took nothing: but at thy word I will let down the nets.

6 And when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking;

7 And they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

8 But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken;



- 10 And so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.  
 11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed him.  
 27 And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow me.  
 28 And he forsook all, and rose up and followed him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*They left all, and followed him.*” (Luke 5: 11.)

TIME.—A.D. 28.

PLACE.—West coast of the Sea of Galilee.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the multitude, Peter, James, John, and Matthew.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 62: 6-12.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

January	27.	M.	-----	Jesus Enlists Helpers (Luke 5: 1-11)
January	28.	T.	-----	Jesus Calls Levi (Luke 5: 27-32)
January	29.	W.	-----	The Need of Helpers (Matt. 9: 35-38)
January	30.	T.	-----	The Twelve Commissioned (Matt. 10: 1-15)
January	31.	F.	-----	The Seventy Sent Forth (Luke 10: 1-12)
February	1.	S.	-----	Helpers in Service (Mark 6: 30-44)
February	2.	S.	-----	God's Care (Isa. 62: 6-12)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

#### Introductory Study.

- I. Jesus Teaches by the Sea (Verses 1-3).
  - II. The Miraculous Catch of Fishes (Verses 4-7).
  - III. The Call to Catch Men (Verses 8-11).
  - IV. The Call of Levi (Verses 27, 28).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—If it was correct, as already stated, that the incidents of last lesson were recorded out of their chronological order, then the time of this lesson can be understood best by starting again from the temptation, lesson three. Unquestionably the temptation was immediately after his baptism and in the early part of A.D. 27. It is evident that some time elapsed between the first three sections of this lesson and the fourth. It also seems certain that both occurred before the Passover in A.D. 28, which was the second Passover of Jesus' ministry. Both may have been late in A.D. 27 or early in A.D. 28. There is no way to fix the time of either exactly.

*Lesson Links.*—With the chronological arrangement here accepted, lesson five comes between lessons three and four. The same general links mentioned in last lesson will also serve the same purpose here except that this lesson comes somewhere in the midst of those events. It seems probable that the call of the fishermen, sections one to three, was after his return to Galilee and a general preaching tour that followed, and while he was dwelling at Capernaum. (Matt. 4: 12-16.) This apparently was soon after John was imprisoned. Between that time and the call of Levi, section four, he made another general tour through Galilee (Matt. 4: 23-25), and performed many cures, including Peter's mother-in-law, the leper (Mark 40-45), and the paralytic (Mark 2: 1-12). Between the time of last lesson, back to the call

of Levi in this lesson, many important things happened. These include sending the apostles under the first commission, the Sermon on the Mount and the speaking of the parables in Matthew, thirteenth chapter.

*Lesson Settings.*—The scene of this lesson was at Lake Gennesaret, also called the Sea of Galilee and Sea of Tiberias. This is an inland lake through which the river Jordan flows, and is about twelve and one-half miles long by seven wide. Its fresh water abounds in fish. This accounts for the fact that the apostles who were fishermen were called there. It was the place of their business. Capernaum, which Jesus made his home city while in Galilee, was situated on its north-west coast. Passing along its coast furnished many opportunities for Jesus to teach the people and heal the afflicted. The fishing business brought many to its shore, and the work of Jesus attracted many others. Here was the place where the incidents of our present lesson occurred.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Jesus Teaches by the Sea (Verses 1-3)

*"Pressed Upon Him."*—Jesus had been traveling through Galilee long enough for his fame as a teacher to become firmly established. Doubtless listeners gathered about him wherever he went, and the shore of Lake Galilee was probably a favorite place for his work. At the time of this lesson he was standing near the place where fishermen had their boats. The multitude pressed upon him in such numbers to hear his teaching that he was forced to enter a boat. This is the way interested crowds of people do when trying to get near one they wish to hear. Only a lively imagination can picture the scene. The world's greatest teacher was explaining the truths by which mankind can be saved and the humble workers about the lake were hanging upon his gracious words.

*"Saw Two Boats."*—Our text says he saw two boats, but the fishermen were out washing their nets. From the record in Matt. 4: 18-22 and Mark 1: 16-20 we learn that he came first to Andrew and his brother Simon. Then going a little farther he saw James and John, whose father Zebedee, was in the boats mending their nets. Matthew and Mark only give the call of the four fishermen, saying nothing about the multitude gathering about him or the miraculous draught of fishes. When he first approached Andrew and Peter they were casting a net into the sea, and he called them saying, "I will make you to become fishers of men." A little further on he came to the other two who were out of their boats. Possibly his calling them caused the people to gather about him and led to his entering the boat of Peter to get away from the crowd. He then sat down in the boat and taught the multitudes as they stood upon the shore.

*They Were Fishers.*—This call to follow him is a little strange in view of the fact that Peter and Andrew, and possibly John, were the first disciples Jesus made. He called them to follow him soon after his temptation and before he went to Galilee the first time. (John 1: 35-43.) It is best understood by supposing that when they all went to Galilee Jesus began his general teaching in that territory while these fishermen went back to their usual work. They were his individual disciples, but had not been called to become his con-



stant attendants. That particular call is the special feature brought out in this lesson. From this time on they appear to have forsaken their fishing business and to have been his constant followers. The time had come when it was necessary to select special witnesses, who, by personal association, would become prepared to carry his gospel to the world.

## II. The Miraculous Catch of Fishes (Verses 4-7)

*"Into the Deep."*—Apparently night was the regular time to fish, as Peter said they had fished all night and caught nothing. We have also a later occasion when they fished all night and caught nothing. (John 21: 3.) The language also indicates that near the shore was the proper place to fish with the kind of nets they were using. Telling them to push out into the deep in daytime to cast their nets for a draught probably seemed useless to experienced fishermen. It was doubtless the Savior's purpose to give a command that naturally seemed unreasonable. That would be a better test of genuine faith than something that human reason would suggest. There may be deep unseen reasons why a thing should be done, but man should not wait to obey God till he can understand them all. The main thing is to understand just what the Lord requires and do it, even though we do not know all the reasons for it. It is bound to be right or the Lord would not require it.

*"At Thy Word."*—Recognizing Jesus as Master or Lord, Peter said he would obey; that is, he would do it, because Jesus, as Master, should be obeyed. True, he modestly mentioned that they had labored all night and caught nothing, a first-class human reason for being doubtful of success at a less favorable time. But when the Master's command was weighed against his human doubt, he promptly decided in favor of the Lord's words. A similar decision would often save us from much neglect and disobedience.

*A Multitude of Fishes.*—That there was something miraculous in this great catch must be admitted, but in just what particular it was miraculous may be questioned. Fish often go in great shoals and might fill nets at such times. It may be that the miraculous feature was the divine knowledge that enabled Jesus to direct Peter to let down the net where the fish were. This required divine power no less than causing the fish to come where they might be caught. The remarkable thing about the catch, whether miraculous or natural, is the great number caught. The text says their nets were breaking. Of course, if they were seriously broken, the fish would have all been lost. As that did not happen, it means their nets were beginning to break. This would happen if they attempted to haul the nets into the boat with so many fish in it.

*They Called for Help.*—Seeing what was about to happen, they beckoned to their partners for help. They were James and John. (Verse 10.) With their assistance they were able to get the fish in their boats without ruining the nets. The quantity of fish was so great that the boats began to sink. Their boats were probably not large, and so much weight pulled up on one side would cause them to list and dip water. This would cease when the load was properly placed in the boats. If this were not true, they probably would not have been able to bring their boats to the shore.

### III. The Call to Catch Men (Verses 8-11)

*"A Sinful Man."*—When Peter saw the great catch, and realized the circumstances under which it had been made, he knew that nothing less than some kind of divine power made it possible. Yielding to the natural impulse of bowing before one infinitely superior, he wished to show his proper respect for the Lord. According to the common custom in such cases he prostrated himself at Jesus' feet. His request, "Depart from me," shows that he was perfectly conscious of his weakness and inferiority. He did not mean by this expression that he did not want Jesus to remain with him, but feeling himself unworthy to be in the presence of a divine being, he thought it would be more appropriate for Jesus to withdraw from one who must confess himself "a sinful man." His feeling was entirely natural under the circumstances, but it was improper for him to ask Jesus to depart from him. Peter, and all with him, including James and John, were amazed at the draught of fishes which they had taken.

*The Promise.*—Jesus gently calmed their disturbed minds by telling them to fear not. According to Luke's record, this was spoken to Peter, but evidently it was intended for all to share in the same confidence. The words "thou shalt catch men" were also spoken to Peter, but from Mark's report of the event the same thing was said to all four. (Mark 1: 17.) Since Peter confessed his sinfulness the language was addressed to him, though the same thought may have been repeated to all. If not, they understood he meant it for all whom he called to follow him. In this promise to make them fishers of men is indicated the purpose of the miracle. It was a picture which showed the success that would attend their preaching of the word. Their experience in fishing would do much in preparing them for success in their higher calling of catching men with the gospel. They well knew the labor, hardships, and dangers that belonged to fishing in the lake; they would soon learn the incessant labor and greater dangers attendant on preaching. Their skill in the use of fishing tackle would show them the necessity of wisdom in presenting the word. From unexpected places and unseasonable times their efforts would be crowned with great success.

*They Followed Him.*—They left their boats, nets, relatives, hired servants and followed him. (Matt. 4: 20-22; Mark 1: 20.) Before this they had been individual disciples attending to their own business affairs; now they are to leave their business and become his constant followers. It was the beginning of a new day in his service which was destined to bring them everlasting praise from God and men.

### IV. The Call of Levi (Verses 27, 28)

*"A Publican."*—Between this incident and the preceding part of this lesson there is an interval of time, during which Jesus cured the leper and healed the paralytic. It was after healing the paralytic that he went forth and saw Levi sitting at the place of toll. From Matthew's own record (9: 9), it is evident that Matthew and Levi are two names referring to the same one; and he is accepted as the writer of the first gospel. He is called a publican, a name meaning a collector of taxes. The Roman government had such officers to collect toll, tribute, other revenues from provinces subject to



their authority. Probably many publicans purchased the right to gather taxes, and then collected excessive amounts. That and the natural hatred the Jews had for the Romans made them despise their own people who collected this tribute. It may have seemed strange to the other disciples, as well as the scribes and Pharisees who murmured because Jesus ate with publicans and sinners, why one should be selected from that despised class to be in the inner circle of Christ's friends. At least it showed that he really did come to save sinners, and that Jewish prejudice could not prevent his doing it.

*"Followed Him."*—It is not known where the place of toll was. It may have been on the road that entered Capernaum or by the sea-side. As Capernaum was a commercial city of some importance the collection of tribute was probably no little matter, and Matthew may have occupied a prominent place with the Roman government. His income may have been large. However this may have been, when Jesus said, "follow me," he forsook all and followed him. This shows the Lord made no mistake in calling him, for he followed without question. He may have been a disciple of Jesus already, just as was the four called a little while before, but now he is required to leave his business and become a constant follower. He doubtless turned the business of his office over to some one else in an honorable way. It is unnecessary to suppose he left without doing so.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. The people "pressed" upon Jesus to hear the word of God. Another historian said, "The common people heard him gladly." (Mark 12: 37.) The sincere, earnest, and clear way with which he presented the problems of man's duties and responsibilities attracted those who wanted the truth. His methods are still best.

2. Peter promptly decided to follow Christ's command, though it was contrary to what fishing experience would suggest. We often fail because we depend upon human wisdom rather than the word of the Lord. We may not foresee the results, but we can trust in God while we carry out his instructions; we can put the net where he says put it.

3. The many manifestations of God's wonderful love to us in providing so richly for our material wants should constantly keep us reminded that we are unworthy of so much consideration. We should have unbounded gratitude for such mercies and be ready at all times to follow divine instructions implicitly. Saved ourselves, we should make every possible effort to save others.

4. Those who object to sinners being saved are against the mission of the Lord; he came to call sinners to repentance. As a publican Matthew's business was very displeasing to his own people, but his leaving it to follow the Lord was pleasing to God. It is not so discreditable to one that he has sinned, as the fact he does not quit it at the call of the Lord.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe in full the cleansing of the leper. (Luke 5: 12-16.)
2. Give a brief sketch of the law of Moses regarding the cleansing of the leper. (Lev. 14: 1-32.)

3. Tell the story in brief regarding the healing of the palsied man. (Luke 5: 17-26.)

4. Give the general features of another fishing experience of the Lord's disciples. (John 21: 1-14.)

5. Assign topics for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, time, place, and persons.  
Repeat the Golden Text.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

Describe the circumstances under which Jesus preached.  
How many boats, and who were in them?  
What is recorded by Luke only?  
How harmonize this call with John 1: 35-43?  
What relationship did they sustain to Jesus after this?

#### II

What time and place were probably best for fishing?

What was the purpose in giving such a command?  
What did Peter say he would do?  
What was the divine feature of the catch?  
Describe the catch.

#### III

What did Peter say of himself?  
Why did he ask the Lord to depart?  
What promise did he make, and to whom?  
What was the purpose of the miracle?  
What did they do in obeying Christ's command?

#### IV

Who were the publicans?  
What more is said of Levi?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.

Lesson VI—February 9, 1936

## JESUS INSISTS ON RIGHTEOUSNESS

Luke 6: 39-49.

39 And he spake also a parable unto them, Can the blind guide the blind? shall they not both fall into a pit?

40 The disciple is not above his teacher: but every one when he is perfected shall be as his teacher.

41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

42 Or how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me cast out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

43 For there is no good tree that bringeth forth corrupt fruit; nor again a corrupt tree that bringeth forth good fruit.

44 For each tree is known by its own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

45 The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

47 Every one that cometh unto me, and heareth my words, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:

48 He is like a man building a house, who digged and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock: and when a flood arose, the stream brake against that house, and could not shake it: because it had been well builded.

49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that built a house upon the earth without a foundation; against which the stream brake, and straightway it fell in: and the ruin of that house was great.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6: 46.)



TIME.—A.D. 28, second year of Jesus' ministry.

PLACE.—Near Capernaum on the plain in Galilee.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, and the multitude.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 3: 13-18.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

February 3.	M.	.....	The Nature of Righteousness (Luke 6: 39-45)
February 4.	T.	.....	The Foundation of Righteousness (Luke 6: 46-49)
February 5.	W.	.....	The Quality of Righteousness (Luke 6: 27-37)
February 6.	T.	.....	Righteousness and Worship (Matt. 5: 21-26)
February 7.	F.	.....	Self-Righteousness Condemned (Gal. 6: 1-10)
February 8.	S.	.....	Unrighteousness Disclosed and Punished (Matt. 7: 15-23)
February 9.	S.	.....	The Worth of Wisdom (Prov. 3: 13-18)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. Parable of the Blind Leader (Verses 39, 40).
  - II. Unrighteous Judging Condemned (Verses 41, 42).
  - III. Trees Are Known by Their Fruits (Verses 43-45).
  - IV. Hearing and Doing Illustrated (Verses 46-48).
  - V. Hearing Alone Condemned (Verse 49).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The events of last lesson were fixed as being near the close of A.D. 27 or early in A.D. 28. According to this calculation the time of this lesson would have to be after the Passover in A.D. 28; that is, after the first of April. As the Passover was attended at Jerusalem, and the teaching in this lesson was delivered near Lake Galilee, the time was perhaps in the early summer of A.D. 28. It would have required some time to make the journey from Jerusalem to Galilee, and we have no means of knowing how soon he started after the Passover.

*Lesson Links.*—After the events of last lesson Jesus returned to Jerusalem for a feast. (John 5: 1.) This we have already decided was the Passover in A.D. 28. One of the striking things that happened between the lessons was Jesus' defense of his disciples for plucking the grain on the Sabbath day. (Luke 6: 1-5.) This probably occurred on the journey back to Galilee. On another Sabbath, at a place not known, he healed a withered hand. (Luke 6: 6-11.) After reaching Galilee he went to the sea and, surrounded by a multitude, he healed many. (Mark 3: 7-12.) After this he selected his apostles, mentioned in our lesson chapter and in Matt. 10: 2-4; Mark 3: 13-19. Then he delivered the Sermon on the Mount, a fuller record of which is found in Matthew, chapters 5 to 7.

*Lesson Settings.*—Our lesson text is at least similar to a part of what is contained in Matthew's record of the Sermon on the Mount. Biblical critics are not agreed as to whether Luke's record is a briefer report of the same discourse given by Matthew or a similar speech made at another time. It is not at all material to know which is the correct view. Jesus doubtless repeated many of his great sayings, and Luke might easily have reported things said in Matthew's record, or spoken at another time. Matthew says that Jesus went up into

"the mountain" and delivered the sermon. (Matt. 5: 1.) Luke speaks of his coming down and standing "on a level place." (Luke 6: 17.) This, however, is not certain proof that they were different discourses. The expression, "the mountain," may mean that he went up into a mountainous section and then came down to a level place on the mountainside where the sermon was spoken. If Luke was referring to a different sermon, the plain may have meant another place entirely. That Luke's words are substantially the same as those used by Matthew is evident. On the points mentioned by both, the lessons are the same.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Parable of the Blind Leader (Verses 39, 40)

*The Comparison.*—By the word "parable" Luke means that Jesus was showing a certain truth with a familiar illustration. One physically blind cannot lead safely another who is also blind. This cannot be safe spiritually any more than physically. Putting it in the form of a question forced his hearers to decide the matter for themselves. The answer when physical blindness was meant must be the answer when spiritual blindness is meant.

*Matthew's Record.*—This illustration is not used in Matthew's report of the Sermon on the Mount, but in Matt. 15: 14, which refers to a different circumstance. He was there condemning the Pharisees for being blind teachers and leading their hearers into disobedience to God by their traditions. He declared that their worship was vain because they taught the precepts of men instead of God's commandments. Instead of a question, Matthew puts it in the form of an assertion, "If the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit." This is no less a fact now than when Jesus spoke these words. Blind religious teachers cannot lead aright those ignorant of God's word. This forever settles the matter that it does make a difference what one believes. Falling into a pit cannot be safe, however confident the leader or the led may feel secure against it. It is too late after it happens. Men may be ignorant of God's teaching, but they are inexcusable, if they accept what men say instead of insisting on hearing the things commanded of the Lord. (Acts 10: 33.)

*Disciples and Master.*—The lesson here is further illustrated by saying "the disciple is not above his teacher," but rather when his education is finished he will be like his teacher. The disciples of the Pharisees would have the same intolerant and self-righteous disposition of their teachers. The fountain cannot rise above its source, and unrighteous teachers cannot be expected to fill the hearts of their students with a desire for holiness. Christ meant for his disciples to receive the truth by which alone they would be able to rise above the hypocritical leaders of their day. It is still the truth that will make us righteous and prevent our falling into the pit of eternal destruction.

### II. Unrighteous Judging Condemned (Verses 41, 42)

*The Mote and Beam.*—Luke here presents the same lesson that Matthew gives as a part of the Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 7: 3-5.) Matthew introduces the statement with the words, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." This refers to rash and unjust judg-



ment, condemning others without a hearing when we may be guilty of something just as bad or even worse. The statement, "with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged," was probably a well-known proverb, meaning that one would be properly punished for his unjust condemnation of others. The absurdity of such unrighteous judgments could not be more forcefully presented than to picture one with a large piece of wood in his eye asking for the privilege of getting a small particle out of another's eye. The application is that we are much more ready to see the small faults of others than the larger ones of our own. We often demand with much positiveness that the mistakes and sins of others shall be duly corrected and atoned for when we are not even willing to admit our own, though they may be far more serious. Such inconsistency is apparent to every one else except one who is blind to his own faults. Asking one to correct his faults when we are unwilling to consider our own first is an inexcusable absurdity.

"*Thou Hypocrite.*"—One with something in his own eye is physically unfit to remove something from another's eye. One who is a sinner is a genuine hypocrite if he strives to force other sinners to repent when he will not repent himself. The logical procedure is to first remove the trouble in our own cases, then we will be in a condition to be helpful to others in removing theirs. This righteous course will lead to success, and prevent many troubles in every walk of life. Such a course is right, and right is always best.

### III. Trees Are Known by Their Fruits (Verses 43-45)

*True Test of Values.*—Having just shown the hypocritical character of unjust judging, the Lord turned to the difference between pretense and reality; or between outward appearance and genuine value. In the parallel passage (Matt. 7: 15-20), Jesus refers to good and bad trees to condemn false prophets who, though really wolves, come in sheep's clothing. As sheep are an emblem of innocence, to come in sheep's clothing means that false teachers will have the appearance of innocence and sanctity, but their work—teaching—will destroy those who accept it. The same principle is true regarding trees. The real value of the tree is in the kind of fruit it bears. Leaves, bark, and blooms are ornaments which give the tree a fine appearance, but all these can be of no great value if the fruit is bad. No difference how pleasing and plausible a doctrine may be, if it is false, its acceptance is dangerous and often fatal. All such teaching may be attributed to Satan who transforms himself into an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11: 14, 15.) He makes his work attractive.

*According to Nature.*—The original decree that plants and trees should bear after their kind (Gen. 1: 11, 12) has never been repealed. Nature presents untold millions of examples of this law without a single violation. In referring to it Jesus was using a fact well known to the simplest one; his lesson, therefore, could not be misunderstood. The good tree means one that has the nature to bear good fruit; the corrupt tree, one that bears bad fruit. He did not mean that a good tree becomes corrupt, but that its very nature is such, and good fruit is therefore impossible from it. This point he illustrates by saying, "For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes." Because men are intelligent and responsible creatures they may change from good to bad or from

bad to good, but they do not become deliberate workers of evil till their hearts become corrupt. Then their works are according to the state of the heart.

*A Good Treasure.*—The statement in verse 45 is not found in Matthew's record of the Sermon on the Mount, but Matt. 12: 35 shows that Jesus used the same language on another occasion to show that, if he were in league with Satan, his works could not be good. In this verse Jesus declares the heart to be the treasure house from which both good and evil deeds come. His words are: "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." A pure stream cannot proceed from an impure fountain; neither can a righteous life come from one whose heart is filled with evil. From the heart proceeds all evil. (Matt. 15: 9.)

#### IV. Hearing and Doing Illustrated (Verses 46-48)

*Vain Profession.*—Jesus later declared that Isaiah's denunciation of false teachers fit the scribes and Pharisees of that day. They honored God with their lips, but their hearts were far from him. (Matt. 15: 8.) In our text he is asking why those to whom he spoke should be like those described by Isaiah. His question shows the inconsistency in their calling him Lord and failing to do what he said. If Lord, he had the right to rule. That right carried the authority to command, and made obedience imperative on their part. In the parallel text (Matt. 7: 21), Jesus declares plainly that saying Lord, Lord, will not insure admission into the kingdom of heaven. This eternal reward will be received only by those who do the will of the Father who is in heaven. His will is that we shall hear (obey) Jesus as his Son. (Matt. 17: 5.)

*"Whom He Is Like."*—The lesson here applies to "every one that cometh" to the Lord. Each must not only hear what Jesus says, but he must do what he commands. In Matthew's record we are told that Jesus said the one who obeys him would be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock to protect it against the storms that were sure to come. No life structure can meet the test of the judgment unless it is builded upon the sayings of Jesus. It cannot be built on his words by just hearing them. But Jesus also said the wise man not only digged, but went deep; did not stop till he found the solid rock upon which to lay the foundation. A superficial study of Jesus' words, or a formal acceptance of his divinity, is not enough; we must wholeheartedly accept his words and render exact obedience. Too great care cannot be given to a structure that means our eternal salvation. Only such houses have been "well builded." Jesus did not give useless commands; wise people obey him.

#### V. Hearing Alone Condemned (Verse 49)

*"A Foolish Man."*—In Matthew's record the one who hears and does not obey is called "a foolish man." If the one who obeys is a wise man, then the disobedient must be a foolish man. The folly of building a house upon the sand is apparent to all. The folly of failing to obey Jesus is evident when reason is allowed to rule; it will be evident to all at the judgment. Unfortunately, it will then be too late for the foolish man to correct his mistake, just as it is too late to change to a safe foundation after the storm breaks upon the house. The time to provide against calamities is before they come upon you. At this point millions make the fatal mistake of their



lives. Crying for help when none can be given will bring no consolation to the lost. Recognizing our own folly too late cannot repair the wrongs already done. The ruin of a wrecked house is great, but its owner cannot appreciate it till it lies before him. The loss of souls is an incalculable calamity, which can only be fully understood in the light of what the judgment will reveal.

*Disappointment.*—In Matthew's record (Matt. 7: 22, 23), Jesus says that many in that day will plead their works in his name, but he will reject, saying "I never knew you." He means that their work was never approved by him. We can only do things in his name when we do what he commands. Anything else is not in his name—by his authority.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. False teachers, like blind leaders, are not to be expected to make their disciples any better than themselves; hence, both are lost together. Since the truth makes men free from sin, those who teach it will raise their disciples till they will be worthy to dwell finally with the great Master Teacher—the Lord himself.

2. Receiving the same measure we mete to others has both a restraining and encouraging influence. If our measure has been unjust, it means a punishment sooner or later that will be just; if our measure be righteous, an adequate reward will be ours sometime.

3. Nature's laws cannot be destroyed, and should not be violated. Attempting to do the impossible thing is foolish. Trying to be saved without entering the church is trying to reach heaven without the merits of Christ's blood. This is just as impossible as gathering "grapes or thorns, or figs of thistles."

4. The same expense and care may be used in building a house upon the sand as upon the solid rock. To the casual observer it will appear as safe, but it will not endure the storms. So, as much time and labor may be used when we build on the commandments of men, but our work will not stand at the judgment. To lose then is to lose all.

5. A foolish man is not one who is destitute of intelligence, but one who does not use his intelligence as reason demands. One who does not consider final results in planning his life is clearly foolish.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe the opening of the eyes of the blind man as recorded in John 9: 1-7.

2. Describe the judgment as pictured by Jesus in Matt. 25: 31-46.

3. Briefly state James' discussion on the relationship of faith and works. (James 2: 14-26.)

4. Describe the final rejection of the disobedient. (2 Cor. 5: 10; 2 Thess. 2: 7-12.)

5. Assign topic for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

What is the lesson in the parable of the blind leader?

Where does Matthew record the same parable?

What false doctrine is condemned by it? Explain the reference to disciple and teacher.

## II

How does Matthew introduce this subject?  
 What is the lesson on a like measure?  
 How does Jesus describe those with beams in their eyes?  
 What is the righteous course to pursue?

## III

What lesson does Jesus teach by trees?  
 Who is the real author of all false teaching?  
 What law of nature does Jesus apply?  
 Give the application of verse 45.

## IV

What teaching from Isaiah does Jesus apply?  
 What is the lesson in Luke 6: 46; Matt. 7: 21?  
 How does Jesus illustrate the subject?

## V

How does Matthew describe the one who builds on the sand?  
 When should provision against loss be made?  
 What will some say at the judgment?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson VII—February 16, 1936*

## JESUS HELPS A DOUBTER

Luke 7: 19-28.

19 And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to the Lord, saying, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?

20 And when the men were come unto him, they said, John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?

21 In that hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and on many that were blind he bestowed sight.

22 And he answered and said unto them, Go and tell John the things which ye have seen and heard; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good tidings preached to them.

23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me.

24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26 But what went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is he of whom it is written,

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,

Who shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I believe; help thou mine unbelief."* (Mark 9: 24.)

TIME.—A.D. 28.

PLACE.—Jesus was somewhere in Galilee; the exact place not known.

PERSONS.—Jesus, John, and some of John's disciples.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 35: 5-10.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

February 10.	M.	Jesus Answers a Doubter (Luke 7: 19-28)
February 11.	T.	Believing Without Seeing (John 20: 24-29)
February 12.	W.	When God Is Doubted (John 14: 1-9)
February 13.	T.	When Love Is Doubted (Matt. 7: 7-12)
February 14.	F.	When Forgiveness Is Doubted (Matt. 9: 1-7)
February 15.	S.	Overcoming Doubt (1 John 5: 1-12)
February 16.	S.	God in His World (Isa. 35: 5-10)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

I. John Makes Inquiry of Jesus (Verses 19-21).



- II. Jesus' Reply to John's Inquiry (Verses 22, 23).
  - III. Jesus Questions the People (Verses 24-26).
  - IV. Jesus Explains John's Mission (Verses 27, 28).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The time of our last lesson was fixed as probably in the early part of the summer of A.D. 28. There is no way to determine definitely just how much time intervened between that lesson and this one; but, as there are many more events recorded that happened between this lesson and the next Passover in A.D. 29 than occurred between this and last lesson, it is safe to presume that this lesson was but little later than the last; hence, probably in the summer of A.D. 28.

*Lesson Links.*—After the Sermon on the Mount Matthew gives the healing of the centurion's servant at Capernaum. (Matt. 8: 5-13.) Luke reports the same incident after giving our last lesson. (Luke 7: 1-10.) Whether Luke is quoting from the same sermon as Matthew or a later one does not change the place of our lesson. The healing came between this and the last lesson. Luke follows this miracle with the raising of the widow's son from the dead at the city of Nain in Galilee. (Luke 7: 11-17.) This, according to Luke's arrangement, is the apparent order of events, and the connection between the two lessons.

*Lesson Settings.*—At the time of this lesson John the Baptist had been in prison probably as long as six months. The place of his imprisonment is said to have been the castle of Machaerus, east of the Dead Sea. This had prevented John having any personal knowledge of the works of Jesus during that period. Though it was a long distance to Galilee, where Jesus had been doing so many mighty works, yet the news had come to him. His anxiety doubtless was increased by not being able to see for himself, and the reports would only make him more anxious. When we consider his former personal relationship to Jesus, and his own statements concerning him (John 1: 29), there is a degree of surprise at the inquiry contained in the lesson text.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. John Makes Inquiry of Jesus (Verses 19-21)

*Occasion for It.*—Jesus did many mighty works, but the report of his raising the widow's son probably spread more rapidly than the news concerning the healings. Luke had just related the story of the son's restoration to life and then said: "And this report went forth concerning him in the whole of Judæa, and all the region round about." (Verse 17.) This brought the news of his miracles into the territory where John was in prison. His disciples would be interested, of course, in keeping him informed regarding such works. Luke says they "told him of all these things," which accounts for the fact that the inquiry was made.

*"He That Cometh."*—Personal messengers were at that time the only available means of getting information, a method both expensive and slow. The city of Nain was some seventy-five miles a little west of north from Machaerus where John was imprisoned. The expression "he that cometh" had reference to their expected Messiah, or

as expressed in Greek, the Christ. The prophets had referred to him as the coming one. (Isa. 9: 1-7; 11: 1-5.) Moses had mentioned the coming one as a prophet. (Deut. 18: 18, 19.) They expected the Messiah, when he came, to liberate their nation and rule upon the literal throne of his father David. Since the apostles after their time of close personal association with him still misunderstood the nature of the kingdom he came to establish (Acts 1: 6-8), it is not likely that John understood the matter any better than they. After his long wait in the prison, he really was anxious to know whether Jesus was in fact the one to come, or whether they should look for another.

*Why John's Doubt?*—Careful Bible students have been perplexed as to why John should ask any such question. They have disagreed about what is the solution of the problem. Did John ask the question for information? If so, how can that be harmonized with his baptism of Jesus and hearing the Father declare him to be his beloved Son, and his own early declaration that Jesus was the Lamb of God? How could it be a matter of doubt with that past personal knowledge and the late report of his healing the sick and raising the dead? Taking the passage at its plain face value, it indicates that John's faith had weakened. Under the circumstances, that was not unreasonable. Inspiration did not guarantee against mistakes or wavering of faith. Peter's faith wavered when he attempted to walk on the water (Matt. 14: 26-32), and when he denied the Lord (Matt. 26: 1-6). John's long stay in prison, and the Lord's delay to proclaim himself as king, had a tendency to bring discouragement and cause him to wonder if there might be some question about Jesus being the Messiah. He may have thought that, if Jesus was all he had declared him to be soon after his baptism, he still might possibly be just a great prophet and not the one promised as the Messiah. It seems best then to take John's question at its face meaning.

*"In That Hour."*—Verse 20 simply states that John's messengers came to Jesus and presented the questions. Verse 21 says that "in that hour" Jesus healed many of diseases and bestowed sight on the blind. This evidently means that the messengers appeared at the very time that Jesus was busily engaged in manifesting his power. It is not improbable that he went on with his healing without giving the messengers any verbal answer till they saw for themselves what he was doing. This harmonizes with the reply that Jesus did make.

## II. Jesus' Reply to John's Inquiry (Verses 22, 23)

*An Indirect Answer.*—When the priests and Levites asked John who he was (John 1: 20, 21), he answered directly that he was not the Christ, nor the prophet. Jesus preferred to answer John indirectly by calling attention to the works he was doing. For the messengers to tell John they had seen the miracles themselves would be more convincing than for them to report that Jesus said he was the one to come. He would know that no one could perform such miracles unless God be with him. This would at least show Jesus had a divine mission. The things mentioned were in the main what the prophets had said. (Isa. 35: 5, 6; 61: 1-3.) Raising the dead would add force to the proof in the other miracles. All of this doubtless gave John the assurance that Jesus was a special servant of God,



and could therefore be the one to come. This would renew his faith till the end, which was all that was necessary.

*A Beatitude.*—Jesus declared that a blessing should rest upon anyone who would find no occasion of stumbling in him. Many of the Jews had stumbled at Jesus because he did not come in the manner they expected. His poverty, obscurity, and failure to proclaim himself a temporal king had all been disappointing. Happy would be the man who could overlook all these and see in his works the evidence of his divinity. The evidence was sufficient, if only they had given it honest consideration. It is equally so today. This promise of happiness was probably to encourage John not to falter at what appeared inconsistent with the kind of kingdom he expected.

### III. Jesus Questions the People (Verses 24-26)

*"Began to Say."*—Luke says that when the messengers of John were departed Jesus began to question the people. John's question regarding Jesus indicated that his faith had wavered since his imprisonment. This Jesus knew the people would understand, and would wonder how that could be. He did not want them to have an unfavorable opinion of John, and his questions were designed to show that, in spite of John's temporary doubt, he was one of God's greatest servants. This defense of John's character was not begun till the messengers had departed. It was not necessary that John should hear such praise of himself. All he needed was comfort for the few dark days remaining till his soul would be in the realm where God's approval would be assured.

*"A Reed Shaken."*—Christ's questions strongly hint at the fact that some then present may have heard John when he was preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and would know something of his habits and manner of life. Doubtless reeds grew upon the banks of the Jordan, and their swaying under the blowing of the wind would be a common sight. Figuratively this represented a weak, vacillating, inconstant man. His question might be thus paraphrased: "Do you think that John's season of doubt means that he was as weak as the reeds that bend with the wind?" Their knowledge of his fearless denunciation of sin and call to repentance showed him to be among the boldest of the bold.

*"In Soft Raiment."*—Jesus next asked if they went out to see a man "clothed in soft raiment." Those thus gorgeously apparelled live delicately in king's courts and homes of the rich. John's garment of camel's hair and food of locusts and wild honey indicated his fitness to meet the stern requirements of wilderness life. He was not a voluptuous man ready to sacrifice truth and character for food and raiment and the deceptive smiles of kings. If they went out to see such a man, they were disappointed. He had not fallen under any such temptations. His boldness in preparing a people for the Lord was too great to justify thinking that his time of doubt showed him a failure.

*"A Prophet?"*—Finally Jesus asked if they had gone out to see a prophet. If so, then they had not been deceived, for John was in fact a true prophet. But Jesus said he was much more than a prophet. The ancient prophets in lofty strains and bold figures had taught the people of God and predicted the coming Messiah. The latter had been done by none better than by Isaiah, who in touching symbols had presented the coming one as a lamb sacrificed without

opening his mouth. John had declared the kingdom as at hand, but had surpassed all the others in the fact that he lived in the time of Christ and had actually introduced him to the people. John occupied a position and had been granted privileges which had been accorded to no other. He was therefore something more than a prophet.

#### IV. Jesus Explains John's Mission (Verses 27, 28)

*A Subject of Prophecy.*—Jesus said that John himself was a subject of prophecy. In this we have another feature in which he surpassed the ancient Jewish prophets. The prophecy here referred to is found in Mal. 3: 1. Jesus quotes it with a slight change of words. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all report this particular quotation. (Matt. 11: 10; Mark 1: 2.) All three mention that he was to prepare the way of the Lord, and the first two say he was to make the way straight. The angel told Zacharias before John was born that he was to go "before his face," and "to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him." (Luke 1: 17.) This meant that John would prepare a people to receive the Lord when he came, and from whom Jesus would select his first disciples. All this shows that John sustained a closer and higher relationship to the Lord than any other prophet. This purpose of John's work is clearly indicated in what Paul says of John's baptism. (Acts 19: 4.)

*"None Greater."*—Jesus said: "Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John." This is an emphatic way of saying that John was superior to all human beings in some sense. It is not necessary to conclude that Jesus meant he was superior to all in every way—absolutely the greatest man. Jesus was talking about John as a prophet. In comparison with all other prophets there was none greater than he, which, as we have already seen, means that in his position and work as a prophet he was the greatest of them all. Unless this be the proper view of the words, then the one "but little in the kingdom of God" could not be greater than John; or, if John was the greatest man in every way that had ever been born, then an inferior person in the kingdom could not be greater. In his work as prophet none had been greater or as great.

*"Greater Than He."*—This expression, like the preceding, must be understood as applying to position and privileges, not to personal ability or qualifications. In that sense the least in the kingdom could not be greater than John. Any one in God's kingdom can proclaim the Christ as having already come, crucified, raised and seated at the Father's right hand; he can declare the terms of salvation through Christ. None of this could John do, for he was only a forerunner to prepare a people for Christ, but died before Jesus did. Things that any Christian can now preach John never knew. This expression also shows that John himself was never in the kingdom of Christ, else the least in that kingdom could not have been greater than he.

#### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. John was anxious to know the real character of Jesus and sent messengers to get the information. This should be the desire of every heart, and no effort should be omitted till we know just what he was. John had to send messengers; we have the proof in the Bible right at our hand.



2. Jesus presented the best proof. If he could heal the sick, he can forgive sins; if he could open blind eyes, he can give enlightenment to the sinner; if he could raise the dead, he can save those dead in trespasses and sins. The doing of such miracles was proof that he was the Son of God. It is still proof.

3. The best saints will continually need to go to Jesus' words to have their spiritual strength renewed, their faith strengthened, and the power of temptations overcome. Many falter under less trying circumstances than confronted John; all may succeed who commit themselves entirely to Christ's leadership.

4. There are many things in which men may be great and still not saved. In many things some outside the church are greater than some inside, but the greatest position that can possibly be occupied is inside the church. The least in the church therefore in the most vital thing is greater than the greatest out of the church.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Give the full details in the curing of the centurion's servant. (Luke 7: 1-10.)
2. Describe the scene when the widow's son was raised. (Luke 7: 11-17.)
3. Point out the distinction between publicans and Pharisees. (Luke 7: 29-35.)
4. Briefly give the parable of the two debtors. (Luke 7: 41-50.)
5. Assign topics for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

What was the occasion of John's sending the messengers?  
What was the distance the messengers went?  
Why ask if he was the one to come?  
How account for John's doubt?  
What is the meaning of verse 21?

#### **II**

How did John answer the Levites?  
Why did Jesus answer John indirectly?

What blessing did Jesus promise?  
Why would people likely stumble at Jesus?

#### **III**

Why did Jesus ask the people questions about John?  
What is the thought in "a reed shaken"?  
What did he mean by the expression "soft raiment"?  
Why ask if they went to see a prophet?

#### **IV**

What prophecy did Jesus quote and why?  
In what sense was John greater up to that time?  
How could the least be greater than he?  
What does this expression show about John?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

## Lesson VIII—February 23, 1936

## PEOPLE BEFORE PROPERTY

Luke 8: 26-37.

26 And they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is over against Galilee.  
 27 And when he was come forth upon the land, there met him a certain man out of the city, who had demons; and for a long time he had worn no clothes, and abode not in any house, but in the tombs.

28 And when he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I beseech thee, torment me not.

29 For he was commanding the unclean spirit to come out from the man. For oftentimes it had seized him; and he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters; and breaking the bands asunder, he was driven of the demon into the deserts.

30 And Jesus asked him, What is thy name? And he said, Legion; for many demons were entered into him.

31 And they entreated him that he would not command them to depart into the abyss.  
 32 Now there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they entreated him that he would give them leave to enter into them. And he gave them leave.

33 And the demons came out from the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd rushed down the steep into the lake, and were drowned.

34 And when they that fed them saw what had come to pass, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country.

35 And they went out to see what had come to pass; and they came to Jesus, and found the man, from whom the demons were gone out, sitting, clothed and in his right mind, at the feet of Jesus: and they were afraid.

36 And they that saw it told them how he that was possessed with demons was made whole.

37 And all the people of the country of the Gerasenes round about asked him to depart from them; for they were holden with great fear: and he entered into a boat, and returned.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Luke 16: 13.)

**TIME.**—A.D. 28.

**PLACE.**—Near the Sea of Galilee.

**PERSONS.**—Jesus, the demoniac, and the Gerasenes.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Col. 1: 9-18.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

February 17.	M.	Jesus and Human Worth (Luke 8: 26-34)
February 18.	T.	The Materialist (Luke 8: 35-39)
February 19.	W.	The Worth of a Child (Matt. 18: 1-6)
February 20.	T.	Man's Preeminent Worth (Matt. 12: 1-13)
February 21.	F.	Unbrotherly Practices Condemned (Hab. 2: 9-15)
February 22.	S.	Christlike Love Enjoined (1 John 3: 13-24)
February 23.	S.	Saved to Serve (Luke 1: 68-75)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

Introductory Study.

- I. Jesus Meets the Gerasene Demoniac (Verses 26, 27).
  - II. The Demoniac's Appeal to Jesus (Verses 28, 29).
  - III. The Demons' Request Granted (Verses 30-33).
  - IV. The Miracle Reported (Verses 34-36).
  - V. Jesus Leaves Their Country (Verse 37).
- Thoughts for Meditation.



## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The four gospels contain the reports of many incidents, miracles, and parables in the life of Jesus between the time of our last lesson and the Lord's third Passover, A.D. 29. There is no way to fix their exact time or the chronological order in which they happened. Fixing the time approximately is usually all that is necessary. Apparently the incident described in this lesson occurred some time between early summer in A.D. 28 and the Passover in A.D. 29. This would put it more than a year before his crucifixion.

*Lesson Links.*—In the time intervening between this and last lesson Jesus made a general tour through the cities and villages of Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom. (Luke 8: 1-3.) Some of his enemies charged him with casting out demons by Beelzebub the prince of demons. (Mark 3: 19-30.) It was in this time that he spoke the cluster of parables recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. One of them, the sower, is given by Luke in our lesson chapter. The most remarkable miracle during this time was the stilling of the storm as they crossed the sea toward the country where this lesson occurred. (Luke 8: 22-25.)

*Lesson Settings.*—Since Jesus and his disciples had just crossed the lake, it is certain that the country to which they came was east of it. Luke calls it the country of the Gerasenes. Mark's record has the same, but Matthew says Gadarenes. The margin in our lesson text gives Gergesenes. It is possible that Gergesenes and Gerasenes are two ways of spelling the same name. Or, these three words may have been names of three different towns in the same general territory, Matthew using one and Mark and Luke the other. Gadara was a town about seven miles from the sea and probably of enough importance to give its name to that section. Luke may have intended to tell where they landed and Matthew to tell the section of the country where they went. The apparent discrepancy of names is of no significance; certainly is nothing against the truthfulness of the records.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Jesus Meets the Gerasene Demoniac (Verses 26, 27)

*The Number.*—We have already noted an apparent discrepancy between Matthew and Luke regarding the name of the place. Another discrepancy, seemingly more important, is in regard to the number of demons that met them when they arrived. Luke and Mark both say there met him a man, whereas Matthew says there met him two that were possessed with demons. (Matt. 8: 28.) Skeptics declare that in these statements we have an irreconcilable contradiction. But apparent contradictions are not really so unless there is no reasonable way to harmonize them. If they may be harmonized, then they may not be contradictory. Neither Mark nor Luke says that *only* one man met him, but Matthew definitely says there were two. Matthew's definite statement cannot be set aside by Luke's indefinite one. Besides a plausible reason can be given for the different expressions. Mark and Luke probably were only describing the fiercer one who did the talking, while Matthew gave the number. This way of giving the story shows that the writers were not impostors. Had they agreed to write a false story, they would not have made statements that are apparently contradictory. Each



one told the part of the story he had in mind regardless of what the others might say; all are strictly true.

*"Who Had Demons."*—There is a degree of mystery about devils or demons that cannot be explained, but the Bible says enough about them to enable us to know much about the way they affected persons in whom they dwelled. They were not diseases such as insanity or epilepsy, for in the scriptures they are contrasted with diseases. (Matt. 4: 24.) They were intelligences of some kind, for they could speak and were spoken to. (Matt. 8: 31.) Evil spirits knew divine beings. (Luke 4: 34; Acts 19: 15.) Our lesson text logically harmonizes with the facts here indicated. So far as is known demons are not allowed to influence people now as then. Neither do we know why this is so. It may be that since the time of miracles is past there is no way to cast them out, and they are not permitted to torment us when we would have no chance for relief.

*"In the Tombs."*—The fact that this man had for a long time been driven from his home to remain naked and dwell in the tombs shows what dreadful influence such a spirit could have on one. The tombs were in caves excavated out of the hillsides. These caves would be the lonely, gloomy places where evil spirits would likely force the tormented person to dwell. Such places would be congenial to the wretched state of their minds. According to Mark, this demoniac possessed superhuman strength. (Mark 5: 3-5.)

## II. The Demoniac's Appeal to Jesus (Verses 28, 29)

*"He Cried Out."*—The language clearly indicates that it was the man who cried out and fell down before Jesus, yet the language seems to have come from the demon. This presents no difficulty when we remember that the evil spirit was speaking through him. The human power of speech was the medium through which the demon expressed the appeal; in fact, so far as we know, there was no other way for the demon to express itself. Man's own spirit uses the same method of expression; the Holy Spirit spake through the apostles. It is but the natural thing to expect that evil spirits would speak through those in whom they dwelled.

*"Torment Me Not."*—Both the man and the evil spirit seemed to recognize Jesus as the Son of the Most High. Doubtless his majestic and calm bearing enabled the spirit to know at once who he was. The expression, "What have I to do with thee," was a kind of complaint or mild rebuke meaning "Why do you disturb or trouble me?" That is equivalent to saying, "Let me alone to act and do as I please." Other examples of the use of a similar expression are found in 2 Sam. 16: 10; 2 Kings 9: 18; Ezra 4: 3. This idea is further sustained by the words "torment me not." Matthew adds the expression "before the time." (Matt. 8: 29.) The time doubtless refers to the judgment, for evil spirits realize that they are reserved unto judgment to be punished. (2 Pet. 2: 4; Jude 6.)

*Occasion for Appeal.*—Our text says Jesus "was commanding the unclean spirit to come out from the man." This seems to be the reason for the appeal not to be tormented. The distress that may have been produced by the demon at this command probably put the man in a most wretched state. Jesus gave the command because of the evil which the spirit was continually doing to the man. When he was seized by the spirit the man became uncontrollable by ordinary



means. When not in prison he would break the bonds with which he was bound and would be driven to dwell in the tombs and deserts.

### III. The Demons' Request Granted (Verses 30-33)

*"What Is Thy Name?"*—Jesus may have addressed this question to the man himself, but for what purpose we do not know. The demons, however, seem to have forced a reply as if it was addressed to them. The word "legion" referred to a division of the Roman army that contained in the time of Christ about six thousand men. Doubtless it here means a large but indefinite number. That one person was sometimes tormented by more than one evil spirit is seen from the case of Mary Magdalene out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons. (Mark 16: 9.) The text says "for many demons were entered into him." How many is not known, for there were two demoniacs, and the expression may have referred to both or to the one who was doing the talking. The fact that the herd of swine was about two thousand in number indicates that there were many demons. (Mark 5: 13.)

*"Into the Abyss."*—The word "abyss" is a Greek term translated in different versions—"the deep," "bottomless," and anglicized in the form "abyss." It is used nine times in the New Testament in the following texts: Rom. 10: 7; Rev. 9: 1, 2, 11; 11: 7; 17: 8; 20: 1, 3; and in our lesson. It clearly refers to the abode of demons or wicked spirits in all these texts but the first. There it is used as equivalent to Hades, the abode of Christ between death and his resurrection. Hades is a more comprehensive term and includes the abode of spirits, both bad and good. Here the abode of evil spirits is described as the abyss. Hades means "unseen," and the abyss would mean that part of the unseen where the evil dwell.

*Entered the Swine.*—For some reason the demons preferred to remain in this world rather than be returned to their proper abode. Asking to be permitted to enter the swine seems to indicate that they had to have some living body in which to dwell. It has been suggested that the demons in making this request may have desired to injure Jesus in that country. But it is not necessary to speculate regarding the motive that the demons had; it is enough to know the simple facts that are recorded. Much in the realm of spirits must remain a mystery to us while we are here. The text says that Jesus gave them leave—permitted them to enter the swine.

### IV. The Miracle Reported (Verses 34-36)

*The Swine Were Drowned.*—When the demons entered the swine they became so crazed that they rushed down the steep and were drowned in the lake. Skeptics criticize Jesus for commanding or permitting this destruction of property. It should be noted that he commanded the evil spirits to come out of the man, but he only permitted them to enter the swine. The Lord permits a lot of evil because he cannot do otherwise without taking man's ability from him. He might have permitted some contagious disease to kill the swine. If so, no one would criticize him for it. Since the Jews were forbidden to eat swine meat, that herd may have been kept by some Jew in violation of God's law. If so, the loss of his herd was nothing more than he deserved. If it were a Gentile's property, he may have used it to induce Israel to sin, and in that case the loss

was justified. But it is not necessary to show that any of these reasons are a satisfactory explanation. In the true sense Jesus with the Father rightfully owns all the property of the world. When he wishes to dispose of any of it in any way, that right is his regardless of who has personal rights in it. No property is man's except temporarily and conditionally; it is God's in the absolute.

*The Report Spread.*—The herdsmen who cared for the swine fled and spread the news of the miracle both in the city and the country. Restoring the demoniac and the drowning of the swine were both so remarkable that excitement was aroused at once. This caused the people to rush out to see for themselves. When they arrived where Jesus was they saw the demoniac "clothed and in his right mind" sitting at the feet of Jesus. Knowing the terrible state of the man as he dwelled in the tombs and roamed in the deserts, they were amazed to see him at Jesus' feet, evidently listening to the teaching that came from his lips. The text says they were afraid. Such circumstances would naturally fill all hearts with a solemn awe for Jesus' divine power. The herdsmen, and probably others who may have witnessed the things done, told them how the demoniac had been made whole.

### V. Jesus Leaves Their Country (Verse 37)

*"Asked Him to Depart."*—Luke says the reason they asked Jesus to depart from their country was that "they were holden with great fear." As already remarked this great fear was not surprising after such a manifestation of Christ's power, and such a circumstance as the destruction of more than two thousand swine at one time. Careful consideration of the fact that a man possessed with demons had been made whole should have made them want Jesus to remain with them. The fact that he could cast out demons was evidence that he could do other mighty works. The power to heal was one of the most necessary for their happiness in a temporal way, but apparently they feared the loss of more property. This seemed to weigh more heavily with them than the good Jesus did to the man. Whether all shared the same opinion or not is not known, but the fear of him was so general that they asked him to leave.

*Jesus Departed.*—Divine wisdom always enabled Jesus to know how long to stay in any place and the circumstances showed it wise to leave. This was not the only time when people ignorant of what was best for them refused to receive Jesus. Such opposition will hinder the work of a divine being. Jesus could not do many mighty works in his own home city of Nazareth because of the unbelief of the people. (Matt. 13: 54-58.)

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. We should not reject the reality of things simply because we cannot understand them. Nothing is more inexplicable than the nature of spirits, the Holy Spirit, our spirits, or evil spirits, yet there is no reason for denying the existence of any one of them.
2. Like condemned criminals awaiting in prison the day of their full punishment, so evil spirits know that the judgment is the time for their decreed punishment. They are held in their abode till that time. The spirits of the wicked dead are in a similar state.
3. The abode of the spirits of the dead is called Hades—the un-



seen. Since it is unthinkable that the wicked and righteous should remain in the same place while waiting for the resurrection, we are sure Jesus was right when he referred to the abode of the good as "paradise." This is a part of the unseen world across the gulf from the wicked.

4. The loss of property is not a pleasant thing, but it is a matter of small consideration when a human life is at stake. We do not stop to count the cost if a life may be saved. Nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of saving the soul.

5. Many sinners, like the Gerasenes, wish Jesus to depart from them. They do not realize that when they reject him they forfeit their privilege of receiving his blessings. This is foolish in view of the fact that we must meet him again at the judgment.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell the story of Jesus stilling the storm on the lake. (Luke 8: 22-25.)
2. Describe the raising of the daughter of Jairus. (Luke 8: 41, 42, 49-56.)
3. Sketch briefly the story of the rich man and Lazarus. (Luke 16: 19-31.)
4. Describe the cure of another demoniac. (Luke 4: 31-37.)
5. Assign topics for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### *I*

What apparent discrepancy appears here?  
How may the statements be understood?  
What do we learn from the Bible regarding demons?  
How did the evil spirit affect this man?

#### *II*

Who was it that cried out?  
Explain the words, "What have I to do with thee?"

What was meant by "before the time"?  
What was the occasion of the appeal?

#### *III*

Who was asked, "What is thy name"?  
How many demons were there?  
Explain the word "abyss."  
Why did the demons ask to enter the swine?

#### *IV*

What criticism is made by skeptics?  
What answers may be given to it?  
What effect did the report have on the people?

#### *V*

What did the people ask Jesus to do?  
What should they have done?  
Why did Jesus leave?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

### *Lesson IX—March 1, 1936*

### VISION AND SERVICE

Luke 9: 28-43.

28 And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, that he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up into the mountain to pray.

29 And as he was praying, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and dazzling.

30 And behold, there talked with him two men, who were Moses and Elijah;

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 Now Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: but when they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they were parting from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah: not knowing what he said.

34 And while he said these things, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my Son, my chosen: hear ye him.

36 And when the voice came, Jesus was found alone. And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen.

37 And it came to pass, on the next day, when they were come down from the mountain, a great multitude met him.

38 And behold, a man from the multitude cried, saying, Teacher, I beseech thee to look upon my son; for he is mine only child:

39 And behold, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth, and it hardly departeth from him, bruising him sorely.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast it out; and they could not.

41 And Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and bear with you? bring hither thy son.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the demon dashed him down, and tare him grievously. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

43 And they were all astonished at the majesty of God.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit."* (John 15: 5.)

TIME.—A.D. 29.

PLACE.—Probably Mount Hermon, near Cesarea Philippi.

PERSONS.—Jesus, Moses, Elijah, Peter, James, and John.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—2 Pet. 1: 16-21.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

February 24.	M.	Jesus in Prayer (Luke 9: 28-36)
February 25.	T.	Jesus in Service (Luke 9: 37-43)
February 26.	W.	Peter's Vision (Acts 10: 9-20)
February 27.	T.	Paul's Vision and Call (Acts 16: 6-10)
February 28.	F.	Love and Service (John 21: 5-17)
February 29.	S.	Prayer and Service (Acts 3: 1-10)
March 1.	S.	Vision and Service (Isa. 6: 1-8)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. Jesus in the Mountain (Verses 28-31).
- II. Peter Proposes to Build Three Tabernacles (Verses 32, 33).
- III. Jesus Proclaimed God's Son (Verses 34-36).
- IV. Disciples Fail to Cast Out a Demon (Verses 37-40).
- V. Jesus Casts Out the Demon (Verses 41-43).

Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—It was stated in last lesson that the time it occurred was indefinite, but was between the summer of A.D. 28 and the Passover of A.D. 29. As the transfiguration which is described in our present text occurred after making the journey to Cesarea Philippi, we are sure that it was in the summer of A.D. 29, some nine months before the crucifixion. This would indicate that a period of probably six months intervened between this and last lesson. However it



could have been more or less because of not being able to fix the time of last lesson very closely.

*Lesson Links.*—In the interval between this and last lesson Jesus made another tour through Galilee teaching and preaching in their villages. (Matt. 9: 35-38.) He sent out the twelve under the first commission, restricted their preaching to the Jews, but gave them power to heal and authority to preach the kingdom as at hand. (Matt. 10: 1, 5-10; Luke 9: 1-6.) The miracle of feeding the five thousand came in this period. After that was the miracle of walking on the water while they were rowing back to the west side of the lake. (John 6: 15-21.) From John 6: 4-21, compared with John 7: 1, it appears that Jesus did not attend the third Passover in his ministry because the Jews sought to kill him. He made a journey into the region of Tyre and Sidon (Matt. 15: 21-28), and returned to Galilee through Decapolis (verse 29). During this time other miracles were performed.

*Lesson Settings.*—This lesson occurred after Jesus and his disciples had completed their journey to Cesarea Philippi. It was while they were on this journey that Peter made the great confession recorded in Matt. 16: 13-20 and Jesus made the first announcement of his suffering and death at Jerusalem. This was an appropriate announcement to precede the transfiguration, which in its very nature was a vivid representation of the spiritual nature of his coming kingdom. The appearance of Moses and Elijah, both of whom had been dead for centuries, made the situation and occasion the appropriate time for the announcement of the superiority of Christ's work. There can be no question but that God wanted all to understand by this scene that Jesus' words were to supersede that which had been given by Moses and the prophets.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Jesus in the Mountain (Verses 28-31)

*"These Sayings."*—This expression refers doubtless to the statements regarding his suffering which he said was to take place at Jerusalem. (Luke 9: 22-26.) These statements were made apparently just after the confession made by Peter. Luke says his going into the mountain was "about eight days after these sayings." Matthew and Mark in the parallel passages both say "six days." An easy way to harmonize the apparent contradiction is to suppose that Matthew and Mark mean the six days intervening between the day of the sayings and that of the transfiguration, while Luke includes them in his statement. If that is the correct solution, the statements are strictly accurate. Since Luke uses the indefinite term "about," he may not have intended to give the exact time. If so, then there is no contradiction in the expressions.

*"Into the Mountain to Pray."*—The transfiguration probably occurred on some peak or spur of Mount Hermon which was in the region not far north of Cesarea Philippi. The record does not give the name of the mountain. It seems to have been the Lord's custom to pray much before important events. He continued all night in prayer before selecting the twelve apostles (Luke 6: 12-16), after feeding the thousands, and before the miracle of walking on the water (Matt. 14: 22, 23). His great prayers in the garden were just before his arrest and trial. (Luke 2: 39-46.) He took with him into

the mountain Peter and John and James. They were with him at the raising of the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5: 37), and in the garden before his arrest (Mark 14: 33). Probably as natural leaders among the apostles they needed the encouragement that the transfiguration would give.

*"Countenance Was Altered."*—Matthew and Mark use a term that means to change the form or figure, but Luke gives the meaning of the word by saying his "countenance was altered." This he further explains by saying his "raiment became white and dazzling." Matthew says "his face did shine as the sun." (Matt. 17: 2.) All this splendor and glory was of his appearance only. That it was sublime beyond words to adequately describe seems evident. We can only accept the record as being absolutely correct and leave it at that. The text indicates that this change of countenance occurred as he prayed.

*Moses and Elijah.*—It was appropriate that these two worthy servants of God should have been present. Moses was the writer of the old law, and its types and shadows were to be fulfilled and brought to an end by Jesus in his death. Elijah was perhaps the most distinguished prophet in the Mosaic dispensation and the type of John the Baptist, Christ's forerunner. (Mal. 4: 5; Luke 1: 17.) As the most important prophecies were to be fulfilled in Christ, Elijah's presence was the proper thing. The text says they appeared "in glory." As they had been dead for centuries, this proves that their spirits continued to exist after the body died. "In glory" means as they were in the spiritual or glorified state in Hades, the intermediate realm. They spoke of his decease (death), probably because it was by it he was to redeem the world.

## II. Peter Proposes to Build Three Tabernacles (Verses 32, 33)

*"Heavy with Sleep."*—The expression regarding the apostles being heavy with sleep makes it not improbable that the transfiguration occurred at night. Perhaps the apostles were weary and sought rest while the Master continued his prayer. In such a state it was doubtless hard to remain fully awake. The next expression says "when they were fully awake." This would mean that, though drowsy, they were not completely asleep; hence, the glorious light beginning to shine would arouse them at once. The margin says "having remained awake." If this be the correct translation here, the thought is this: Though borne down with drowsiness, they managed to remain awake, and were, of course, ready to witness the transfiguration. This fact enabled them to say later that they were "eyewitnesses of his majesty" in the holy mount. (2 Pet. 1: 16-18.)

*Peter's Offer.*—The scene naturally filled the three disciples with awe, or as Mark puts it, "they became sore afraid." (Mark 9: 6.) It is no surprise that they thought such a manifestation of divine majesty was a great favor. Peter's offer to build three tabernacles indicates that they wanted to keep the spiritual visitors with them. Just why is not stated further than to say, "It is good for us to be here." When recording the event Mark and Luke say that Peter knew not what he said, or what to say. Under the ecstasy of the moment his kindness exceeded his judgment, and his impulsiveness led him to suggest the unreasonable thing.



### III. Jesus Proclaimed God's Son (Verses 34-36)

*"There Came a Cloud."*—While Peter was speaking these words a cloud overshadowed them. The fact that the cloud excited fear indicates that it was not an ordinary cloud. A cloud seemed a symbol of the divine presence. A "pillar of cloud" led the Israelites in the wilderness. (Ex. 14: 19, 20.) Jehovah appeared in a cloud upon Mount Sinai and spake the ten commandments. (Ex. 19: 16-19.) As Jews the three apostles would not be surprised to hear God speak out of the cloud. In the form of a cloud God's presence dwelled in the temple. (1 Kings 8: 10, 11.) Naturally, the presence of the cloud led them to conclude that they were in the divine presence.

*"Hear Ye Him."*—This is the second time that God had announced audibly that Jesus was his Son. (Matt. 3: 17.) He is called God's chosen or beloved Son. This must mean that he occupied a relationship to the Father different from any other one. Matthew adds the words "in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 17: 5), while all three writers give the expression "hear ye him." These words were to show that they must be ready to hear Jesus above all others, and especially to hear him rather than Moses and the prophets. With their selfish notion of a material kingdom remaining with them till Jesus' ascension to heaven (Acts 1: 6), they did not understand the full significance of these words, but when the event was recorded later they knew that Christ was to be heard—that his words were final.

*"Held Their Peace."*—Verse 34 says they entered the cloud. When the voice "came" (the margin says *was past*) Jesus was alone; Moses and Elijah had departed for their abode. Matthew says that when the apostles heard the word they fell on their face. Jesus touched them and said, "Arise, and be not afraid." When they lifted up their eyes they saw Jesus only. Matthew says that as they came down the mountain Jesus charged them not to tell the event till after the resurrection. Our text says they told no man in those days what they had seen. While he was with them, it was unnecessary for them to tell it.

### IV. Disciples Fail to Cast Out a Demon (Verses 37-40)

*"Look Upon My Son."*—The next day after the transfiguration they came down the mountain probably to the place where he left the other nine apostles. A multitude met him. Some of these were doubtless his disciples, others those attracted to him because of his teaching. When he came to his disciples he found the scribes questioning with them. (Mark 9: 14.) Probably the scribes were plying the disciples with questions they were not handling very successfully, and the unexpected return of the Master would create amazement—joy to the disciples and embarrassment to the scribes. In the multitude there was a man who asked Jesus to look upon his afflicted son, being deeply concerned because he was an only child. Matthew says the man asked Jesus to have mercy on his son. He meant that he wanted his son healed and he believed Jesus was able to heal him.

*The Affliction.*—Evil spirits seemed to afflict different persons in various ways. In some cases the trouble apparently was much worse than in others. The demons themselves may have been of different character. In this case the spirit would cause him to cry out. The text also says "teareth" him, but the margin says "convulseth."

Matthew refers to him as a lunatic, saying that he oft fell into the water or into the fire. Luke mentions his foaming, and says that the spirit hardly departed from him. All of this means that the spirit frequently threw him into convulsions that often resulted in harm to his body.

*"They Could Not."*—The father told Jesus that the disciples could not cast the demon out. Luke gives a statement that implies the reason for their failure, but does not state definitely why they failed. Matthew says plainly that Jesus said it was because of their little faith. (Matt. 17: 20.) Doubtless the questions of the scribes were to discredit Jesus, and this had filled the disciples with more or less fear, the very thing that prevented their being able to perform the miracle. This shows that those able and authorized to work miracles could not do so, if they allowed doubt to enter their heart. See the failure of Peter in walking on the water. (Matt. 14: 28-31.)

### V. Jesus Casts Out the Demon (Verses 41-43)

*"O Faithless Generation."*—That the scribes, Pharisees, and other enemies of Jesus did not believe is no surprise, because they would not allow themselves to honestly consider his works. If they had, they would have believed also. After the disciples had seen so many marvelous works, it is surprising that they allowed the criticisms to fill their minds with fear. Still human nature is weak, and temptations are strong. The conversation as reported by Mark contains the thought that the father also had to believe. (Mark 9: 22-24.) The father's faith was not necessary to enable Jesus to perform such a cure, but it was necessary to show that the father was worthy to receive such a priceless favor.

*"Healed the Boy."*—Jesus commanded the boy to be brought to him. That spirit evidently was especially vicious and, as they were bringing the boy to Jesus, it dashed him down and convulsed him grievously. The demon doubtless realized what was about to take place and tried to torment the boy in the most bitter way possible. But this could not defeat divine power. At the rebuke of Jesus the spirit left the boy and he was healed and given back to his father. Jesus said that kind of demon could come out "by nothing, save by prayer." (Mark 9: 29.) It was only by earnest prayer that they would keep themselves beyond any doubt. They were all astonished at the majesty of God. The disciples' failure made the Lord's work conspicuous.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. If the Master himself, in meeting the great ordeals of his life in becoming our Savior, needed those seasons of earnest prayer for comfort and strength, we with our weak nature cannot need less. It is the way we keep our faith constant and true to him. Victories over sin are not won when a shadow of doubt creeps into our hearts.

2. Ignorance and uncontrolled enthusiasm often make us propose to do the wrong thing. Just because a thing seems right does not make it so. Errors in religious activity are just as easily made as in other matters; they are the most dangerous kind. (Prov. 14: 12.)

3. "Hear ye him" is one of the most important statements ever uttered. Jesus asserted that the difference between a wise man and a fool was the difference between hearing his words and doing them



and only hearing them. Heaven's law demands obedience to Jesus; there is no way to evade it and accept him as the Son of God.

4. People shrink from attempting to do what God requires just in proportion as their faith weakens. Abraham looked to the promise of God, "wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith," and gave glory to God. (Rom. 4: 20.) That is the key to open the door of success in serving God.

5. Those who come to God in obedience to his command, "fully assured that what he had promised" he is able to perform, will succeed in his service just as did Abraham of old.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the different opinions held regarding Jesus. (Luke 9: 7-9; Matt. 14: 1, 2; Luke 9: 18-20.)
2. Describe the feeding of the five thousand. (Luke 9: 10-17.)
3. Discuss Jesus' value of the soul of man. (Luke 9: 24-27.)
4. Point out the difficulties that may have to be met in following Jesus as his disciple. (Luke 9: 57-62.)
5. Assign topics for next lesson.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

To what does "these sayings" refer?  
How harmonize "six days" and "about eight days"?  
What mountain and where located?  
What is meant by "transfiguration"?  
Why were Moses and Elijah present?

#### **II**

When did the transfiguration probably occur?  
What is meant by "they were fully awake"?

How did the scene affect the apostles?  
What did Peter propose to do?

#### **III**

Explain the statement about the cloud.  
On what occasions did God proclaim Jesus as his Son?  
What is meant by "hear ye him"?  
What did Jesus command the three disciples not to do?

#### **IV**

What is meant by "look upon my son"?  
Describe the boy's affliction.  
Why did the disciples fail to cast out the demon?

#### **V**

Why were they a faithless generation?  
Describe the healing.

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

### *Lesson X—March 8, 1936*

## JESUS TEACHES NEIGHBORLINESS

Luke 10: 25-37.

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and made trial of him, saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?  
30 Jesus made answer and said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance a certain priest was going down that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion.

34 And came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine: and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow he took out two shillings, and gave them to the host, and said, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee.

36 Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers?

37 And he said, He that showed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." (Luke 10: 27.)

**TIME.**—A.D. 29.

**PLACE.**—Probably spoken in Perea.

**PERSONS.**—Jesus, the lawyer, and characters of the parable.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Matt. 5: 38-48.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

March 2.	M.	Who Is My Neighbor (Luke 10: 25-37)
March 3.	T.	Loving One's Neighbor (Matt. 19: 16-22)
March 4.	W.	Neighborly Relations (Rom. 13: 1-10)
March 5.	T.	Job as Neighbor (Job 31: 16-23)
March 6.	F.	A Home of Hospitality (John 12: 1-8)
March 7.	S.	A Friend in Need (2 Tim. 4: 9-18)
March 8.	S.	A Good Neighbor (Matt. 5: 38-48)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

Introductory Study.

- I. A Lawyer Questions Jesus (Verses 25-27).
  - II. A Reply and a Second Question (Verses 28, 29).
  - III. Lack of Neighborliness Illustrated (Verses 30-32).
  - IV. An Example of True Neighborliness (Verses 33-35).
  - V. The Parable Applied (Verses 36, 37).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—The transfiguration, which was the event described in our last lesson, occurred in the summer of A.D. 29. After that Jesus returned to Galilee where he remained some time. (Matt. 17: 24.) He then returned to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of Tabernacles. (John 7: 2, 10, 14.) This feast began on the fifteenth day of the seventh Jewish month, or about October 1. (Lev. 23: 33-36.) As this lesson probably came soon after this feast, it shows that about three months elapsed since the preceding lesson.

**Lesson Links.**—It was probably on their return to Galilee, after curing the demoniac, that Jesus rebuked his disciples because of their ambition. (Luke 9: 46-48.) After reaching Capernaum he performed a miracle in getting money to pay tribute for himself and Peter. (Matt. 17: 24-27.) About this time he gave the teaching on how to treat brethren who sin against you. (Matt. 18: 15-35.) He made



a private journey to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles, and his teaching created much disagreement about who he was. (John 7: 14-43.) The Jews became so incensed at his teaching in the temple that they attempted to stone him. (John 8: 54-59.) While there he opened the eyes of the man that had been born blind, a discussion of which is found in the ninth chapter of John. This was followed by his discourse on the good shepherd. (John 10: 1-21.) In Luke 10: 1-24 we have the account of sending out the seventy disciples and their return and report of their labors.

*Lesson Settings.*—The teachings and miracles of Jesus frequently led some one to question him on some important matter. The hatred of many prompted them to ask questions, not for information, but to entrap him or get some excuse for denouncing him as an impostor. Some others, perhaps, were really honest, and desired information on some subject that had been perplexing them for a long time. The lawyer whose questions are recorded in our lesson text belonged to the former class. This incident probably happened at or near Jerusalem, but the exact place is not known. Jesus answered questions promptly, and usually gave the questioner something more than he was expecting. This lawyer probably thought he would be able to expose Jesus as a false teacher, or one whose teaching conflicted with their accepted understanding of the law and traditions.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. A Lawyer Questions Jesus (Verses 25-27)

*"What Shall I Do?"*—The word lawyer here is not used in the ordinary acceptance of that term. It means a teacher of the Mosaic law, and probably then meant about the same as the scribes, because they were not only professional copyists, but teachers as well. There was doubtless quite a crowd around Jesus, and the lawyer stood up to attract attention to himself and the question he proposed to ask. His intention was to make trial of Jesus—test his ability to answer difficult questions of the law. He was probably feigning a desire to learn the truth when he really wanted to perplex Jesus. His question, what to do to inherit eternal life, was one about which the Jews were doubtless seriously concerned. That is a vital question to anyone who believes in God. He may have entertained the idea that there was some one special thing more important than all else.

*"What Is Written?"*—Jesus did not answer directly, but turned questioner himself and asked the lawyer what was written. As a lawyer he would know that what the law taught was the rule by which the problem should be solved. Jesus put the matter upon the accepted ground of the efficiency of God's law, a thing the lawyer could not deny. He probably thought Jesus was a lawbreaker and would therefore have something different from their law to offer. But Jesus had said that no part of the law should pass away till all was fulfilled (Matt. 5: 17, 18), which fulfillment had not been completed. The Mosaic law being still in force, the lawyer could answer his own question by reading the law. It had not been nailed to the cross and the lawyer was at that moment subject to its requirements. The question was not what a man should do to be saved after Jesus abolished the law (Eph. 2: 15, 16), but what he should do then as a subject of the law before its abolishment. The answer of Jesus met the situation exactly.

*"Love the Lord Thy God."*—The lawyer answered Jesus' question by referring to the two basic laws of the entire Jewish system. Loving God with all the heart, soul, strength, and mind is the foundation upon which rests every religious duty to God in all covenants. If he so loved God, he would keep his commandments, and Solomon said that was man's whole duty. (Eccles. 12: 13.) Loving one's neighbor as oneself covers all moral obligations to others. If the lawyer was doing that, he knew without further inquiry he would receive eternal life, unless he ceased to obey God. The same rule is applicable to all now under the new covenant.

## II. A Reply and a Second Question (Verses 28, 29)

*"Answered Right."*—The lawyer had probably started in to confound Jesus, but found himself perplexed at the fact that Jesus referred him to the very law he professed to teach. He knew the basic principles of his own law, and quoted the very ones to answer his own question. Jesus promptly told him he had given the right answer to the question and said, "This do, and thou shalt live." In this reply Jesus drew a sharp distinction between wholehearted obedience to God's law, and the superficial theorizing of the scribes and Pharisees, who said much but did practically nothing. With their traditions they had made void the most solemn requirements of the Mosaic system. (Matt. 15: 1-9.) In this reply Jesus presented the vital principle of man's acceptance with God; not hearers but doers of the law shall be justified, and that in their doing they shall be blessed. (James 1: 25.) This apparently killed the lawyer's desire to make trial of Jesus and led to another question.

*"Desiring to Justify Himself."*—Probably his consciousness that his conduct would not harmonize with the plain import of God's commands, he was ready to take the defensive and try to vindicate himself. He probably felt that he had kept the religious part of God's commands and was safe on that point. The doubt was about having loved his neighbor as himself. If that could be defined in the way he wanted it, he might think himself safe on that, too. Hence, his request for Jesus to tell him who his neighbor was. The Jews doubtless felt that the law on neighborliness applied only to themselves. With that definition he might have congratulated himself as having been faithful. But even with that limitation, he might have been much short of his duty.

## III. Lack of Neighborliness Illustrated (Verses 30-32)

*A Parable.*—Jesus does not here use the word "parable" or any form of comparison, but the form of expression is such that we know the story is a parable. It contains an example of the lesson taught, and is based upon what might easily occur. Parables refer to what does happen or could happen; they should be distinguished from fables and other impossible stories.

*"Jerusalem to Jericho."*—Jericho was situated some eighteen miles northeast of Jerusalem and about seven miles west of the Jordan. The record says he went "down from Jerusalem to Jericho." This corresponds with the lay of the country. Travelers put the descent as about 3,500 feet. It is said that after leaving Bethany the way soon enters a rocky, mountainous section, bare and solitary. Such territory furnished a convenient place for all kinds of robbers to



engage in their nefarious business. Such seems to have been the situation from the time of Jesus till the present. Jericho being an important city, the road would naturally be a thoroughfare. When Jesus represented the man as falling among robbers, he mentioned what was well known as a common occurrence. Those determined to take by force what is not theirs have no regard for any rights of others. They do not stop at bodily torture or even death.

*"He Passed By."*—Jesus says that "by chance" a priest was going down that way; that is, the man happened to be there at the time the priest was traveling this road. It is said that Jericho was the home of several thousand priests who filled their courses in the temple service at Jerusalem. Naturally they would be traveling the road frequently. When he saw the wounded man he passed by on the other side. Doubtless the man was a Jew, one of his own race, which would be an additional incentive to appeal to his mercy and kindness. "Passed by on the other side" now proverbially stands for the act of shirking a known duty when the opportunity to meet it is present. Being a neighbor required kindness and mercy when one is in need. On no one was this obligation supposed to rest more than on the priests who were professedly ministering in behalf of the people. Refusing to consider the half-dead man was a total lack of neighborliness. A Levite, a helper of the priests, also serving in the behalf of the people, did in like manner, "passed by on the other side." His action was disappointing for the same reasons as was that of the priest.

#### IV. An Example of True Neighborliness (Verses 33-35)

*"Moved with Compassion."*—In contrast with the priest and Levite Jesus says "a certain Samaritan," in making a journey over that road, saw the man and had compassion on him. The Samaritans were inveterate enemies of the Jews. (John 4: 9.) This made his conduct all the more striking while he helped the wounded man who had been passed by in such cold-blooded manner by two of his own race. One who was not expected to have any interest in a Jew overcame his own natural hostility to them and showed the genuine spirit of a neighbor, administering to his needs. The priest and Levite would not help their own afflicted brother; the Samaritan had compassion on a hated stranger. Neighborliness never had a better manifestation.

*The Deeds of Mercy.*—The Samaritan did not express sympathy and then pass on, leaving the man to suffer and die; he rendered such immediate aid as would bring comfort to the suffering man. He bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. The oil and wine, probably mixed, was a common remedy used in treating wounds. In using them the Samaritan was trying to alleviate the physical suffering. He then put the man on his own beast and brought him to the inn where he could be cared for, and rendered that first service himself. He paid the innkeeper two shillings, left the man in his care, and agreed to pay any extra charges. His neighborliness consisted in rendering personal service to the man in need, and in making sacrifices for his extra requirements. In other words, he gave both time and money.

### V. The Parable Applied (Verses 36, 37)

*Which Proved Neighbor?*—In asking the lawyer to say which of the three really proved neighbor to the man that fell among robbers, Jesus made the lawyer become his own judge; forced him to answer his own question. He asked, "Who is my neighbor?" The parable lays before him the true facts, and he does not need any one to tell who acted the neighbor to the wounded man. This manner of answering the question was far more satisfactory than a simple declaration that one who showed mercy was a neighbor. It was presenting the matter in concrete form that could not be misunderstood, and in so convincing a way that the lawyer could not deny it.

*The Lawyer's Answer.*—Only one answer was possible, and the lawyer was honest and fair enough to admit it. He said the neighbor was "he that showed mercy on him." What the final results were in the lawyer's case we do not know, but we do know he was frank enough to admit what was clearly true. This is a commendable thing.

*Do Likewise.*—The parting thought recorded in our text was the command of Jesus, "Go, and do thou likewise." It is one thing to know what is right, but another to do it. Some believed on Jesus, but would not confess him lest they be put out of the synagogue. (John 12: 42, 43.) It would have amounted to very little for the lawyer to know who was acting the neighbor, if he were not willing to do likewise. Jesus meant for us to have this same lesson.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Regardless of the age in which a man has lived, the most vital question that can be asked is the same propounded by the lawyer to Jesus, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The terms of salvation have varied in different covenants, but the necessity of being saved remains the same; something must be done about it.

2. The desire to find a way to justify our neglect or disobedience often causes us to turn away from the plain and simple duty that is right before us. Receiving the right answer to our questions is of little value unless we are willing to accept and practice it.

3. Often the best servants of the Lord are found among those we least expect to have any interest at all. Hatred for another does not show that his heart is sinful or his life bad; the trouble may be located in our own narrowness and selfishness. A real neighbor is one whose life is modeled after the Golden Rule.

4. Obedience to the gospel is the way to show our love for God; a heart of compassion that manifests itself in kindness to those in distress is the way to show that we are truly genuine neighbors. "By their fruits ye shall know them" is no more true of trees than of men. We should love in deed and not in word only.

5. Since we are continually imitating examples, why not see to it that those we do imitate are good ones? Doing the right will often cost something in time, labor, or sacrifice, but the results will justify any effort required to follow the worthy example.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell the story of Jesus sending out the seventy disciples. (Luke 10: 1-11.)

2. Describe the visit of Jesus to the home of Mary and Martha. (Luke 10: 38-42.)



3. Describe the judgment scene as presented in Matt. 25: 31-46.  
 4. Discuss this subject as it is found in James 2: 14-18.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
 Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
 Repeat the Lesson Links.  
 Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

What is the meaning of the word lawyer?  
 In what way did Jesus answer his question?  
 What had Jesus said about the law?  
 What laws did the lawyer mention in his reply?

#### II

What did Jesus say to the lawyer in reply?  
 What distinction did Jesus here present?  
 Why did the lawyer ask another question?

To whom did the Jews think this law applied?

#### III

What is the nature of a parable?  
 Describe the road from Jerusalem to Jericho.  
 How did the priest and Levite act?  
 What position did these men occupy?

#### IV

How did the Jews and Samaritans regard each other?  
 Describe the treatment given the man by the Samaritan.

#### V

What question did Jesus ask, and why?  
 What was the lawyer's answer?  
 What was the final instruction of Jesus?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.

### Lesson XI—March 15, 1936

## JESUS TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES TO PRAY

Luke 11: 1-13.

1 And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Father, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him;

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee?

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 And of which of you that is a father shall his son ask a loaf, and he give him a stone? or a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us."* (1 John 5: 14.)

TIME.—A.D. 29.

PLACE.—Somewhere in Perea, east of the Jordan.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his disciples.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 6: 6-15.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

March 9.	M.	Prayer to the Heavenly Father (Luke 11: 1-13)
March 10.	T.	Prayer and Power (Mark 9: 17-29)
March 11.	W.	Prayer a Safeguard (Luke 22: 39-46)
March 12.	T.	God Answers Prayer (Acts 9: 10-19)
March 13.	F.	Prayer and Guidance (Acts 10: 1-8)
March 14.	S.	Prayer and Deliverance (Acts 12: 1-11)
March 15.	S.	Sincerity in Prayer (Matt. 6: 6-15)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Disciples Taught How to Pray (Verses 1-4).
  - II. Disciples Taught to Persevere in Prayer (Verses 5-8).
  - III. Requests Must Be Made (Verses 9, 10).
  - IV. God Gives Good Things (Verses 11-13).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—It is probable that the last lesson came not long after the Feast of Tabernacles, about October 1. The Feast of Dedication was about the twentieth of December. This feast was kept to commemorate the cleansing of the temple in 164 B.C. after it had been polluted by Antiochus Epiphanes. (Josephus Ant. XII, Chapter 7, Sections 6, 7.) This lesson, as well as the last, came between these feasts. Since the time was a little less than three months, it is probable that these lessons were not very far apart. In fact, they may have been very close together.

*Lesson Links.*—As we do not know just how much time elapsed between this and last lesson we do not know how many things happened. Apparently only one thing has been recorded that seems to have come in this period. That event is the visit of Jesus to the home of Mary and Martha given in Luke 10: 38-42. It was the time that Martha was cumbered with much serving and disappointed because Mary chose to sit at the Lord's feet to hear his teaching. Jesus said that "but one thing is needful," and that Mary had chosen the good part. Other things may have happened in this interval that are not recorded. It is entirely probable that only a small part of what Jesus said and did in his ministry is reported by the apostles. John assures us that Jesus did many other signs than what he had recorded. (John 20: 30, 31.)

*Lesson Settings.*—The language in our lesson is in part the same as found in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus taught the disciples how to pray. That was on a mountain near the Sea of Galilee, while this was in a "certain place" probably in Judea. Just where that particular place was is not known. This lesson was spoken about four months before the crucifixion; the so-called Lord's prayer (Matt. 6: 9-15) was spoken more than a year earlier. The time and occasion for our present lesson were entirely different from that.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Disciples Taught How to Pray (Verses 1-4)

"As He Was Praying."—Here again Luke makes note of the Savior's praying. He more than any other one of them mentions this fact. He tells us of Jesus praying at his baptism (Luke 3: 21);



that he withdrew himself into the deserts and prayed (Luke 6: 16); that he went into the mountain to pray just before selecting his apostles (Luke 6: 12); that on another occasion he departed from the disciples to pray (Luke 9: 18); and that he was praying when he was transfigured (Luke 9: 27, 28). Such examples could not fail to impress the disciples with the importance of prayer and make them realize the necessity of knowing how to pray acceptably.

*"Teach Us to Pray."*—Jesus had already taught them how to pray in the Sermon on the Mount, but that sample prayer was so short that this disciple may have thought they needed more instruction, for they knew that Jesus often prayed a long time. Besides, it is not uncommon for persons to ask to have instruction repeated, especially when they consider it important. Or, it is possible that this disciple was one of the seventy or some one becoming a disciple later, and was not in the company when the Sermon on the Mount was spoken. The rabbis probably taught forms of prayer, and the language here shows that John had done the same, though none of these prayers are preserved in the sacred text. These customs may have prompted the disciples of Jesus to request instruction on the matter.

*"When Ye Pray."*—As the disciple's words clearly mean he wanted Jesus to teach them *how* to pray, the reply must be understood in the same light. Jesus was not giving them a *form* of words to be repeated, but teaching the *manner* in which they should pray. (Matt. 6: 9.) The address to God in our lesson text is slightly different to that in Matthew. This indicates that the statements were made on different occasions, and that no exact form of words is to be used to make an acceptable prayer. Either form can be used, if desired, or either can be changed. The Bible gives no formal set prayers to be repeated. Neither this nor that in Matt. 6: 9-15 is the "Lord's prayer," as is often said, but prayers he taught his disciples.

*"Thy Kingdom Come."*—Since the disciples had been taught by both John the Baptist and Christ that the kingdom was "at hand," and therefore future at that time, it was strictly appropriate that they pray for the kingdom to come. To pray that now would not be appropriate, if the word kingdom is understood in the sense they used it then. Undoubtedly the word kingdom meant the one Jesus came to found, and that began on Pentecost after his ascension. To pray now for that to come is to reject the plain teaching of the New Testament on the subject. Prayers to be scriptural must be in harmony with plain facts. Prayers appropriate at one time might not be at another.

*Other Petitions.*—Praying for daily bread would imply the privilege of asking for any other temporal benefit for our bodies. Asking for our daily wants also shows that we should be content with what we need. Praying for forgiveness of sins is clearly a privilege, but the assurance of its availing anything for us depends upon our willingness to forgive those who sin against us. Nothing is here said about the sinner repenting, which Jesus makes necessary to salvation (Luke 13: 3), for he is only showing the manner in which we should pray. The repentance must be understood because clearly taught elsewhere. All pious hearts will wish to escape temptations.

## II. Disciples Taught to Persevere in Prayer (Verses 5-8)

*Subject Illustrated.*—Jesus here presents a picture of a situation in which there is an emergency to be met under inconvenient circumstances. This is a fine way to show the need of persistence. It is practically the same lesson presented with a different setting to teach that men "ought always to pray, and not to faint." (Luke 18: 1.) An appeal to a friend for a kindness exactly represents asking God for his divine favors. Going to him at an inconvenient season will test his friendship, and may require an extra appeal or persistence to gain the favor.

*The Suppliant's Condition.*—A friend from a journey had unexpectedly arrived and he had nothing to set before him. Conditions often arise when we realize that we are powerless to meet them without assistance; we must then turn to our friends for help. There is probably no significance in saying three loaves. He had to ask for some amount and that was probably what he needed to meet the emergency. Whatever we are sure we need is the thing for which we should ask; asking for more is contrary to the true spirit of prayer.

*The Friend's Reply.*—The friend pleaded the situation as an excuse for not granting the request. He said the door was shut, his children were in bed, and he could not arise to give him anything. This part of the story applies to men, and is put in to fill out the picture according to human conduct, but does not represent God's action. The only part of the story that fits with our prayers to God is that of persistence—a continuance to pray to God for what we realize we need. God may delay giving us what we ask for, or not give it at all, because his wisdom knows that it is not best for us. But he hears any and all prayers that are offered in harmony with his will. (1 John 3: 22.) Failure to receive what we ask for may test our faith, but unfaltering trust in God will lead to persistent pleadings.

*"His Importunity."*—The man, Jesus says, will not arise and give because of friendship, but because of the importunity—meaning that he will do so to avoid trouble and inconvenience to himself. If one so selfish could be won through perseverance to do what he did not want to do, surely God, who is willing to bless all sincerely coming to him, will hear our prayers. We are then encouraged to come to him, not as to a selfish friend, but a loving Father who is willing to hear and bless.

## III. Requests Must Be Made (Verses 9, 10)

*Ask, Seek, Knock.*—Having shown by the example of the selfish friend yielding to importunity that prayer to God, a loving Father, would be heard, Jesus drops the illustration and plainly commands them to ask for what they desired. Even though God knows what we need before we ask him, and is watching over us with tender care, it is best for us to ask him for his blessings. That he bestows upon us untold blessings for which we do not ask cannot be doubted, but even that does not excuse us from showing proper filial respect in recognizing our dependence upon him. We are given full assurance by Jesus that God will give to us. Of course, it is implied that we will ask in harmony with his will. Nothing else would correspond with his infinite wisdom and our human weakness. Seek-



ing and knocking are just two other expressions that mean the same thing.

*The Promise.*—We are given full and unmistakable assurance that God will hear our prayers. This assurance rests upon the direct promise of Jesus himself, and cannot be doubted or disputed, if we accept him as God's Son. Men often fail to receive what they ask for from men because their requests are unreasonable, wrong, or impossible. Refusal to give when we ask is no surprise; we know it must often be that way. If we are unwilling to comply with the terms demanded, we do not expect to have our requests granted. We can never find what we seek, if we look where the object cannot be; we find benefits when we come to where they dwell. Doors are not opened unless we knock in the proper manner. All this shows that while we are urged to persevere in our prayers to God, we must pray in keeping with his holy word. Prayers must be in faith (James 1: 6-8); they must not be for the purpose of gratifying lusts (James 4: 3); they must be offered by those who keep God's commandments (1 John 3: 22); they must be petitions that are according to God's will (1 John 5: 14, 15). Unless these plain conditions are complied with the promise that we will receive what we ask for will not be true. Meanings must not be put on scriptures that are in clear conflict with other teaching on the same subject.

#### IV. God Gives Good Things (Verses 11-13)

*A Father's Love.*—Having shown the necessity of persistence in our petitions with the assurance that God would answer our prayers, the Savior now shows that God, as a loving Father, will give only that which is good for us. Children in their ignorance often ask for what is not best for them and have to be denied. There is no better evidence of a father's love for his child than the fact that he will not give it that which might harm it. No amount of earnest pleading should prevent his following this course. No loving father will willingly give something harmful to his child. Jesus asked for an example of one who would give his son a stone when he asked for bread. The reply, of course, would be, no one will do that. Or, if a son should ask for a fish, the father would not give him a serpent, nor a scorpion instead of an egg. Illustrating with this well-known manner of fathers answering their children's prayers, Jesus taught that God will not give us what is harmful and dangerous, even if we do ask for it. He will not do wrong, though our own ignorance might ask him to do so. When we ask and receive not, we can be assured that we are either asking for something not best for us, or we are not complying with the conditions of acceptable prayer. Human fathers may, through weakness, fail to always give us the best thing, but our heavenly Father is subject to no such weakness; he will make no mistakes and his gifts will always be the best the situation will allow.

*"How Much More."*—If men who confessedly are subject to mistakes always strive to do the best thing for their children, how much more can we trust the wisdom and goodness of God to give us what we need. No one can doubt this without doubting God's infinite wisdom and love. In the parallel passage (Matt. 7: 11) Jesus says God will give "good things" to them that ask him. Here the promise is that God will give the "Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Of course,

the Holy Spirit would be a good gift, but this promise must be construed in harmony with all expressed facts. The Holy Spirit in various miraculous measures was imparted then and throughout the apostolic age. No such powers are bestowed now; hence, we could not now receive it in such measures. The word of God is the language of the Spirit, and those who fill their minds with his words are enjoying the Spirit's blessings. "Filled" with the Spirit and having the word dwelling in us richly lead to the same thing. (Eph. 5: 18, 19; Col. 3: 16.)

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. In trying to learn anything it is best to get the knowledge from the source that is the most perfect. In all things Jesus is our best example. Others may furnish many commendable characteristics or practices, but Jesus presents to us the faultless ones. Nothing equals having the best.

2. Worth-while success is bought at the price of persistence. Jesus said: "But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." (Matt. 24: 13.) Journeys not completed fail of their purpose and the effort made is lost. Difficulties and obstacles make it all the more necessary that determined efforts be made.

3. In material things God places what we need where we can get it, invites us to accept it. But the law in the case demands that we comply with the conditions which nature imposes. Unless we have energy and interest enough to work, we will not get what God wants us to have. Spiritual blessings, likewise, are to be received by those who seek them in obedience to the gospel commands.

4. The most careful parents often fail to provide the best for their children; sometimes they do not know what is best. But our heavenly Father with his infinite wisdom will make no mistake. What he provides for us is always the best thing under the circumstances. It may not always seem so to us, but we do not always know what is best.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the charge that some brought against Jesus. (Luke 11: 14-23.)
2. Discuss the lessons found in Luke 11: 29-32.
3. Point out the lesson in Luke 11: 37-40.
4. Give the discussion of the efficacy of prayer as it is recorded in James 5: 16-18.
5. Describe Solomon's prayer and God's answer. (1 Kings 3: 6-15.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

What reference does Luke make to Jesus' praying?  
What request was made by a disciple?

How account for the question being asked?  
What phase of prayer is meant?  
Why tell them to pray "thy kingdom come"?  
What other petitions are mentioned?

#### II

How did Jesus illustrate the subject?  
How is the subject presented in Luke 18: 1?  
Why explain the suppliant's condition?  
How can the story be applied to God?



Why did the friend finally answer the man's request?

## III

What commands are given in these verses?

Why necessary to ask when God knows what we need?

What assurance have we that our prayers will be answered?

What kind of prayers are acceptable?

## IV

What is the lesson taught in verses 11 and 12?

What is the lesson in verse 13?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson XII—March 22, 1936*

## JESUS TEACHES TRUE VALUES

Luke 12: 22-34.

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.

23 For the life is more than the food, and the body than the raiment.

24 Consider the ravens, that they sow not, neither reap; which have no store-chamber nor barn; and God feedeth them: of how much more value are ye than the birds!

25 And which of you by being anxious can add a cubit unto the measure of his life?

26 If then ye are not able to do even that which is least, why are ye anxious concerning the rest?

27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; yet I say unto you, Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28 But if God doth so clothe the grass in the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more shall he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: but your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 Yet seek ye his kingdom, and these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that which ye have, and give alms; make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*"Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* (Matt. 6: 33.)

**TIME.**—A.D. 29.

**PLACE.**—Perea, beyond the Jordan.

**PERSONS.**—Jesus and his disciples.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 23.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**

March 16.	M.	Minor Values (Luke 12: 13-21)
March 17.	T.	Major Values (Luke 12: 22-34)
March 18.	W.	Imperishable Values (John 6: 25-40)
March 19.	T.	The Abundant Life (John 10: 7-10)
March 20.	F.	The Greatest in the Kingdom (Matt. 20: 20-27)
March 21.	S.	Things Most Worth While (Mark 9: 33-37)
March 22.	S.	God's Goodness and Mercy (Psalm 23)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**

Introductory Study.

I. Undue Anxiety Forbidden (Verses 22, 23).

II. The Subject Thrice Illustrated (Verses 24-28).

- III. God's Kingdom Should Be Considered First (Verses 29-31).  
IV. The Kingdom Promised to the Disciples (Verse 32).  
V. Treasures in Heaven (Verses 33, 34).  
Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—Nearly all the items recorded in Luke 9: 51 to 18: 14 are omitted by the other three writers. It is agreed by Bible scholars that they are not given in chronological order. Some doubtless belong to the closing months of the Lord's ministry and others may belong to a much earlier period. It is not improbable that the words of this lesson were spoken much earlier than last lesson. After leaving Galilee Jesus came to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles in October, six months before the crucifixion. It would not affect the subject any if we should conclude this lesson came in that period. But it may have been earlier.

*Lesson Links.*—The events recorded in Luke 11: 14-54 appear to have happened just before Jesus gave the teaching in our lesson text. In Luke 11: 14-23 we have the blasphemous accusations of the Jews against him, in which they charged him with casting out demons "by Beelzebub the prince of the demons." This he answered by showing the absurdity of Satan casting out Satan, as a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. He then showed that, if he cast out demons by "the finger of God," the kingdom of God had come upon them. In Luke 11: 29, 30 he said it was an evil generation that demanded a sign from him, and declared that no such sign as they asked for would be given except the sign of Jonah. Jesus had done many signs, but his resurrection was the only one of the kind they demanded that would be given.

*Lesson Settings.*—In verse 1 of this lesson chapter it is said that "in the mean time" Jesus began to tell his disciples to beware of "the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." He had been invited to dine in the house of a Pharisee. He had accepted the invitation and delivered teaching against their hypocrisy. (Luke 11: 37-53.) "In the mean time" probably means that it was while in the Pharisee's house that he warned his disciples against their doctrine. With a parable (verses 13-21) he taught them to keep themselves from covetousness, and become "rich toward God." This prepared their minds for the great truths brought out in our lesson text.

### LESSON NOTES

#### I. Undue Anxiety Forbidden (Verses 22, 23)

*A Parallel Text.*—In Matt. 6: 25-33, which is a part of the Sermon on the Mount, we have almost an exact parallel to most of our lesson text. Of course, it was spoken long before the time of this lesson, but this shows that Jesus sometimes repeated his lessons in practically the same words. Any teacher will do that over a long period. Anything of vital importance is worth repeating to the same people, and certainly appropriately repeated when different ones are to be taught.

*"Be Not Anxious."*—The Authorized Version says "Take no thought." The English word "thought" was probably used, when that



translation was made, in the sense of anxiety, but not so now. The Greek word here carries the idea of distracting care or such anxiety as divides the mind. The simple matter of thought, even earnest thought, is right and taught in the scriptures; but such distracting anxiety as will take all the joy out of life's experiences is what our Lord here forbids. In this text the revisers have done the world a great favor in substituting a word that is a correct translation for one so easily misunderstood as it is used at the present time.

*Life and Body.*—The two main things of a temporal character about which most people are unduly anxious are food and raiment. Some are driven to distraction by poverty and others by pride and vanity. No Christian should allow either of these to destroy his confidence in the church or his joy in the service of God. Food is necessary to sustain the body, and therefore very important in its place, but cannot be as important as the life itself. It is a matter of much more concern to keep the life pure than to worry about something for it to eat. Raiment is required to keep the body comfortable, but it is conceded the body is of more value than the quickly perishing clothes. To have undue anxiety about what we are to wear is putting the less important thing first. Besides the body might be comfortably clothed without worrying about the matter. The life might be preserved longer by using simple, plain food than that of the more costly kind. There are in these two verses two plain lessons: We should give the most careful consideration to the things of first value; we should not be distracted by care and destroy what legitimate joy we might otherwise have. The first is right in its nature; to do the other is useless and foolish. The Christian of all men should manifest practical common sense.

## II. The Subject Thrice Illustrated (Verses 24-28)

*"Consider the Ravens."*—In Matt. 6: 26 the expression "birds of the heaven" is used; here the word "ravens." One is definite, the other is general, showing that it is a fact true of all birds. God has provided for their wants in the laws of nature. They receive their food according to the Father's provision and do not worry about it. They neither sow, reap nor prepare storehouses to hoard supplies for the future, yet God feeds them. If animals governed by instinct live successfully by the provisions of natural law, how much more should intelligent creatures, directed by God's revealed will, be content with the provisions made for their wants. The Lord here puts the natural contentment of animals over against the anxiety of the rich landowner who builded greater barns to house his produce for the future. What a contrast! And what a lesson for selfish, covetous people! Is not man of more value than birds?

*Anxiety Ineffective.*—Jesus next mentions the fact that being anxious will not enable one to add "a cubit unto the measure of his life." The King James Version says one cubit to "his stature." The lesson is the same regardless of which translation is the proper one. No amount of anxious thought will enable one to add to the height of his body after reaching maturity. This he knows perfectly. Looking at the span of life as a way or road to be traveled, anxiety will not prolong it when the time arrives to depart. A cubit would be a very small addition to the way or length of life. The lesson Jesus puts in the form of a question. If one is not able by anxiety



to do the very little things, why attempt thus to do the bigger things? Distracting anxiety will not aid us in doing things, but rather it will greatly hinder us in doing what should be done.

*"Consider the Lilies."*—Jesus next illustrates by the growth of the lilies. They do not toil nor spin, yet they are more gorgeously arrayed than even Solomon in all his royal robes. The lilies receive their marvelous beauty through God's natural law without effort on their part. With all his wealth and planning Solomon could not surpass them. If God so clothes the grass which lasts but a day, he surely does not overlook the provision for man's needs. Man should learn from inanimate nature to depend upon God's ample provision for material things. Of course, he should use common sense and make proper efforts to obtain them, but he should learn that his being distraught with anxiety will do no good, but rather harm in obtaining them. Not to have such confidence in God's manner of providing for man's wants is to be of "little faith."

### III. God's Kingdom Should Be Considered First (Verses 29-31)

*A Conclusion.*—Verse 29 repeats substantially the same thought as that expressed in verse 22. It is really a conclusion from his reasoning in the preceding verses. The statement is in the form of a command, saying, "And seek not ye what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink." If this were taken without any limitation, one would not be allowed to make any efforts to provide food and drink. This we know cannot be true, for it violates the plain teaching that one who does not provide for his own household has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Tim. 5: 8.) The seeking here forbidden is the kind that is done with disturbing anxiety, which would leave the mind distracted. Hence, Jesus here also says, "Neither be ye of doubtful mind." That means that we should never be so wrought up with anxious care that our minds would cease to trust in God or his provisions for our welfare.

*No Better Than Others.*—If Christians allow themselves to be disturbed by anxiety over temporal things, they are no better than the nations of worldly people. That is what worldly-minded people do. Why should not Christians have a higher and truer conception of God's provisions for man than do ordinary sinners who have never learned to trust in God? God, as a loving Father, knows what man needs, and certainly will provide what is best for his children. To think otherwise is to rob oneself of that comfort and satisfaction to which every Christian is entitled.

*First Things First.*—Luke here quotes Jesus as saying "Seek ye his kingdom, and these things shall be added unto you." In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, "Seek ye first his kingdom; and his righteousness." (Matt. 6: 33.) Here the duty to make God's kingdom and righteousness our first consideration is unequivocally stated. When this is done we will not have any time to give anxious thought to temporal matters; they will take second place and not drive us to distraction. The promise that the temporal things will be added to those who make the kingdom first does not mean that we will always have what we want or think we need. That might not be best for us. But we may count on getting what is best or what we might obtain with our best efforts under the circumstances. We certainly could not receive more by being all disturbed with anxiety; hence, best



from every standpoint for us to make temporal needs our second consideration. With this course we will certainly get all we could possibly get under less favorable conditions.

#### IV. The Kingdom Promised to the Disciples (Verse 32)

*"Fear Not."*—Verse 22 shows that the words of our lesson were spoken to the disciples, and the words "little flock" indicate that possibly they were spoken to the apostles. The general instruction against undue anxiety is applicable to all disciples, but the encouragement of this section was especially for the apostles at that time. He had shown that they should trust God's provision for their welfare, and now tells them not to fear for the consequences that might come. This encouragement was more important in their situation because they were so few in numbers that success may have seemed almost impossible. They were urged not to allow their unfavorable circumstances to create a fear of failure.

*"Give You the Kingdom."*—It was God's pleasure to give to them the kingdom. No shifting of argument can evade the evident conclusion that he meant the kingdom would be established and they would be in it. Previously Jesus had said to them that some then standing there with him would not die till they saw the kingdom. (Luke 9: 27.) On the night before his crucifixion he said to the apostles, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." (Luke 22: 29, 30.) As surely as the apostles and early disciples had the Lord's Supper, so surely were they in the kingdom. It is only this view that will harmonize with Jesus' words that Peter was to use the keys of the kingdom here on earth. (Matt. 16: 19.) Denial that the kingdom is now in existence is really a denial of Jesus' words.

#### V. Treasures in Heaven (Verses 33, 34)

*Sell and Give.*—Jesus had condemned trusting in riches and warned against anxious care. In these verses he urges that we use our means to provide something better and more enduring. Selling and giving alms would be laying up treasures in heaven. This would be exchanging purses that wear out for those that will not wax old. This is equivalent to saying that the contents will not be lost. It will put our treasure in heaven where it cannot fail us, be destroyed by moth, or stolen by thieves. No earthly treasure can have any such sure protection against loss.

*Heart with Treasure.*—The statement, "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," shows clearly that the physical heart is not meant, for it remains in the body regardless of where the treasure is located. This is true, if the treasure be money in the bank, or spiritual rewards in heaven. The word heart here refers to the affections. One's thoughts or affections will be centered where his treasures are placed. If he is laying up treasures in heaven, his heart will not be distracted by schemes to amass wealth here on earth. Hence, the true Christian can be really happy.

#### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Anxious care leads to disappointment, discontent, and distrust in God's promises. These not only rob us of life's greatest joys, but

seriously interfere with our services to God. Tolerating such mental attitudes will not change the situation. How foolish to give time and strength to that which can only be harmful.

2. Man who boasts the high honor of being an intelligent creature in the image of his maker should be ashamed not to act as reasonably as does the animal by instinct. The beauty of form that fades like the flower is of little value as compared with life. Eternal life surpasses all else.

3. Legitimate seeking of temporal things is praiseworthy, but should not be allowed to occupy first place in our thoughts. No duty surpasses that of seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness. It is in this matter that God's children rise above sinners.

4. Jesus fulfilled his promise to give the kingdom to his disciples that were following him then. He will fulfill his promise to us of an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom, if we add the Christian graces and remain faithful till death.

5. Things of real value cost in time, effort, and means. The price paid is insignificant when the thing purchased is of enough value. Confessedly mansions in heaven for the age of eternity cannot be estimated in temporal values.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the value that Jesus places upon the soul of man. (Luke 12: 4-7; Matt. 16: 24-26.)

2. Give the parable of the rich landowner. (Luke 12: 13-21.)

3. Describe the faithful servants meeting the Lord at his coming. (Luke 12: 35-40.)

4. Describe the separations that will take place when the Lord comes. (Luke 12: 49-53.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

What text is parallel with our lesson?  
Explain the difference between the old and revised versions.  
What temporal things are people anxious about?  
What two lessons are taught here?

#### **II**

What lesson is taught by the ravens?  
What is the argument in verse 25?  
What is the lesson from the lilies?  
What is true of those unduly anxious?

#### **III**

What is verse 22?  
Why is this verse not to be taken without limitation?  
What is meant by "doubtful mind"?  
What is the lesson in verse 30?  
What is the difference between this verse and Matt. 6: 33?

#### **IV**

Why did the apostle especially need encouragement?  
What promise did Jesus make?  
What does this prove regarding the kingdom?

#### **V**

What is the teaching in these verses?  
What heart does Jesus mean in this verse?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.



## Lesson XIII—March 29, 1936

## JESUS EXPLAINS THE KINGDOM

Luke 13: 18-30.

18 He said therefore, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I liken it?

19 It is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his own garden; and it grew, and became a tree; and the birds of the heaven lodged in the branches thereof.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened.

22 And he went on his way through cities and villages, teaching, and journeying on unto Jerusalem.

23 And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that are saved? And he said unto them,

24 Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence ye are;

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our streets;

27 And he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without.

29 And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And behold, there are last who shall be first, and there are first who shall be last.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"They shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."*  
(Luke 13: 29.)

TIME.—A.D. 29.

PLACE.—Perea, beyond the Jordan.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, and the Jews.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 62: 1-7.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

March 23.	M.	.....	The Growth of the Kingdom (Luke 13: 18-21)
March 24.	T.	.....	The Door of the Kingdom (Luke 13: 22-30)
March 25.	W.	.....	A Heavenly Kingdom (John 18: 33-38)
March 26.	T.	.....	A Coming Kingdom (Matt. 16: 21-28)
March 27.	F.	.....	The Worth of the Kingdom (Matt. 13: 44-50)
March 28.	S.	.....	An Everlasting Kingdom (Psalm 145: 1-13)
March 29.	S.	.....	A Triumphant Kingdom (Isa. 62: 1-5)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Parable of the Mustard Seed (Verses 18, 19).
  - II. Parable of the Leaven (Verses 20, 21).
  - III. Entrance by the Narrow Door (Verses 22-25).
  - IV. The Vain Plea of the Rejected (Verses 26-28).
  - V. The Last First and the First Last (Verses 29, 30).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The record indicates that verses 18-21 of our lesson were spoken while Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. (Verse 22.) This was probably the time when he attended the Feast of Dedication (John 10: 22, 23), which was in December preceding his crucifixion. That the rest of our lesson was spoken on the way may also be the fact, but at what particular place is not known. As Luke does not mention the Feast of Dedication, the remainder of our lesson follows in natural order even if spoken after reaching Jerusalem.

*Lesson Links.*—A comparison of verses 10-17 with verses 18-22 furnishes presumptive evidence that our lesson was spoken immediately after his teaching in a synagogue where he healed the woman who had been afflicted for eighteen years. Just where this synagogue was is not known. The rulers charged Jesus with violating the Sabbath law because the cure was effected on the Sabbath day. Jesus called them hypocrites, and showed that they were inconsistent. They would loose an ox or ass from the stall and lead it to water on the principle of mercy to animals, but would condemn him for loosing a daughter of Abraham from a physical bondage of eighteen years. Surely one of Abraham's descendants was of more value than an ox, and certainly more worthy of freedom. Eighteen years' bondage in bodily affliction was more serious than the animal's discomfort for a few hours. Showing mercy to the animal and none to the woman was absurd. Their own conduct condemned them as hypocrites. It is perfectly right to guard against violating any of God's commands, but we should be certain that we are not breaking others of equal importance in our efforts to do so.

*Lesson Settings.*—If the presumption mentioned in the last paragraph, that our lesson was spoken immediately after healing the woman, is valid, then the "lesson links" are also the "lesson settings," for they show the circumstances under which the lesson was given. But if these events are not in the exact chronological order, the settings for this lesson cannot be known certainly. As Jesus did not waste words, we know that some reason prompted the teaching in the lesson text, and that the circumstances under which it was given were just right. Regardless of the situation we also know that his teaching was always true in fact and needed by those who heard it. We are sure that like needs and similar circumstances often made a repetition of the same lessons the appropriate thing. This is true regardless of any variation in the words used.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Parable of the Mustard Seed (Verses 18, 19)

*What Is the Kingdom Like?*—That the miracle and Jesus' rebuke put the adversaries to shame and caused the multitude to rejoice is the teaching of verse 17. This may have suggested the parables that follow as a means of showing that his work would continue to grow in favor with men. Both of these parables had been spoken



at a much earlier period, and are recorded in Matt. 13: 31-33. The slight difference in the wording of the two passages does not change the teaching in the least. It is strong evidence that they were spoken on different occasions, for rarely do men repeat their own teaching in precisely the same words. In our text the question is put, "Unto what is the kingdom of God like?" Then the parable is given to answer the question. Matthew omits the question, or Jesus did not use it on that occasion, but he uses expressions that show the mustard seed made the greatest growth in proportion to its size of any seed sown in the field. Our text presents the idea of great growth, but omits the comparison. The lessons are substantially the same.

*The Application.*—The tiny mustard seed producing a plant or tree of the size to shelter birds, comparatively a tremendous growth, shows what great results may come from apparently insignificant things. This parable was designed to teach one lesson—the rapid increase of the kingdom. This the facts demonstrated to be literally true. At that time Jesus had about him a mere handful of personal disciples, some of whom were destined to forsake him when the test came. With a few timid followers and no material resources at his command, faced by inveterate enemies with political power, the establishment of a world-wide kingdom was a prodigious and apparently impossible task. The difference between the size of a mustard seed and the grown stalk fitly represents it, though doubtless not the full difference between the kingdom at its beginning and its final development. Three thousand converts on Pentecost, other thousands later, then through Judea, Samaria unto the ends of the earth vividly paint the picture of its early success. Only the judgment will reveal its full growth at the end of time.

## II. Parable of the Leaven (Verses 20, 21)

*"Like Unto Leaven."*—This brief parable, like that of the mustard seed, teaches the lesson of growth. That teaches the *rapid* and *great* growth of the kingdom; this the *manner* in which that growth is effected. Leaven permeates from one particle to another till all the lump is affected. The growth from the mustard seed comes by its inherent power expanding and developing the size and dimensions; that from leaven from one atom transmitting to another. Both are essential ideas in the spreading of the kingdom. The word of God, as the seed of the kingdom, has the power within itself to affect any honest heart into which it may fall. The lives of citizens of the kingdom, because directed by God's word, have the power to bring the truth to others by example. Thus the truth is spread by being carried from one to another; or, one being leavened by the truth reaches another by showing it to him. This parable places the responsibility for spreading the kingdom squarely upon the citizens of the kingdom. Any one thoroughly leavened by the truth must affect others with it.

*The Time Element.*—All growth requires time; how much depends upon the nature of the thing that grows. It may be days, months,

or years before the growth is completed. The growth of the kingdom means it is spread by people entering it to become citizens. This growth will not be completed till the Lord comes again. Its citizenship may vary at different times, but it is still growing if people are entering it. There is no apparent spiritual application of "three measures" of meal. The word here used for measure means about one and a half pecks. This would be more than a bushel for the three measures. Such an amount may have been mentioned to show the power of heaven to affect large lumps. The kingdom was to leaven the world; the gospel has power to save all who will obey. We should note that parables based on material objects differ from the application. Inanimate objects act by nature's law and have no volition; men and women have will power and intelligence and must be consulted and persuaded to act. This distinction should never be overlooked.

### III. Entrance by the Narrow Door (Verses 22-25)

*Will Few Be Saved?*—Verse 22 probably means that after Jesus healed the woman in the synagogue he continued his journey toward Jerusalem. It is not known who the one was who asked this question. It is likely that it was some Jew, but not one of his disciples. His question may have been suggested by what Jesus said of the small beginning of the kingdom, or from the fact that the Jews, considering themselves the only ones worthy of salvation, wondered if only a few of them would be saved. Whatever the motive that prompted the question, there was no practical advantage in it. Whether few or many, the conditions of salvation would be the same, and the results the same to both the saved and lost.

*"Strive to Enter."*—With this reply Jesus declared that salvation will depend upon one's individual efforts. By the expression "narrow door," he showed that it will require care and thoughtfulness to enter. Seeking to enter when it is too late will bring failure and disappointments. There is no question but the time will come when all will want to enter into the favor of God.

*The Shut Door.*—The picture here is that of a feast at a given time with men invited to be guests. Those invited who do not appear in time will find the door shut, and themselves rejected in spite of all their pleadings to be admitted. The master will say, "I know not whence you are." This teaching may be applied in two ways. The invitation to enter the kingdom will be good till the end of the world. After that the door of opportunity will be closed to all. Those who do not enter before that will not be approved by the Lord. Individually the case will be the same. Those who do not enter before their own death closes the door will not be received. The time to serve God is when the invitation is offered and the opportunity is still before us.

### IV. The Vain Plea of the Rejected (Verses 26-28)

*"Shall Ye Begin to Say."*—The Savior here describes what the rejected will reply to the master of the house. He had said, "I



know not whence ye are." They would say they ate and drank in his presence and he had taught in their streets, and therefore he should know them. The application of these words is found in the saying of Jesus on another occasion. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works?" (Matt. 7: 22.) To this appeal he will say, "I never knew you." That will mean that he never approved of their conduct, although they may have professed to do much in his name. This quotation from Matthew's record is plain language literally expressed. It explains the parabolic language of the lesson text.

*The Sentence.*—The text says that the master of the house, after hearing their cry for recognition, will repeat that he does not know them, and add: "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." This shows that much pretended service to God will be rejected as wicked works, causing the worker to be driven away from God's presence. Being religious is a commendable thing, but only those religious acts that are in harmony with what God says will be approved. Since the house in this parable represents the kingdom of God, those outside cannot render acceptable service. Their claiming to do so will not change the facts. If that were so, why should the Lord have a kingdom at all? "The door would not be narrow, if it opened to excuses." (Fourfold Gospel, page 489.)

*Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth.*—The sorrow that will come to those who realize they are rejected is here represented by weeping and gnashing of teeth. This will result because then they will fully realize what they have lost beyond recovery. This remorse will be intensified by the fact that others are saved. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets in the kingdom represent the saved. Not to be permitted to sit with them in the heavenly kingdom will bring deepest sorrow.

## V. The Last First and the First Last (Verses 29, 30)

*From Every Quarter.*—Jesus in these verses presents the universal nature of his kingdom. Many would desire to enter the final kingdom, but be rejected because they would not enter the open door into the kingdom he came to establish, but there would be some to enter from every quarter, even from every nation; for all nations were to be taught (Matt. 28: 18), and some from all nations were to flow into the mountain of the Lord's house. (Isa. 2: 2.)

*"Sit Down in the Kingdom."*—This language is taken from the custom of sitting together at the same table in feasts. The more distinguished the company the greater the honor of sitting with them. None would be more honorable than Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets. To enjoy the blessings of heaven will be to enjoy the association of the saved. This happy association in the eternal state depends upon our Christian association in the Lord's kingdom on earth. Failing to enter the door to that will close the door to the other.

*Last and First.*—The peculiar statements in verse 30 are not so difficult as they at first thought seem to be. The Jews had been first in God's favor for a long time, but by rejecting God's Son they were to lose that favor and be supplanted by the Gentiles. This was literally true, as the early history of the church shows. Many individuals who are first in opportunities are last to receive the benefits of them; those last in opportunities are often first in receiving blessings.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. It matters little how small and insignificant a thing may be if it possesses the power to develop into something of real value. A chance word may sometimes lead to the conversion of a soul. One life changed into the service of God may cause an immense territory to be evangelized with the gospel.

2. The power of heaven works, though unseen to the eye. The truth has an unseen influence that can change the whole course of one's conduct. Acted truth often affects others more powerfully than the spoken word. Christians have the highest motives for guarding both words and deeds.

3. The safety of any road depends not upon its broadness, but upon its foundation and the destination to which it leads. Lines of traffic are usually narrow ways. The narrow way alone leads to eternal life, the broad way to destruction. Why take chances?

4. Goals are reached through striving; the Greek word for strive means to *agonize*. That means that it will require persistent and unrelenting efforts to gain the reward. Our desire to enter into life will be vain if we have let all opportunities pass by.

5. Since the gospel is for people of every nation, and salvation is a personal matter, there is no reason why any one should not be saved. Many who are first in receiving opportunities are last in obeying the truth.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the subject of repentance as presented in Luke 13: 1-5.
2. Show what feature of the kingdom is presented in the parables of the hidden treasure and goodly pearls. (Matt. 13: 44, 45.)
3. What is the lesson presented in the parable of the fish net? (Matt. 13: 47-50.)
4. Describe the judgment scene in Matt. 25: 30-46.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

Where and when was this parable spoken before this?  
What is the difference in the way they are worded?  
What one lesson was this parable designed to teach?  
What shows that the teaching was literally true?



## SECOND QUARTER

## JESUS MEETING HUMAN NEEDS

*Studies in Luke*

(SECOND HALF OF A SIX MONTHS' COURSE)

Lesson I—April 5, 1936

## JESUS INVITES ALL PEOPLE

Luke 14: 15-24.

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 But he said unto him, A certain man made a great supper; and he bade many:

17 And he sent forth his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go out and see it; I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 And the servant came, and told his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and maimed and blind and lame.

22 And the servant said, Lord, what thou didst command is done, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Come; for all things are now ready.” (Luke 14: 17.)

TIME.—A.D. 29.

PLACE.—Somewhere in Perea.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, and the Pharisees.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 55: 1-7.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

March 30.	M.	.....	The Gospel for All (Luke 14: 12-24)
March 31.	T.	.....	The Worth of a Man (Matt. 12: 9-14)
April 1.	W.	.....	The Universal Invitation (Isa. 55: 1-7)
April 2.	T.	.....	God No Respector of Persons (Acts 10: 34-38)
April 3.	F.	.....	Jesus, the Friend of All (Luke 5: 27-32)
April 4.	S.	.....	The Soul's Thirst and Its Satisfaction (John 4: 7-14)
April 5.	S.	.....	The Joy of the Redeemed (Rev. 7: 9-12)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. A Blessing for Those in the Kingdom (Verse 15).
- II. Many Invited to a Great Supper (Verses 16, 17).
- III. Excuses Offered for Refusing (Verses 18-20).

- IV. Others Invited to Come (Verse 21).  
V. Still Others Urged to Come (Verses 22-24).  
Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The incident in our last lesson occurred while Jesus was on his way toward Jerusalem. (Luke 13: 22.) Perhaps all that we can safely say about the time of this lesson is that it happened in the latter part of A.D. 29, a few months before his crucifixion. As already mentioned in previous lessons, Luke's record from 9: 51 to 18: 14 is not chronological. The exact time of this lesson cannot be fixed.

*Lesson Links.*—Jesus attended the Feast of Tabernacles in October A.D. 29. (John 7: 2-11.) As he also attended the Feast of Dedication in December (John 10: 22), he probably remained in the sections near Jerusalem during the interval. Luke 13: 31-35 seems to indicate that he had already been in Jerusalem when the event of this lesson occurred. But whether after the Feast of Tabernacles or Dedication is uncertain. The place where Luke puts the lesson in his record probably indicates that it was after his visit to the Feast of Tabernacles. If this view be correct, then there was no very long interval between this and our last lesson.

*Lesson Settings.*—Jesus delivered this lesson while he was eating bread in the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on a Sabbath day. (Luke 14: 1, 15.) Saying "a sabbath day" leaves the time uncertain. The place is not certain, though probably in Perea east of the Jordan. Being a ruler of the Pharisees may mean he belonged to the Sanhedrin, but does not show where he lived. Likely he invited Jesus to dine with him with evil intent. The statement, "they were watching him," probably means they were seeking some chance to bring charges against him. If the Pharisee extended hospitality with the purpose of using it to get an advantage over Jesus, his conduct was most wicked. These were the circumstances under which the words of our lesson were spoken.

### LESSON NOTES

#### I. A Blessing for Those in the Kingdom (Verse 15)

*The Occasion.*—The remark that those in the kingdom would be blessed was made by one sitting at supper with Jesus in the Pharisee's house. He made it after hearing "these things." The things he had heard were Jesus' condemnation of those who chose the chief seats when invited to a feast, and his instruction to the Pharisee to invite the poor, maimed, lame, and blind when he made a feast. The rich could recompense him with a similar invitation, but the poor could not; for such there would be a recompense "in the resurrection of the just." This led the man to use the same figure of a feast and say that those permitted to eat bread in the kingdom would be blessed.

*"In the Kingdom of God."*—The Jews were expecting the restoration of their temporal kingdom, in which, of course, there would be literal eating and drinking. If God was to recompense those who fed the poor, and his kingdom was to be ushered in with a feast, then happy would be the man who would be fortunate enough to eat at that feast. It was to the expectant Jew a glorious anticipation,



though his conception of its nature was not correct. When the kingdom was established, the disciples learned that it was not of this world (John 18: 36), and that the feast in it was of a spiritual nature. The man, however, was right in placing the eating "in" the kingdom. Unless that were true there would be no necessity for the kingdom at all. This harmonizes perfectly with a later statement by Jesus saying, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, . . . that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." (Luke 22: 29, 30.)

## II. Many Invited to a Great Supper (Verses 16, 17)

*A Parable.*—Though not called a parable in the text, the form of expression clearly shows it to be one. The certain man making a great supper and sending his servants to tell the invited guests to come represents Christ himself, the servants represent those who proclaim his gospel, and the guests those who obey his commands. The supper means the joyous feast of good things spiritually that are had in the kingdom. The parable and its application should not be confused.

*"Bade Many."*—These verses, compared with Matt. 22: 3, show that the invitation to attend the supper had been given previously, and the parties were notified when everything was ready for them to come. That was probably the custom in managing such affairs then. The general invitation had been predicted by the prophets (Isa. 2: 2-4), and confirmed by Jesus after his resurrection when he gave the commission to teach all nations (Matt. 28: 19.) If this invitation to enter the kingdom and enjoy the feast is not accepted, it will be man's own fault; for he can come, is asked to come, and nothing but stubbornness or indifference can prevent it.

*"Come."*—When all things were ready those invited were told to come. When the kingdom was established, all things were ready for those who desired to enjoy its benefits to enter. This could not be before the death of Christ, for it was through his death that the Jewish kingdom was abolished. (Matt. 21: 43; Col. 2: 14.) The spiritual kingdom could not be established till the Jewish was removed. (Heb. 10: 9.) Neither could it begin till Christ took his seat on his throne at God's right hand. (Heb. 10: 12; 1 Cor. 15: 25.) On the day of Pentecost all preparations had been made, Jesus had become both Lord and Christ, and the command to come was first given. It was accepted and three thousand sat down to the spiritual feast in the kingdom of God, having obeyed the command to repent and be baptized. (Acts 2: 36-38.)

## III. Excuses Offered for Refusing (Verses 18-20)

*"With One Consent."*—The expression, "they all with one consent," is not intended to show that no one invited came. The parable of the marriage feast (Matt. 22: 1-14) shows some did attend. But the Jews to whom the invitation was first given in the main did refuse to accept it. The design was to show that there would be a more or less general rejection of the gospel, and to point out the common excuses that would be offered for disobedience. As this parable was spoken in reply to the man who mentioned the kingdom of God, the refusal to accept the invitation to attend the supper can mean nothing less than that they were refusing to enter that kingdom when it was ready.

*"Bought a Field."*—The first said he had bought a field and "must needs" go and see it. Pleading a business engagement would not be considered sufficient to neglect a matter affecting the life physically. When life is at stake all business engagements are immediately cancelled. As seeing the land probably could easily have been done at some other time, there was no reason for insulting his friend by rejecting the invitation. Since seeking the kingdom of God is man's first duty, he is not justified in allowing any sort of business complications to prevent his obedience to the gospel. When the value of the soul is considered (Matt. 16: 25, 26), no fair dealing with the case can allow any business to be offered as an excuse for not entering the kingdom. Such excuses are not honest.

*"I Go to Prove Them."*—Another said he had bought five yoke of oxen and "I go to prove them." The first alleges necessity—saying "I must go." The second did not plead necessity, but gave an excuse—saying he had something else to do. This was as much as saying I desire to do something else and have no special concern in your invitation. This was even more trifling than the excuse offered by the first, though it was trifling with a serious matter.

*"Married a Wife."*—This one did not offer necessity or excuse, but just rudely declared he could not come. By "I cannot" come he probably meant I "will not" come. Having married a wife could by no kind of reasoning be a justification for rejecting the invitation. Marriage requires neither the abandonment of social privileges nor the mistreatment of friends. Such a claim is absurd. Doubtless the wife was included in the invitation. This is the most flimsy excuse of all, having neither reason nor common sense in it.

*Design of Parable.*—It may be said that these excuses are all foolish. True enough, but it was evidently the Savior's design to show that all excuses for disobedience are foolish. Surely no better examples could be found than those he gives here. If one thinks so, let him present one better. One went to his land, another to his merchandise, and another refused to leave his house or family. In these Jesus shows that we should not let either property, business, or family ties keep us from entering the kingdom where we can enjoy spiritual blessings. Till this decision is reached, there is little chance that one will be saved; with it carried out, there is no chance to be lost.

#### IV. Others Invited to Come (Verse 21)

*Master Being Angry.*—The servant came and told the master of the house that his invitation to come had been rejected. This represents the fact that when the gospel was first preached many of the Jews refused to accept it. The Jewish rulers—Pharisees and Sadducees—were the leaders in this fight against the truth. Naturally the master of the house would be angry because those invited had insulted him by slighting his invitation. Justly, God is angry with sinners for rejecting his invitation to be saved upon the ground of such trifling excuses as are here mentioned. Excuses which would satisfy no one at the judgment will not satisfy God while we are here. It is both foolish and wicked to offer such excuses, for we know they are not valid. We may deceive ourselves, but we cannot deceive God. He knows when we are dishonest.

*"Streets and Lanes."*—The master of the house hearing the servant's report commanded him to go out quickly into the streets and



lanes of the city and bring in the "poor and maimed and blind and lame." This may mean that when the Jews, as a class, turned against the truth, the Gentiles should be invited to the feast; that is, to enter the kingdom. Or, it might be applied to the poor of the Jews who were to have gospel privileges after the Pharisees and Sadducees had, as the ruling classes, rejected it. In giving this application to this verse those mentioned in verse 23 would represent the Gentiles. In either view it shows that when any people turned down the gospel, God's servants turned to preach to others. (Acts 13: 46-48.) Whoever turns from the truth loses its blessings.

### V. Still Others Urged to Come (Verses 22-24)

*"Yet There Is Room."*—At the Feast of Dedication a short time before, Jesus had said he had other sheep not of that fold. (John 10: 16, 22.) By "other sheep" he evidently referred to the Gentiles. In this lesson he is also contrasting the Jews and Gentiles, representing the latter as poor and maimed and blind. After going into the streets and lanes of the city, the servant said there still was room. This statement was probably made to indicate that no difference how many accept the gospel invitation there will be room for more. Millions have come, millions more may come, and yet there will be room for more. How infinite and marvelous are God's provisions for man!

*"Constrain Them to Come."*—Finding them in the "highways and hedges" indicates that the humblest of men may come as well as those in high places. It agrees with the scriptural thought that "God is no respecter of persons." Not only *may* all come, but they should be *urged* to come. The Common Version says "compel" them to come in, but the Revised Version is clearly correct in saying "constrain" them. Forcing people to enter the kingdom is inconsistent with personal responsibility. Whosoever will may come is the teaching; not whosoever must come. With individual independence admitted there is good reason for urging, persuading, and pressing the claims of salvation. There is ground for praise when one decides to enter the Lord's service in his kingdom. There is no need to prepare an abundant feast for many and have but a few enjoy it. God wants his house to be filled.

*Fate of Disobedient.*—The master of the house told the servant that none of those who rejected his invitation should taste of his supper. The application of these words is too evident to need explanation. The plain scriptural teaching is that those who reject the gospel will not be received into the heavenly home to enjoy God's eternal feast. That is prepared for those who come.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Enjoying the blessings of the eternal kingdom called heaven depends upon entering the kingdom of Christ here on earth. It is the heavenly way leading to that final abode. Jesus said no man could come to the Father but by him. (John 14: 6.) The only way we can come by him is to come through the way he has provided—the kingdom.

2. Jesus closes the parable of the wedding feast by saying, "For many are called, but few chosen." (Matt. 22: 14.) The gospel invitation is to all, but only the obedient will be saved. Those who

refuse the pleadings of God's love need not expect that their cry for mercy will be heard when the door is shut.

3. Ignoring the call to righteousness does not cancel man's responsibility. Offering excuses for neglect or positive sin does not remove guilt or prevent the disastrous results that follow evil-doing. Sins should be repented of, not excused.

4. "So foolish as well as wicked is the conduct of the sinner; so trifling is his excuse for not repenting and turning to God that it is no wonder if God cannot look upon their conduct but with abhorrence."—*Albert Barnes*.

5. It is consoling to know that God's mercy cannot be exhausted nor the blood of Christ lose its efficacy. There will be room in heaven for all the citizens of Christ's kingdom who have been faithful unto the end. Faithful unto death brings the crown.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the parable of the wedding feast, pointing out the difference between it and the parable of this lesson. (Matt. 22: 1-14.)

2. Point out the lessons on humility and exaltation that are presented in Luke 14: 7-11.

3. Briefly discuss the lessons on what it will cost to be good disciples of Christ. (Luke 14: 25-30.)

4. What is the lesson in Luke 14: 31-33?

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

When was the command first given to come?

Why could it not have been given before?

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

What was meant by "one consent"?

What was the first excuse?

Give the other excuses presented.

What was the design of the parable?

#### **I**

What was the occasion for the man's remark?

What did he mean by eating bread in the kingdom?

What was learned later about the kingdom?

Why was the master of the house angry?

What lesson is taught here?

What is indicated by the poor, maimed, and blind?

#### **II**

What was represented by the supper?

When had the invitation been given?

Why say there is yet room?

What is meant by saying "constrain" them to come in?

What does this show about man's nature?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.



## Lesson II—April 12, 1936

## JESUS TRIUMPHS OVER DEATH

Luke 24: 1-12.

1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, while they were perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel:

5 And as they were affrighted and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying that the Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the tomb, and told all these things to the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 Now they were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James: and the other women with them told these things unto the apostles.

11 And these words appeared in their sight as idle talk; and they disbelieved them.

12 But Peter arose, and ran unto the tomb; and stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths by themselves; and he departed to his home, wondering at that which was come to pass.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Because I live, ye shall live also.*” (John 14: 19.)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACES.—A garden near Calvary, just outside the walls of Jerusalem, and the city streets.

PERSONS.—The angel, the women, and the eleven.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rev. 5: 9-13.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

April 6.	M.	.....	The Shadow of the Cross (Matt. 16: 21-28)
April 7.	T.	.....	The Crucifixion (John 19: 17-22)
April 8.	W.	.....	Jesus Triumphs Over Death (Luke 24: 1-12)
April 9.	T.	.....	Christ Died for Us (Rom. 5: 1-11)
April 10.	F.	.....	A Song of Triumph (Rev. 5: 9-13)
April 11.	S.	.....	New Life in Christ (Col. 3: 1-11)
April 12.	S.	.....	Our Immortality (1 Cor. 15: 50-57)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. Women Visit the Empty Tomb (Verses 1-3).
  - II. The Resurrection Announced to the Women (Verses 4-6).
  - III. Women Reminded of Jesus' Prediction (Verses 6-8).
  - IV. The Women Tell the Disciples (Verses 9-11).
  - V. Peter Visits the Tomb (Verse 12).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The resurrection of Jesus occurred on the first day of the week after the Passover, a Sabbath day intervening between his death and resurrection. This was about the first of April A.D. 30. The Passover, according to the Jewish law, came in their first month, called Abib or Nisan. The Passover lamb was killed in the afternoon on the fourteenth day, and the supper eaten that night.

(Ex. 12: 1-10; Lev. 23: 5, 6.) The exact moment that Jesus arose cannot be fixed, but those appearing early on Sunday morning found the tomb already empty.

*Lesson Links.*—Since this lesson was selected for the day of the year on which Christ arose, the committee wisely passed over many events between it and our last lesson to select a scripture that described his disciples' finding his tomb empty on the day he was raised. With equal appropriateness they called the lesson: "Jesus Triumphs Over Death." Our last lesson left him somewhere about Jerusalem dining with a Pharisee, near the close of A.D. 29. After this came the important events of raising Lazarus, his triumphal entrance to Jerusalem, and his wonderful teaching in the temple court during the last week. Some of his wonderful parables, teachings, and answers to questions occurred in these busy days. After this teaching in the temple grounds, he left the building for the last time (Matt. 23: 38), retired to Bethany and waited for his last Passover supper with his disciples. (Luke 22: 14-16.)

*Lesson Settings.*—Jesus was buried late in the afternoon on the day before the Sabbath so the body might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath. This was done by Joseph and Nicodemus. (John 19: 31-42.) They placed the body in Joseph's new tomb and anointed it. The women who came with him out of Galilee saw where the tomb was, prepared spices and ointments for further anointing of his body. After doing this they rested on the Sabbath, according to the commandment. (Luke 23: 55, 56.) As the burial must have been late in the afternoon, they probably found it too late to get their spices ready to return to the tomb before the Sabbath began; hence, they were compelled to wait till after the Sabbath before they could finish the anointing. Their anxiety to render this token of love accounts for their appearance at the tomb so early in the morning on the first day of the week. Nothing but the strictest respect for the Sabbath law could have restrained them from going to the tomb on the Sabbath. They would have found the tomb sealed and guarded, but they probably knew nothing of that. It was the Sabbath law they observed.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Women Visit the Empty Tomb (Verses 1-3)

*"At Early Dawn."*—The women who had prepared spices to anoint Christ's body, but had to wait because the Sabbath came on, reached the tomb on the first day of the week at early dawn. As the Jewish day began at sunset the night was the first half of the twenty-four-hour day. This fact has been a little confusing when all the statements regarding the time of their coming are considered. Matthew says "late on the sabbath" (Matt. 28: 1), which, taken without any limitations, does not harmonize with other statements. That would make it late Saturday afternoon, and Luke says the first day of the week. Mark says plainly "when the sabbath was past." (Mark 16: 1.) Since the word "late" in Matthew's record may have the meaning of "after," and Mark says the Sabbath was past, we are sure that is the thought. Besides, Matthew says "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week." Moreover Mark says the "sun was risen." John's statement, "while it was yet dark," prob-



ably refers to the time they left their homes; the others to the time they arrived.

*"Stone Rolled Away."*—Mark tells us that as they came on the way they were talking about who would roll the stone away. (Mark 16: 3.) This shows they knew nothing about the stone being sealed or the guards to watch the tomb. Matthew says the stone was removed by the angel of the Lord through a great earthquake. (Matt. 28: 2.) They found the stone rolled away when they got there. This likely caused no great surprise, for they might easily have concluded that others of his disciples had gotten there first and removed the stone. Since entering the tomb was necessary to anoint the body—the purpose of their visit—it was natural for them to enter at once. But they found the body was not there. Its disappearance, of course, must be accounted for. They could not have been mistaken about it being placed there, for they had followed to the tomb and saw how it was laid.

## II. The Resurrection Announced to the Women (Verses 4-6)

*"Were Perplexed."*—Finding the body not there so early in the morning was additional reason for their being perplexed. All the women doubtless shared the opinion of Mary that some friend had moved the body to another tomb. (John 20: 11-13.) Since they were not prepared to understand Jesus' statements about his resurrection, their idea that the body had been moved for some reason was the natural one. But why this had been done, or who had done it, was the thing they could not understand.

*"Two Men Stood By."*—Matthew says an angel from heaven removed the stone. He also represents the angel as talking to the women and saying that Jesus was risen. (Matt. 28: 5, 6.) Mark says that when they entered the tomb they saw a young man sitting on the right side, and he told them that Jesus had been raised. (Mark 16: 5, 6.) All these statements can be easily harmonized by understanding that Mark and Luke refer to them as men because they had the appearance of men. It is perfectly natural for angelic beings to assume that form if they were to appear to men. Matthew calls the being an angel of God because he was describing his nature and giving a reason for the stone's removal in a way that would prevent the guards knowing what was done. Luke is particular to say two men, which doubtless was the number, but Matthew and Mark seem to be referring only to the one that did the talking. They neither say one man or just one man, but "a young man," "an angel." These indefinite expressions allow for Luke's statement to be true without any conflict. Luke says the men "stood"; Mark says the young man was "sitting." The one or both might have been sitting when the women entered, and then stood; this would show both statements correct.

*"Is Risen."*—Jesus had several times told them he would arise. But they did not understand him and were not therefore expecting it. According to Matthew's record the angel told them to come and see where the Lord lay. The bodies were deposited in niches cut in the wall of sepulchres or caverns in the rock. (Luke 23: 53.) Seeing the body was not there prepared them for the angel's announcement that he had been raised.



### III. Women Reminded of Jesus' Prediction (Verses 6-8)

*"Remember."*—The promise of his resurrection was first made after Peter had made his great confession. (Matt. 16: 21.) This promise was repeated about a week later as they came down from the mount of transfiguration. (Matt. 17: 9.) A little later it was repeated, and still another time just a little while before his death. (Matt. 17: 22; 20: 18.) These four are recorded, but he may have mentioned it to them on other occasions that are not recorded. The disappearance of the body and the angel's words would very readily call to their minds what Jesus had said.

*"Delivered Up."*—He had been very specific in telling how he was to be delivered up. Luke here says into the hands of "sinful men." Matthew says he said he was to suffer many things of "elders and chief priests and scribes." He had also said these Jewish rulers would deliver him to the Gentiles "to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify." He said his death would be by crucifixion, and that he would be raised on the third day. They had only to turn their thoughts back to the events of the trial and crucifixion to know that all his predictions except his resurrection had literally been fulfilled before their eyes. A fulfillment of all the other features of the prediction was proof that the resurrection would also be fulfilled.

*"They Remembered."*—This probably does not so much refer to the fact that they had forgotten these predictions entirely as that they were enabled to understand their true import. As they had never understood that he really was to die, they may not have kept these sayings in their mind very well. But the startling facts would easily call them to mind when the angel repeated them, and lead to accepting the angel's words that he had arisen.

### IV. The Women Tell the Disciples (Verses 9-11)

*"Told All These Things."*—Matthew says that the angel told them to go quickly and tell his disciples, saying that he would meet them in Galilee as he had told them. Luke does not mention the angel's command to the women, but just states that they returned from the tomb and told these things to the eleven, and to all the rest. As they were on the way Jesus appeared to them. (Matt. 28: 8-10.) He then sent them on to tell the disciples. Luke does not mention this incident, but only mentions that they took the disciples word.

*The Women Named.*—Luke mentions Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. He then says other women with them. How many there were of the "other women" is not known, but there could not have been less than two, though probably more. John in his record (20: 1-20) mentions only Mary Magdalene, but describes in detail her visit to the tomb, her running to tell Peter and another disciple who was probably John. The facts seem to indicate that Mary left the tomb before the other women entered it. After they had left she looked in. When she turned away from the tomb Jesus appeared to her—she being the first one to whom he appeared. (Mark 16: 9.)

*"As Idle Talk."*—Our text says that when the women told the disciples their words appeared to them as idle talk. Mark says that, when Mary Magdalene told that he was alive and had been seen of her, they disbelieved. (Mark 16: 11.) When the true facts are



considered their rejecting the women's story was entirely natural. Expecting him to establish a temporal kingdom, they thought, of course, that his death meant failure of that. He had told them that the gates of Hades could not prevail against building his church. (Matt. 16: 18.) This promise likewise they had misunderstood. With their ideas of his promises they thought it more likely that the women had become excited and deceived than that their words were true.

### V. Peter Visits the Tomb (Verse 12)

*"Ran Unto the Tomb."*—Luke here mentions only that Peter arose and ran to the tomb. He does not give the circumstances leading up to this visit of Peter at the sepulchre. These are supplied by John. Mary Magdalene had left the tomb before the other women did, and went to the city to tell Peter and that other disciple whom Jesus loved. (John 20: 2-4.) The other disciple was John himself. They both ran toward the tomb, but John outran Peter, getting to the tomb first. Just why Luke failed to give all the story is not known. Neither does there seem to be any special reason why he should mention one instead of both. But what he said is true, and his omissions are immaterial as they are supplied by John.

*Entered the Tomb.*—John who arrived first hesitated to enter, but Peter looked in and entered. (John 20: 5.) Luke makes the statement that Peter saw the linen cloths lying by themselves. John adds the fact that the napkin that was on his head was rolled up and lying by itself. These statements about the linen cloths and napkin are proof against the body being stolen. If either friends or enemies had tried to steal the body away, they probably would not have waited to remove the graveclothes. It would have been quicker to have taken it just as it was. If the body had been still dead, there would be no reason for carefully rolling up the cloths and laying them aside. It is said that the other disciple also entered the tomb, saw and believed. That means that they believed Mary's report about the body being removed; for John says "they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." (John 20: 8, 9.) That is, they did not understand that he was to arise.

*"Wondering."*—Luke says that Peter departed to his home "wondering at that which was come to pass." This is further proof that they only believed that his body had been removed, not that they believed he had been raised from the dead. But he appeared to Peter some time during that day, for the two to whom he appeared on the way to Emmaus found the eleven that night and said he had appeared to Simon. (Luke 24: 33-35; 1 Cor. 15: 6.) It was that night that Jesus appeared to the apostles through the closed door. (John 20: 19-23.) A week later Thomas saw him and the proof of his resurrection was all in. (John 20: 26-29.)

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Embalming the body with spices was the last act to show their love for Jesus, as they did not understand he was to arise. The women hastened to do that at the earliest time possible. We should be willing to show kindness to all, and as soon and as much as possible.

2. As soon as we learn vital truths we should joyfully and gladly take them to others. When the Jerusalem congregation was scat-

tered abroad, the members "went about preaching the word." (Acts 8: 4.)

3. Our hope of the fulfillment of God's promises to us depends upon the assurance that he has fulfilled others. The angel reminded the women of Jesus' predictions. We should be reminded of his promises to us; his resurrection is assurance that they will be fulfilled.

4. Doubting statements that are improbable should be commended rather than criticized. Asking for proof is the sensible thing to do. Refusing to believe when proof is presented is stubbornness.

5. The resurrection of Jesus is the crowning proof of his claims to be the divine Son of God. Nothing that disbelievers can say against him can have any weight so long as his resurrection is sustained as a fact. The evidence is overwhelming proof.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Briefly sketch the facts related in Luke 24: 13-35.
2. Describe his appearance to them that night. (Luke 24: 36-42.)
3. Give Paul's argument on the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15: 12-19.
4. Repeat the statement of Jesus on the subject. (John 5: 25-29.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

Why did the women wait till Sunday morning to visit the tomb?  
Explain the different statements about their arrival.  
What was said about the stone being rolled away?

#### II

What opinion did they have about the disappearance of the body?  
How harmonize the statements about the number of men?  
How harmonize the expressions, "sitting" and "stood"?  
How were tombs made?

#### III

On what occasions did Jesus refer to his resurrection?  
What had he said about being "delivered up"?  
What proof had they that he would rise?  
What is meant by "they remembered"?

#### IV

What were the women told to do?  
What women are here named?  
Why did the disciples consider the report "idle talk"?

#### V

What is Luke's statement about Peter?  
What additional information does John give?  
What did Peter and John see in the tomb?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.

Lesson III—April 19, 1936

## GOD, THE FORGIVING FATHER

Luke 15: 11-24.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.



16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 But when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight:

19 I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him." (Psalm 103: 13.)

**TIME.**—Probably late A.D. 29 or early A.D. 30.

**PLACE.**—Perea, the region east of the lower Jordan.

**PERSONS.**—Jesus, his disciples, Pharisees, scribes, and publicans.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 103: 8-14.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

April 13.	M.	God's Forgiving Love (Luke 15: 11-24)
April 14.	T.	Our Need of Forgiveness (Psalm 51: 1-4)
April 15.	W.	The Blessedness of Forgiveness (Psalm 32: 1-7)
April 16.	T.	A Forgiving Spirit (Mark 11: 20-25)
April 17.	F.	Jesus Teaches Forgiveness (John 8: 2-11)
April 18.	S.	The Merciful Father (Psalm 103: 8-14)
April 19.	S.	Forgiveness and Love (Luke 7: 36-38, 44-50)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. The Prodigal's Great Mistakes (Verses 11-13).
- II. The Prodigal's Great Fall (Verses 14-16).
- III. The Prodigal's Great Resolve (Verses 17-19).
- IV. A Noble Confession (Verses 20, 21).
- V. The Father's Blessings (Verses 22-24).

Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—This lesson takes us back from the crucifixion to probably the closing days of the preceding year, A.D. 29. It was likely not much later than the time of lesson one. For that reason the chronological facts of that lesson are substantially the same as for this. Hence, nothing more need be said on it here. The student is advised to turn back to the first lesson and read the chronology as there given.

**Lesson Links.**—Since there must have been very little time intervening between this lesson and the first one of the quarter, and nothing recorded that is certainly known to have transpired in that time, the lesson links of that lesson will fit this one also. To get "links" between this and our last lesson we would have to go forward instead of backward, since lesson two was much later in time than this one.

*Lesson Settings.*—Luke 14: 25 says "there went with him great multitudes." This seems to indicate that he had left the house of the Pharisee where lesson one was spoken. It is supposed that he was still in Perea, east of the Jordan, but the exact location is not known. Luke 15: 1 shows that "publicans and sinners were drawing near . . . to hear him." They were a self-righteous set that was continually trying to find something to charge against him. On various occasions he condemned their hypocrisy most severely. Their complaint here meant that if he were what he professed and was truly a righteous man, he would not associate with the outcast publicans and common sinners. Then he spoke three parables—lost sheep, lost money, and lost boy—to show that he was justified in his conduct toward sinners. If they were lost, they needed salvation, and were more valuable than sheep or money.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Prodigal's Great Mistakes (Verses 11-13)

*A Parable.*—In the story of the lost sheep (verses 3-7) Luke calls it a parable, but he does not so name this lesson. It is, however, a parable; the style of expression clearly shows that. Neither does the text call it the parable of "the prodigal son." But by common consent the term "prodigal" has been used because the young man was a reckless and extravagant spender of all the resources at his command. This conduct in his case, as in millions of others, brought him to ruin. It will still have the same results.

*Asked for His Portion.*—Young people especially often ask for things not best for them. The sequel shows that to have been true in this young man's case. He may have been old enough to receive what the father wanted him to have, and yet he was not wise and temperate enough to use it rightly. It was a mistake for him to ask for it. While that is true, yet the parable was constructed to show that the father's receiving the sinful boy when he returned proved that Jesus was right when he received sinners. The prodigal being in fact a sinner, confessed himself such, returned to his father's house and was received. He represented the publicans and sinners who, though sinful, yet were more inclined to hear Jesus than were the scribes and Pharisees with their bigotry and self-righteousness. The latter were represented by the older son. According to their law the first-born son received a double portion. In this case, since the parable presents two sons, the portion of the younger was one-third of the estate. (Deut. 21: 17.) It included those things with which the father made his living; hence, it is said he "divided unto them his living." That means he gave portions to both.

*Went into a Far Country.*—The second mistake the young man made was to take his newly received possessions and go to a far country among strangers. Those with little experience need the help that can be given only by those who are well grounded in vital issues. Undue exposure to enemies is always fraught with dangers. The facts show that the young man of the parable was not prepared to resist the evil influences he found in the far country. He longed for a false liberty which turned out to be the most cruel kind of bondage. In bad company (verse 30) he wasted all his substance in riotous living. As all the parties in this parable were Jews—God's people—it might be argued that the younger son represented the backsliding



Christian. It is unquestionably true that the lessons of the parable might be so applied; but, since it was spoken to show the self-righteous Pharisees that Jesus was doing right in receiving sinners, it may have a broader application. The general truth carried in the parable is that people of any class who have lost God's favor by sin may return to that favor through repentance and reformation. The willingness of God to receive truly penitent sinners when they return to him lies upon the very surface. That fits both alien sinners and backsliders.

## II. The Prodigal's Great Fall (Verses 14-16)

*"Spent All."*—Usually the profligate spendthrift never stops till he reaches the bottom; he seems not to realize how swiftly he is descending till he has reached the end of his power and exhausted all his resources. Unless the realization of his true condition produces a thorough and speedy reformation his case is generally hopeless. Such reckless persons never provide for adversity. When the prodigal had spent all he had a mighty famine came on to render his condition all the more deplorable. To the loss of all he had was added actual want. When the pangs of hunger and the threat of starvation torment both body and mind, there is little left to make existence bearable. When an abominably corrupt life has destroyed the hope of eternal happiness, the state is beyond man's power to describe.

*The Prodigal's Last Effort.*—With his money all gone and his health probably greatly impaired, he was forced to provide food or starve. None of his profligate friends remained with him in his distress. He was compelled to seek employment from a citizen of the country. This citizen was a Gentile else he would not have had a herd of swine; the Jews were forbidden to eat swine meat, and of course it would be considered wrong for them to keep swine. Probably no more disgusting kind of employment could have been offered a Jew then than the work of caring for swine. But necessity forced its acceptance. Those who waste their all in sinful practices must come to want and degradation.

*Ate the Husks.*—The expression "he would fain" means that he would gladly have eaten the same food he was giving the swine. His hunger had become so torturing that he would willingly have eaten any kind of food. The "husks" were, it is said, something like a bean pod and grew on a carob tree. The pods were the part eaten. Since his employer must have furnished him very poor food, and no one else gave him anything, he was ready to eat part of what he had for the swine. Nothing could better show the wretched condition of those lost in sin than the miserable state of this prodigal at the bottom of his downward course.

## III. The Prodigal's Great Resolve (Verses 17-19)

*"Came to Himself."*—The statement that the prodigal "came to himself" implies that he had been beside himself; that is, he had been acting as a madman—one temporarily insane. This any one does when he rejects every element of common sense, and abandons himself to unrestrained profligacy and immorality. Unfortunately, many who pursue such a course never come to themselves, or never get enough self-control to abandon their wickedness. For such life ends in shame.

*His Reasoning.*—When the prodigal reached the end of his course and realized that his power and resources were gone, he began to compare his ruined state with the situation in the home he had left. He could well know what was there by the knowledge of what was there before he left. While he was forced to accept employment that was specially hated, his father was able to hire many servants in work that was agreeable. Though a son he was in far worse condition than the hired servants in his father's house. They worked for a good master; he served one with no sympathy with his wants. They had bread enough and some to spare; he was so hungry that he was eating the coarse food that was fit only for the swine. When men will compare the consequences of a sinful and a righteous life, they, like the prodigal, will also conclude that the only sensible thing to do is to turn from sin to righteousness.

*"I Will Arise."*—The prodigal came to himself enough to reason the thing out on its merits. His decision was that he would arise and go to his father's house. In the expression "I will" we have a clear-cut definition of repentance. Godly sorrow and the goodness of God produce repentance. (Rom. 2: 4; 2 Cor. 7: 10.) Repentance leads to a reformation of life; a change of conduct to harmonize with the decision made. The decision, the "I will," is the change of mind that is repentance. When the boy considered his conduct he decided it was sinful. Influenced by this and the assurance that his father's love was sufficient to receive him, he decided to go. He said he would tell his father he had sinned in heaven's sight and against him. A repentance that is not strong enough to make one confess his sins is worthless. He said he would also say that he was no more worthy to be called the son of such a good father. Strictly speaking, that was true, and is true of sinners now; but the father's love was so great that he would be welcome. True to his decision he arose and went. Apparently he did so without hesitancy or delays. In this we have another remarkable example of following Bible teaching.

#### IV. A Noble Confession (Verses 20, 21)

*"Moved with Compassion."*—While a great way off the father saw him and ran to meet him. It touched the father's heart to see the wayward son returning home. This is the natural feeling that any good father would have on seeing his son returning to safety. It fitly represents the love of our Heavenly Father for sinners that turn from sin to the way of righteousness. Of course, as the son got nearer the father saw his wretched appearance and he was deeply moved to see his son, who went away proudly with all his possessions, return empty-handed, and probably dressed in rags. The father showed his compassion and love by falling on his neck and kissing him. This, according to that oriental custom, was a token of the sincerest love. It assured the prodigal of his welcome in the father's house.

*"I Have Sinned."*—The prodigal realized his folly and sin and, true to his determination, he confessed it to his father. The father clearly showed by his action that the son was welcome, yet the son felt that he must confess his sinfulness. In doing this he admitted that he was no more worthy to be called a son; his conduct had forfeited every claim to that honor. He had said to himself that he would ask to be allowed to be as one of the hired servants. The



record does not say he made that request. Whether he was so overwhelmed by the father's love that he forgot it, or Luke failed to record it, is not known. Still enough is said to show that he was truly penitent. That guaranteed the father's acceptance.

### V. The Father's Blessings (Verses 22-24)

*"The Best Robe."*—The prodigal, reduced to poverty and want, was probably returning clad in rags. This would suggest to the father first of all to supply him proper garments. The best robe—one probably reserved for festival occasions—would indicate the joy with which he was received by the father. Giving a ring indicated favor, affection, or a sign of induction into office. Here it showed the father's love for the son and his favor in receiving him back into his home. Probably the son returned without any shoes. When the father commanded that shoes be placed on his feet, it showed that he was to be treated as a son, not simply as a servant. Servants probably did not wear shoes in their work.

*"The Fatted Calf."*—To kill the fatted calf meant that they were to have a special season of feasting and rejoicing. To kill the calf that was being prepared for some special occasion shows that the father considered the return of his son as being worthy of special rejoicing. This is clearly seen in the older son's complaint in verse 30. The father showed his happiness by saying, "Let us eat, and make merry." The reason assigned is, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." He could have meant, I thought he was dead, but I now know he is alive; or, he was dead to virtue—sunk in sin—but now has returned to the right. Whatever the father may have meant, the latter we know was the truth in the case.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. In leaving the father's house to gain independence and seek for imaginary pleasures the prodigal left the father's protection and help; the end was misery, shame, and disgrace. This is a vivid picture of what will happen to those who turn from God to seek the pleasures of sin and folly.

2. In time all must come to the end of their way. Those who squander time, strength, and wealth must ultimately come to want. Downward roads will finally reach the bottom, and wicked lives will come to disaster sooner or later.

3. A careful and honest consideration of facts will force every one to see the folly of sin; perfect sincerity in dealing with the facts will compel one to return to God for safety. This is the only course in avoiding the consequences of sin.

4. The manifestation of God's love in providing for man's salvation is proof that God's love will cause him to accept the sinner when he is ready to leave his sin and come to God. Sinners must be ready and willing to confess their sins.

5. God's willingness to receive penitent sinners is evidence that he will provide for us the best blessings. Jesus said there would be joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. (Luke 15: 7.)

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

✓ 1. Give the parable of the lost sheep. (Luke 15: 1-7.)

2. Give in full the parable of the lost piece of money. (Luke 15: 8-10.)

3. Give the remainder of the story regarding the prodigal son. (Luke 15: 25-31.)
4. Give Paul's argument on the nature and importance of repentance in 2 Cor. 7: 8-12.

## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

## Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

## I

What is the reason for calling this a parable?  
What is the lesson taught in this parable?  
Who were represented by the two sons?  
What was the second mistake the boy made?

## II

What is usually true of spendthrifts?  
What happened when all was spent?

What last effort did he make?  
What was meant by the "husks"?

## III

What is meant by "he came to himself"?  
How did he reason about himself?  
What was his decision?  
What Bible teaching is here explained?

## IV

Describe the father's feeling toward the son.  
What confession did he make?

## V

Explain the father's commands regarding the son.  
What is indicated by orders to kill the "fatted calf"?

## Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.

Lesson IV—April 26, 1936

## JESUS LOOKS AT WEALTH AND POVERTY

Luke 16: 19-31.

19 Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day:

20 And a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores,  
21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried.

23 And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish.

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us.

27 And he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house;

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 But Abraham saith, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The rich and the poor meet together: Jehovah is the maker of them all." (Prov. 22: 2.)



TIME.—Probably A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Perea, the country east of the Jordan.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, and the Pharisees.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 John 3: 13-18.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

April 20.	M	-----	The Dangers of Riches (Luke 16: 19-26)
April 21.	T	-----	Giving at a Sacrifice (Mark 12: 41-44)
April 22.	W	-----	Social Justice (Amos 5: 10-15)
April 23.	T	-----	A Charge to the Wealthy (1 Tim. 6: 17-19)
April 24.	F	-----	True Wealth (Eccles. 5: 8-17)
April 25.	S	-----	The Joy of Simple Living (Prov. 15: 16, 17; 1 Tim. 6: 6-9)
April 26.	S	-----	Love in Deed and Truth (1 John 3: 13-18)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. The Two Men Described (Verses 19-21).
  - II. Both Men Enter Hades (Verses 22-24).
  - III. The Rich Man's Appeal Rejected (Verses 25, 26).
  - IV. The Rich Man's Second Appeal (Verses 27-29).
  - V. The Rich Man's Final Appeal (Verses 30, 31).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronological Facts.*—This is another one of several lessons selected from Luke that occurred a few months before the crucifixion. Nothing more definite can be said of the time for this one than for the last. These lessons may have been given very close together or several weeks apart. Presumably they were spoken when Jesus and his disciples were in Perea, east of the Jordan, where he went after dining with the Pharisee as described in lesson one.

*Lesson Links.*—Again we have no incidents recorded that came between this and our last lesson, for which reason there are no connecting links to mention. Possibly many interesting things did occur, for we know that Jesus was constantly teaching and extending blessings to the needy, but they are not given. Since the brief records of his life contain so little of what doubtless really happened, we know that the true chain of events is often broken. But that is immaterial since what we do have is correct. Few stories are told in full detail; such is not necessary to their credibility. Truth requires that what is told shall be a correct relation of facts.

*Lesson Settings.*—From Luke 15: 1 we learn that a general multitude had drawn near to hear Jesus. The text states that publicans and sinners had come to hear him, and that Pharisees and scribes were present ready to object. The parables in the fifteenth chapter were spoken to the multitudes, though addressed directly to those who were murmuring. Verse 1 of our lesson chapter may mean that the stories of the unrighteous steward and the rich man and Lazarus were spoken to his disciples only. If this be the fact, then it indicates that it was spoken at a later time and probably at some other place. But, if it means that he turned to address his disciples, then these stories were spoken on the same occasion as our last lesson. In the unrighteous steward Jesus showed how his disciples should use their

riches. In the rich man's sad state he showed how dangerous it would be not to use them rightly. The entire contents of chapters fifteen and sixteen were spoken especially to condemn the murmuring Pharisees and scribes, though it was wholesome teaching for the disciples as well.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Two Men Described (Verses 19-21)

*The Rich Man.*—The rich man is commonly referred to as "Dives"—a Latin word meaning rich. The text does not mention his name, but just calls him "a certain rich man." If this be a bit of real history, Jesus could have given his name if he had so desired. But to name one so prominent as a rich man was likely to be might have caused unnecessary offense and done no good. Leaving the matter impersonal would allow the argument to apply to any and all men of similar character. He is described as clothed "in purple and fine linen," the color and kind of garments worn by royalty and wealthy people. It is also said he fared "sumptuously every day." This means that was his customary way of living, and harmonizes fully with the fact that he was declared a rich man. It should be noted that he is not charged with having obtained his riches by trickery or dishonest dealings, or that he was insolent or merciless. Nothing is said about his scandalous misuse of his wealth in riotous living, as was true of the prodigal. In the eyes of the world, so far as his record is concerned, he would be rated as a typical gentleman, having plenty and living well. His sin was self-satisfaction with his own abundance and cold indifference regarding the welfare of others.

*Lazarus.*—The word Lazarus was a common Jewish name meaning *the help of God*, and therefore fittingly described one who needed and received help from God. To name a poor man would not likely give any offense to any one. His physical condition was most distressing. He was "full of sores," probably meaning that he was covered with painful ulcers. He desired to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, but was so helpless that he had to be brought to the gate. The dogs licked his sores because he was too feeble to prevent it. The contrast between the two men is certainly striking. One had an abundance of physical strength and material blessings; the other was a physical wreck and a genuine pauper.

### II. Both Men Enter Hades (Verses 22-24)

*Parable or History?*—Some contend that this story is a parable; others that it is the description of a literal situation. The word parable is not in the text, neither does the Savior say the kingdom of heaven is *like* two men. Hence, it is impossible to prove that it is a parable. But, if it is one, the lessons in it would not be materially changed. Parables are based upon things that have occurred or things that can occur. Therefore, the facts stated in the story are real situations. If these illustrate something else, these facts are still true. Those who reject the idea that man is conscious between death and the resurrection contend that it is a parable, and then reject it as a parable by denying that the story states facts.

*Both Men Died.*—The simple statement that the rich man and Lazarus died—a thing common to humanity—has no special signifi-



cance in itself, but is necessary to show another contrast in the intermediate state. Of the rich man it is said that he was buried. This, of course, must refer to the body, for that goes to the grave. While not mentioned in the text, the body of Lazarus was buried also. Since the rich man was said to be in Hades in torment and able to see and converse with Abraham, who had been dead for centuries, we know that the part that was in Hades was his spirit. As Abraham and the rich man were in Hades, it follows that Lazarus was also there. From Acts 2: 27, 31 it is clear that Christ's soul (spirit) was in Hades while his body was in the tomb. The word "Hades" means "the unseen," and applies to the state of spirits between death and the resurrection. It is an entirely different word from the one that means "hell," having reference to the final state of the wicked after the resurrection. The Revised Version puts Hades where it should take the place of the word hell. (See Luke 16: 23; Acts 2: 27, 31.)

*"Abraham's Bosom."*—To the Jewish mind this expression meant a place of happiness after death for the spirits of the righteous. It was equivalent to "Paradise" in the language of Jesus to the dying robber. (Luke 23: 42.) The text states that Lazarus was enjoying this happiness. Here from the appeal to Abraham by the rich man we learn that in the Hadean state all were conscious. There could be neither happiness nor torment for one who does not exist or is not conscious. This story also shows that paradise is divided into two compartments, places, or conditions. One for the righteous, the other for the wicked; one a paradise, the other a place of torment. The rich man cried for help; wanted Abraham to send Lazarus to cool his tongue with a little water. Some say this could not refer to the spirit in Hades, for spirits do not have fingers and tongues. But as man cannot see or describe a pure spirit, the only way to think of one is to imagine it in the form of man. God is a Spirit, yet we speak of his eyes and hands. There is no inconsistency then in thinking of those in Hades as we see the living here.

### III. The Rich Man's Appeal Rejected (Verses 25, 26)

*"Thou Art in Anguish."*—The rich man had just said that he was in "anguish in this flame." Abraham admitted the statement to be true by saying, "Thou art in anguish." The contrast between the two both in life and in Hades was presented by Abraham. He called upon the rich man to *remember* what he had had and what he had lost. So far as we know much of the torment of the damned may consist in remembering what they have lost through folly and the fact that they cannot change their state. It is foolish to become skeptical or become horrified at the thought of literal fire. We have no means of knowing fully what is included in that term anguish; but the expression, "this flame," is used to indicate a fearful torture of some kind. A thing so terrible that fire represents it must be too bad for any to risk. In life the rich man had good things—clothing, fine food, and great riches; Lazarus had evil things—poverty, sores, and hunger. In Hades, Lazarus had comfort and the rich man had anguish.

*"Great Gulf Fixed."*—The rich man was told that his request could not be granted because there was an impassable gulf between them. Those on either side could not cross to the other side. This means



that after reaching the Hadean world the lost cannot be saved and the saved cannot be lost. This shows that the "second-chance" doctrine—an opportunity to be saved after death—is not true. It also shows that the only way to be saved is to so live that after death we will be on the right side of the impassable gulf. There is no such gulf in this life. Men here cross the line from right to wrong and from wrong to right. Those who deny that the spirits of the dead are conscious say the rich man represents the Jews and that Lazarus represents the Gentiles. There never was a time when Gentiles could not come into the Jewish family by the rite of circumcision. (Gen. 17: 12, 13; Ex. 12: 43-49.) Since the Gentiles could be incorporated with the Jews, that explanation must be false. The only thing to say is that Jesus was describing the condition of both good and bad spirits in the state between death and the resurrection. This fact is strong proof that the story is not a parable; for, if spirits in Hades are the parties in the parable, it will be difficult to find any application for the parable. If it is plain history, the lessons are easily found.

#### IV. The Rich Man's Second Appeal (Verses 27-29)

*His Brethren.*—Realizing that no relief could come to him his thoughts turned to his brethren. He begged Abraham to send messengers to his father's house and warn his five brethren to prevent their coming to the same place of torment. How sad that wicked people will find when too late that they are not able to do anything to save their own. If we expect to do anything to prevent the loss of our relatives and friends, we must do it while both we and they live. This also shows that any of our friends or relatives who may find themselves lost will not want us to follow them to condemnation. If possible they would warn us and beg us not to come to their place of torment. They would keep us away if they could. This part of the story also shows that the Jew-Gentile interpretation will not do; for in that case there would be nobody to be represented by the five brethren. All the persons in this story were Jews; five on earth alive, two in the Hadean world. It is best to suppose that Jesus was simply stating facts with their solemn reality to impress us with the fact that, if we expect to be saved, we must live a righteous life and be faithful unto death.

*Abraham's Reply.*—Abraham reminded the rich man that his brethren had Moses and the prophets and should hear them. Two lessons are clearly evident here: (1) When God gives man a revelation he expects him to honor it. To ask for a special revelation when the one in his possession is rejected is out of the question. This the reply of Abraham means. Since we now have the gospel, there is no use to ask for direct spiritual influence. (2) It shows clearly that spirits in the intermediate state are not allowed to communicate directly with the living. This, if allowed, would discredit God's revelation. This story shows that the whole spiritualistic doctrine—communing with the departed—is a false teaching.

#### V. The Rich Man's Final Appeal (Verses 30, 31)

*"Nay."*—The rich man said, "Nay, father Abraham." By this he said no to Abraham's statement, meaning he was not ready to accept it as the end of the matter. He knew they had Moses and the prophets



and that they had rejected them, for he himself had done the same thing. But in spite of that fact he insisted that they would repent if one should rise from the dead. He was making his final effort to get his brethren warned against what he knew was their fate. But he was mistaken in his conclusion about the matter.

*One from the Dead.*—Abraham reasoned that their refusal to hear Moses and the prophets was proof that they would not be persuaded by one from the dead. They accepted the prophets as inspired messengers, and Moses, their lawgiver, had appeared at the transfiguration, but they did not listen to them. Jesus had raised two from the dead and demonstrated his divine power, yet they did not believe him. What better evidence could another bring from the dead? Such a messenger would have been rejected just as they were then rejecting Jesus. That Abraham was right about the matter is seen in the fact that after Jesus was raised from the dead the Jews in the main did not believe in him.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Judged by purely human standards the rich man would have graded high. He would probably have been lavishly praised as a splendid citizen because of his remarkable success in the business world. Lazarus would have been scarcely noticed because he appeared to be one of life's failures. Jesus' view of the two is in the text.

2. The realm of spirits will doubtless reveal many surprises to both good and bad. The "wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish" promised to the disobedient will never be understood till Hades is reached; neither can the joys of the redeemed be realized till then. Skeptics will then know their loss; believers will know their gain.

3. Cries for help do no good when the last door of opportunity has been closed. Deep poverty and bitter afflictions in this life are far better than abundant wealth, if it be used in a way to send one to the wrong side of the impassable gulf.

4. Nothing is more commendable than instructing the ignorant or warning those in danger of loss, but it must be done when opportunities are afforded. Life is our only time to render that important service. Messages from the dead are forbidden.

5. When God reveals his will man must hear and obey. Asking for personal and special revelations is showing disrespect for God's word.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Briefly relate the story of the unjust steward. (Luke 16: 1-13.)

2. How does James describe rich men? (James 5: 1-6.)

3. Quote and explain what Peter said about Hades on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2: 25-31.)

4. What does the New Testament teach regarding the perfection of God's word? (Heb. 4: 12; 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

How is the rich man described?

Why did Jesus fail to give his name?

What was his sin?

Describe Lazarus.

#### II

Is this story a parable or history?

What part of man goes to Hades?

Who are described as being in Hades?  
 What is meant by "Abraham's bosom"?  
 How explain the use of the words  
 "tongue" and "finger"?

## III

What contrast does Abraham make here?  
 What is taught by the impassable gulf?  
 What proof is there that the Jews and  
 Gentiles are not meant?

## IV

What appeal did the rich man make  
 next?  
 What lessons are taught in these verses?  
 What reply did Abraham make?

## V

What did the rich man mean by "Nay"?  
 How did Abraham reason the case?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson V—May 3, 1936*

## JESUS TEACHES FORGIVENESS, HUMILITY, AND GRATITUDE

Luke 17: 1-19.

1 And he said unto his disciples, It is impossible but that occasions of stumbling should come; but woe unto him, through whom they come!

2 It were well for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble.

3 Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would obey you.

7 But who is there of you, having a servant plowing or keeping sheep, that will say unto him, when he is come in from the field, Come straightway and sit down to meat;

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9 Doth he thank the servant because he did the things that were commanded?

10 Even so ye also, when ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do.

11 And it came to pass, as they were on their way to Jerusalem, that he was passing along the borders of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up their voices, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go and show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God;

16 And he fell upon his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

18 Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger?

19 And he said unto him, Arise, and go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you." (Eph. 4: 32.)

**TIME.**—Probably A.D. 30.

**PLACE.**—On the border between Samaria and Galilee.

**PERSONS.**—Jesus and his disciples.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Phil. 2: 1-11.



## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

April 27.	M.	-----	Jesus Teaches Forgiveness (Luke 17: 1-4)
April 28.	T.	-----	Jesus Teaches Humility (Luke 17: 5-10)
April 29.	W.	-----	Jesus Teaches Gratitude (Luke 17: 11-19)
April 30.	T.	-----	Paul Teaches Forgiveness (Col. 3: 12-17)
May 1.	F.	-----	James Teaches Humility (James 4: 1-9)
May 2.	S.	-----	Paul Teaches Gratitude (Phil. 4: 4-7)
May 3.	S.	-----	The Mind of Christ (Phil. 2: 1-11)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Stumbling, Repentance, and Forgiveness (Verses 1-4).
  - II. Power of Faith Explained (Verses 5, 6).
  - III. Humble Service Illustrated (Verses 7-10).
  - IV. Ten Lepers Healed (Verses 11-14).
  - V. One Leper Manifests Gratitude (Verses 15-19).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The first ten verses of this lesson were spoken soon after our last lesson in all probability, and somewhere near the end of A.D. 29. It must have been only a short time before he left Perea, east of the Jordan, where he spoke our last lesson. The rest of this lesson was probably a month or two later or early in the year A.D. 30. Neither of the two events mentioned in our text can be fixed exactly as to time.

*Lesson Links.*—Leaving Perea after our last lesson Jesus went back to Bethany near Jerusalem where he raised Lazarus from the dead. The record of this event is found in John 11: 1-46. This miracle was reported to the Pharisees and resulted in arousing bitter opposition against him. The council (Sanhedrin), which was the Jewish high court, was gathered together and, after considering the case, determined to have him killed. (John 11: 46-54.) This decision was doubtless made known to Jesus and he thwarted their plans by departing to Ephraim, a city sixteen miles northeast of Jerusalem. When we consider his later movements, we know his stay there must have been brief. He may have left there because it was too close to Jerusalem for him to be safe from the infuriated Pharisees very long. We next hear of him as touching the borders of Samaria and Galilee. This took him where he was probably much safer from his enemies for the time.

*Lesson Settings.*—As was pointed out in the last two lessons Jesus had been answering the complaints of the scribes and Pharisees while in Perea. His addresses were directed mainly to them, though his disciples of course heard also. (Luke 15: 1.) The first verse of this lesson chapter indicates the probability that it was spoken to the disciples alone, and the first part (ten verses) before leaving Perea. The remainder of the lesson was given some time while he was in the borders of Samaria and Galilee. This indefinite expression does not fix the exact place. But it was on the circuitous route he was taking on his last journey to Jerusalem. From the borders of Samaria and Galilee he went through Perea again, crossed the Jordan and made his way to Jerusalem through Jericho.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Stumbling, Repentance, and Forgiveness (Verses 1-4)

*"Occasions of Stumbling."*—The murmuring of the scribes and Pharisees to whom he had been talking probably suggested the statement about stumbling. In a world where sin abounds it would be impossible to prevent offenses. Sinners would naturally be inclined to place stumbling blocks in the way of others. As one might fall over a block in his way, so might one through the sin of others be influenced to doubt or give up his faith in Christ. It would be wicked indeed to put something in one's way deliberately to cause him to fall, but an exceeding sinful thing to cause one to stumble spiritually and lose the eternal reward. The seriousness of this sin is shown by the statement of Jesus that it would be better to have a millstone hanged about the neck and cast into the sea than to commit such an offense. "These little ones" refers to beginners in the faith. Causing such weak disciples to stumble is a desperate sin. Only those of the hardest hearts could be guilty of it.

*"Take Heed."*—The terrible fate announced for those who cause stumbling probably suggested the warning for his disciples to take heed to themselves. They might easily make his teaching the occasion of refusing mercy to those who might offend and repent. Hence, the necessity of watching themselves, for they might become offenders and need mercy. To balance the teaching he said: "If thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." Sin should be condemned, not excused. It is best for those who sin to be rebuked, for if the sin is condoned, the sinner is not likely to repent. What he needs is to reform, not to have his conduct tolerated. But the command to rebuke the sinner might lead to harshness, if not used with caution. Jesus therefore adds, "and if he repent, forgive him." This takes care of the other side of the question.

*"Seven Times."*—Jesus showed the importance of carrying out this instruction by supposing that one might sin against another seven times in one day. If so, he said forgive him. If necessary to forgive once when repentance is confessed, then necessary again for the same reason. Being led to sin once implies that it might be again. "Seven times" was used probably to indicate a great number of times; or, that the law would apply continuously. It is said that it was a maxim among the Jews to forgive only three times. Jesus here increases the number to seven. If seven be considered a perfect number, the principle would apply indefinitely. That is likely what Jesus wanted them to understand.

## II. Power of Faith Explained (Verses 5, 6)

*"Increase Our Faith."*—The apostles asked that Jesus increase their faith. To do the thing he had required in the matter of forgiving offenses, they felt they would need an increase of faith. Forgiving offenses is evidently one of the most difficult things for even Christians to do. It requires a nobility of soul that can suppress petty feelings, overcome natural tendencies, and do our duty in spite of any and all difficulties. It means that we must go against the spirit of the world and put out of our hearts the desire for revenge. Nothing short of strong faith in God's word will enable anyone to follow Christ in this matter. As faith comes by hearing God's word



(Rom. 10: 17), the persistent reading of that word will give us that increase of faith needed to meet the most trying situations.

*"As a Grain of Mustard Seed."*—Their idea that it would require exceedingly great faith to perform the duties Jesus had mentioned led to their request for stronger faith. This caused Jesus to say that faith "as a grain of mustard seed" would enable them to remove the sycamine tree into the sea with a command. Such a thing could not be except by the exercise of miraculous power. Neither would such a miracle—in fact, no miracle—be performed unless there was a real need for it. That means that even the apostles could not perform a miracle to gratify curiosity; it must have a legitimate purpose. It also means that with a proper purpose it could not be done unless they were genuine believers. Doubting God's word would cause them to fail. Any degree of genuine faith would enable God to use them as the agents through which he could manifest his miraculous power. Perhaps Jesus meant that, as the mustard seed grows and rapidly expands, their faith should be vital and aboundingly strong. Such faith would not be denied in any miracle that the truth required for its confirmation. Peter's failure in walking on the water (Matt. 14: 27-31) is proof that miracles cannot be performed when faith fails.

### III. Humble Service Illustrated (Verses 7-10)

*Man's Servants.*—Men of faith and ability have great responsibilities. In these verses Jesus shows that the servants of both God and men have duties to perform. From the known conduct of men with their servants Jesus illustrates the higher obligations of service to God. He even presents an extreme case on the human side. He said that when a servant came from plowing or keeping sheep his master would not tell him to sit down and eat, but would rather require him to prepare the master's meal and serve him, then the servant would eat. The question is then asked: "Doth he thank the servant because he did the things that were commanded?" The servant did not expect thanks, as though he were rendering a favor, but understood his service was a duty. Being a bond servant he was obligated to render the obedience.

*"Unprofitable Servants."*—Jesus says, "Even so ye also," and means that the case is similar to the matter of our service to God. As spiritual bond servants we owe our obedience to Christ. When we have done "all the things that are commanded," we should then say we are "unprofitable servants." We deserve no thanks, for we have rendered no favors to the Lord, having done "that which it was our duty to do." When we have done that we have been unable to even render value received for the favors given by the Lord. We have not been profitable to the Lord, but just obedient as small tokens of our appreciation for his numberless blessings. Besides our numerous sins continually bring us under more obligations to him.

### IV. Ten Lepers Healed (Verses 11-14)

*"Stood Afar Off."*—The text states that Jesus was passing along the borders of Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a certain village he was met by ten lepers. The village is not named and therefore cannot be located. The Jewish law (Lev. 13: 45, 46) required lepers to dress in a certain way, dwell without the camp and cry unclean



to prevent any clean person from coming near them. These lepers knew their condition, recognized the law governing their cases, and stood afar off. They cried to Jesus to have mercy on them.

*Sent to the Priests.*—The thirteenth chapter of Leviticus explains the tests that had to be made to determine whether one was a leper or not. If the priest decided that he was a leper, he must remain apart from the people; if the leper was healed, then he had to be pronounced cured by the priest, and be cleansed according to the law found in the fourteenth chapter of Leviticus. When the lepers cried for mercy, Jesus told them to go and show themselves to the priests. This was a test of their confidence in his power to heal, for he did not tell them he would heal them, neither were they healed when they started. If he had healed them first, they still would have been required to show themselves to the priests and have their testimony that they were cured. They would have had a reason for going to the priests, but without healing they had nothing but his command to prompt them to go.

*"They Were Cleansed."*—The difference between the cure of the disease and the legal cleansing after being cured should not be overlooked. True the word "cleansed" is used in our text in reference to the cure of the disease, but a physical cure may be called a cleansing. But being healed—cured of the disease—is a different "cleansing" from the legal cleansing which was a process by which the healed person was restored to his place in society. The offerings they made in that legal process were commanded by Moses "for a testimony unto them"; that is, being examined by the priest and being pronounced healed, they made the offerings to have the proof that they had been cleansed. (Mark 1: 44.) In this verse the word "for" in the expression "for thy cleansing" is Greek *peri* and means *concerning*. The word "for" in the expression "for a testimony" is the Greek word *eis* and means "into." Here it carries the idea of purpose. The plain meaning of the verse is this: In the things pertaining to your cleansing make the offerings Moses required that you may have a testimony to the fact that you are cured.

## V. One Leper Manifests Gratitude (Verses 15-19)

*"Glorifying God."*—Verse 15 says he saw he was "healed," which shows that "cleansed" in verse 14 means to be cured. One returned and with a loud voice was glorifying God. He gave God the credit for his cure. He even fell upon his face at the feet of Jesus to give him thanks, knowing that his cure must have come through Jesus. The instant cure could not be accounted for any other way. Luke incidentally mentions that he was a Samaritan. This implies that the others were Jews. Doubtless he was led to mention this fact that the contrast between the grateful one and the other nine might appear the more forcible.

*"Where Are the Nine?"*—This is one of the most impressive statements to be found. In order to give the words their full force Jesus asked, "Were not the ten cleansed?" Of course they were. If, then, all ten were healed and the one returned to give thanks, why not the other nine? Why should only one in ten be ready to show becoming gratitude for kindness received? Perhaps not that per cent are properly thankful for the Lord's blessings. Perhaps the nine went on to the priest, for they were doubtless selfish enough to want the



testimony to their healing. What they lacked was gratitude for the favor they had already received. Jesus dismissed the leper with the assurance that his faith had made him whole. His confidence in Jesus had made him render prompt obedience with gratitude; hence, led to his being healed.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Divisions are necessary when the difference between right and wrong must be shown, according to Paul's teaching in 1 Cor. 11: 19. Those who are responsible for factions that bring division and strife to the congregation, Paul teaches, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5: 19-21.)

2. Sinners must repent in order to be saved (Acts 2: 38; 3: 19); they must repent to keep from perishing (Luke 13: 3). But repentance on the part of sinners is no more necessary than forgiveness on the part of those against whom they sin. Our salvation depends not only upon God's pardon of our sins, but our pardon of others. (Matt. 6: 14, 15.)

3. It is exceedingly important that we realize that no difference how much we do we do not merit salvation. From the viewpoint of value we are unprofitable servants. The meritorious cause of salvation is the blood of Christ; our obedience simply shows that we have made ourselves worthy to receive salvation through the blood.

4. Leprosy is a type of sin. Isaiah said that sin separates man from God. (Isa. 59: 2.) Nothing is more necessary in bringing one to repentance than for him to realize his guilty distance from God. The lost need to know they are lost, and the way to safety will be taken the more readily.

5. No difference how ungrateful others may be, our duty is to show our thankfulness to God; glorify him in obedience to his commands. It is only in this way that our faith can do us any good.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Briefly tell the story of the Ninevites repenting at the preaching of Jonah. (Matt. 12: 41; Jonah 3: 1-10.)

2. Point out the evidence of Abraham's faith as mentioned in Heb. 11: 8-10.

3. What example of humble service is recorded in John 13: 5-15?

4. Briefly describe the cleansing of the leper. (Lev. 14: 1-22.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### *I*

What occasion probably suggested this statement?

What is the lesson taught here?

Why tell his disciples to take heed?

What is the teaching here on repentance?

#### *II*

Why did they ask for an increase in faith?

What is a most difficult thing to do?

What caused Jesus to speak of the mustard seed?

What was probably his meaning?

#### *III*

How does Jesus illustrate the duty of service?

What is meant by "unprofitable servants"?

#### *IV*

Why did these lepers stand afar off?

Why did Jesus send them to the priests?

What is meant by "cleansed" in verse 14?  
Why was it necessary to make the offering?

V

What happened after they left Jesus?

What did the Samaritan do?  
What did Jesus say of the others?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson VI—May 10, 1936*

**EFFECTUAL PRAYER**

Luke 18: 1-14.

1 And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, and regarded not man:  
3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his elect, that cry to him day and night, and yet he is longsuffering over them?

8 I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

9 And he spake also this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get.

13 But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner.

14 I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"God, be thou merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18: 13.)

**TIME.**—Probably A.D. 30.

**PLACE.**—In Perea and Jericho, on the way to Jerusalem.

**PERSONS.**—Jesus, his disciples, and the Pharisees.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—1 John 3: 18-24.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

May 4.	M.	Learning to Pray (Matt. 6: 5-8)
May 5.	T.	The Perfect Prayer (Matt. 6: 9-14)
May 6.	W.	Faith and Prayer (John 14: 11-20)
May 7.	T.	Humility in Prayer (Luke 18: 9-14)
May 8.	F.	Encouragement to Pray (Luke 11: 9-13)
May 9.	S.	Earnest Prayer (Psalm 63: 1-8)
May 10.	S.	A Penitent's Prayer (Psalm 38: 1-9)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

Introductory Study.

I. An Appeal to an Unjust Judge (Verses 1-3).

II. The Judge's Reasoning (Verses 4, 5).

III. The Parable Applied (Verses 6-8).



- IV. The Pharisee's Prayer (Verses 9-12).  
 V. The Publican's Prayer (Verses 13, 14).  
 Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—So far as the record indicates this lesson may have followed immediately after the discourse in the preceding chapter, a part of which was used for our last lesson text. However, it could have been some later, for doubtless nothing like all the events were recorded. It occurred while he was yet on his journey to Jerusalem, but whether on the border of Samaria and Galilee or after leaving there cannot be determined. It was probably early in A.D. 30.

*Lesson Links.*—John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles had all taught that the kingdom was "at hand." The Pharisees, in common with all other Jews, misunderstood this teaching, and were expecting the restoration of their national kingdom. Since this doctrine had been preached for more than three years and no kingdom had yet been established, they asked Jesus when it would come. (Luke 17: 21, 22.) His answer showed that their notion of the kingdom was wrong. He said it "cometh not with observation," meaning that it would not appear as they anticipated with pomp and display such as characterized the beginning of earthly kingdoms. This proves it another kind of kingdom. He said further, "The kingdom of God is within you." The margin says *in the midst of you*. "Within you," if the pronoun *you* is used indefinitely to mean all, would clearly indicate the spiritual nature of the kingdom, and settle the matter that he did not propose a temporal kingdom. If "you" had reference to the Pharisees only, then "in the midst of you" is correct, for the kingdom spiritually was not in their wicked hearts. In that case the meaning is that the king is now among you. By a figure of speech the word kingdom is used for king. See a similar use of these words in Dan. 7: 17, 23.

*Lesson Settings.*—After replying to the Pharisees he turned to his disciples and warned them of calamities that would come with such terrifying power that they would desire to see a manifestation of the Lord's work. The times mentioned would overtake them unawares, and the good would be separated from the wicked. This prediction doubtless had a literal fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem when the Jews really did desire the Deliverer. The principle will be the same when the Lord comes at the judgment; men will long for an opportunity to be saved—to enjoy the benefits of the Lord's power when it is too late. This furnishes the setting for the first part of the lesson—the parable on persistence in prayer.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. An Appeal to an Unjust Judge (Verses 1-3)

*Purpose of the Parable.*—Here again we note the characteristic of a parable—a story of facts that are real; something that has occurred or can occur. Appealing to a judge for justice could happen at any time, and doubtless did often happen in that age. The purpose of the parable, as Luke expresses it, was "to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint." To pray "always," of course, means to be regular in our praying, not simply in times of distress



or great danger. Not that our every breath shall be an audible prayer, but that we shall have the spirit of prayer in our hearts all the time. Not to faint means that we are not to give up that spirit of prayer—that we will not cease however long the answer to our prayers may be delayed.

*"A Judge."*—A judge is one appointed by law to hear cases that are brought before him, and to see that justice is done. The judge of the parable neither feared God nor regarded man. For a judge to fear God, into whose hands he must come, is the surest evidence that he will regard the rights of man. Man's case is always safest in the hands of those who fear God. The application and parable are not alike in every feature. There are contrasts as well as similarities. In this parable the judge is unrighteous, but God, our Judge, is righteous and will judge in righteousness. (Psalm 96: 13; Rom. 2: 5.) Even honest judges among men make mistakes; the divine wisdom of our heavenly Father makes his ordinances "true and righteous altogether." (Psalm 19: 9; see also Deut. 1: 16, 17; 16: 18-20.)

*"Avenge Me of Mine Adversary."*—The margin puts it "do me justice," which seems to be the correct idea. The parable assumes that the widow's cause was just and that she was seeking relief from an adversary trying to do her harm. She was not asking for vengeance, but for justice, the very thing that judges are supposed to dispense. Her case was so important that she could not afford to give up till she received a hearing. This fact is indicated in the statement that she came oft to the judge. His many refusals to grant her request did not stop her coming. Persistence was finally rewarded.

## II. The Judge's Reasoning (Verses 4, 5)

*"He Would Not."*—How long he continued to refuse her appeal is not indicated, but the point would have little force unless she continued to come for some time. This is the ground for Jesus saying in the application that God will avenge his elect "speedily." Then the coming had to continue long enough to test the widow's persistence or the word "always" in verse 1 would not have much force.

*"Said Within Himself."*—That means that he reasoned the case out in his own mind and decided to grant her request. His delay for a time would not have been so bad if his action had been with an honest desire to do justice. Instead of thinking what was just and right to the widow he was thinking only of his own comfort. He was not actuated by the principle of justice at all. Had not his own selfish desires come into view he would not have considered her appeal. In his decision he probably treated the widow justly, but he was grossly unjust to himself in perverting the obligations resting upon him.

*His Reasons.*—Not fearing God or regarding man he had none of the high motives for his action; he was governed solely by what he wanted for his own pleasure. The widow was troubling him, and he wanted to be rid of that unpleasantness. That meant he was not willing to bear any inconvenience even to remove burdens from the oppressed. Then he said her continual coming would wear him out. Naturally a continuance of unpleasant things will put a strain upon patience that a wicked mind will not endure. Rather than to have any such



bother he decided to grant her request. The thing he did was right; his motive was wrong. In this he was different from our divine Judge.

### III. The Parable Applied (Verses 6-8)

*"Shall Not God Avenge?"*—That is, will not God answer the prayers of his elect in giving them justice? "Hear what the righteous judge saith" means give attention to his reasoning and learn a lesson. In getting that lesson we must note not only the likenesses, but also the contrasts. An unrighteous judge, but a righteous God; a poor and despised widow, but an elect people; a frequent petition, but prayer to God day and night. Reluctantly the judge heard the widow; God graciously hears his people. Then God is infinitely above the unrighteous judge because he is merciful and long-suffering even to enemies of the righteous, giving them time to repent. He is also long-suffering to his elect while he delays to answer their prayers.

*"Avenge Them Speedily."*—To avenge them "speedily" evidently means that he will do so without any unnecessary delay; will not put them off as the unrighteous judge did because of no interest in them. It does not mean that answer to prayers will never be delayed, but only that it will not be delayed beyond what is best for the petitioners. Perhaps it may also mean that when the proper time has arrived the answer will be speedily given and justice quickly meted out.

*"Shall He Find Faith?"*—The question is asked if the Lord shall find faith on the earth when he comes. The parable was spoken to urge persistence in prayer, and by implication persistence in all Christian duties. Some, because of God's delay in answering prayer, might become discouraged and quit the service. The question of vital importance is not whether God will be true to his people and bless them as they need, but will they remain faithful in God's service to the end. Those that do will be saved. (Matt. 24: 13.) Will death or the coming of the Lord find us faithful?

### IV. The Pharisee's Prayer (Verses 9-12)

*"Who Trusted in Themselves."*—In this parable the subject of prayer is also used, but the design is to teach another lesson. The purpose here is to rebuke or condemn those who trust in their own righteousness and set all others at naught. True righteousness is clearly taught in the scriptures, but the statement that they trusted in themselves shows that the parable is directed against those who were self-righteous; those who esteemed themselves so highly that they rejected all others as unworthy. Such a spirit of pride is contrary to man's natural weakness and dependence upon God. Neither will it accord with the fact that God is no respecter of persons.

*Pharisee and Publican.*—The contrast could hardly have been presented in a stronger form than to say a Pharisee and publican went up to the temple to pray. The Pharisees were a Jewish sect. The name means to set apart or to separate. They kept some of the laws and the traditions of the elders very scrupulously. They were very formal, claimed great piety, but failed much in the real spirit of true service to God. For this reason Jesus severely rebuked them. (See Matt. 23.) The Jews at that time were subject to the Roman government, and publicans were Jews whom the Romans had authorized to collect taxes from their own people. The taxes doubtless

were often excessive and the Jews would naturally learn to hate those of their own blood who collected them. Doubtless some of the publicans were very unscrupulous men, but all were looked upon as great sinners by their brethren.

*"Not as the Rest."*—Since the Pharisee considered his own supposed righteousness sufficient to separate him morally and socially from all others, his prayer is no surprise. He believed he was better than the rest of men, and so expressed himself to God. He told God that he was not guilty of the outrageous crimes against society—extortion, injustice, adultery—and that he was not in the same class with "this publican." This reference shows how the publicans were considered by the Pharisees. With his pride and self-righteousness he felt that he should draw the line of distinction between himself and those he considered outcasts.

*Fast and Give Tithes.*—After claiming that he did no great evil against his fellow man, which in fact was not true (Matt. 23: 13, 23, 28, 34), he mentioned his service and worship of God. He fasted twice a week—probably a Jewish custom. He gave tithes—a tenth—which the law required. (Num. 18: 21-24.) Jesus said, however, that the Pharisees were very particular about tithing even small herbs, but neglected the weightier matters of the law. (Matt. 23: 23, 24.) While they formally paid tithes, yet the rejection of more important features of their law made them hypocrites. Tithing all he possessed did not amount to anything when great moral principles were ignored.

### V. The Publican's Prayer (Verses 13, 14)

*Stood Afar Off.*—None but priests entered the temple building; prayers were offered by others in the outer court. The Pharisee got as near the temple as he could, but the publican stood afar off, probably realizing his unworthiness in approaching God. The Pharisee doubtless stood with his face turned toward heaven, but the publican would not "so much as lift up his eyes."

*"A Sinner."*—The publican smote his breast and said, "God, be thou merciful to me a sinner." The position, attitude, and petition all showed the sincerity and humility of the publican. The contrast in the prayers is remarkable. One told the Lord how morally good he was, and how faithfully he attended to his religious duty; the other omitted all reference to his own excellence, if he had any, and confessed himself a sinner. The Pharisee prayed for approval of his good deeds, if we may judge by his words, but the publican prayed for mercy. Sinners need mercy and pardon.

*Exalted and Humbled.*—Jesus said the publican went down to his house "justified rather than the other." Both men were Jews, belonged to God's people, and had a right to pray. The parable does not have any reference to an unsaved man praying for pardon. The lesson is on the spirit of prayer, and shows what kind of prayer is acceptable among God's people. The Pharisee exalted himself, but the publican humbled himself. The former was humbled and the latter exalted in the mind of God. The prayers of humble people will be heard rather than those who are self-righteous and exalt themselves. This is the lesson.



## THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Paul said, "And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal. 6: 9.) This principle of successful service to God not only applies to prayer, but all other parts of that service. Nothing but death should bring our worship of God to an end on this earth.

2. Doing the right thing from the wrong motive will not bring lasting joy. The value of a right deed will do the recipient the same good regardless of what prompted its doing, but the doer will lose if his purpose was wrong. Deeds are approved or condemned according to the motives that led to them.

3. There is far more danger that children of God will grow weary and cease to worship him than that God will be found unfaithful to them. So far as our destiny is concerned everything depends upon his finding us faithful when he comes. We must not let obstacles defeat us.

4. Solomon said, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." (Prov. 28: 26.) Also, "Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding." (Prov. 3: 5.) Those who trust in their own wisdom or righteousness will be sure to manifest folly.

5. It is not dishonorable to confess wrongs when we are guilty. Real dishonor is to be a sinner and refuse to confess it and ask for pardon. Claiming for ourselves what is not true may deceive men, but God knows our heart—him we cannot deceive.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss judging as presented by Jesus in Matt. 7: 1-5.
2. Discuss the subject of faithfulness in Heb. 11: 4-6.
3. Tell the story of a "certain ruler" who wanted to know what to do to inherit eternal life. (Luke 18: 18-23.)
4. Repeat the story of the healing of the blind man at Jericho. (Luke 18: 35-43.)

## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

*Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

## I

What was the purpose of this parable?

What is meant by praying "always"?

Describe this judge.

What is meant by the word "avenge"?

## II

What did the judge first do?

How did he finally reason about it?

By what was he governed in the matter?

## III

What is meant by "hear" what the judge saith?

What is meant by "avenge them speedily"?

Explain the question: "Shall he find faith"?

## IV

Describe the Pharisees and publicans.

Repeat the Pharisee's prayer.

What religious acts had he performed?

## V

Describe the publican's prayer.

How did it differ from the Pharisee's prayer?

What did Jesus say of them?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

Lesson VII—May 17, 1936

## JESUS INSPIRES HONESTY

Luke 19: 1-10, 45-48.

- 1 And he entered and was passing through Jericho.  
 2 And behold, a man called by name Zacchæus; and he was a chief publican, and he was rich.  
 3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature.  
 4 And he ran on before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.  
 5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.  
 6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.  
 7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner.  
 8 And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold.  
 9 And Jesus said unto him, To-day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.  
 10 For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.  
 45 And he entered into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold,  
 46 Saying unto them, It is written, And my house shall be a house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of robbers.  
 47 And he was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people sought to destroy him:  
 48 And they could not find what they might do; for the people all hung upon him, listening.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou shalt not steal." (Ex. 20: 15.)

TIME.—A.D. 30. About ten days before the crucifixion.

PLACES.—Jericho and Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, Zacchæus, and others.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 15.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

May 11.	M.	Jesus Inspires Honesty (Luke 10: 1-10)
May 12.	T.	Micah Teaches Justice (Mic. 2: 1-5; 6: 8)
May 13.	W.	Religion in Business (Deut. 24: 10-15, 17, 18)
May 14.	T.	Dishonesty in Business (Amos 8: 4-8)
May 15.	F.	Honesty the Cornerstone of Character (Matt. 7: 15-20)
May 16.	S.	The Accusing Conscience (Matt. 26: 14-16; 27: 3-5)
May 17.	S.	A Citizen of Zion (Psalm 15: 1-5)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Zacchæus Prepares to See Jesus (Verses 1-4).
  - II. Jesus a Self-Invited Guest (Verses 5-7).
  - III. Jesus Pronounces a Blessing (Verses 8-10).
  - IV. Jesus Cleanses the Temple (Verses 45, 46).
  - V. Enemies Seek to Destroy Jesus (Verses 47, 48).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The first ten verses of our lesson relate the incident of Jesus in the home of Zacchæus in Jericho. As Jericho was between the Jordan and Jerusalem we know that the time of this



lesson was only a short while before his crucifixion, probably about one week. This puts at least a few weeks between this and our last lesson. The things recorded in verses 45-48 occurred on Monday of crucifixion week, or three or four days after the time spent in Jericho, and the next day after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

*Lesson Links.*—In the interval between this and last lesson Jesus evidently did much teaching. Probably all of it was done in Perea, through which section he traveled after leaving the borders of Samaria and Galilee. The following important matters discussed by him have been recorded: Teaching that his disciples should become like little children (Matt. 19: 13-15); his answer to the rich young ruler regarding what he must do to inherit eternal life (Luke 18: 18-23); the teaching on the danger of trusting in riches (Mark 10: 23-31); the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matt. 20: 1-16); the rebuke he gave his disciples against unholy ambition (Matt. 20: 17-28); and the healing of two blind men at the gate of Jericho (Luke 18: 35-43). Probably he did much more teaching that is not recorded.

*Lesson Settings.*—The fact that Jesus and his disciples were on the road to Jerusalem at the Passover season explains in part the fact that a great multitude was with him as he entered into Jericho. (Luke 18: 35, 36.) Luke's record shows that the blind men cried for mercy as the crowds were entering the city. Mark's report shows that the healing occurred as Jesus went out of the city. (Mark 10: 46-52.) This apparent contradiction is easily explained by understanding that Jesus in entering the gate had passed by them before they knew he was in the crowd, or that he did not then stop to answer their cry. While he was remaining in the city at the home of Zacchaeus, they doubtless moved to the gate where he would have to leave. He healed them as he went out. While they were waiting at the gate, Jesus was in the house of Zacchaeus where this lesson began.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Zacchaeus Prepares to See Jesus (Verses 1-4)

*"A Chief Publican."*—The name Zacchaeus is Hebrew, and indicates that he was a Jew. In verse 9 he is referred to as a "son of Abraham." This leaves no doubt about his nationality. The publicans were collectors of taxes for the Roman government. Any and all Jews who held such a position were especially hated by their own people. A chief publican was probably one who was over others and received their collections for transmission to Rome. It is said that he was rich. While doubtless many publicans were wicked, and possibly rich because of their dishonest collections, there is nothing to indicate that Zacchaeus belonged to that class. Possession of money is dangerous, but all rich men are not lovers of money or dishonest. If there was any crooked dealing, Luke does not charge it against Zacchaeus.

*"Little of Stature."*—A multitude was with Jesus as he was passing through the city, and doubtless the people of the city added to the number in their efforts to see him. Any one who has tried to make his way through a surging crowd in an effort to reach some one can understand how difficult it is. Zacchaeus being of short stature did not have any chance in the multitude. Probably Luke mentions his height to show the determination he manifested to see

Jesus. Otherwise he would have been just one of a crowd with nothing to direct the Master's attention to him. Of course, the teachings and miracles of Jesus had been heralded over the country, and Zacchaeus had probably heard of his wonderful works. Naturally he had a curiosity to see him. That is always true when one has gained prominence in any way. The text says he sought to see "who he was," meaning perhaps that he wanted to see how he appeared. The text does not show his interest to be anything more than honest curiosity.

*Zacchaeus Sees Jesus.*—Knowing that Jesus was to pass a certain way in going through the city, Zacchaeus ran before the crowd and climbed into a tree. It is called a sycamore tree, but the kind of tree has no special significance unless it was to indicate one large enough to raise him above the crowd. The essential point is that Zacchaeus lost no time in using the means at hand to accomplish his purpose. This lesson should not be overlooked by those who are anxious to learn more of Jesus.

## II. Jesus a Self-Invited Guest (Verses 5-7)

*The Command of Jesus.*—It is a matter of some curiosity as to how Jesus knew Zacchaeus' name. If he had never seen him before, the divine power which enabled him to know what was in man would enable him to know his name. Being in the tree served the purpose of making the command of Jesus attract attention, and made the whole scene strikingly impressive. He was told to make haste and come down, for Jesus purposed to abide in his house that day. This is the only time recorded where Jesus invited himself to be a guest, but he evidently knew the mind of Zacchaeus, and that he would be welcome. While Zacchaeus probably thought only of getting to see how Jesus looked, he was rewarded, as many others had been, by receiving more than he expected. He was to be honored with the presence of Jesus as a guest in his own house. That he was greatly pleased is clear from the fact that he came down quickly and "received him joyfully."

*To Lodge with a Sinner.*—The text says "they all murmured," probably meaning that there was a general complaint at what Jesus proposed to do. Of course, the murmurers were Jews, for none else would have raised any objection to his being entertained by a publican. According to them, he was a sinner by reason of his oppression of his own people. To be received by such a man as a guest they thought identified Jesus with his sin.

*Zacchaeus' Proposal.*—Some think that in standing while he spoke Zacchaeus gave emphasis to his words. Probably the purpose to give half his goods to feed the poor was made because of the teaching of Jesus while in his house. The record may be but a small part of what was said by either Jesus or Zacchaeus. His decision to give so liberally shows that the teaching and influence of Jesus had made a profound impression on him. He also said he would restore anything wrongfully exacted fourfold. The law on stealing is given in Ex. 22: 1-4. If a sheep, the restoration required was fourfold. His proposal shows his sincerity and willingness to meet the full requirements of the law.



### III. Jesus Pronounces a Blessing (Verses 8-10)

*Salvation Is Come.*—There are probably two senses in which this expression may be understood. As Christ himself is the author of salvation (Heb. 5: 9), it may be said that salvation had come to the house of Zacchaeus because its author was there just as the kingdom was said to be in their midst because Christ, the heir to the throne, was among them. (Luke 17: 21.) Or, since he was "a son of Abraham," one of the lost sheep which Jesus came to save, salvation could come to him in the sense it was possible for any Jew at that time. John and Jesus had both taught that they should repent, for the kingdom was at hand. (Matt. 3: 1; Mark 1: 14, 15.) Clearly Zacchaeus did repent, and that brought him within the promise of the preparatory preaching. If he accepted Christ and did not later reject him, he would be within the promises made when the new covenant was made effective through the offering of Christ's blood. (Heb. 10: 19, 20.) This offering was made after his ascension to heaven. (Heb. 9: 3, 7, 24.)

*To Save the Lost.*—If Zacchaeus, a publican, was the sinner the people thought he was, he still was a subject of salvation. That Jesus came to save sinners is a fundamental New Testament teaching. Why should Zacchaeus or any other penitent sinner be denied the privilege of receiving the very blessing Jesus came to bestow? This could not be unless the mission of Jesus was to be a failure. The statement in the text, "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost," is assigned as a reason for the Lord's saying that salvation had come to that house.

### IV. Jesus Cleanses the Temple (Verses 45, 46)

*In the Temple.*—The temple proper was a house of two apartments, builded on the same plan as the tabernacle, but twice as large. Into this building none but consecrated priests could enter. (Heb. 9: 1-10.) Jesus being of the tribe of Judah could not enter the building himself. (Heb. 7: 13, 14.) Around the building was an enclosure called a court. Into the court the people could come. It was in this that he found the money-changers and those selling animals for sacrifice. (Mark 11: 15-18.) Of course, animals and merchandizing would not have been allowed inside the sacred building. This shows that anything inside the court wall was said to be in the temple.

*Cast Them Out.*—In the early part of his ministry Jesus cleansed the temple in a similar manner. (John 2: 13-16.) In that case it is definitely stated that he drove the animals out; in this lesson text it is said he cast the merchants out. Jesus quotes from Isa. 56: 7 that God's house was to be a house of prayer and told them they had made it a "den or robbers." They had taken the place set apart to the worship and service of God and turned it into a place for dishonest merchandizing. With the claims of furnishing animals for sacrifices and exchanging the kind of money to be put in the temple treasury for the kind the people brought with them, they took advantage of the necessity in the matter to charge exorbitant prices which amounted to pure robbery. Such desecration of sacred things deserved the severest denunciation. It was no worse, however, than modern-day people who make merchandise of the gospel, taking advantage of religion for personal gain.

*History of the Temple.*—The first temple was built by Solomon about 1,004 years before Christ. He was seven years in building it. (1 Kings 6: 38.) It was destroyed by the Babylonians when the captivity of Judah was made complete about 587 B.C. After the Babylonish captivity it was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, but on a much inferior scale. (Ezra 3: 8, 12.) After that it was defiled often in their wars, was much decayed by the time of Christ. King Herod continued to repair it over a period of forty-six years (John 2: 20) until it was almost a new temple. It was finally destroyed by the Roman army in A.D. 70.

### V. Enemies Seek to Destroy Jesus (Verses 47, 48)

*"Teaching Daily."*—If our chronology is correct, Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Sunday. From Mark 11: 11 it seems that he entered the temple enclosure late in the afternoon of Sunday, looked around, and went back to Bethany for the night. Our lesson text says he was teaching daily, which is true, but it appears that he spent only Monday and Tuesday in the temple and remained at Bethany from then till he went into Jerusalem for the Passover supper. However these two days in the temple seemed to be among his busiest in teaching.

*"Sought to Destroy Him."*—We do not know just when they reached that decision. But doubtless it was after they had seen the ease with which he defended his doctrine and refuted all objectors. This is not the only time the Jews became so angry that they tried to kill him. On two occasions before they attempted to stone him. (John 8: 59; 10: 30-39.) His own city Nazareth attempted once to hurl him down a bluff, but he passed through their midst and went away. (Luke 4: 29, 30.) His escapes from their wrath were probably miraculous, at least in part, for his hour to depart had not come. He intimated that on the occasion of his disciples trying to persuade him not to go to Jerusalem because they thought the Jews would attempt to kill him. (John 11: 7-9.)

*The People Heard.*—The chief priests, scribes, and principal men led in the plot against him, but the people—the common element—"hung upon him, listening." They were attracted doubtless by the simple and clear truths he gave as well as his matchless wisdom. They were not as prejudiced as their leaders. Probably many of them in person or in their families had received some special benefits through his miracles. Because of the intense interest of the crowds in listening to him, the rulers could not find any convenient and safe way to carry out their design. It was not safe to bring on a disturbance with so many people about them.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. When difficulties stimulate to greater efforts they may be aids instead of handicaps. If there is an intense desire to accomplish things, most obstacles can be overcome enough to bring reasonable success. Zacchaeus was amply rewarded for his efforts.

2. Jesus is our best example of being in the world, but not of it. He said that his disciples should be like him in this. (John 17: 14.) It is impossible for Christians to save sinners unless they live among them; but it is impossible to save them if Christians partake of their sins—are of them.



3. Salvation will come to anyone who is willing to be true to his fellow man and obedient to God. Jesus will not come in person to his house as he came to Zacchaeus, but his approval will rest upon all the obedient. That is what we need.

4. Turning a place of worship into one of dishonest merchandise is disgusting to man and an abomination to God. Using religion as the means of personal gain by taking advantage of others is a kind of hypocrisy that is intolerable.

5. The life of Jesus was so faultless and his teaching so evidently correct that his enemies could not bring any successful charges against him. When they could not meet his teaching nor get him legally condemned, then in their rage they attempted to get him killed. Those who fight the truth generally hate those who proclaim it.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the young ruler's question, and the reply made by Jesus. (Luke 18: 18-23.)

2. Discuss the Savior's teaching on the danger of riches that was suggested by the ruler's question. (Luke 18: 24-30.)

3. Repeat the story of the healing of the blind man as recorded by Luke 18: 35-43.

4. Tell the story of the blind man recorded in John 9: 1-12.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

Of what nationality was Zacchaeus?  
How is Zacchaeus described?  
Why did Luke probably mention his little stature?  
What essential point is taught here?

#### **II**

How did Jesus know Zacchaeus?  
What did Jesus say to him?  
What complaint was made against Jesus?  
What problem led Zacchaeus to make his proposals?

#### **III**

What was meant by "salvation" is come to this house?  
What did Jesus say of him?  
What was Jesus' purpose in coming?

#### **IV**

What is meant by "in the temple"?  
Why could Jesus not enter the temple building?  
Where were the money-changers and merchants located?  
Describe the building of the different temples.

#### **V**

How did Jesus spend the last few days?  
On what other occasions did they try to kill Jesus?  
How did the common people treat him?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

### *Lesson VIII—May 24, 1936*

### BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Luke 20: 45-47; 21: 1-9, 34-36.

45 And in the hearing of all the people he said unto his disciples,  
46 Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk in long robes, and love salutations in the marketplaces, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts;  
47 Who devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater condemnation.

1 And he looked up, and saw the rich men that were casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And he saw a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than they all:

4 For all these did of their superfluity cast in unto the gifts; but she of her want did cast in all the living that she had.

5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings, he said,

6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in which there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

7 And they asked him, saying, Teacher, when therefore shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?

8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not led astray: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am he; and, The time is at hand: go ye not after them.

9 And when ye shall hear of wars and tumults, be not terrified: for these things must needs come to pass first; but the end is not immediately.

34 But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare:

35 For so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth.

36 But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*"In your patience ye shall win your souls."* (Luke 21: 19.)

**TIME.**—A.D. 30.

**PLACE.**—Jerusalem.

**PERSONS.**—Jesus, his disciples, and others.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—1 Tim. 6: 11-19.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

May 18.	M.	Building a Strong Body (Dan. 1: 8-16)
May 19.	T.	Developing the Mind (2 Pet. 1: 1-8)
May 20.	W.	Enriching the Soul (Eph. 6: 10-20)
May 21.	T.	Practicing Self-Control (1 Cor. 9: 19-27)
May 22.	F.	Abstaining from Strong Drink (Prov. 23: 12-21)
May 23.	S.	Laying Up Treasures in Heaven (Matt. 6: 19-26)
May 24.	S.	Building for Eternity (1 Tim. 6: 11-19)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

Introductory Study.

- I. Warnings Against Hypocrisy (Verses 45-47).
  - II. A Lesson on Giving (Luke 21: 1-4).
  - III. Destruction of the Temple Foretold (Verses 5, 6).
  - IV. An Explanation Requested (Verses 7-9).
  - V. Jesus Urges Preparation to Escape Evil (Verses 34-36).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—All the teaching contained in the verses of this lesson was given on Tuesday of the crucifixion week. This was one of the busiest days in Jesus' life in teaching. He had entered the city on Sunday, but returned to Bethany that night. Monday he came to the temple again, and again spent the night in Bethany. Apparently Tuesday was his last day in the temple grounds, leaving it late in the afternoon to return to it no more so far as we know.



*Lesson Links.*—Jesus pronounced a curse upon the barren fig tree as he came to Jerusalem Monday, and they found it withered away when they came back Tuesday morning. (Matt. 21: 18-22.) During the day in the court of the temple Jesus gave the following teaching: He answered the elders, priests, and scribes when they asked by what authority he did his works, probably having especial reference to his driving the traders and merchants out of the temple (Luke 20: 1-8); he gave the parables of the wicked husbandman (Luke 20: 9-19), the two sons (Matt. 21: 28-32), and the marriage of the king's son (Matt. 22: 1-14). He answered the question about tribute to Caesar or not (Luke 20: 20-26); refuted the Sadducean doctrine of no resurrection (Luke 20: 27-39); answered the lawyer's question regarding the greatest commandment of the law (Matt. 22: 34-40); and presented a question which none of his critics could answer (Luke 20: 41-44). He also on that day delivered his last public discourse in which he denounced the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees. (Matt. 23: 1-39). A brief reference to this denunciation is made in the first section of this lesson.

*Lesson Settings.*—Some time during this day of continuous teaching, perhaps during the late afternoon, he observed those who were putting money into the treasury and commented on the widow's mite, which is the second section of our lesson. After leaving the temple enclosure (Matt. 24: 3) he taught his disciples regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and his coming again. This is recorded in its fullest form in Matt. 24: 1-51, but is given by Luke in 21: 5-37. The passage in Luke contains our last three sections. These sections were spoken as he sat upon the Mount of Olives.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Warnings Against Hypocrisy (Verses 45-47)

*People and Disciples.*—As he was teaching in the court of the temple, the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees had been plying him with questions, and his answers had put them to silence on each subject. Then in the hearing of the people he spoke this warning to his disciples. In this way the persons against whom he spoke were rebuked. Matt. 23: 1-12 gives a fuller report of this warning, and verses 13-16 show that he also directed some of his words to the scribes and Pharisees. Luke, in our text, mentions only the scribes, but doubtless refers to the same incident. As the scribes were recognized as the accepted teachers of the people, they especially deserved condemnation for their hypocrisy. This may account for Luke's mentioning them only.

*Their Desires.*—Jesus said they desired to appear in special robes—a kind of religious uniform to indicate their position. Matthew explains that they made broad their phylacteries and the borders of their garments. (Matt. 23: 5.) They wanted to be greeted in the market place as rabbi, and to have the chief seats in the synagogues and feasts. All this they coveted for their own glory, not because it would enable them to be better servants of God. Jesus denounced them and condemned their practice in most unsparing terms. (Matt. 23: 8-12.) He declared plainly that they did it all to be seen of men. In the following verses he mentions some of their outstanding sins and charges them with being hypocrites.



*Their Practice.*—Jesus declared that when they taught what Moses said, they should be obeyed, but their practice should not be followed, for they failed to practice what they taught. (Matt. 23: 1-4.) He denounced them as being guilty of devouring widows' houses and for a pretense he said they made long prayers. Matthew adds that they bound heavy and grievous burdens on men's shoulders, and refused to make any effort to take them off. This probably means that through a pretense of legal justice they took advantage of those needing protection, robbing even widows. Their sins they attempted to hide with a religious cloak in the form of long prayers. For this reason Jesus said they would receive "greater condemnation." Hypocrites deserve the strongest rebukes and more severe punishment.

## II. A Lesson on Giving (Luke 21: 1-4)

*Those Who Gave.*—The court of the women was an enclosure between the gate into the outer court and the temple proper. It is supposed that a number of chests were placed in the court of the women, and into these the worshipers dropped their offerings to meet the various costs connected with the temple service. Jesus sat near and watched the people cast in their money. Doubtless all classes were making their offerings, but Jesus mentions only two classes—the rich and the very poor. The same two classes deserve special notice now; the rich for their failure to do enough, and the very poor for doing more in comparison than others.

*"Two Mites."*—The "mite" is supposed to be the smallest coin used by the Jews. Its exact value is not known, but it is thought to be about one-fifth of a cent. If so, the two mites would be less than half a cent. It is true that rich people often give large amounts to religion, charity, and education, yet it is true that as a rule they do not give as liberally as the middle class or the very poor when all the conditions are considered. Making large gifts from great wealth or superabundance usually means no sacrifice whatsoever, for the givers probably still have more left than they will ever need for personal support. Jesus said the rich cast into the treasury of their superfluity, but the widow of her want, even "all the living that she had." She gave that which she really needed for her own living; the rich gave of that extra amount above their needs. When her deep poverty was considered she gave more than any of the rich. The value of our gifts in God's sight depends upon our ability and the state of the heart. It is not the quantity of the gift, but the quality of the giver that counts. Offerings that entail no sacrifice cannot be estimated as those that do. Giving cheerfully and as one has been prospered meets the divine requirement for acceptable giving.

## III. Destruction of the Temple Foretold (Verses 5, 6)

*When Spoken?*—Since these verses in our lesson text follow immediately after the incident in section two, and nothing is said to indicate any change of place, it would be easy to conclude that these words were spoken in the court of the temple. But Matt. 24: 1-3, which discusses the same thing, shows that it happened after he left the temple and as he was sitting in the western slope of the Mount of Olives. The subject may have been raised by the disciples



as they were passing from the temple to the mount. The question may have been suggested by Jesus' remark that their house had been left unto them "desolate." He was leaving it not to return any more.

*The Question.*—Our text says that "some spake of the temple, how it was adorned." Mark's record says that "one of his disciples saith unto him." (Mark 13: 1, 2.) Mark with his characteristic definiteness probably refers to the one that did the talking. We have no means of knowing which one of the disciples it was. He called attention to the way the temple was adorned with "goodly stones and offerings." He probably had reference to the well-finished stones and those of immense size. The "gifts" mentioned were doubtless the various kinds of adornments and precious things kept in the temple. Josephus, the Jewish historian, refers to the great size of the stones and the gifts for its adornment.

*Shall Be Thrown Down.*—Jesus replied by saying, "Seest thou these great buildings?" and then declared that everything would be thrown down—not one stone left upon another. This, of course, was a surprising statement to them, for they believed that the huge stones and solid foundation guaranteed that the building would stand forever. They knew that their preceding temples had been destroyed, but they were no such structures as the one then standing. Its utter destruction, as they viewed it, was a thing not to be expected till the end of the world. No wonder they asked for information about it.

#### IV. An Explanation Requested (Verses 7-9)

*When and What Sign?*—They were so astonished that they wanted to know when such a thing could be, and what sign would indicate that it was about to occur. They unquestionably thought it would be an awful calamity and wished to be protected against it if it were to be soon. They probably imagined, if there were some certain sign by which they would be warned of its near approach, they could make preparation for it. From Matt. 24: 3 we learn that they had reached the Mount of Olives before they asked these questions. This text also says they came to him "privately," and Mark 13: 3 tells that those who came were Peter, James, John, and Andrew.

*Jesus' Reply.*—Jesus urged them to take heed that they be not led astray by false teaching and false reports. He assured them that many would come in his name and say, "I am he; and, The time is at hand." But he told them not to follow such teachers, not to be led astray by any such false promises. He also told them they would hear of wars and tumults, but they were not to be terrified. Such things he said would of necessity come, but the end would not come immediately. Nation rising against nation, earthquakes and famines were the beginning of travail, but the end was not yet. (Mark 13: 8.) Many such disturbances would take place before the time came for those mighty stones of the temple to be removed from their place. It was not so important that they know just when the destruction should occur as that they be not deceived by false teaching. If they followed his teaching, they would be eternally safe, and the destruction of the temple would be a matter of small concern. It was about forty years later when this prediction was fulfilled, Jerusalem being reduced to ruins by the Roman army. This well-known historical event places the stamp of approval upon Jesus as a true prophet.

He told them that when they saw Jerusalem compassed with armies then they would know that her desolation is at hand. (Luke 21: 20.)

### V. Jesus Urges Preparation to Escape Evil (Verses 34-36)

*"Overcharged with Surfeiting."*—The Roman soldiers would make no distinction between Christians and non-Christians when they captured the city. It was highly important that Christians should not be absorbed in worldly pleasures lest they be taken by surprise and fleeing for safety be impossible. Surfeiting means excess in eating and drinking which leaves the mind dulled. Banqueting is not to be the chief aim in life and drunkenness is an intolerable sin which Christians must shun. Any of these would have rendered them unfit to cope with the situation brought on by a national calamity. The "cares of this life" would include any and all material things that would consume their time and deaden their moral sensibility. It requires both moral and physical rectitude to prepare for disasters.

*Come Suddenly.*—In Jesus' warning "that day" referred to the time when the destruction of the city would take place. They were to be so careful about their conduct that they would not be overtaken unawares by its coming suddenly. If it came unexpectedly, they would be entrapped like birds caught with a snare. Jesus also told them that when they saw "the abomination of desolation" standing in the holy place to flee to the mountains. They were to pray that no hindering circumstance should arise to prevent their escape. (Matt. 24: 15-21.) Nothing but the most careful preparation and vigilant watching would make them safe in such time.

*"At Every Season."*—As they would not know when the time was near till they saw the Roman army at the gates of the city, they were to watch at every season, be prepared all the time. The lesson given them is applicable in principle in meeting every dangerous situation, including one's own death and the judgment. Those who by constant watchfulness prepare for all events will finally stand before the Lord with his approval. The Christians learned this at the destruction of Jerusalem; we will learn the same thing at the judgment.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Those who affect great piety by using special garbs or engaging in formal religious exercises to gain the praise of men or obtain money are the most despicable kind of hypocrites; they are disgusting to men and abominable to God. The praise of men should not be bought at the displeasure of God.

2. The highest love for the church is not evidenced by the abundance of the gift we make to it, but by the amount we give in comparison with our ability, either in material things or in time or talents. God accepts the humblest offering if given sincerely.

3. Jesus mercifully warned the Christians against the impending calamity that threatened them when disaster would overthrow their nation. In like manner he warns us about death and the coming judgment when we must face the record of our lives.

4. He urged them to be ready for any emergency by not allowing themselves to be deceived by false teachers or led astray by false promises. The apostles later warned us not to allow false teaching to prevent our preparation to meet the Lord in peace.

5. Man's enemies are not only without but within. Jesus urges constant watchfulness to prevent immorality or worldly cares from



robbing us of our reward. This watchfulness he says should be maintained at every season. No other course is safe.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the reply of Jesus to the question about his authority. (Luke 20: 1-8.)
2. Repeat the parable of the vineyard. (Luke 20: 9-18.)
3. Discuss the matter of paying tribute to Caesar. (Luke 20: 19-26.)
4. Give Jesus' answer to the Sadducees on the resurrection of the dead. (Luke 20: 27-38.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

How did Jesus spend his time in the temple court?  
What warning did he give his disciples?  
What did the scribes and Pharisees desire?  
What were their practices?

#### **II**

Who were putting money in the treasury?  
How much did the widow give?  
Why was her gift more than others?

#### **III**

When were the words of this section spoken?  
Who mentioned the temple to Jesus?  
What was meant by "goodly stones" and gifts?  
What prediction did Jesus make?

#### **IV**

What request did his disciples make?  
Which ones made this request?  
What warning did Jesus give them?  
What did he say would happen?

#### **V**

What advice regarding conduct did Jesus give?  
What advice about watchfulness?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

### *Lesson IX—May 31, 1936*

### THE LAST SUPPER

Luke 22: 7-23.

- 7 And the day of unleavened bread came, on which the passover must be sacrificed.
- 8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the passover, that we may eat.
- 9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we make ready?
- 10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house wherinto he goeth.
- 11 And ye shall say unto the master of the house, The Teacher saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?
- 12 And he will show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.
- 13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.
- 14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him.
- 15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:
- 16 For I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.
- 17 And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:
- 18 For I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.
- 19 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, *even* that which is poured out for you.

21 But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

22 For the Son of man indeed goeth, as it hath been determined: but woe unto that man through whom he is betrayed!

23 And they began to question among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"This do in remembrance of me."* (Luke 22: 19.)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACES.—Bethany and the upper room in Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his apostles.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 11: 23-29.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

May 25.	M.	.....	The Promise of the New Testament (Jer. 31: 31-34)
May 26.	T.	.....	The Great Sacrifice (Isa. 53: 1-6)
May 27.	W.	.....	Fellowship with His Suffering (Phil. 3: 8-12)
May 28.	T.	.....	Jesus' Last Supper (Luke 22: 14-20)
May 29.	F.	.....	How to Observe the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11: 23-28)
May 30.	S.	.....	The Cup of Blessing (1 Cor. 10: 14-22)
May 31.	S.	.....	The Bread of Life (John 6: 32-40)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. Jesus Orders the Passover Prepared (Verses 7-9).
  - II. Jesus Answers Their Question (Verses 10-13).
  - III. The Passover Supper (Verses 14-18).
  - IV. The Lord's Supper Instituted (Verses 19, 20).
  - V. The Betrayer Pointed Out (Verses 21-23).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—In the first verse of this lesson chapter Luke says "the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh." This feast lasted seven days, beginning with the day in which the lamb supper was eaten. In verse 7 he says "the day of unleavened bread came." The lamb was killed on the fourteenth day of the first month preparatory to eating the supper that night, which, according to Jewish count, was the fifteenth. The fourteenth was the day to prepare for the supper and also the day to put the leaven out of their houses; hence, the day the lamb was killed was also called the day of unleavened bread—a day preparatory to eating unleavened bread during the feast. The first verse of our lesson explains the day of unleavened bread to be the day when the Passover must be sacrificed. The day of unleavened bread was not the Feast of Unleavened Bread, but the day to make preparation for it.

*Lesson Links.*—At least a part of the discourse after leaving the temple Tuesday was delivered on the slope of the Mount of Olives (Matt. 24: 3), and the remainder of it, recorded in Matt. 25, was delivered there or as they were returning to Bethany. It seems probable from the word "then," Matt. 25: 1, that it was finished while on the mountainside. It included the parables of the talents, the ten virgins, and a description of the judgment scene. Our lesson



chapter begins with the statement that the Passover drew nigh. Mark refers to the same thing and says that "after two days was the feast of the passover." (Mark 14: 1.) At that time the chief priests, scribes, and elders took counsel together how they might take Jesus by subtilty and have him killed. They feared to undertake it during the feast, but Judas, whose heart had been influenced by Satan, agreed to deliver Jesus to them for thirty pieces of silver. This brings us to the day of the preparation.

*Lesson Settings.*—The chronology accepted in this book is that Jesus was crucified on Friday. Hence, the day for sacrificing the lamb and making other preparations for the supper was Thursday. How Jesus spent Wednesday and Thursday till time for the supper is not known. The only thing that we know he did was to send the disciples to make the proper preparation. It was doubtless a custom for residents of Jerusalem to furnish rooms for the Passover to visitors from distant countries. It was in one of these that Jesus and his apostles observed this feast. Our lesson text tells the story.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Jesus Orders the Passover Prepared (Verses 7-9)

*Peter and John Sent.*—The Passover supper was designed to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews from Egyptian bondage, and was called the Passover because the destroying angel passed over the Israelites without the death of any of the first-born. The significance of this supper required that it be prepared with great care and eaten with great solemnity. A lamb of the sheep or goats had to be sacrificed for each company of not less than ten persons. It had to be roasted and eaten with bitter herbs. (Ex. 12: 5-10.) Peter and John were sent to make the necessary preparation. If the residents of Jerusalem allowed visitors to the city at the Passover to use their houses free of charge, then as Jesus and his apostles were visitors, they would need to enjoy this hospitality. They may have thought Jesus knew some friendly one where he would prefer to go for the supper; hence, their question, "Where wilt thou that we make ready?"

*Practical Lessons.*—The Passover lamb was typical of Christ "our passover." (1 Cor. 5: 7.) The Passover was instituted in Egypt, but was observed annually; Jesus was sacrificed for us and through the Lord's Supper we remember him and proclaim his death weekly. The Passover season was the time for repeating the story of their deliverance, and doubtless did more than any other service to make the Jews recognize their responsibility to God. In like manner we have no other service in which we are so forcibly impressed with what Jesus has done for us; nothing that will bind us closer to him. It is in that observance that we revisit in mind Mount Calvary and witness the suffering and death of the world's Redeemer. The fact that Jesus and his disciples were observing the Passover is proof that the Jewish law was still in force. They would not have participated in such service had the law already been abolished. This incidentally is decisive evidence that the church was not then established, for the record says he took away the first that he might establish the second. (Heb. 10: 9.)

## II. Jesus Answers Their Question (Verses 10-13)

*Circumstances Described.*—Whether the master of the house was known to Jesus or not, it is clear that the circumstances were related through supernatural power. Such minute detail would not have happened by chance and been described by guess. They were told that on entering the city they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. He was not to be found by calling his name, but by the fact that they would meet him at a certain time and place. Instead of asking him anything they were simply to follow him into the house. He was probably a servant performing his usual task.

*The Guestchamber.*—They were to say to the master of the house that the Teacher wanted to know where the guestchamber was that he and his disciples might eat the supper. According to the custom of visitors being allowed to use rooms for that purpose, they might have presumed upon being permitted to use any room that had been set aside for that purpose, if not already taken. The expression "the Teacher saith unto thee" implies a probable knowledge of Jesus by the master of the house, and further that Jesus knew he would be granted the privilege. That statement that he "will show you a large upper room furnished" is still further proof that Jesus possessed divine knowledge.

*"They Made Ready."*—They rendered prompt obedience—went as he directed and found just as he said. There they made the necessary preparation. They were told that the master of the house would show them the place—give his consent for them to use it. They had no reason to doubt their Lord's miraculous power; this advance description of what actually occurred would be confirmation of that power.

## III. The Passover Supper (Verses 14-18)

*"When the Hour Was Come."*—Matthew and Mark both say "when the even was come." The proper hour for eating that supper was in the evening. From Ex. 12: 8-10, where reference is made to the first Passover supper, it is clear that it was eaten at night. That Jesus and the disciples ate this last Passover supper at night is the plain statement of Paul. (1 Cor. 11: 23.) The law required the lamb to be killed on the fourteenth day of the first month, probably late in the afternoon, and the supper followed in that night; hence, the supper was eaten on the fifteenth day of the month, for, according to Jewish reckoning, their day began at sunset.

*"Desired to Eat."*—Jesus said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you." This expression is a Hebrew idiom that means he greatly desired to eat it with them. Just why he had this great desire to eat it is not stated, though the following reasons may be suggested: (1) He may have wished to show them his wish to be obedient to the law just as long as it was in force. In this he would teach the general principle of obedience. (2) Since he was to fulfill its typical features in becoming "our sacrifice," he wished to honor the type to the very end. This would show the necessity of complete obedience. (3) As he was to institute his own memorial supper, to be observed in commemoration of his death, there could be no more appropriate time than the last observance of the typical supper. This would indicate obedience at the appropriate time.



*Until the Kingdom Come.*—Verse 16 says he would not eat with them again “until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” Verse 18 says he would not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine “until the kingdom of God shall come.” According to Matthew’s record he also said “until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” This all means that he would not again eat the elements of the law Passover, but would eat with them in a *new* manner in the Father’s kingdom after it came. Of course, he does not eat the material elements with us, but is in spiritual communion with us as we eat them in memory of him. This is the “new” way he promised to eat and drink with us. It is a like idea as that expressed in “sup with him” in Rev. 3: 20. It should be further observed that the Lord’s Supper is to be taken in the kingdom. (Verse 30.) This demonstrates that the kingdom had not come when Jesus instituted the supper, for its purpose was to show his death “till he come.” (1 Cor. 11: 26.) The Lord’s Supper, therefore, cannot be taken after Jesus comes back. As certain as we have the right to have the Lord’s Supper, just that certain the kingdom is in existence. If the kingdom does not exist, there is no authority for the Lord’s Supper. The cup mentioned in verse 17 refers to the Passover supper.

#### IV. The Lord’s Supper Instituted (Verses 19, 20)

*“This Is My Body.”*—The preceding section refers to the Passover supper. Probably the washing of the disciples’ feet, recorded in John 13: 1-20, came just after what is mentioned in that section. After the foot washing he sat down and instructed them further. While at the table then he likely gave them his own supper. The breaking of the bread followed the giving of thanks. “This is my body” is a figurative expression that means this bread represents my body. This mode of expression is often used. (See Matt. 13: 38, 39.) Luke adds the words, “which is given for you.” Just as the Passover lamb’s body had to be given to save the first-born, so Christ’s body had to be given to save sinners. The bread represents the body he gave. The bread used in instituting the Lord’s Supper was unleavened—the kind required in the Passover supper. In like manner the cup—referring to the contents rather than the vessel—represents his blood by which the new covenant was dedicated. (Heb. 10: 19, 20.)

*“In Remembrance.”*—The Passover was instituted in Egypt before they left; it was observed each year after that in remembrance of the deliverance secured by the blood of the lamb. The Lord’s Supper was instituted before the church was established and while Jesus was with them, but after the church was established it is observed in remembrance of his death. This we do upon the first day of the week. (Acts 20: 7.) The law required the Passover on a certain day of one month; the Lord’s Supper is authorized on one day of the week. The duty and privilege come each time the day returns. Christ poured out his blood “unto remission of sins” (Matt. 26: 28), which is another reason why it should be remembered in the Lord’s Supper.

#### V. The Betrayer Pointed Out (Verses 21-23)

*At the Table.*—Judas had already bargained with the chief priests to deliver Jesus to them for thirty pieces of silver. (Matt. 26: 15.) At the supper table he announced that one of them would betray

him. When asked which one, he said it was one who dipped in the dish with him. (Matt. 26: 22, 23.) Judas asked if he was the one, and Jesus replied, "Thou hast said," meaning that what you have said is true. Verse 23 of our lesson shows that when Jesus announced that one at the table would betray him, they all began to question among themselves who would be the one. Evidently the question of Judas and Jesus' reply quoted from Matthew's record came after that.

*A Woe Pronounced.*—Jesus said he would go as it had been determined, but woe to the man through whom he would be betrayed; in fact, it would have been better for him if he had not been born. It has been a matter of speculation whether Judas left before the Lord's Supper was eaten or not. It is immaterial which he did, but a comparison of Matt. 26: 21-25 and John 13: 21-30 seems to indicate that he left before. This appears certain if the sop was given him while they ate the Passover. John says "straightway." (Verse 30.)

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Jesus said that not one "jot or one tittle" of the law should pass away till all be accomplished. (Matt. 5: 18.) He came to fulfill the typical features of the law, keeping it strictly till he nailed it to the cross. Since that time the law has not been in force. We must now obey the gospel of Christ, not the Mosaic law.

2. Obedience to Christ's commands cannot be done till proper preparation has been made. Baptism is necessary, but none are fit subjects who do not believe and repent. People cannot serve Christ till they become members of the church he has established. To be a soldier one must enter the army.

3. The earnest desire to do what we can and what should be done now will be the best preparation for doing other things when they should be done. The one who refuses to do the little things now will hardly be ready to do the greater thing later on.

4. No Jewish service was any more interesting to them than the Passover, for it reminded them of the greatest single favor Jehovah had bestowed upon them as a people. The Lord's Supper brings to the Christian's mind his salvation through Christ's blood.

5. No difference how carefully we conceal our wicked deeds from men, we cannot hide them from God. All things are naked and open before him with whom we have to do. We must all appear before him to be rewarded according to our deeds. (2 Cor. 5: 10.)

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Give John's description of Jesus' revealing the betrayer. (John 13: 21-29.)

2. Give the description of Peter's denial as predicted by Jesus. (Matt. 26: 31-35.)

3. Describe the death of Judas. (Matt. 27: 3-10.)

4. Discuss the prayer of Jesus before leaving the room. (John 17.)



## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

*Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

**I**

Explain the name and design of the Passover.  
Describe the Passover.  
Give the practical lessons.

**II**

How were the circumstances related, and by what power?  
What was the custom regarding visitors to the Passover?  
What preparations did they have to make?

**III**

What hour did they eat the supper?  
On what day did they eat it?  
What was meant by "with desire I have desired"?  
What reasons may be assigned for his desire?  
How did Jesus drink it "new" with them?

**IV**

What is meant by "this is my body"?  
Point out the memorial features of the Passover and Lord's Supper.

**V**

How did Jesus point out the betrayer?  
What woe was pronounced?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson X—June 7, 1936***JESUS IN GETHSEMANE**

Luke 22: 39-53.

39 And he came out, and went, as his custom was, unto the mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed him.

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

41 And he was parted from them about a stone's cast; and he kneeled down and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

45 And when he rose up from his prayer, he came unto the disciples, and found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

47 While he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them; and he drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49 And when they that were about him saw what would follow, they said, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 And a certain one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and struck off his right ear.

51 But Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye them thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

52 And Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and elders, that were come against him, Are ye come out, as against a robber, with swords and staves?

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched not forth your hands against me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Not my will, but thine, be done." (Luke 22: 42.)

**TIME.**—A.D. 30.

**PLACE.**—Garden of Gethsemane, on the western slope of the Mount of Olives.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the eleven, the traitor, soldiers, and others.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 53: 1-6.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

June 1.	M.	-----	A Comforter Promised (John 14: 16-24)
June 2.	T.	-----	The Farewell Prayer (John 17: 9-17)
June 3.	W.	-----	The Suffering Jesus (Luke 22: 39-44)
June 4.	T.	-----	The Sleeping Disciples (Luke 22: 45, 46)
June 5.	F.	-----	The Fleeing Band (Matt. 26: 55-58)
June 6.	S.	-----	Sharing His Suffering (1 Pet. 4: 12-19)
June 7.	S.	-----	Perfect Through Suffering (Heb. 2: 10-18)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. Jesus and His Apostles Enter the Garden (Verses 39-41).
  - II. Jesus Prays a Second Time (Verses 42-46).
  - III. Jesus Betrayed (Verses 47, 48).
  - IV. The Carnal Sword Condemned (Verses 49-51).
  - V. Jesus Rebukes His Enemies (Verses 52, 53).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—This lesson describes incidents that occurred the same night of the Passover and the institution of the Lord's Supper. According to the chronology followed in this book, it was Thursday night, or the night part of Friday, as the Jews reckoned the time. We have no means of knowing how long they remained in the upper room before leaving for the garden, or just how long he remained in the three times he left them to pray. Matt. 26: 40 implies that he spent one hour the first time.

*Lesson Links.*—Observing the Passover, washing the disciples' feet, and instituting his own supper, all taking place in the upper room, would require some little time. As the Passover was kept with much solemnity it is reasonable to suppose that they spent much time in it. Besides these things that long discourse recorded in John, chapters 14 to 16, was spoken in all probability before they left the room. The prayer, chapter 17, seems to have been the last thing before they went across the brook Kidron to the garden. (John 18: 1.) Matthew and Mark both mention the fact that they sang a hymn before they went out. (Matt. 26: 30; Mark 14: 26.) At just what time this singing was before leaving the room is not stated. It probably was at the close of the supper since the Jews sang at their Passover. If so, then they did not leave for the Mount of Olives immediately after the singing, for time must be allowed for the discourse and the prayer.

*Lesson Settings.*—Jesus told them that it was expedient that he go away that the Spirit, as a guide and helper, might come to them. (John 16: 7-15.) He had encouraged them by reminding them that he was going to prepare a place for them. (John 14: 1, 2.) He knew that in a few hours he would be arrested, tried, and be crucified. To meet such ordeals he would need all the strength he could possibly get. Since his human nature was to be tested to the full limit, he knew that the intervening hours should be given to preparation for it. For that reason, no doubt, he sought the quietude of the garden



where in communion with the Father he made the last preparation in resigning himself completely to what was inevitable.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Jesus and His Apostles Enter the Garden (Verses 39-41)

*"As His Custom Was."*—This expression seems to imply that Jesus had been in the habit of visiting this place from the city. Possibly he had often gone to the garden for rest and a quiet place to pray after teaching in the temple. This garden was on the west slope of the mountain just across the brook Kidron. The place is called Gethsemane, a word signifying an oil press. The name was probably given because there was in it a place where the oil was pressed out of the olives.

*Disciples Urged to Pray.*—As they entered the garden he told the disciples to pray that they "enter not into temptation." Temptations are always dangerous and should be avoided when possible. But since they often come one should pray for courage to meet them successfully when they do come. Matthew adds the word "watch," evidently meaning that we should look to see that we are not ensnared by temptations unawares. Matthew's order of arrangement puts this advice from Jesus after his return from his first hour's prayer, and when he found them asleep. Luke evidently is stating certain facts, but does not give all of them nor does he appear to be trying to give them in strictly chronological order.

*The Prayer of Jesus.*—After telling them to pray, he departed from them about a stone's cast and kneeled down. Matthew says he "fell on his face." (Matt. 26: 39.) Both statements are true, and mean that he kneeled, but also in kneeling, bowed his face to the ground. His prayer was for the Father to remove the cup. As death was often produced by drinking poison from a cup, the word "cup" here stands for those sufferings that would lead to his death. By having it removed he meant that he be excused from submitting to them. No other feeling would be natural to one in the flesh. This request, however, was made conditionally—if it were the Father's will. That meant that if the Father's will could be carried out without his suffering death, his human nature cried for the relief. But since that could not be, he had to drink the cup. In both joy and grief saints should have the spirit of their Master—an earnest desire to do the will of the Father.

### II. Jesus Prays a Second Time (Verses 42-46)

*The Angel's Appearance.*—Our text says that there appeared an angel from heaven "strengthening him." It may seem strange that the divine Son of God would need any strengthening. But we should not forget the fact that he dwelled in the flesh and was subject to all the temptation that men have to meet. That human nature in such a trying ordeal would need encouragement and assistance is evident enough. Doubtless his asking them to watch with him (Matt. 26: 38) was because he desired the help that comes from love and sympathy. What could be more appropriate than the strength that would come from the presence of an angel?

*In Agony.*—It was in deep agony that he prayed. Of course, human minds can never know the crushing weight of the burden that bore



him down, with a world's salvation depending upon his paying the price. We are told that he prayed more earnestly. How this could be we do not know, but the text says "his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." Some have suggested that his intense suffering affected the bodily functions so that he actually sweat drops of blood. It should be noted, however, that the text does not say he sweat blood, but that his sweat became "as it were" great drops of blood. It is hardly safe to press the language beyond what the words naturally convey. That sweat does often stand out in great beads when the mind is greatly disturbed is a fact often observed. Normally drops of blood would be larger before falling than drops of water. The great agony caused sweat to form in great drops, like that of blood before falling. It is unnecessary to try to get more out of this expression.

"*Why Sleep Ye?*"—Jesus had urged them to watch and warned them that "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26: 41.) Yet when he returned to them he found them sleeping. Luke says they were sleeping "for sorrow." Just how they could sleep under the circumstances seems strange, but nature can endure only so much and then must yield. Their condition may have been somewhat similar to children who sometimes cry themselves to sleep. Their distress and sorrow at the saying of Jesus that he would be denied that night would leave them, and the quietude of the hour all tended to overcome physical resistance, and sleep resulted naturally. The circumstance of their sleep gave him the occasion to warn them to be awake to the possibilities and dangers of temptations.

### III. Jesus Betrayed (Verses 47, 48)

"*While He Yet Spake.*"—Matthew and Mark mention that he went away from the disciples three times and prayed. Luke mentions only two, which shows that he is not attempting to go into full detail. Judas knowing the place where Jesus often resorted with his disciples (John 18: 2) had led the band of soldiers and officers there to arrest him. When Jesus returned to the disciples the third and last time, he said, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." Evidently about the time he told them to sleep on the band with Judas appeared in sight and he said, "Arise, let us be going." (Matt. 26: 44-46.) Hence, we have the words of Luke that the band came while "he yet spake."

"*With a Kiss.*"—Judas who was leading the soldiers and officers drew near to kiss Jesus. The kiss was the usual method of greeting under normal circumstances, and would have been received as a friendly salutation, if there had been no knowledge of hypocrisy. How deliberate and diabolical the treachery of Judas! Being able to read the human heart, Jesus knew the greeting was a traitor's kiss. What a terrible revelation it must have been to him when Jesus said, "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" No hypocrisy could be more abominable than betraying one through pretended affection. No one ever brought upon himself more lasting disgrace or covered his name with deeper shame. Satan had entered his heart.

### IV. The Carnal Sword Condemned (Verses 49-51)

"*Shall We Smite?*"—Earlier in the night—while in the supper room—the disciples had all declared they would die before they would forsake him. (Mark 14: 31.) Their first impulse then was to defend



him with the sword when the soldiers appeared to arrest him. Naturally, they felt that they must meet force with force. One of them actually drew a sword and cut off a man's ear. John tells us that it was Simon Peter who did that. (John 18: 10.) This impulsiveness is in keeping with his usual rashness, but in striking contrast with their fear a little later when they all "left him, and fled." (Matt. 26: 56.) Jesus told Peter to put the sword in its place, "for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matt. 26: 52, 53.) He also said that, if he had needed that kind of defense, he could have called to his assistance twelve legions of angels. Nothing could more certainly indicate that he did not come to establish a temporal kingdom. When before Pilate later he said: "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18: 36.) For that reason he would not allow his disciples to fight with a carnal sword in his defense.

*Suffer Them Thus Far.*—By the words, "Suffer ye them thus far," Jesus probably meant for his disciples to offer no resistance to the soldiers who came to take him. They doubtless understood him to mean that he would not resist arrest. As their hope was based on the promised kingdom being a temporal one, they were naturally disappointed, and decided that each one would have to take care of himself. When all the facts are considered, their fleeing is not a matter of surprise. Of course, he knew that they had to learn in due time that an escape from death would thwart the divine plans in saving the world. Sin could only be remitted at the cost of blood; his must be poured out to secure that remission. The carnal sword must not interfere with the divine purpose.

#### V. Jesus Rebukes His Enemies (Verses 52, 53)

*Priests, Captains, and Elders.*—The crowd that came to arrest Jesus included the guards of the temple, soldiers, scribes, Pharisees, chief priests, and elders. Since the chief priests and elders were the ones who contracted with Judas to have him delivered to them, they wanted to be sure it would be done. As Jesus had been popular with some because of his teaching and miracles, they may have thought they should take no chances in allowing his friends to defend him. Those who are wicked enough to buy a man's death to get rid of him would want to be sure their work was a success; they would not recoil from witnessing his arrest, trial, and execution. The heartlessness of wicked men is often amazing. They came for him with swords and staves as if he were a robber or some other hardened criminal, yet from day to day they had seen him among them with no evidence of evil in him.

*"This Is Your Hour."*—Jesus frankly met them with the question, "Whom seek ye?" When they answered, "Jesus of Nazareth," he promptly replied, "I am he." This willing acknowledgment that he was the one amazed them and they went backward and fell to the ground. (John 18: 4-8.) Jesus rebuked them for coming out as if they were trying to surprise a desperate criminal when he had been openly before them from day to day. But he said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." Matthew also adds that "all this is come to pass, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." (Matt. 26: 56.) He could have called legions of angels to protect him, if it had been proper, but he must be taken as a lamb to the slaughter, and he must not open his mouth in complaint. It

had not been possible for them before this to carry out their wicked designs, but now their hour had arrived—the time when they would be permitted to carry out the desire to have him killed.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Regardless of how strong our faith may be or how much we are sure we need the things asked for, we should always pray with the provision understood or expressed, if according to God's will. Human weakness is so great that man's judgment is often at fault in spite of all his sincerity and carefulness.

2. Human experience is a continual reminder that dangers may confront us at any time. The best protection against them is to be continually on the watch. Nothing is so likely to deceive us as the devices of Satan. Too late when the battle has been lost.

3. Asking divine help to avoid absolute duties is not right. Jesus refused to do anything that might interfere with his Father's plans, however much it might be pleasant to him. We should imitate his example—allow nothing to prevent our doing God's will.

4. The apostles at first thought their Lord should be defended by the carnal sword; they learned later that he did not come to establish that kind of kingdom. Efficiency in using the sword of the Spirit is the preparation Christians need to defend Christ's kingdom.

5. Wicked people ought to realize that it is through God's permission that they are permitted to carry out their nefarious plans. There is a difference between allowing one to pursue his wicked course and authorizing his wickedness. Ultimately all wicked men will be forced to meet the record of their lives; the impenitent will be lost.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the contention that arose at the supper table. (Luke 22: 24-30.)

2. Discuss the denial of Peter. (Luke 22: 54-62.)

3. Discuss the necessity of suffering as it relates to the service of Jesus. (2 Tim. 3: 12; Acts 14: 22.)

4. Describe the sufferings Paul had to endure for the gospel's sake. (2 Cor. 11: 23-27.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place,

and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### *I*

What custom of Jesus is referred to here?

What did he urge his disciples to do?

Describe the prayers of Jesus.

How many times did he pray?

#### *II*

What is said about the angel?

Why ask them to watch with him?

What is meant in the expression about his sweating?

What is meant by sleeping "for sorrow"?

#### *III*

How harmonize the two expressions about sleep in verses 44, 45?

Describe the manner of Judas' betrayal.

#### *IV*

What question did the disciples ask him?

What rash thing did Peter do?

What did Jesus say about his kingdom?

What caused the disciples to flee?

#### *V*

What parties were in the crowd that came to arrest him?

What is meant by "this is your hour"?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.



## Lesson XI—June 14, 1936

## JESUS CRUCIFIED

Luke 23: 33-46.

33 And when they came unto the place which is called The skull, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

34 And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And parting his garments among them, they cast lots.

35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also scoffed at him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if this is the Christ of God, his chosen.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou art the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And there was also a superscription over him, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 And one of the malefactors that were hanged railed on him, saying, Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us.

40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said, Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom.

43 And he said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

44 And it was now about the sixth hour, and a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.

45 The sun's light failing: and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5: 8.)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACES.—Pilate's judgment hall and Herod's palace in Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus, Roman officers, soldiers, and the multitude.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 130.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

June 8.	M.	.....	The Scourged Christ (Matt. 27: 26-31)
June 9.	T.	.....	The Forgiving Christ (Luke 23: 33-35)
June 10.	W.	.....	The Penitent Thief (Luke 23: 39-43)
June 11.	T.	.....	Jesus on the Cross (Luke 23: 44-49)
June 12.	F.	.....	The Necessity of Christ's Death (John 12: 23-32)
June 13.	S.	.....	The Message of the Cross (1 Cor. 1: 17-25)
June 14.	S.	.....	Christ Died for Us (Rom. 5: 1-8)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. The Crucifixion Described (Verses 33, 34).
  - II. Jesus Mocked by Soldiers and Rulers (Verses 35-38).
  - III. The Malefactors Speak (Verses 39-41).
  - IV. The Penitent Robber's Appeal and Jesus' Reply (Verses 42, 43).
  - V. The Death of Jesus (Verses 44-46).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The incidents of this lesson occurred on Friday, according to the plan of chronology we are following. From Mark 15:

25 we learn that the crucifixion began at the third hour—9 o'clock in the morning. From verse 33 of the same chapter we find that the darkness spread over the land at the sixth hour—12 o'clock. Matthew's record is in agreement with this by saying the darkness lasted from the sixth to the ninth hour. (Matt. 27: 45, 46.) His death occurred at the ninth hour. John 19: 14 says the sixth hour, which is an apparent conflict. John does not refer to the time Jesus was placed on the cross, but to the time he was before Pilate in the trial. Either John used the Roman method as we do, six in the morning, or some copyist later made a mistake and wrote six instead of nine. Either way satisfactorily harmonizes the statements. If John used the Roman method, the time he mentions was three hours before Jesus was placed on the cross.

*Lesson Links.*—Just what hour of the night he was arrested is not known, but presumably not till midnight or later. Before day he was brought before both Annas and Caiaphas. (John 18: 12-14.) He was before Annas first and then sent to Caiaphas. (Matt. 26: 57.) About this time occurred the denial of Peter. When it was morning the assembly of elders, priests, and scribes held their council regarding his case and condemned him to death. Then they led him to Pilate. (Matt. 27: 1, 2.) A number of things transpired before the governor, but no evidence that they submitted convinced him that Jesus was guilty. He offered to release him, but after much insistence on the part of the Jews that he should be killed, he reluctantly gave his consent. He washed his hands before them to signify he claimed to be free from Christ's blood, but no such hollow sham could remove the sin of allowing an innocent person to be crucified. After mocking and scourging Jesus they led him to Golgotha for the crucifixion.

*Lesson Settings.*—Being falsely accused and unjustly condemned, he became subject to both mental and physical torture before the crucifixion began. They scourged him, placed a crown of thorns upon his head, and forced him to bear his own cross. Add to this physical suffering the fact that his apostles had forsaken him a few hours before, one betraying him and another denying him, and his sense of loneliness must have been a terrific mental test. A great multitude of men and women who followed him weeping called for his pity and sympathy. When we consider the indifferent soldiers who did the horrible work and the bitter enemies who rejoiced at his sufferings, we have one of the saddest scenes in mankind's whole history.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Crucifixion Described (Verses 33, 34)

*The Place.*—The text says the crucifixion occurred at a place called "The skull." In the King James Version it is called Calvary. This word is derived from the Latin, and means a skull. Matthew in his record has the word Golgotha, a Hebrew word, that also means a skull. The place may have been called the skull because in form it may have resembled one, or for some other reason not known. We know that it was outside of the city, but near it. (Heb. 13: 12; John 19: 20.) Its exact location cannot be determined.

*Two Malefactors.*—The two crucified at the time with Jesus are called robbers by Matthew. (Matt. 27: 38.) They were probably



also guilty of murder in connection with their robberies and subject to the extreme penalty of the law. They had doubtless already been condemned and were crucified at the same time for convenience's sake. Placing Jesus between them showed that they wanted to cast upon him all the indignity and shame possible. While the Roman soldiers did the crucifying, the Jewish leaders could easily influence them to arrange matters to their own liking. Though innocent he was to be "numbered with the transgressors" (Isa. 53: 12); he was condemned and executed along with those who were really transgressors. This is expressed in the word "malefactors," which means evil workers.

*"Father, Forgive Them."*—This prayer in behalf of his persecutors and murderers was also in fulfillment of Isaiah's statement that he "made intercession for the transgressors." Jesus offered their ignorance of what they were doing as a reason for his plea. The Roman soldiers, of course, considered themselves only the agents in carrying out the law, but they, as well as the Jews, were ignorant of the fact that the Son of God was being crucified. They knew neither the awfulness of the deed nor what calamities it would bring upon them. True, they could have known, if they had tried to learn. But indifference on the part of the Romans, and prejudice on the part of the Jews, closed their eyes to the truth.

## II. Jesus Mocked by Soldiers and Rulers (Verses 35-38)

*"Let Him Save Himself."*—The soldiers fulfilled another prophecy in casting lots for his garments (Psalm 22: 18). The people stood beholding. This is further explained in verses 48, 49 where it is said the multitude who witnessed these things "returned smiting their breasts." All his acquaintances and the women that followed with him stood afar off "seeing these things." These last were his friends and were grief-stricken, but unable to do anything for him. The rulers scoffed at him with the demand that, as he claimed to save others, let him save himself, if he is God's chosen one to be the Messiah. By this they meant that he should save himself from death by coming down from the cross. In this they showed ignorance of his mission. To do what they suggested would have destroyed his claims as the Christ.

*"Offering Him Vinegar."*—The soldiers also mocked him. This they did probably more because his own people were doing so. They had no special reason for scoffing him. The custom of offering vinegar mingled with gall evidently was intended to dull the senses and render the torture less severe. As death was the design of the crucifixion, they thought it was not necessary that the suffering should have its full power. There was at least a grain of sympathy in the offer. But he refused to drink it, evidently not being willing to take any drug to escape the full suffering necessary to being made perfect. (Heb. 5: 8, 9.) As God's Son he could have saved his life, but he could not then have brought life and immortality to light by the gospel (2 Tim. 1: 10) and saved men from their sins.

*"A Superscription."*—The accusation was written above those crucified to indicate the cause of their execution. The emperor would consider such a superscription as implying that he was crucified because he was claiming to be a rival king. This would justify Pilate with the emperor at Rome. At the same time it condemned the Jews because they had demanded the death of an innocent man. The



chief priests felt the force of this implied condemnation and asked Pilate to change it to read, "He said, I am King of the Jews." (John 19: 21, 22.) It was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, the three prevailing languages, and that enabled all to read it. (John 19: 20.)

### III. The Malefactors Speak (Verses 39-41)

*"Railed on Him."*—Our text says "one" of the malefactors railed on him, saying, "Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us." The word "rail" shows that he meant his words as a reproach, used in the same sense as the scoffing of the rulers mentioned in verse 35. It was equivalent to saying that, if you are what you profess, you would be able to save thyself and us. So far as power was concerned the words were true, but not according to God's will, a thing of which they had no knowledge. There is an apparent contradiction here with what is said in Matt. 27: 44. Matthew represents both robbers as casting the same reproach upon him as was done by the chief priests, scribes, and elders. The usual, and probably the best, explanation is that at first both robbers joined in the reproaches, but much later when near death one of them repented and begged for mercy, while the one mentioned by Luke still remained impenitent. There was ample time for one to change, for they were on the cross about six hours before the end came.

*"We Indeed Justly."*—The penitent robber rebuked his fellow robber by asking if he did not fear God, a thing, of course, he should do. The complaining one was in the same condemnation—they were all on the cross. The fact mentioned which should have caused the angry robber to cease his reproaches was that both of them had been justly condemned according to the law, but Jesus had done nothing amiss. The penitent robber did not rebuke his fellow criminal for desiring to escape death. Doubtless he desired that himself. But he condemned him for reproaching one who was sinless and yet had to die. Here we find the penitent robber agreeing with Pilate, who, after hearing the testimony presented by the Jews against Jesus, said he "found no fault in this man." (Luke 23: 14.) Then he challenged the accusers to tell what evil he had done. (Verse 22.)

### IV. The Penitent Robber's Appeal and Jesus' Reply (Verses 42, 43)

*"Remember Me."*—This is a phrase of entreaty, meaning the asking for a favor of some kind. He realized that asking to be saved from the cross was impossible and useless. Jesus could not save himself from that and carry out the Father's will; he could not have saved the robber without implying that he could save others and not himself. He did not come to interfere with established law. Even the Jewish law was observed by him till his death. He could ask Jesus to favor him when he came "in" his kingdom. The margin says "into thy kingdom." We have no means of knowing how much the robber knew of the claims of Jesus to establish a kingdom, but the very fact that he asked to be remembered when Jesus came in that kingdom is evidence that he knew something about it. Otherwise his request would not have been made. Neither do we know what his conception was concerning the nature of that kingdom; it may have been the same as the Jews commonly held, a temporal one. But one thing is certain, he understood it to be future at that time. If that had been a wrong idea, and the kingdom was already in existence then, surely Luke would have corrected his mistake.



"*With Me in Paradise.*"—Jesus replied that he should be with him in paradise that day. "Verily" means truly or certainly; that is, what I am about to promise you is certain to come to pass. The word "Paradise" means a place of pleasure, and in this case refers to the state of the spirit after death. As a word expressing a place of pleasure, paradise can refer to heaven, and does in 2 Cor. 12: 4 and Rev. 2: 7. But the expression, "To-day," here limits it to the state between death and the resurrection. This state is also called Hades, and means an abode unseen by those in the flesh. Christ, Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich man were all in that state after death. (Acts 2: 27; Luke 16: 22-26.) Hence, paradise is that part of the state of spirits where the good are. From them the wicked are separated by a great and impassable gulf, though they too are in Hades. Jesus' promise to the robber implies his ultimate salvation, but Jesus had a right to give him any blessing of which he was worthy because he had not yet died, and his will had not yet become effective. (See Heb. 9: 16, 17.) The law of pardon—the commission—was not given till after his resurrection, and did not become operative till Pentecost. (Luke 24: 49.)

### V. The Death of Jesus (Verses 44-46)

*Material Happenings.*—There was three hours' darkness lasting from the sixth hour—noon—till three o'clock. This darkness was so great that the sun's light failed. The veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom as he expired. As that was the time when priests were probably in the temple, the rending of the veil was doubtless seen by them. At the same time the earth quaked and the rocks were rent. This could not have been a natural occasion with all these effects being caused by the earthquake, for it is stated by Matthew that the tombs were opened "and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised." (Matt. 27: 52.) The earthquake was doubtless the means for rending the rocks and in that way open the tombs, but the bodies probably were not raised till Jesus was.

*"Gave Up the Ghost."*—Clearly the word "ghost" here refers to the spirit. This is evident from the parallel passage in Matthew where it is said he "yielded up his spirit." (Matt. 27: 50.) In Luke's account we have the words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Having said this he expired, or gave up his spirit. Of course, it also means that the body died, but commending his spirit to God shows the spirit continued to exist after it left the body. No other view is possible in explanation of Jesus' words.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. On the cross Jesus presented the most remarkable example of divine love that the world has ever seen. After the most shameful treatment and in the agony of the most torturing pain he prayed for his murderers to be forgiven because they knew not what they did. Dying for enemies is not a human trait.

2. In refusing to drink anything to soften his suffering while he was paying the full price of man's redemption, he set us the example of not allowing anything to prevent exact obedience to God's will. The way of endurance may be hard, but the reward is glorious.

3. Men often ridicule and reject that which is not only best for

them, but even what is necessary to their salvation. The amazing thing is that both robbers did not repent. This circumstance shows that being saved or lost is an individual matter for each to decide.

4. Those who want to be safe in the future should take the right road now. No road is safe except the one that leads to the right destination. Through Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension he became the way, the truth, and the life. All must come to God through him.

5. The material changes that occurred when Jesus died show that he had the approval of the God of nature. But the God of nature is also the God of revelation; hence, Jesus in his sacrifice had the approval of our heavenly Father. We share that approval by obedience.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe the Savior's appearance before Pilate. (Luke 23: 1-7.)
2. Discuss the offer that Pilate made to release Jesus. (Matt. 27: 11-23.)
3. Discuss the conversation between Pilate and Jesus. (John 18: 33-38.)
4. Describe the death of Jesus. (John 19: 30-35.)
5. Give the story of his burial as related in John 19: 38-42.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

What names describe the place of crucifixion?  
Why were the robbers crucified at that time?  
Why did they place Jesus between them?  
What prayer did Jesus utter?

#### **II**

What other prophecy was fulfilled by the soldiers?  
What different classes witnessed the crucifixion?

Why did they offer him vinegar?  
Why did he refuse it?  
Why place a superscription over him?

#### **III**

What did the malefactors do?  
How harmonize our text with Matt. 27: 44?  
What did the penitent robber say?

#### **IV**

What did he mean by "remember me"?  
What request did the robber make?  
What does this show about the establishment of the kingdom?  
What does "Paradise" mean in this text?

#### **V**

What things happened at his death?  
What is meant by "gave up the ghost"?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson XII—June 21, 1936*

### JESUS EXALTED

Luke 24: 36-53.

36 And as they spake these things, he himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit.  
38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and wherefore do questionings arise in your heart?

39 See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having.



- 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.  
 41 And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here anything to eat?  
 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish.  
 43 And he took it, and ate before them.  
 44 And he said unto them, These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me.  
 45 Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the scriptures;  
 46 And he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day;  
 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.  
 48 Ye are witnesses of these things.  
 49 And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.  
 50 And he led them out until they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.  
 51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven.  
 52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:  
 53 And were continually in the temple, blessing God.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name." (Phil. 2: 9.)

**TIME.**—A.D. 30.

**PLACES.**—Galilee and the Mount of Olivet near Bethany.

**PERSONS.**—The risen Lord and his disciples.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Heb. 2: 5-9.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

June 15.	M.	.....	The Empty Tomb (Matt. 28: 1-10)
June 16.	T.	.....	The Ascension (Luke 24: 36-53)
June 17.	W.	.....	The Lord We Worship (Acts 13: 29-37)
June 18.	T.	.....	The Promise of Power (Acts 1: 1-11)
June 19.	F.	.....	The Supreme Victory (1 Cor. 15: 50-58)
June 20.	S.	.....	The Security of Believers (Rom. 8: 28-39)
June 21.	S.	.....	Christ Supreme (Heb. 2: 5-9)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

Introductory Study.

- I. Jesus Appears to the Apostles (Verses 36-38).
- II. Gives Proof of His Identity (Verses 39-43).
- III. Jesus Gives Them Understanding (Verses 44, 45).
- IV. Jesus Speaks the Commission (Verses 46-49).
- V. Jesus Ascends (Verses 50-53).

Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—Our last lesson was on the crucifixion of our Savior which, according to the chronology followed here, was on Friday. His resurrection is clearly presented as having occurred very early on the first day of the week. (Mark 16: 9.) From Luke 24: 13, 33 we learn that the incidents recorded in the first four sections of this lesson occurred that day. From John 20: 19-24 we find that this meeting was at "evening." Comparing this passage with Matt. 14: 23; John 6: 16 it appears that at "even" or "evening" meant any time from late afternoon till well into the night. The ascension,

described in the last section of this lesson, occurred forty days later. For this fact we have the words of Luke in Acts 1: 3.

*Lesson Links.*—The essential events between this and our last lesson consist mainly in the record of the various instances in which Jesus appeared to the disciples. On the day of the resurrection he appeared to Mary Magdalene first. (Mark 16: 9.) Next he appeared to other women. (Matt. 28: 8-10.) He also that same day appeared to two on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-15), and to the ten disciples later (John 2: 19-24). He appeared to Peter possibly on this day, though the time is not stated definitely. (1 Cor. 15: 5.) A week later he appeared to all the apostles. (John 20: 26.) After this he met them on the mountain in Galilee as he had promised. (Matt. 28: 16, 17.) It was probably at that meeting that he gave them the commission as recorded by Matthew and Mark. After appearing to seven on the Sea of Galilee (John 21: 1, 2), he returned to Jerusalem and led the disciples to the Mount of Olives where the forty-day period ended with the ascension.

*Lesson Settings.*—There could scarcely have been a more interesting meeting to the disciples than that first one in which all were present except Thomas. They had the doors closed because of their fear of the Jews. They probably thought the same hatred that caused them to secure Christ's crucifixion would lead them to persecute his followers. His miraculous entrance through the closed door would again remind them of his mighty power, and their seeing the nail-prints in his hands would assure them they were not mistaken when they heard his voice. The interest in this meeting and the profound solemnity that necessarily prevailed as they watched his ascension from the mount are two of the most touching events in their association with him, no doubt. They saw him leave; we still await his return. May the God of mercy help us to be ready for that return!

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Jesus Appears to the Apostles (Verses 36-38)

*"Stood in the Midst."*—Verse 36 begins with the expression, "as they spake these things." The things referred to here were being told them by the two that he had appeared to as they went to Emmaus. The full story is told in verses 13-35 of this chapter. The two disciples did not recognize him as he talked to them in the way because their "eyes were holden," but as they sat at meat their eyes were opened and he vanished out of their sight. They rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem to bring the news to the apostles. It was while they were relating the remarkable things that had transpired that Jesus appeared in their midst. As he walked with the two on the way without them recognizing him, so he entered the closed room without their seeing him. This was clearly a miracle, though we are not told how it was done.

*"Peace Be Unto You."*—This was a Jewish form of salutation, and meant a wish for peace to be with them. The night of the supper he had promised to leave his peace with them. (John 14: 27.) In their terrified state it was especially fitting that he renew that promise. His sudden and unexpected appearance in the room, and their fear of the Jews, would all naturally so excite them that it was no doubt easy to think it was a spirit. Then in spite of the reports they prob-



ably continued to think of him as dead and to consider his presence as a spectre.

*"Why Are Ye Troubled?"*—Jesus' questions were a mild rebuke for their having any doubts, though knowing the weakness of human nature, their actions are not surprising. The scriptures had foretold his death, he had said he would die and be raised from the dead, and now eyewitnesses had said they saw him. All this was sufficient to prove him to be in their midst, yet apparently they were not in their disturbed state able at first to realize the exact truth.

## II. Gives Proof of His Identity (Verses 39-43)

*"Handle Me, and See."*—Under normal circumstances the appearance and voice of one who is well known would be sufficient for satisfactory identification. Under the strain of intense excitement one might be deceived if that were all. In the case of Jesus the fact of his resurrection at first had little bearing. Even with all their previous teaching they did not seem to consider it possible. Nothing short of unmistakable evidence would satisfy. It is more favorable to the certainty of his resurrection that they were not ready to accept it as true till the evidence was unquestionable. His crucifixion was known to be a fact. The prints of the nails in his hands and feet would be plain proof that he had been crucified. Their long association with him made his appearance a matter of knowledge. His miraculous power in the past and his mysterious entrance into the room would prepare them for admitting the possibility of the resurrection. His appearance, voice, and the physical marks would complete the proof in making it a certainty. They were asked to examine the wounds.

*The Nature of Spirits.*—In making an examination of his body they would see that he had flesh and bones, a thing which was not true of spirits. This would be proof that their first impression was not right. Incidentally this remark about the distinction between body and spirit shows that spirits do exist when separated from the body. The old Sadducean doctrine, also held by many modern people, that man does not have a spirit that survives the death of the body is not true. If so, the Savior's language here would be meaningless. This argument was to convince them that the marks upon his body confirmed the other facts in proving he was really there. After making this statement he showed them his hands and feet.

*"Still Disbelieved."*—They were so bewildered and their joy was so great that they still sought evidence of what they wanted to believe. Probably their natural feeling was like ours sometimes is; they thought it seemed too good to be true. Or, considering it from their narrow viewpoint, they thought it was impossible. To set the matter at rest he proposed a demonstration of his bodily reality. He asked if they had anything to eat. They gave him a piece of fish which he ate before them. Knowing that spirits did not eat material food, they were of course forced to realize that he was not a spirit as they first thought. Evidently the proof was satisfactory to them, for John says they told Thomas a week later that they had seen the Lord. (John 20: 25.)

## III. Jesus Gives Them Understanding (Verses 44, 45)

*"These Are My Words."*—This expression meant that the evidence they had before them was the proof that his predictions of his death



and resurrection had been fulfilled. For these predictions, see Luke 18: 31-33; 22: 37. He further reminded them that he had told them of these things while he was with them. He mentioned the fact several times that prophecies had to be fulfilled. (Matt. 26: 24, 31, 54, 56.) He then said that this would include all the things concerning him that were in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. As he was to be the "end of the law" (Rom. 10: 4), all the types of the law, as well as the predictions concerning him, had to be fulfilled. All the prophecies concerning the peculiar circumstances of his death and resurrection they were then in position to know had been fulfilled. Other things regarding the establishment and progress of his kingdom they would learn in due time. They then had enough facts before them to know that he was their Messiah.

*Opened Their Mind.*—This text furnishes a perfect explanation of what is meant by God's opening the heart, as Luke reports regarding Lydia. (Acts 16: 14.) In such passages the mind and heart refer to the same thing. An opening in the physical sense is necessarily impossible. The statement he opened their minds "that they might understand the scriptures" shows plainly what is meant. He enabled them to understand what their prophets meant when they foretold events concerning him. It is unnecessary to think he gave them some superior ability by a miracle that enabled them to understand, but only that he showed them that what the prophets had said was fulfilled in him. Before the prophecies were dark, even the prophets not knowing the meaning of their own words (1 Pet. 1: 10-12), but with the facts before them and his explanation they understood.

#### IV. Jesus Speaks the Commission (Verses 46-49)

*"Thus It Is Written."*—Of course this refers to the writings of the Old Testament, for none of the New Testament was written at that time. His death was predicted in Isa. 53: 1-9, his resurrection in Psalm 16: 9-11, and remission of sins in Isa. 59: 20 and Jer. 31: 34. The prophet had plainly stated that he must suffer; they had seen him endure the limit of suffering. Later we are told by a divine writer that he was made perfect through sufferings "and became unto all that obey him the author of eternal salvation." Many years later Paul declared that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures," and was raised "on the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. 15: 3, 4.) There can be no doubt but that it all happened according to what had been written.

*Repentance and Remission.*—In the commission, as given by Matthew and Mark, both faith and baptism are mentioned. In Mark's record, both are made necessary to salvation by saying, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) Luke here gives repentance as necessary, supplying what was omitted by the others. Earlier in his record he reports Jesus as saying that sinners must repent or perish. (Luke 13: 3.) Repentance means the determination to cease sinning, and is something the sinner does for himself. Remission of sins is something God does for the sinner. The repentance is necessary to obtain the remission. The same is true with the other commands. The sinner believes and is baptized, but God pardons his sins. All these commands are necessary to secure the pardon, but God bestows it.



*"Beginning from Jerusalem."*—The preaching of remission in the name of Christ was to begin from Jerusalem. It was to be presented to all nations, but it was preached to Jews only on the day of Pentecost. It went to Gentiles several years later. This forces the expression to mean that it began to be preached then. This is final proof that the church did not begin till the day of Pentecost. The apostles were told to wait in the city till clothed with power from on high. This promise was fulfilled when the apostles were filled with the Spirit on that day. (Acts 2: 1-4.) The apostles were also personal witnesses of the incidents they described. (Acts 1: 21, 22.)

### V. Jesus Ascends (Verses 50-53)

*"Over Against Bethany."*—Acts 1: 12 shows that after the ascension they returned to Jerusalem from the mount which is a Sabbath day's journey. Bethany is about twice that distance. This text does not say they went to Bethany, but shows it was on the mountain in that direction. That location may have been chosen so it would be in plain view from all directions and would leave no doubt about what occurred. The last act performed in their behalf was to give them his parting blessing. He was taken up while he was in this act of pronouncing his blessings upon them.

*The Certainty.*—The reports declare in unmistakable terms that he was taken up, and that as they stood gazing at him. There can be no misunderstanding here about what is asserted. They could not have been mistaken about what they saw. Either they saw him ascend or they later falsified the known facts, and were liars of the most pronounced type. Their devotion and death for what they believed furnish the most undoubted proof of their honesty. If they were honest men, Jesus ascended. They did not see him arise from the grave, but they did see him ascend, a miracle of equal value. If he ascended, he is God's Son and man's Savior. They believed in him, returned to the city, worshiped him, and continued blessing God daily.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Because we are deeply interested in a thing does not mean that we should accept it as true without investigation. Perhaps no disciples of Christ were ever more deeply concerned than were the apostles on the day of the resurrection, yet they were slow to believe that he had really been raised till proof was given.

2. Men may be easily excited and more easily deceived when under great excitement, but common sense must sooner or later give in to solid facts. When all the details of the story are fairly considered they will make us believers just as they made the apostles.

3. David said the opening of God's word giveth understanding. (Psalm 119: 130.) Paul says that faith comes by hearing the Lord's word. (Rom. 10: 17.) A knowledge of God's precepts will make all honest hearts hate every false way. (Psalm 119: 104.)

4. "Thus it is written" is vitally important not only in trying to learn how to obtain remission of sins, but also in learning how to serve and worship God. It perfects the man of God for every good work, and leads him safely to eternal life.

5. Because Jesus humbled himself to the point of dying for a lost race, God has highly exalted him and given him a name above every

name. (Phil. 2: 8, 9.) If we humble ourselves in God's service, and are willing to sacrifice to aid men, God will in due time exalt us.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the matter of selecting Matthias to take the place of Judas. Show what was required of an apostle. (Acts 1: 21-26.)
2. Discuss the matter of their qualification for the work, giving both the promise of Jesus and its fulfillment. (John 16: 7-15; Acts 2: 1-4.)
3. Give, in connected order, all the times Jesus appeared to any of his disciples after the resurrection. (See the Introductory Study.)
4. Give the lessons on Christ's exaltation in Heb. 12: 1-5.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

Who spoke the things here mentioned?  
Where is the full story found?  
Describe his entrance into the room.  
What did Jesus say to them, and why?

#### **II**

Why was his presence not enough to satisfy them?  
What were they told to do?  
What lesson did Jesus give on spirits?  
Why did they still disbelieve?

#### **III**

What is meant by "these are my words"?  
What is meant by his opening their mind?

#### **IV**

What scriptures are referred to in "it is written"?  
What does Paul say about his death and resurrection?  
What were they to preach?  
How does repentance save?  
Where was this preaching to begin?

#### **V**

Where did the ascension occur?  
What was Jesus' last earthly act?  
What is the certain proof that he ascended?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.



## Lesson XIII—June 28, 1936

## THE REIGNING CHRIST

1 Cor. 15: 12-28.

12 Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised:

14 And if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised.

16 For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised:

17 And if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

19 If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable.

20 But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep.

21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming.

24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy that shall be abolished is death.

27 For he put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him.

28 And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet."* (1 Cor. 15: 25.)

TIME.—Probably A.D. 57.

PLACE.—Paul was probably at Ephesus when he wrote First Corinthians.

PERSONS.—Paul and the church at Corinth; all Christians.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 47.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

June 22.	M.	.....	The Friend of Sinners (Luke 7: 36-50)
June 23.	T.	.....	Jesus and the Afflicted (Matt. 9: 27-31)
June 24.	W.	.....	Jesus Helping the Perplexed (Luke 24: 17-27)
June 25.	T.	.....	Healing the Soul (Matt. 9: 9-13)
June 26.	F.	.....	Teaching in Parables (Matt. 13: 1-9)
June 27.	S.	.....	Teaching by Example (John 13: 12-20)
June 28.	S.	.....	Jesus, the Comforter (Matt. 11: 25-30)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. The Necessity of the Resurrection Shown (Verses 12-15).
  - II. Without a Resurrection All Is Lost (Verses 16-19).
  - III. The Resurrection Affirmed (Verses 20-23).
  - IV. The Reign of Christ Described (Verses 24-26).
  - V. Supremacy of God Declared (Verses 27, 28).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—As this lesson is taken from one of Paul's letters, the chronology will have reference to the time it was written. The first letter to the church at Corinth is supposed to have been written in the spring of A.D. 57. Since the ascension of Jesus, a part of our last lesson, occurred in A.D. 30, there is a period of about twenty-seven years between these lessons. Paul established the congregation at Corinth and remained there eighteen months (Acts 18: 11), after which he returned to Antioch. Leaving again on a third missionary journey, he came to Ephesus where he stayed two years and three months. (Acts 19: 8, 10.) It was during his stay there that he wrote First Corinthians.

*Lesson Links.*—We can give only a few hints respecting some of the important events that transpired during the twenty-seven years intervening between this and our last lesson. We mention only those in which Paul figured. He is first introduced to us as assisting those who bitterly persecuted the church in that day. He was pressing his fight against the church in foreign countries when the Lord appeared to him and sent him to Damascus to learn what he "must" do. From Ananias he learned his duty (Acts 22: 16), and rendered prompt obedience. He began preaching at once and after three years returned to Jerusalem for a brief visit (Gal. 1: 15-18), then went to his home town—Tarsus. Later he came to Antioch, from which he began his first missionary tour with Barnabas. This tour ended with his return to Antioch, whence he started on his second journey in company with Silas. Leaving from the same place on a third tour he came to Ephesus, the place he wrote the letter as already mentioned.

*Lesson Settings.*—Paul learned while at Ephesus about the condition of the congregation he had established at Corinth. Apollos had been at Ephesus, but had left when Paul came. (Acts 18: 24 to 19: 1.) From 1 Cor. 16: 12 it appears that Apollos had come back to Ephesus while Paul was there. He had probably learned from Apollos and the house of Chloe (1 Cor. 1: 11, 12) about the divisions that had crept in after he left them. They had also written him for information on some points, and much of this letter is a direct reply to their questions. (See 7: 1.) He had learned that some were denying the resurrection (15: 12), and he devotes the fifteenth chapter to a refutation of that denial. It is in this matchless defense of the resurrection that the text of this lesson is found. The points in the lesson are only incidental to the main subject, for he could not be a reigning Christ if he had not been raised from the dead.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. The Necessity of the Resurrection Shown (Verses 12-15)

*"If Christ Is Preached."*—The resurrection is such a cardinal Christian teaching that it seems strange anyone would have denied it. The Sadducees, a prominent Jewish sect, however, did deny it. (Acts 23: 8.) It appears probable from Paul's words that some of them, or some under their influence, had come into the church and were teaching against it. Paul had preached the resurrection to them. His argument seems to be this: If the resurrection of Christ has been preached among you, and you believed it (as was done),



how can any of you now consistently deny it by saying there is no resurrection of the dead? If you admit that Christ has been raised, then you cannot consistently deny that others may be; hence, the denial of the resurrection in general is an absurdity, unless you are willing to deny that Christ arose. Or, if you believe that Christ arose, how can you say others will not?

*The Opposite Conclusion.*—Paul argues in the reverse order. He says, "But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised." The wholesale rejection of the resurrection of the dead would include Christ just the same as others. It would be absurd to admit Christ's resurrection and deny that of others; just as much so as to deny others and admit his. Both must be admitted or both rejected. To reject his involved the denial of his divinity and the possibility of salvation.

*Vain Preaching and Vain Faith.*—Paul also reminded them that, if Christ had not been raised, his preaching had been vain. A thing is "vain" when it is empty—not productive of the results that are promised; something that will finally disappoint us. Since Paul had preached the resurrection of Christ to them, if it were not true, then his preaching had been vain, because all the promises based upon that fact would fail of fulfillment. Preaching that inspires false hopes must of necessity be vain. But he also told them their faith would be vain. As faith comes by hearing (Rom. 10: 17), its value would correspond with the nature of what they heard. Vain preaching, therefore, could not produce anything but vain faith. The reason is found in the fact that such preaching is false. Paul preached that Christ had been raised. If it were not true, he was a false witness; those who believed it had been deceived and their faith was vain. This is Paul's own reasoning on the subject.

## II. Without a Resurrection All Is Lost (Verses 16-19)

*"Yet in Your Sins."*—Paul repeats substantially the point that Christ's resurrection must be denied if we reject the resurrection of others. For this reason he repeats also that those who believe such doctrine have vain faith, but he adds the further fatal fact that such belief left them in their sins. If they based their hope that their sins had been pardoned upon the belief that Christ had been raised, they were deceived and were still in their sins if he had not been. The very thing they desired and supposed they had was all a delusion unless Christ had been raised. Such belief and faith were not only unreasonable, but fatal in results.

*The Dead Have Perished.*—Another conclusion fatal to Christianity would follow from denying the resurrection; namely, that the dead in Christ have perished. As no one denied Christ's death and burial, his resurrection was a necessity, if he was to become the Savior of the world. Rejecting his resurrection was then equivalent to rejecting his claims as the Messiah. This would irresistibly lead to the conclusion that there is no salvation for anyone. Those, therefore, who died thinking they were saved had perished just as the animal does. Such is the unmistakable logic of the case.

*"Most Pitiable."*—Verse 19 has been differently translated and variously explained. It is somewhat difficult to know just the exact

thought intended, though the general idea is apparent. If in this life we have a hope in Christ which cannot be realized because Christ has not been raised, then we are pitiable. If hope is all we can have because we have believed what is not true, we would be more pitiable than one who had no such hope. To labor and sacrifice for what we hope only to realize at last that it cannot be is a most deplorable situation.

### III. The Resurrection Affirmed (Verses 20-23)

*"The Firstfruits."*—Calling Christ the first fruits is in reference to the law of Moses which required that the first fruits of the harvest should be brought into the house of Jehovah. (Ex. 3: 19.) The offering of the first fruits went to show the certainty of the general harvest that was to follow. So the resurrection of Christ is the divine guarantee that a general resurrection will take place. He was not the first one that was raised, for he himself had raised Lazarus and the widow's son, but he was the first one to rise in a glorified body to die no more. In this sense he is the first fruits of that great multitude that will be raised at his coming.

*Resurrection Universal.*—After showing that the admission of Christ's resurrection necessitated admitting the resurrection of all, Paul next says that the resurrection is as universal as death. By man—Adam—came death; by man—Christ—came also the resurrection of the dead. This led Paul to say that "in Adam all die." By this he means that through Adam's sin death passed upon all men; men die a natural death because they descended from Adam and have to suffer the consequences of his sin. In like manner "in Christ shall all be made alive." The contrast here demands that "made alive" means to be raised from the dead, not made alive spiritually. Such a construction of the text would prove universal salvation, which is clearly in conflict with Bible teaching. Since the subject Paul is discussing is the resurrection, we are not at liberty to say that he does not mean the resurrection by "made alive in Christ."

*"In His Own Order."*—Having mentioned the resurrection of all, the apostle next refers to the time it will occur. Christ being the first fruits, the full harvest will be at his second coming. In the expression, "they that are Christ's," the contrast is made between Christ and his followers, since they are to be the full harvest to be gathered into the garner. The wicked, though they too are to be raised, are not mentioned in this verse, doubtless because they as chaff are to be burned up. (Matt. 3: 12.) The language refers to the saved—the wheat—which is to be garnered. Of this company Christ is the first fruits.

### IV. The Reign of Christ Described (Verses 24-26)

*Kingdom Delivered to God.*—"Then cometh the end" means that at the time of Christ's coming he shall deliver the kingdom up to God. This view is necessary for two reasons: (1) The surface meaning of the argument Paul is making allows no other view; (2)



the words immediately following demand that conclusion. This transfer of kingly power will be when Christ "shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power." This shows that Christ has that kingly power and is using it before he delivers it up to the Father. It is the possession of such power that is to enable him to finally overcome all opposing power.

*"Enemies Under His Feet."*—Of course the exercising of kingly power is the way he will put his enemies under his feet. He must reign then while that work is going on. Not only so, but he "must reign, till he hath put *all* his enemies under his feet." He must overcome all enemies, and continue to reign *till* that is done. However long his reign, it must end when all enemies are subdued. If all his enemies are put under his feet instantly as soon as he becomes king, then his reign ends as soon as it begins. This is an absurdity on its very face. But the apostle says that the "last enemy" that shall be abolished is death. Other enemies may be overthrown before, but the abolishment of death ends Christ's kingly reign. So long as men die, just that long will Christ's reign continue. Death and Hades (the abode of the dead) are both to be destroyed at the general resurrection, at the time when the earth and the heaven will flee away; hence, at the resurrection of all, both bad and good. (Rev. 20: 11-15.) Christ's reign then will end at the general judgment. At that time all must be turned back to the Father.

*Beginning of His Reign.*—The apostles fix the beginning of Christ's reign as certainly as its end. David and Peter both represent God as saying to Christ, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet." (Acts 2: 34, 35.) This statement of David was endorsed by Jesus himself. (Matt. 22: 44.) With the testimony of David, Peter, and Jesus the matter is settled that Jesus must sit at God's right hand while he is putting all his enemies under his feet. Then he must sit there till death is abolished, which we have already seen will be at the general resurrection. From Heb. 10: 12, 13 we learn that he sat down at God's right hand after he made his offering, and from Acts 2: 33 we learn that he was there on Pentecost. From Pentecost till the general resurrection is the time he will be putting his enemies under his feet. Verse 25 of our text shows he will reign exactly that same length of time. Hence, the kingdom of Christ has been established, and he is now reigning.

## V. Supremacy of God Declared (Verses 27, 28)

*All Things Under His Feet.*—"He [God] put all things in subjection under his [Christ's] feet." Because God set Christ above all and requires all to submit to him does not mean that all will obey him. Paul teaches that when he comes he will take vengeance on those who do not obey the gospel. (2 Thess. 2: 7, 8.) So those who do not obey him must bow to his authority at the judgment. The state has authority over all citizens, but all citizens do not obey. In this authority of Christ God is excepted—it is over all else. (1 Pet. 3: 22.)

*Christ Subject to God.*—When Christ's authority to reign has been submitted to by the faithful here and acknowledged by the wicked at the judgment, then all enemies will have been abolished and the supreme authority over all will be turned back to the Father that he may be all in all. Such will be the grand and glorious consummation of the Savior's mediatorial reign.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Paul says the "how" of the resurrection may be learned from the grain that is planted. (1 Cor. 15: 35-38.) The shell or body of the grain dies, but the germ springs up in a new plant to perpetuate the grain. If the germ dies, the plant will never come up. If the spirit dies, then there will be no resurrection. The spirit does not die.

2. It is exceedingly pitiable for people who know the truth to live in such a way that they will be unworthy of salvation, but more pitiable for them to cling to a falsehood till too late to be saved.

3. Physical death comes upon man unconditionally; the resurrection of the body is also unconditional. Man's sins may hasten his death, but his righteousness cannot prevent it. Spiritual death is prevented only by righteousness.

4. The most glorious feature of Christ's reign is that death will be abolished and the redeemed on earth and in Hades will be brought to the joys of heaven.

5. John tells us that we do not know what we shall be in the final state, but we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. To be in the presence of the Father and our Lord and the redeemed will be enough.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the price Jesus had to pay in reaching the throne of his father David. (Phil. 2: 5-11; Heb. 12: 1-3.)

2. Discuss the parable of the pounds. (Luke 19: 11-27.)

3. Discuss the resurrection as it is given in 1 Thess. 4: 13-18.

4. Discuss the judgment scene as pictured in Matt. 25: 31-46.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### *I*

What was the occasion of Paul's making this argument?  
What is the point in his argument?

How does he reverse the argument?  
What argument does he make on "vain" preaching?

#### *II*

What further argument does he make in this section?  
What other fatal conclusion would follow?  
What is the point in verse 19?

#### *III*

Why refer to Christ as the "firstfruits"?  
How is he the first fruits from the dead?



What is the point in verse 22?  
What is meant by "made alive" in Christ?  
Explain verse 23.

#### IV

What will take place when Christ comes?  
How long can his reign continue?  
When did his reign begin?  
Where must he be while reigning?

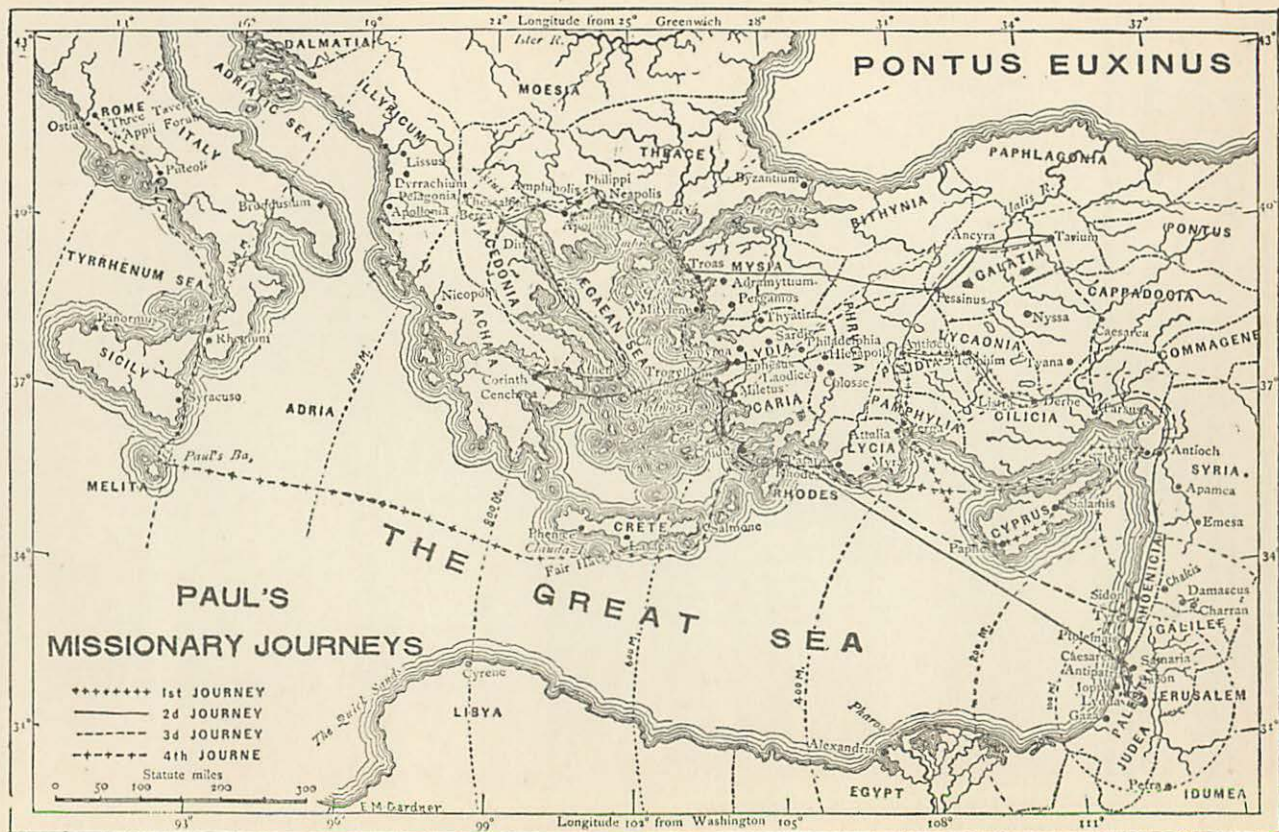
#### V

How are all things under Christ?  
Who will be supreme in the final state?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

Note: Have you assigned the topics for next Sunday?





# THIRD QUARTER

## THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

*Studies in the Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation*  
(FIRST HALF OF A SIX MONTHS' COURSE)

AIM: *To lead the student to an understanding of New Testament Christianity, and to beget in him the desire and purpose to live the Christian life and to win others to faith in the Lord Jesus.*

Lesson I—July 5, 1936

### THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN POWER

Acts 1: 6-9; 2: 1-11, 32-38.

6 They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority.

8 But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

1 And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place.

2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

6 And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans?

8 And how hear we, every man in our own language wherein we were born?

9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia,

10 In Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretans and Arabians, we hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God.

32 This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear.

34 For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?

38 And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1: 8.)

**TIME.**—A.D. 30.

**PLACE.**—Jerusalem.

**PERSONS.**—The apostles, other disciples, and the multitudes.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—John 16: 7-14.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

June 29.	M.	.....	The Holy Spirit Promised (Joel 2: 21-29)
June 30.	T.	.....	The Holy Spirit Received (Acts 2: 1-11)
July 1.	W.	.....	The Power of the Spirit (Acts 2: 32-38)
July 2.	T.	.....	The Presence of the Spirit (Psalm 139: 1-10)
July 3.	F.	.....	Gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12: 1-11)
July 4.	S.	.....	Witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8: 9-17)
July 5.	S.	.....	The Office of the Spirit (John 16: 7-14)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

Introductory Study.

- I. The Holy Spirit Promised (Verses 6-9).
  - II. The Promise Fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-4).
  - III. Those Who Heard the Preaching (Verses 5-11).
  - IV. Peter Declares the Promise Fulfilled (Verses 32-36).
  - V. The "Gift" of the Spirit Promised (Verses 37, 38).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—The things mentioned in the first section of this lesson occurred on the day of Christ's ascension to heaven, forty days after his resurrection. (Acts 1: 3.) The things described in the remainder of the lesson happened on Pentecost. This word means fiftieth, the word day being understood. According to Lev. 23: 10, 15, 16 the feast called Pentecost came fifty days from the day the sheaf of first fruits was waved. The sheaf was waved on the first day of the week, and the fiftieth day was also the first day of the week. Christ was raised on the first day of the week and became our first fruits. (1 Cor. 15: 23.) If the time Christ was raised was also the day the sheaf was waved that year, then it was fifty days from the resurrection till Pentecost, and ten days from the ascension till Pentecost.

**Lesson Links.**—In a historical way this lesson connects with the twelfth in last quarter. The last section of that was on the ascension. In the first part of this lesson Luke repeats the assertion that Jesus was taken up to heaven. In both records he tells us that the apostles returned to Jerusalem after Jesus left them "and were continually in the temple, blessing God." It was during the ten days, though the exact time is not known, that Matthias was chosen to take the place of Judas. It is a reasonable presumption that it occurred soon after their return to the city; certainly nothing to indicate that it was on Pentecost. Since they had no means of knowing what day the Spirit would come, it is most likely that they attended



to the matter of selecting the apostle soon after they came back to the city so everything would be in readiness for the reception of the Spirit whenever it did come.

*Lesson Settings.*—After Jesus had shown himself to the apostles several times during the forty days after his resurrection, speaking to them "the things concerning the kingdom of God," the time came for his return to the Father. In selecting one to take the place of Judas the full number—twelve—was ready to receive the Spirit that Jesus had promised. By their continuing steadfastly in prayer in the temple court from day to day they were all in the best possible frame of mind to have such power bestowed upon them.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Holy Spirit Promised (Verses 6-9)

*When Promised.*—On the night of the last Passover he made some very definite promises to the apostles regarding the coming of the Holy Spirit. The following texts tell what he said to them: John 14: 16, 17, 26; 16: 7-16. It should be remembered that these promises were made to the apostles; no others were present at that time. He told them he would send the Spirit in accordance with his promise, but they were to remain in Jerusalem till it came. (Luke 24: 48, 49; Acts 1: 4.) It was to be the Spirit in the baptismal power and was to come "not many days hence." This was the same promise made the night before the crucifixion, repeated probably a short time before the ascension, though the exact time cannot be determined.

*The Apostles' Question.*—The first verse of our lesson says "when they were come together" they asked this question. By comparing verses 6 and 9 we see that the assembling was at the time he ascended. They asked if he would restore the kingdom at that time. This shows with unmistakable clearness that they were still expecting the restoration of their own Jewish kingdom. After all Jesus' teaching they still had in mind a temporal kingdom. Of course, they misunderstood his teaching, for he told Pilate plainly that his kingdom was not of this world. (John 18: 36.) Jesus replied: "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority." That means, as intimated in the margin, that the times and seasons are "appointed by his own authority." When God brought the time and the appointed thing for that time, they would then understand. Or they could speak with authority only as God revealed it unto them.

*"Ye Shall Receive Power."*—They were promised "power" when the Spirit came upon them. God's power or authority in verse 7 means his right or authority to appoint the things to be or be done; their power—a different Greek word being used—was to be their ability to understand God's appointments, declare them without mistake and prove by miracles that their preaching was true. Here again the promise is made to the apostles only. As a result of their having such power they were to become his witnesses. In the sense meant only the apostles could be witnesses. (Acts 1: 21, 22.)

*Ascension Declared.*—He told them the work was to begin at Jerusalem, then to Judea, Samaria and then spread to the uttermost part of the earth. As he finished these words "he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."

## II. The Promise Fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-4)

*"Were All Together."*—The words "was now come" mean that while the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled; that is, it was in the day after it had already started. Verse 15 says it was the third hour, which, according to our method of counting, was nine o'clock. Jesus promised the baptism of the Holy Spirit to the apostles; this verse shows that in the fulfillment of that promise on Pentecost only the apostles received it. The verse says "they" were all together. Since this is the first verse of the chapter, we must go to the last verse of the first chapter to find the antecedent of the pronoun "they." There the word "apostles" is found in exactly the right place to be the proper antecedent. Following the pronouns "they" and "them" to verse four we must conclude that the apostles only were the ones who received the Spirit. The assembling to select Matthias, when one hundred and twenty were present, was undoubtedly before this, a different time, for he had already been selected and was ready with the rest to be filled with the Spirit.

*What Seen and Heard.*—Suddenly a sound like a mighty wind filled the house where they were. This was not the baptism of the Spirit, but a miraculous display that was probably designed to prepare their minds to consider the greater display just about to be made. There were also fiery-appearing tongues that sat upon them. It is not absolutely certain just what is meant by tongues "parting asunder." The King James Version says "cloven tongues," which appears to indicate that the tongues themselves were forked. The Revised Version says "parting asunder," putting in the margin, "parting among them." This means that the tongues were distributed, one sitting upon each, but nothing indicated about them being forked. But whatever the thought of the words it is clear that a tongue upon each shows that all received the same power. This is doubtless the lesson indicated.

*Filled with the Spirit.*—Since the apostles were to be baptized with the Spirit and were "filled" with it, then the filling with the Spirit was the baptism with the Spirit. This language can only mean that their minds were completely under the influence of the Spirit—they were directed by it. That, moreover, is just what Jesus promised them it would do for them. Hence, the baptism of the Spirit was a mental and miraculous endowment, not a moral one. It was not to save the apostles, but to qualify them for their work. The Spirit gave them power to speak "with other tongues." That meant tongues other than their own (verses 7, 8), but real languages that were spoken by the people then in their audience. Such tongue-speaking never occurs now; missionaries in foreign lands always have to learn the languages. This is final proof that no one now receives the same power the apostles did then; hence, no one is now baptized with the Spirit as they were.

## III. Those Who Heard the Preaching (Verses 5-11)

*"Devout Men."*—Pentecost was one of the three great annual feasts that brought the male Jews from other countries to Jerusalem. At this Pentecost there were "Jews, devout men," from every nation. Since the gospel was to be first spoken to the Jews (Acts 3: 26; 13: 46), and to begin in Jerusalem (Luke 24: 47), the apostles were at the right place and the right people present. It should not be overlooked that they were Jews and devout men. They were at Jerusalem



at that time to engage in worship to God. The first converts to Christianity then were religious people. It was simply a case of accepting a new religion, because the one they had before had been set aside.

*"In His Own Language."*—The remarkable thing of hearing Galileans speak in other tongues created excitement, and quickly caused a multitude to gather about the apostles. They were confounded because each heard them in his own language. There were fifteen different kinds of people present. It is not stated in just what way this remarkable miracle was done, but when each heard in the language he had spoken all his life, there could be no question about it being miraculous. The "proselytes" who heard were Gentiles who had been adopted into the Jewish nation—legally Jews. No pure Gentiles were admitted into the church till the conversion of Cornelius a few years later.

#### IV. Peter Declares the Promise Fulfilled (Verses 32-36)

*Christ Exalted.*—The amazed people wondered what it all meant, and some charged the apostles with being drunk. Peter quoted Joel to show what was happening; quoted the prediction of David that one was to be raised to sit on his throne, and declared that David's words applied to Christ. He then said God had raised Jesus and they were witnesses to the truth of that fact. He then assured them that Jesus had been exalted and was then at the right hand of God. Nothing but an erroneous theory could make anyone understand from these words that Jesus was not then sitting on David's throne.

*"Poured Forth This."*—Jesus told the apostles that he would send them the Spirit (John 16: 7); Peter now says that Jesus had that privilege from the Father and had poured forth this "which ye see and hear." This assured them that what they saw and heard not only fulfilled a prophecy from Joel, but also one from Jesus himself. He then reminded them that David could not have referred to himself at being at God's right hand, for he had not been raised. But Jesus had, and was there, and would remain there, till his enemies were made the footstool of his feet.

*The Conclusion.*—Peter concludes his argument by saying that Jesus had been made both Lord and Christ—Ruler and Anointed One. This is another way of saying King and Priest. Moreover, that exalting Jesus was after he had been crucified, raised, and taken to heaven.

#### V. The "Gift" of the Spirit Promised (Verses 37, 38)

*Conditions Expressed.*—Peter's reasoning and conclusion reached many of his hearers, for the record says they were pricked in their heart. This, connected with the fact that they immediately asked what to do, shows that they believed in Jesus as the Christ. Such a question would not have been asked if they had not believed what Peter had just said. Since they were already believers, as their question indicated, Peter did not tell them to believe. In telling them to repent and be baptized he was requiring them to do what they had not yet done. The remission of their sins, of course, was something that God must do for them; they could repent and be baptized. Obeying these commands was "unto" remission of sins. This means that these two commands were necessary to obtain remission, but

God gave it. Repentance and baptism are related to the subject just alike; if repentance is in order to obtain remission, so is baptism.

*The Gift of the Spirit.*—Whatever this "gift" may be, its reception is after both repentance and baptism. Those who receive it according to Peter's promise must first repent and be baptized. If we never understand it fully, we need not worry; for those who have remission are saved, and will be certain to have all that God intends for them. That it will not be the baptism of the Spirit is clear from the fact that the baptism of the Spirit was all over before Peter preached the sermon, and also the further consideration no one now, regardless of his claim, can speak with tongues. Paul says the fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." The fruit of a tree is what it bears. These blessings, as a gift of the Spirit, one has who obeys his commands. God had made a promise to Abraham that in his seed all nations of the earth should receive his divine blessings. This promise was now fulfilled so far as the Jews were concerned. Their descendants, as well as Gentiles, were to share these same benefits later.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. God's promises are always fulfilled at the proper time. He has often made special promises to individuals for specific purposes. Trying to make general application of such promises is just as erroneous as rejecting what is common to all.

2. To be filled with the Spirit means to have the full measure of the Spirit's influence that God intended for some particular work. The apostles were filled with the baptismal measure. Christians are filled with it when the word of God dwells in them richly. (Eph. 5: 18, 19; Col. 3: 16.) The word is the language of the Spirit.

3. Truly devout men are anxious to hear about divine things. God has put his revelation in human speech so each can hear it in his own language. This brings it to all who are interested enough to want to know what it says.

4. Christ first humbled himself, and was for that reason exalted. If we expect to share in the rewards he has secured for the world, we should imitate his example of humility.

5. When benefits are offered on specified conditions, it is a mark of unbelief to contend that we can receive them without complying with the conditions.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell the items mentioned in the introduction to the book of Acts. (Acts 1: 1-5.)

2. Describe in full the selection of Matthias. (Acts 1: 15-26.)

3. State the results that followed from the preaching. (Acts 2: 41-47.)

4. Give the points Paul makes on the work of the Spirit in influencing and directing Christians. (Rom. 8: 12-17.)



## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

*Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

**I**

On what two occasions was this promise made?  
To whom was it made?  
What question did the apostles ask?  
When were they to receive the power?

**II**

When did this event transpire?  
What is the antecedent of the pronoun "they"?  
Explain what was seen and heard.

What is meant by being "filled" with the Spirit?

**III**

Who were present to hear?  
How many nationalities of the Jews are mentioned?  
Who were the "proselytes" mentioned?

**IV**

What prophecies did Peter quote?  
What did he prove by these prophecies?  
What was his conclusion?

**V**

How was remission to be obtained?  
When was the gift of the Spirit to be received?  
What are the fruits of the Spirit?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

*Lesson II—July 12, 1936*

## WITNESSING UNDER PERSECUTION

Acts 4: 5-12; 1 Cor. 1: 21-25.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;

6 And Annas the high priest *was there*, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power, or in what name, have ye done this?

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders,

9 If we this day are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means this man is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* in him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner.

12 And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.

21 For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.

22 Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness;

24 But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"We must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5: 29.)

**TIME.**—A.D. 30 for Acts and about A.D. 56 for First Corinthians.

**PLACES.**—Jerusalem and Corinth.

**PERSONS.**—Peter, John, and Jewish Sanhedrin, Paul and the church at Corinth.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Rom. 10: 8-15.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

July 6.	M.	Witnessing Under Persecution (Acts 4: 5-12)
July 7.	T.	Faithful Witnessing (1 Cor. 1: 21-25)
July 8.	W.	Promise of Help (Luke 21: 10-19)
July 9.	T.	Proud of the Gospel (Rom. 1: 8-17)
July 10.	F.	Holding Fast (Heb. 4: 9-16)
July 11.	S.	Reward of Faithfulness (Rev. 7: 13-17)
July 12.	S.	The Triumph of Faith (Rom. 10: 8-11)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Peter and John Questioned (Verses 5-7).
  - II. Peter Replies to Their Question (Verses 8-10).
  - III. Jesus' Position and Power (Verses 11, 12).
  - IV. Christ the Power and Wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1: 21-25).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—From the words, "when the day of Pentecost was now come" (Acts 2: 1), we know that the events of our last lesson occurred on Pentecost. From the way the third chapter of Acts is introduced, it would be easy to conclude that the events of this lesson occurred immediately after the last. This, however, does not follow. Often in the Bible account of things one event is recorded in close connection with another when considerable time intervenes between them. The things described in Acts 2 probably required the entire day. This would place the present lesson on a later day. The expression (Acts 2: 47) that the Lord added to them "day by day" those that were saved indicates some little time between the lessons. Just how much time came between these lessons is not known. So far as we know it might have been anything from a few days to a few weeks.

*Lesson Links.*—Since we have no recorded events that transpired between these lessons, there is no way to make out any certain list of links between them. The brief report that Luke gave in Acts evidently mentions but a small part of the things that actually occurred. No doubt he was led by the Spirit to select for his record just such happenings as would best serve to give the extension of the kingdom. The brief statement that those that were saved were being added daily shows that the gospel was being continually preached and people were being saved. Doubtless much of this was but a common repetition of work on preceding days, and its record would have added nothing to the truth already confirmed. This lesson was probably recorded because it resulted from a remarkable miracle, a great sermon and perhaps the second greatest number of converts at one time; enough to make the total about five thousand at that time.

*Lesson Settings.*—Peter and John had healed the lame man as they were entering the temple court. This created much excitement, caused a great crowd to gather about them at Solomon's porch, and furnished the occasion for the sermon which converted so many. (Acts 4: 4.) Peter charged them with denying the Holy and Righteous One and asking for a murderer to be granted to them, and with killing the "Prince of life" whom God had raised from the dead. He further



declared that he and John were witnesses of these things. While speaking these words the "priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees" laid hands on them and put them in prison because it was eventide. Here they remained till next day when they were brought out to face their accusers and endure the persecution that awaited them, which is the matter presented in this lesson.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Peter and John Questioned (Verses 5-7)

*Rulers, Elders, and Scribes.*—This gathering was probably the Jewish Sanhedrin. It was a senate or supreme court of justice to enforce the Mosaic law in religious and civil life. It was presided over by the high priest and its membership consisted of priests, elders, and scribes. It is supposed to have had about seventy-one members. Such an august assembly naturally met to consider only matters of great importance. After the Jews became subject to the Romans the Sanhedrin lost the power of inflicting the death penalty. (John 18: 31.) Sometimes in moments of extreme excitement they forgot this limitation and turned themselves into a veritable mob. (Acts 7: 57, 58.) Being brought before this Jewish court to give account of conduct was a most serious matter. The Roman authority over the Jews doubtless saved the Christians of that day from many punishments that the Sanhedrin would have inflicted.

*Distinguished Persons.*—Luke mentions by name some who were present in that council. He says that Annas was there. He calls him the high priest. From John 18: 13 we learn that Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas, was the acting high priest at that time. Annas, however, is said to have been high priest for eleven years and was followed in the office by five of his sons and his son-in-law. This, perhaps, made him among the most noted of the high priests, and caused his counsel to be sought in serious cases. Caiaphas, the high priest, would naturally be there to preside over the deliberations. John and Alexander were doubtless men of prominence in the Jewish affairs and would be mentioned because of that fact. The "kindred of the high priest" would include all those belonging to the family from which the high priest was taken. These names were probably mentioned to show the powerful enemies that the apostles had to confront in their defense of the church.

*The Question.*—The miracle wrought in healing the lame man was evident, for he was standing in their midst. In a private conference, a little later, they admitted among themselves that a "notable miracle" had been wrought and they could not deny it. (Acts 4: 15, 16.) They did not deny that the miracle was a reality, but demanded "by what power, or in what name" the apostles had performed it. If they thought it a true miracle by the power of Jehovah, their question would be very much out of place, for they could answer it themselves. But if they thought it a matter of magic, effected by some familiar spirit, they may have wanted the apostles to tell the source of their power in order to charge them with a capital crime. Those who practiced divination by claiming to possess a familiar spirit were to be put to death. (Lev. 20: 6, 27; Deut. 18: 10-14.) If the apostles claimed any such power, they would be subject to the penalty their law prescribed. They could at least close the Jewish ears against the apostles, even if Rome would not allow them to put them to death.



## II. Peter Replies to Their Question (Verses 8-10)

*Filled with the Spirit.*—The apostles were all “filled with the Holy Spirit” on the day of Pentecost, when they were baptized with it according to Jesus’ promise. (Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 4, 5; 2: 4.) The Spirit was to abide with them (John 14: 17); hence, had been with them since it first fell on them. The expression, “filled with the Holy Spirit,” in our lesson text, means simply that the Spirit directed Peter what to say in reply to their question; or, he was under the Spirit’s influence as he spoke. Jesus had previously told them that when they were brought before governors and kings they need not be anxious about what they should speak, for they would not be speaking, but the Holy Spirit speaking in them. (Matt. 10: 18-20.) This incident was a fulfillment of what Jesus had said.

*The Good Deed.*—Peter knew they would have to admit that the lame man had been healed. His presence among them furnished the absolute proof of that. That such healing was a “good deed” would not have been questioned by anyone who knew the man. They had asked the apostles to explain by what power or in whose name this deed had been done. Peter told them that, if that was what they wanted to know, he would give them the information. The plain results required something more than ordinary human power. It must have been produced by supernatural power. If a good deed for a good purpose, it must have been by a good power. This is a legitimate proof that it was the work of God.

*“In the Name of Jesus.”*—Peter wanted not only his questioners, but all the people of Israel to know exactly how the lame man had been made whole. The credit should be given to Jesus, and this he wished all to understand; it was the essential thing for his hearers to accept. In the name of Jesus usually means by his authority or in harmony with his commands. It certainly includes this idea here. Jesus had sent the apostles to preach and had promised them the Spirit to guide and help them in the work. The healing of the man was in accord with what the Spirit directed them to say. It was actually done by the power of God, but they were authorized by Jesus to ask for that power when it was needed. He had said to them: “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14: 13.) The answer of Peter gave the proper credit to all. He was only the agent through whom the deed was performed; it was by the authority of Christ and the power was from God. This is the general truth regarding the salvation of men now.

*The Hearers Rebuked.*—In the midst of this explanation Peter put a stinging rebuke. He told them the man was healed by the authority of that same Jesus they had crucified. He drove the thought deeper into their hearts by declaring that God had raised him from the dead, thus condemning them as guilty of murder. This was a terrific blow and a kind that would either bring conviction and repentance or drive the guilty parties into deeper sin.

## III. Jesus’ Position and Power (Verses 11, 12)

*“Head of the Corner.”*—In the words of verse 11 Peter pressed their condemnation still harder by telling them that they had fulfilled one of their own prophecies by their rejection and crucifixion of Jesus. (Psalm 118: 22.) This figure is drawn from the fact that builders



might reject the most important stone to be used in the structure. In the parable of the vineyard Jesus quoted this prophecy and applied it to those rejecting him. (Matt. 21: 42-44.) In our text Peter makes the same application of it. With a slight change of figure both Peter and Paul quote Isa. 28: 16 where the coming one is referred to as "a precious corner stone." The apostles call him the "chief corner stone," and Peter again refers to him as having been "made the head of the corner." (Eph. 2: 20; 1 Pet. 2: 6, 7.) Like a builder looking for a suitable stone for a given place, they were looking for a Messiah to bring them redemption; but, because of their misconception of the nature of the kingdom, they rejected Jesus who was at that time the head of the corner in that spiritual building. By a change of figure, which Jesus himself used in the parable of the vineyard, it means that Jesus was ruling as a king at the time Peter used the words in our lesson.

*Salvation in None Other.*—Leaving the figures of cornerstone and kingdom Peter states plainly that there is salvation in none other than Jesus. Being the chief stone in the spiritual temple, and the ruler in the kingdom, he was naturally and logically the Savior. If he occupied that place, then there could be no other Savior but he. In this, Peter not only rebuked them for rejecting their true Messiah, but assured them they must reverse their decision and accept that Messiah or be lost. He did not mince words when declaring the terms by which they might be saved. He repeated the thought with emphasis by saying there is not any other name under heaven "wherein we must be saved." The hearers evidently were amazed at the apostle's words, but could not refute what he said; hence, they charged them to cease preaching in Jesus' name, threatened them and allowed them to depart. (Verses 13, 18, 21.)

#### IV. Christ the Power and Wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1: 21-25)

*World Knew Not God.*—The heavens and material things "declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19: 1), reveal divine power, but wise men of the world had not, with all the wisdom they had from these things, been able to fully comprehend God. It required a revelation to really declare his attributes; hence, the necessity of saving the world through preaching. To worldly-wise men the preaching seemed foolishness, and perhaps was so asserted by those depending on human wisdom, but it was in fact the wisdom of God. But even the wisdom of God preached will not save unless believed.

*Signs and Wisdom.*—Paul says the Jews asked for signs, some miraculous display. Jesus had performed many miracles, but they probably wanted some heavenly display (Mark 8: 11) to confirm his claims and prove him to be the temporal Savior they were expecting. The Greeks were seeking for philosophy similar to what they had been receiving from the wise men. These demands were the natural outgrowth of the systems accepted by Jews and Greeks. In contrast with this the apostles preached a crucified Christ. This seemed preposterous to both peoples. The former expected an earthly king; the latter depended upon human philosophy. Such preaching was a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles. To those who accepted the gospel call Christ was received as the power and wisdom of God.

*"Wiser Than Men."*—The preaching of "Christ crucified"—considered foolishness by men—was wiser than the best philosophy taught

in the Grecian schools. The noblest efforts in human wisdom gave no certain satisfaction regarding the origin, duty, and destiny of man. The wisdom that is from above is pure, peaceable, full of mercy and good works, without variance or hypocrisy. (James 3: 17.) It alone satisfies the cravings of human souls.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Known results must be accounted for by adequate causes. The origin of man is a self-evident fact. The Bible account of his creation is the only method of accounting for his origin that is at all satisfactory. Accepting Christ as divine is necessary if his life and teachings are to be explained.

2. The apostles were under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, taught the exact truth. If we believe and practice just what they taught, we will be led by the Spirit. The apostles were directed by the miraculous influence of the Spirit; we by the Spirit's language in God's word.

3. The apostles allowed no compromise between the teachings of Jesus and the doctrines and commandments of men. Since there is no Savior but he, there is no way to be saved except through obedience to his commands.

4. Science and philosophy may combine to show that there is system in the universe, necessitating a Creator, but only a divine revelation can show how man can be saved.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe in full the healing of the lame man. (Acts 3: 1-10.)  
2. Give the main features in the address that Peter made to the crowd that was on Solomon's porch. (Acts 3: 11-21.)

3. Give the quotation that Peter took from the Old Testament, and point out the application he made of it. (Deut. 18: 15-19; Acts 3: 22-26.)

4. Explain the method Paul said he used in preaching the gospel of Christ. (1 Cor. 2: 1-8.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

Describe the gathering mentioned.  
What limit had been placed on the Jewish court?  
What distinguished persons are mentioned?  
What was the situation regarding Annas and Caiaphas?  
What questions did they ask?  
What was the Jewish law regarding "familiar spirits"?

#### II

What is meant here by "filled with the Spirit"?

What promise had Jesus made the apostles?  
What did Peter call the healing?  
What is meant by "in the name of Jesus"?  
How did Peter further rebuke them?

#### III

What prophecy did Peter quote?  
What other prophecy quoted by Peter and Paul?  
What did Peter declare about salvation?  
How did the matter result?

#### IV

What had wise men failed to learn?  
What did Jews and Greeks seek?  
Why is preaching Christ wiser than philosophy?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.

Note: Have you assigned the topics for next Sunday?



## Lesson III—July 19, 1936

## SOCIAL SERVICE IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Acts 4: 32-35; 2 Cor. 8: 1-9.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34 For neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need.

1 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord,

4 Beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints:

5 And this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God.

6 Inasmuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also.

7 But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

8 I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love.

9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"He himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (Acts 20: 35.)

TIME.—For Acts about A.D. 30; for Second Corinthians A.D. 57 or 58.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Corinth.

PERSONS.—The churches at Jerusalem and Corinth, and the apostles.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 112: 5-10.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

July 13.	M.	Christian Brotherhood (Acts 4: 32-37)
July 14.	T.	The Grace of Liberality (2 Cor. 8: 1-9)
July 15.	W.	The Liberal Soul (Prov. 11: 24-28)
July 16.	T.	Mutual Helpfulness (Rom. 15: 1-7)
July 17.	F.	The Open Hand (Deut. 15: 7, 8)
July 18.	S.	The Open Heart (Col. 3: 12-17)
July 19.	S.	The Generous Man (Psalm 112: 5-10)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. "Of One Heart and Soul" (Verses 32, 33).
  - II. The Needy Provided For (Verses 34, 35).
  - III. The Liberality of Macedonia (2 Cor. 8: 1-4).
  - IV. The Corinthians Urged to Abound in Liberality (Verses 5-7).
  - V. Christ's Sacrifice an Example (Verses 8, 9).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—As already pointed out there is no way to determine just how long after Pentecost it was before the events recorded in our last lesson. Neither is there any means by which to fix the time for sections one and two of this lesson, though it probably was not very long after the time of the preceding one. The language of this lesson from Acts is general, and evidently was intended to describe a condition that lasted for some time. Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth, from which the last three sections of our lesson are taken, was written from Macedonia in the year A.D. 57.

*Lesson Links.*—After Peter and John had been threatened and dismissed by the Sanhedrin, as shown in our last lesson, they returned to their own company and reported what had been said to them. Then they all with one accord engaged in solemn prayer for courage to speak the word with boldness, and for God's providence to protect them against their enemies. They also asked that signs and wonders be wrought through Jesus. While they prayed the house was shaken and they were said to be "filled with the Holy Spirit." Evidently this means they were encouraged and sustained by the Spirit's power, for they were said to speak the word with boldness. This they continued to do for some time as our lesson text indicates, and during this period they continued in their special care of the needy among themselves. About twenty-seven years later Paul wrote to the Corinthian church urging them to liberality in helping the poor brethren in Judea, thus showing that Christian charity is applicable to the needy saints throughout the whole world.

*Lesson Settings.*—From a social standpoint the church began under very unfavorable circumstances. Being subject to the Roman empire their liberties were restricted greatly. A congregation of several thousand members began in a day. Additions rapidly swelled the number before there was any time to get adjusted in temporal matters. They had no meetinghouses, and probably would have had them destroyed or confiscated if they had. Bitter persecutions were likely to fall upon them at any time. In addition to all this they probably had a large number of the very poor. In their condition there were doubtless great numbers who had to be cared for by the church. The situation naturally led to the very practices that are made prominent in our lesson text.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. "Of One Heart and Soul" (Verses 32, 33)

*"Them That Believed."*—As the company of the saints prayed "with one accord" (Acts 4: 24), so they were of "one heart and soul" in all things pertaining to the welfare of the church. The "multitude of them" at that time contained at least five thousand, and probably soon was much more than that. In view of the known tendencies to strife and disagreement, their perfect unanimity is one of the marvelous things of history. It shows that in their new-found joys of salvation in Christ they made everything secondary to his service. Jesus had taught that the kingdom of God should be sought first (Matt. 6: 33), and they were carrying out that teaching to the letter. Doubtless they had many petty differences, but they allowed no insignificant matter to interfere with the vital problems that were before them. Paul said many years later in giving command to the



church at Corinth to be "perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1: 10). These early disciples were doing that in a practical way without any command so far as we know. Active faith in doing what God requires does not leave time for wrangling over nonessential things.

*"All Things Common."*—There is nothing here to indicate that the individual possession of property was wrong. At least some of them had some possessions or there would have been none able to give anything. But they were so deeply concerned about the salvation of men that none considered that anything he had was his own; that is, he did not consider that he must retain his own when there was real need among the brethren. Having "all things common" did not mean that they pooled their possessions and divided them equally among the members, but rather that common use was to be made of them as really needed. They proposed not to allow any suffering among the members if possible to prevent it.

*"With Great Power."*—It is true that such liberality and faithfulness to the church would have a good influence on those outside, but this is probably not what is meant by this text. To testify to the resurrection with great power no doubt means that their preaching was being confirmed by miracles and signs. The company of the disciples prayed for God to stretch out his hand to heal and that signs and wonders might be done in Jesus' name. They preached the truth with great spiritual manifestations. This fact had much to do in giving the success that attended their labor.

## II. The Needy Provided For (Verses 34, 35)

*None Lacked.*—This shows that they provided for that immense multitude and none suffered. Doubtless many who became Christians at Pentecost and soon after, that were from abroad, had to remain in Jerusalem till properly instructed how to manage church affairs. This would cause a large number to be dependent at least for a time. The situation presented a real emergency and called for the most carefully arranged plan to meet it. Any really suffering for necessities would have been charged to the church, and not only discouraged members themselves, but would have driven unbelievers away.

*Sold Possessions.*—To meet the emergency demand those who had possessions sold them, even lands and houses, and brought the prices received and laid them at the apostles' feet. This plan was both necessary and practical. It prevented lack on the one hand and unjust distribution on the other. At that early date when the whole church activities were confined to the narrow territory, and the apostles were present, it was natural to bring the gifts to them for distribution. All important and general questions were left for them to settle.

*"As Any One Had Need."*—This expression shows clearly that the distribution of goods was a temporary matter applicable to that particular occasion. It was not a *pro rata* division of goods, for the distribution was made as any one had need. Putting a community fund in the apostles' hands to be dispensed to meet the emergency needs of that special time is entirely different from an equal division of goods. It furnishes the example for many like occasions when a congregation supplies the needs of unfortunate members from a common fund under the direction of the elders. The amount that may



be required at any given time will depend upon circumstances. Acts 2: 44, 45 shows that this practice had prevailed with the Jerusalem church since Pentecost.

### III. The Liberality of Macedonia (2 Cor. 8: 1-4)

*"The Grace of God."*—The word "grace" literally means favor, but sometimes refers to the benefits or gifts that divine favor prompts one to bestow. That seems to be its import in verses 4, 6, 7, and 19. The charitable contribution which the Macedonian brethren had ready, and which Paul was urging the Corinthians to have ready, was called "this grace." It was God's favor that enabled them to make the offering; it was their own favor also that prompted them to make it. Paul wanted the Corinthian brethren to know this fact. It would show them that the Macedonians manifested their appreciation of God's favor to themselves by extending their own to the poor in Judea. This would be an encouragement to the Corinthians to follow Macedonia's example. Those who recognize themselves as recipients of God's favor will see the need of extending favor to others. Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea were Macedonian churches.

*"Their Deep Poverty."*—Paul further compliments the Macedonian churches by reference to the fact that they gave liberally in spite of their deep poverty. Their enduring much affliction through persecution, the abundance of their joy in God's service, and even their great poverty had all combined to make them abundantly liberal. If they out of their poverty could gladly send help to their more poverty-stricken brethren, why not the large and more fortunate congregation at Corinth do likewise? Those more able should be ashamed to be outstripped by those in deep poverty.

*"Beyond Their Power."*—To stimulate the Corinthian brethren Paul bore witness that those of Macedonia had not only given according to their power (ability), but even beyond their power. This, he said, they did of their own accord. They did not have to be begged, entreated, or threatened, not even commanded. They did it voluntarily. They even went further and with strong entreaty besought the apostles to allow them to have part in that gracious work. Truly a marvelous example of Christian liberality! Would that all Christians had the same spirit.

### IV. The Corinthians Urged to Abound in Liberality (Verses 5-7)

*A Further Compliment.*—The Macedonians gave voluntarily, surpassing their ability and even beyond what the apostle hoped. Knowing their condition and poverty he had no reason to expect such abundant liberality toward the poor of Judea. He was delightfully surprised at the way they responded to those in need. The reason assigned is that they first gave themselves to the Lord. This involved consecrating their means to his service. Having thus wholeheartedly given themselves to the Lord, they were ready to give themselves to Paul in assisting in the charitable work he had laid before them. All of this the apostle assured them was according to God's will.

*Complete This Grace.*—Titus had probably laid before the church at Corinth Paul's instruction for raising this offering for the poor saints as it is described in 1 Cor. 16: 1-3. Inasmuch as the Macedonian brethren had been so liberal Paul urged Titus, who had already made a beginning (probably a year before, verse 10), to complete the work. That doubtless means that Titus was to urge



them to have their offering ready by the time Paul arrived to take it to Jerusalem.

*The Corinthians Praised.*—Paul had made an earnest appeal to the Corinthians by referring them to the liberality of the Macedonians. Now he offers a direct compliment to the Corinthian church. His first letter to them points out their ability in spiritual gifts. (1 Cor. 12: 1-8.) In our text he calls attention to their abounding in faith, in utterance, in knowledge, in earnestness, and in love for the apostle. Since they abounded in these most worthy characteristics, he urges them to abound in "this grace also." The fact that they abounded in these many Christian graces was evidence that they could abound in liberality toward the needy saints in Judea.

### V. Christ's Sacrifice an Example (Verses 8, 9)

*Not a Commandment.*—After all the entreaty and encouragement given, Paul says: "I speak not by way of commandment." He meant that he had no authority over their property and no right to command them to give any specific amount, for giving was to be done voluntarily and cheerfully. There were too many reasons for free-will offerings to make it necessary to give a direct command for either the giving or the amount. But he told them he spoke as he did to prove the sincerity of their love by a reference to the abundant liberality of others; that is, he proposed to provoke them to act through the example of others. This would allow the giving to be both liberal and cheerful; if forced to give by a command, it might not be either.

*"The Grace of Our Lord."*—Paul's final appeal on the subject is a reference to the grace of Christ as manifested in his gift of himself for us. Since, as Christians, they claimed Christ as their supreme example, they should be moved to imitate him in their liberality. He was rich in all the possessions of heaven itself, yet the apostle declares that he became poor that through his poverty we might become rich. He became poor in that he "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." (Phil. 2: 7, 8.) He was rich in the possession of heaven, in the Father's glory; he became poor in being made subject to temptation and death. He did this that lost souls may be saved. The world has never had a greater example of liberal and unselfish giving.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Jesus prayed that his disciples might be one as he and the Father were one, and that this oneness might be extended to all believers. (John 17: 11, 20, 21.) Though personal and minor differences always exist, the unity of the Spirit in all that is vital can be preserved. Christians should strive to that end.

2. All good things may be perverted or wrongly used. The noble examples of those who laid possessions at the apostles' feet for distribution to the poor led Ananias and his wife to lie unto God and men about their possessions, a sin that cost their lives.

3. Those who fully appreciate the mercy and grace of God to themselves are most ready to extend favors to those less fortunate than they. The earnest desire to give beyond what one is able makes

the gift pleasing to God regardless of the amount, for "God loveth a cheerful giver."

4. It is not the task enthusiastically begun that deserves praise, but the one that is happily finished. An abundance of faith, knowledge, love, and earnestness will usually take care of other duties up to the limit of one's ability. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

5. Obedience to commandments is right, and God's commandments when cheerfully obeyed are not grievous. But the grace of God manifested in his wonderful goodness, and the satisfaction of having done good to others, should make obedience a genuine delight.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell what you know of Barnabas. (Acts 4: 36, 37; 13: 1-3; 15: 36-40.)
2. Describe a later provision made for the poor. (Acts 6: 1-6.)
3. Give John's discussion on loving the brethren in 1 John 3: 13-18.
4. Discuss the practical application of Christian charity as revealed in the good works of Dorcas. (Acts 9: 36-43.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

What is said about unity here?  
What teaching of Jesus were they obeying?  
What is meant by "all things common"?  
What is meant by giving witness with "great power"?

#### **II**

What local condition made common distribution necessary?  
How were provisions supplied?  
By what rule were they distributed?

#### **III**

How is the word "grace" sometimes used?

What did Paul want the Corinthians to understand?  
Why did he mention the deep poverty of Macedonia?  
How did he say they gave?

#### **IV**

What other compliment did Paul pay the Macedonian brethren?  
When had the Corinthians learned of this need?  
What praise did the apostle give the Corinthians?

#### **V**

What did Paul mean by saying "not by way of commandment"?  
What final appeal did he make?  
How had he presented the same thought to the Philippians?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next Sunday?

### *Lesson IV—July 26, 1936*

## CHRISTIANITY SPREAD BY PERSECUTION

Acts 7: 59 to 8: 4; 1 Pet. 4: 12-19.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.



2 And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him.  
 3 But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison.

4 They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as though a strange thing happened unto you:

13 But inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of his glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy.

14 If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you.

15 For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters:

16 But if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name.

17 For the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God: and if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?

19 Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.*" (Rev. 2: 10.)

TIME.—A.D. 30-36 for Acts; probably A.D. 63 for First Peter.

PLACES.—Jerusalem for Acts and Babylon for First Peter.

PERSONS.—Stephen, Saul, Peter, and other leaders.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Pet. 1: 3-9.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

July 20.	M.	.....	The First Christian Martyr (Acts 7: 54 to 8: 4)
July 21.	T.	.....	Sharing Christ's Suffering (1 Pet. 4: 12-19)
July 22.	W.	.....	The Cost of Discipleship (Matt. 10: 34-42)
July 23.	T.	.....	"Our Light Affliction" (2 Cor. 4: 16-18)
July 24.	F.	.....	Triumph Through Tribulation (Rev. 2: 8-11)
July 25.	S.	.....	Security in God (Jude 17-25)
July 26.	S.	.....	The Proof of Faith (1 Pet. 1: 3-9)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. Stephen Stoned to Death (Verses 59, 60.)
  - II. The Church Scattered Abroad (Acts 8: 1-4).
  - III. The Christian Attitude Toward Sufferings (1 Pet. 4: 12-16).
  - IV. Reason for This Attitude (Verses 17-19).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

#### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—Lessons two and three of this quarter came in a reasonably short time after Pentecost, though the precise time cannot be determined. The death of Stephen, described in this lesson, was about three years later and came in A.D. 33, for Pentecost was in A.D. 30. First Peter, from which the latter part of this lesson is taken, is supposed to have been written about A.D. 63 or 64. This was probably thirty-three years after the church began, and near thirty years after our last lesson.

*Lesson Links.*—Doubtless many things transpired during the three-year interval between this and our last lesson, but Luke records only a few of them. The general distribution of goods in caring for the

poor caused him to mention two prominent cases of givers. One was Barnabas, who later became noted for his work and his association with Paul; the other story tells of Ananias and his wife Sapphira, who brought only a part of the price for which their land was sold. Because they lied about the amount they brought they were struck dead. Doubtless this was recorded because it was just the opposite from the offering made by the noble Barnabas, and was designed to show for all time that God is displeased with dishonesty. After the death of these two the apostles continued to preach, work miracles, and convert men to Christ. Opposers had them arrested and imprisoned, but they were miraculously freed. (Acts 5: 12-32.) The numbers of disciples continued to increase, and complaint was made about the treatment accorded the Grecian widows in the daily ministration. At that time seven men were appointed to look after that matter. These men were called servants. They have since been considered the first appointed of the class that are now called deacons. (Acts 6: 1-6.)

*Lesson Settings.*—From Acts 6: 7 we learn that the church prospered, and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem. Even a great company of the priests became obedient to the faith. This naturally aroused opposition and probably led to continual encounters with those who fought the church. One special encounter—that between Stephen and certain members of the synagogue of the Libertines—was recorded by Luke. They were not able to withstand the wisdom with which the Spirit enabled him to speak. They stirred up a mob, seized him and dragged him before the council, making false charges against him. He made a wonderful defense, bringing many charges against them. Stephen closed his sermon by calling them “stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart.” This was perhaps a most distasteful way of charging them with being dishonest. Telling them they were in heart similar to the Gentiles in the flesh was a very cutting rebuke. He declared they were as guilty in securing the death of Christ as their fathers who had killed the prophets that showed or predicted his coming. These stinging words so moved them that they were convulsed with rage. Luke expresses their display of anger by saying they “gnashed on him with their teeth.”

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Stephen Stoned to Death (Verses 59, 60)

*“Cast Him Out of the City.”*—Although they were acting as a mob and preparing to execute a man without any formal hearing or condemnation, they were particular to follow the law about the matter of place for it. Lev. 24: 13, 23 shows that those legally condemned to be put to death were to be taken out of the city. Their conduct in this may be understood by the fact that they thought they were condemning him for his perversion of their religion. Though they were crazed with religious anger, they did not forget the requirement to stone criminals outside the city. They supposed Jesus to be among the worst criminals and worthy of death, though they had failed to convict him or legally condemn him. Religious persecutions are the result of unholy and misdirected religious zeal. In this stoning Stephen became the first martyr of the church. A martyr is one who is put to death because of his testimony; particularly that testimony that is found in loyalty to the thing taught.



*"Calling upon the Lord."*—In the statement that Stephen was praying while they were stoning him, we have a remarkable evidence of the value of prayer. In the darkest moments, even when all men turn away from us or plan our destruction, we can turn to the Lord for help and comfort. Stephen's prayer is an unmistakable evidence that the spirit of man does not cease to exist at the death of the body; hence, the doctrine that man is unconscious between death and the resurrection is not true. The body is unconscious, to be sure; but consciousness is a characteristic of the spirit, and the spirit does not cease to be. Unless this be true, there would have been nothing for Stephen to ask the Lord to receive. There can be no question about Stephen's honesty, and he was "full of the Holy Spirit." As he could not be mistaken about it, the spirit must be something which can and does survive the death of the body.

*Prayed for Persecutors.*—The record says he kneeled down and prayed that the Lord lay not that sin to their charge. Whatever may have been the exact idea in Stephen's mind, he did not want their sin to prevent their salvation. If they had been legally condemned and executed for his murder, their own salvation might have been put in jeopardy. In this prayer he imitated his Master who prayed that those who were crucifying him might be forgiven, for they knew not what they were doing. (Luke 23: 34.) Both prayers were answered; for on Pentecost there were present those who caused the crucifixion of Jesus, and Paul was later converted. Having offered this prayer in behalf of his murderers, Stephen fell asleep—a martyr for the truth.

## II. The Church Scattered Abroad (Acts 8: 1-4)

*"Consenting unto His Death."*—Here we are first introduced to the young man Saul, who was to become the great apostle Paul, influencing the world more than any other save Jesus himself. We learn from Acts 7: 58 that those who witnessed against Stephen laid their garments at the feet of Saul. This shows that he gave his sanction to the murder of that holy man. Later as a preacher of the gospel he declared he was exceedingly mad against the saints, giving his vote against them, persecuting them into foreign cities (Acts 26: 10, 11), but also saying he verily believed he was doing God's service (Acts 26: 9; 23: 1).

*"Scattered Abroad."*—On that day the text says there arose a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem. The fury of the persecutors that killed Stephen was turned against the whole church. Thus it turned out that the events of that day were the beginning of a bitter struggle that drove the Christians out of Jerusalem. Their going showed that they preferred suffering rather than to renounce their faith in Jesus as the Messiah. Whether allowing this persecution was providential or not, it resulted in good for the church. Jesus had said that his gospel should be preached to every creature in all nations. When those Jerusalem saints were scattered abroad they went "preaching the word." Jesus had said the gospel was to be preached first in Jerusalem, then spread to Judea and then to Samaria. In their dispersion the plan mapped out by Jesus was followed exactly. For some reason, not explained by Luke, the apostles were allowed to remain. Possibly the hand of providence was in it, because it would bring the best results to the infant church.



*"Laid Waste the Church."*—As the persecution was against Christians it has been suggested that the "devout men" that buried Stephen were pious Jews, but not Christians. If that is true, then there were some Jews who did not consent to his death. Though they were not disciples, they were, like Cornelius, devout and too honorable to endorse the crime. Saul, on the contrary, was an untiring persecutor, and continued his opposition to the church. He entered homes from which he dragged men and women to prison. In course of time he even pushed his persecutions into foreign cities. As an enemy of the church there was no more relentless persecutor. While the congregation at Jerusalem was temporarily wrecked and its members scattered abroad, they did not allow persecution to kill their zeal for the gospel—they preached the word wherever they went.

### III. The Christian Attitude Toward Sufferings (1 Pet. 4: 12-16)

*"Partakers of Christ's Sufferings."*—Peter urged those to whom he wrote not to consider the fiery trials they endured as a strange thing. They were the common lot of the church then as they have ever been since. Paul told Timothy that "all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3: 12.) Persecutions have ever varied in form according to circumstances, but they have never ceased and never will, if we live as God wants us to live. When we remember Christ's sufferings and all they mean to us, we should rejoice that we can be partakers of the same. In verse 1 he urges that we arm ourselves with the same mind that Christ had in meeting sufferings. His led to his perfection and glory (Heb. 5: 8, 9; Phil 2: 7-10); ours will do the same thing (Acts 14: 22). In our text Peter declares that through sufferings we shall be able, when Christ is revealed in glory, to "rejoice with exceeding joy."

*"Suffer as a Christian."*—If we are reproached for the name of Christ, the blessing and Spirit of God will rest upon us; he will approve us, and with that the condemnation of men does not matter. If one suffers as a murderer, thief, or other evildoer, God will not give him the divine blessing; but, if he suffer as a Christian, he will. Whatever sufferings that are incident to living as God directs will bring his approval. There will be no occasion for his being ashamed; in fact, it is in that name that he can glorify God.

### IV. Reason for This Attitude (Verses 17-19)

*"At the House of God."*—This expression means the church. (1 Tim. 3: 15.) There is some difficulty in determining just what application the apostle intended these verses to have. The lesson in them, however, is clear, and a general application is probably the best view to take of them. With this interpretation, sufferings may be considered as chastisements (1 Cor. 11: 32), and looked upon as a kind of judgments, or as punishments to carry out judgments. These come to Christians here, but are of short duration; hence, to them first. The final sufferings—punishments—will come to the sinner after death, and will be eternal. If even Christians must have sufferings here, there will be no chance for the disobedient to escape them after the final judgment.

*"Scarcely Saved."*—Paul declared that it would be through "many tribulations" that we should enter into the kingdom of God. (Acts 14: 22.) If the righteous with difficulty, because of sin, tempta-



tions, and sufferings here, can be saved, where can the ungodly and sinner appear? Surely not in God's presence with his approval. Only those who suffer "according to the will of God"—that is, for righteousness' sake—will be able to meet the Lord in peace. Such humble and faithful servants of God should "commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator."

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Stephen was permitted to behold Jesus at God's right hand as encouragement to unflinchingly endure the sufferings of a cruel death. We are not granted such views, but through faith we can look unto Jesus, as the "author and perfecter of our faith," seated at God's right hand because he endured the cross and despised the shame. (Heb. 12: 1, 2.)

2. Those who are able to pray for the salvation of their persecutors will doubtless have enough patience and perseverance to be saved themselves. Nothing is likely to give us more fortitude in suffering than to commit ourselves into God's care.

3. Many seeming calamities, under the providence of God, turn out to be great blessings in disguise. The persecution which scattered the Jerusalem church sent the gospel to all the world in the course of a lifetime. Many large congregations might be a greater blessing to the world if scattered; the one might soon become many.

4. It is not the fact that sufferings come, but the attitude that Christians sustain toward them, that fixes the destiny of men. Some have died in flames rather than deny their Lord; others have allowed the most trivial circumstances to rob them of eternal life.

5. To deliberately accept a course that will inevitably lead to ruin is not to show good judgment. Christians *may* be lost; sinners *must*. Obey the gospel and commit our souls to the Lord in well-doing is the only safe thing. Not to do it is manifest folly.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell the story of Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5: 1-11.)
2. Tell the story of the imprisonment of the apostles. (Acts 5: 12-27.)
3. Describe the persecution of Paul against the church as he reported it to Agrippa. (Acts 26: 8-11.)
4. Give the reasoning of the apostle Peter in 1 Pet. 3: 13-18.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

Why did they cast him out of the city?  
Who is a martyr?  
For what did Stephen pray?  
What does his words show regarding the spirit?  
When was his prayer answered?

#### II

What is said of Saul in this passage?

What caused the Christians to flee from Jerusalem?  
What was Paul's conduct respecting the church?

#### III

What did Paul say regarding sufferings?  
To what will sufferings lead if endured?  
How should Christ's followers suffer?

#### IV

What is meant by "the house of God"?  
How do sufferings begin first at God's house?  
What is the meaning of "scarcely saved"?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next Sunday?

## Lesson V—August 2, 1936

## PHILIP'S MISSIONARY LABORS

Acts 8: 26-40.

26 But an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same is desert.

27 And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship;

28 And he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.

29 And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this,

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;  
And as a lamb before his shearer is dumb,  
So he openeth not his mouth:  
In his humiliation his judgment was taken away:  
His generation who shall declare?  
For his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other?

35 And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus.

36 And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word." (Acts 8: 4.)

**TIME.**—About A.D. 36 or 37.

**PLACES.**—Samaria and the road from Jerusalem to Gaza.

**PERSONS.**—Philip and the eunuch.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Matt. 13: 3-9.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

July	27.	M.	-----	The Gospel in Samaria (Acts 8: 5-13)
July	28.	T.	-----	Sin and Repentance (Acts 8: 14-23)
July	29.	W.	-----	Philip and the Eunuch (Acts 8: 26-40)
July	30.	T.	-----	Gentiles Follow the Gleam (Isa. 60: 1-9)
July	31.	F.	-----	Gentiles Seeking Jesus (John 12: 20-26)
August	1.	S.	-----	The Spirit of Faith (Gal. 3: 1-6)
August	2.	S.	-----	Scattering Gospel Seed (Matt. 13: 1-9)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

## Introductory Study.

I. Philip Sent to Meet the Eunuch (Verses 26-28).

II. Philip Joins the Eunuch (Verses 29-31).

III. The Prophet's Statement (Verses 32, 33).

IV. Philip Preaches Jesus (Verses 34-36).

V. The Baptism of the Eunuch (Verses 38-40).

Thoughts for Meditation.



## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—Again we find no way to fix the exact time of the lesson. The persecution described in the last lesson began with the death of Stephen, when we first hear of Saul. How long he continued to "lay waste" the church in Jerusalem before starting on his trips in other countries to persecute Christians is not known. Of those who were scattered abroad we have a detailed account of Philip's work in Samaria. The place of this account in the record shows definitely that it was after the persecution began. Because Judea was mentioned before Samaria in the record, it is possible that this work of Philip may have been anywhere from a few weeks to a year or two after the persecution began. Hence, it might have been any time between 35 and 37 A.D.

*Lesson Links.*—The period of time between the lessons, however much or little, is passed over by Luke with just a few general sentences. All we know for certain is that the persecution was continuing and the disciples were going to other places and preaching the word as they went, or as they stayed in some new location. Doubtless many things, both sad and joyful, occurred in those days filled with such momentous consequences to the church. Unquestionably we would be deeply interested in hearing them told, but the divine guidance that directed Luke's mind saw fit to leave them unrecorded. What he has told, of course, gives us all we have to know, and with that we should be satisfied. It may be a divine favor that we are not permitted to know all the horrors that come to those early saints.

*Lesson Settings.*—Our text says Philip proclaimed Christ unto them. The facts show that he was especially fitted for the task before him. He was evidently "full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6: 3), and had been with the apostles long enough to be thoroughly instructed in the truth. That he possessed miraculous power is seen in the fact the people of Samaria who heard him "saw the signs which he did." (Acts 8: 6, 7.) It is explained that he cast out evil spirits and healed the palsied and lame. This power he had received through the laying on of the apostles' hands. (Acts 8: 18.) He had no New Testament, for it was not then written, but he knew the truth, had zeal to preach it, and miraculous power to confirm it. Such was Philip the missionary, a part of whose labors make our lesson text.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Philip Sent to Meet the Eunuch (Verses 26-28)

*An Angel Spoke to Him.*—Not having any written record of the gospel of Christ, preaching had to be sustained by miracles. At that time even the preacher's movements had to be miraculously controlled sometimes. In this case an angel of the Lord directed Philip to leave Samaria. Human wisdom, doubtless, would have said for him to remain there where his labor had been so wonderfully successful, but infinite wisdom knew best and sent him to preach to one ready in heart to learn the truth. The angel did not tell him what to preach; Philip was a Christian and knew that already. He was directed so he would be sure to meet the man to be converted. Here the miracle ceased and the matter was left in the preacher's hands. Gaza was a city near the seacoast, southwest of Jerusalem, and on the way toward Egypt. The section through which the eunuch was

traveling toward Gaza was called "desert." This does not mean a waterless country, for they came to a certain water; but a sparsely settled section, because not good for agriculture.

"*A Man of Ethiopia.*"—Ethiopia refers to a country south of Egypt. The eunuch must have been a man of much prominence, for he held the very important position of being in charge of all the state treasures. This class of men often rose to positions of honor in oriental courts. The text says he was a man of "great authority." Of just what nationality he was we are not able to determine. The expression, "man of Ethiopia," apparently would imply that he was an Ethiopian by birth. However, this is not necessarily true. His going to Jerusalem to worship is a strong implication that he was a Jew. Jews were scattered among the nations of the world, and quite likely many of them had risen to places of prominence. If he were not a Jew, then the only other view that seems plausible is that he had become a proselyte to the Jewish religion, otherwise he would not have been to Jerusalem to worship.

"*Reading the Prophet.*"—The text says he was reading the prophet Isaiah. This also lends color to the supposition that he was a Jew. As this was before the writing of any of the New Testament, the only scriptures he could read would be some portion of the Old Testament. He happened to be reading the very part of the scriptures that furnished the best text for a sermon on Jesus. Divine instruction at hand and a spirit of obedience prepared the settings for one of the greatest sermons ever preached.

## II. Philip Joins the Eunuch (Verses 29-31)

*Spirit Speaks to Philip.*—It appears to have always been the plan of God to do for men what they cannot do for themselves. This was true even with apostolic preachers. Philip had been directed to go southward by the angel. The record says nothing about what purpose God had in that command. When he approaches the eunuch, the Spirit reveals that purpose by telling him to join himself to the chariot. Philip knew from this that he was expected to teach the man in the chariot. Again Philip promptly obeyed; the text says he "ran to him." The reason for this haste is not given, but we are certain it could be accounted for if we knew all the facts.

"*Understandest Thou?*"—Philip soon learned by listening that he was reading from the prophecy of Isaiah. The fact that Philip heard him shows that he was reading aloud. It is not difficult to understand why that question was asked. Philip knew the passage he was reading referred to Christ, and further knew that if the eunuch understood it, he would be a believer in Christ. If not, he would be an unconverted man. The eunuch's answer to that question would at once enable Philip to know the kind of person before him. This would show him how to proceed in giving instruction.

"*How Can I?*"—The eunuch's reply with another question was both timely and reasonable. He said: "How can I, except some one shall guide me?" Peter many years later said that even the prophets searched diligently "what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow." (1 Pet. 1: 11.) Since the prophets themselves did not understand their references to the coming Messiah, it is no wonder that the eunuch



failed to understand. This is another example of the fact that God has determined to save men by the foolishness of preaching. Two miracles brought the sinner and preacher face to face, but the sinner had to learn how to be saved by hearing the word preached. This was also true in the case of both Paul and Cornelius. (Acts 9: 6; 11: 13-15.) It is true in all cases. Philip was invited to sit with the eunuch in the chariot.

### III. The Prophet's Statement (Verses 32, 33)

*"Led as a Sheep."*—The passage that Luke quotes as being the one the eunuch was reading is Isa. 53: 7, 8. It refers to the manner of his death. He is represented as a sheep being sacrificed. As a sheep for slaughter and a lamb for shearing are dumb, so Jesus opened not his mouth; he made no defense nor offered any resistance. If Jesus had tried to evade the cross, this prophecy would have failed in fulfillment, and one of the strong arguments in favor of his being the Son of God would have been lost.

*Judgment Taken Away.*—Jesus was himself the very embodiment of both judgment and justice, yet in his condemnation and death he was denied either justice or a righteous judgment. His right to a just judgment was taken away. In this he was unmercifully humiliated. There is much disagreement as what is meant by who shall declare his generation. From the wording of the prophecy (Isa. 53: 8), it seems probable that it means no one was found to plead his cause or declare anything in his favor. That is, so far as men were concerned, he was left completely without defense. Alone and uncomplainingly he was "cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due."

### IV. Philip Preaches Jesus (Verses 34-36)

*The Eunuch's Question.*—As there was nothing in the prophecy itself to indicate who was meant, it was natural that the eunuch should ask of whom the prophet spake. Philip used the prophecy as a basis and preached unto him Jesus. Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans (verse 5), and they that believed were baptized (verse 12). He preached the same subject to the eunuch, and he was baptized. It is evident that in preaching Christ he preached not only that Jesus is the Christ, but also the commands of Jesus; for in both cases the same results followed. In fact, there was no other way for the eunuch to learn that he should be baptized except for Philip to preach it to him. His question, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" would never have been asked if he had not learned from Philip that it was a duty. With this information the sight of water suggested the question.

*"If Thou Believest."*—The reader will notice that our lesson text leaves out verse 37. It reads, "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." This verse is found in the King James Version in the text, but is placed in the margin in the Revised Version. Since we are using the revised text the verse does not appear in this lesson. The explanation of its omission from the Revised Version, briefly stated, is this: The New Testament was written originally in the Greek language; in all other languages it is a translation. For many centuries all copies of the Bible



were made by hand—copied—actually written. If this verse was really in the copy Luke wrote, then later some one making a copy accidentally left the verse out. All copies made from that would probably leave it out. If Luke did not write the verse, then there is an item in the story he did not tell. That often happens with any writer. In that case some one imagined it had been accidentally left out by a previous copyist, and he inserted it to fill out the story in full. So there are two lines of Greek manuscripts; one has the verse, the other does not. The revisers decided that there was more evidence that Luke did not write it than that he did, but not enough to condemn it as certainly not written by him; hence, they put it in the margin. They did not mean by putting it in the margin that the eunuch did not make the confession. They knew, and everybody else should know, that he did make the confession. There was no other way for Philip to know he should be baptized. The verse states the exact truth and doubtless gives precisely what occurred, though it is possible Luke may not have written it at that place. That is all the revisers meant by putting it in the margin instead of the text. No one should conclude that they were trying to change the Bible.

### V. The Baptism of the Eunuch (Verses 38-40)

*"Down into the Water."*—Commanding the chariot to stand still implies that the eunuch had a driver. It should be noted that they "came" to the water and then "went down into" it. Going down into the water was not the baptism, but necessary to get to where the baptism could be performed. Reasonable people, under such circumstances, would not go into the water unless it was necessary. The words "and he baptized him" show clearly that the baptism did occur while they were both in the water. This verse does not state exactly just what act was performed in baptism; but, since sprinkling and pouring do not require people to go down into the water, it is reasonable to conclude that neither of these acts was performed. Immersion does require going into the water, and could, therefore, be the act that was performed. Paul defines baptism as a burial and raising (Col. 2: 12), which is an immersion. So the eunuch much have been immersed, after which he came "up out of the water."

*"The Lord Caught Away Philip."*—After the baptism the Lord caught away Philip. Again the miraculous appears, but it is the preacher who was the one upon whom it was exercised. The Lord wanted him to labor in other fields. The text says he was found at Azotus and "preached the gospel to all the cities, till he came to Caesarea." The eunuch "went on his way rejoicing." Like the jailer (Acts 16: 33, 34), the eunuch rejoiced after he was baptized. This is no insignificant proof that baptism is necessary. The promptness with which he obeyed the command points in the same direction. The fact that in all the recorded cases of baptism in the New Testament they were baptized the same day or same hour of the day adds further proof to the same fact. God's book gives no examples of procrastination with his approval.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. The angel timed Philip's departure from Samaria so that he would be sure to meet the eunuch on his way home. The whole matter shows the certainty of divine foreknowledge. It also shows



that in the miracles then performed man's will power was left to act.

2. The thing Isaiah said about Jesus as a lamb was not understood till the death of Jesus made it plain. Prophecies concerning future events can be understood certainly only by their fulfillment or the statement of one supernaturally endowed. When Jesus or his apostles applied a prophecy, their explanation must be accepted as final.

3. The case is not hopeless even when all men turn away from one; the Lord may still be with him. "For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears unto their supplication." (1 Pet. 3: 12.)

4. The same thing preached, believed, and obeyed will make the obedient the same religiously. It will put them into the same church it did when the apostles did the preaching. The pure gospel cannot make anything but genuine Christians.

5. There is no better time to do anything than when a good opportunity is presented. The eunuch wanted to know what could hinder. Apparently everything was in readiness. Many virtually ask if there is any way to dodge the responsibility.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell the story of Philip's work in Samaria. (Acts 8: 4-13.)
2. Describe the visit of Peter and John to Samaria. (Acts 8: 14-24.)
3. Describe the sufferings of Christ. (1 Pet. 4: 1-6.)
4. Describe the sufferings of Paul. (2 Cor. 11: 23-28.)

## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

### *I*

Why were miracles necessary at that time?  
What did the angel tell him, and why?  
What is meant by "a man of Ethiopia"?  
What is indicated by his reading a prophet?

### *II*

What did the Spirit say to Philip?  
Why ask if he understood?  
Why did the eunuch answer as he did?

### *III*

What passage was the eunuch reading?  
What is its application?  
What is meant by judgment taken away?  
What is meant by who shall declare his generation?

### *IV*

Why was the eunuch's question a natural one?  
Why is verse 37 not in the lesson text?

### *V*

What is meant by commanding the chariot to "stand still"?  
Why go down into the water?  
What became of Philip?  
What is indicated in the time of the eunuch's rejoicing?

### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next Sunday?

## Lesson VI—August 9, 1936

## SAUL CONVERTED AND COMMISSIONED

Acts 9: 1-9, 17-19; 1 Tim. 1: 12-14.

1 But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

2 And asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

3 And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven:

4 And he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest:

6 But rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

7 And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

17 And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

18 And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized;

19 And he took food and was strengthened. And he was certain days with the disciples that were at Damascus.

12 I thank him that enabled me, *even* Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to his service;

13 Though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief;

14 And the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.*” (Acts 26: 19.)

TIME.—Probably A.D. 36 or 37.

PLACE.—Near Damascus in the road from Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus, Saul, and Ananias.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 6: 1-8.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

August 3.	M.	.....Saul Converted (Acts 9: 1-9)
August 4.	T.	.....The Convert's Commission (Acts 9: 10-19)
August 5.	W.	.....The Convert's Resolve (Phil. 3: 8-16)
August 6.	T.	.....The Convert's Story (Gal. 1: 11-17)
August 7.	F.	.....The Dying Confession (2 Tim. 4: 1-8)
August 8.	S.	.....Saved by Grace (Eph. 2: 1-10)
August 9.	S.	.....Isaiah's Vision and Commission (Isa. 6: 1-8)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. Saul's Persecution of Christ (Verses 1, 2).
  - II. The Lord Appears to Saul (Verses 3-6).
  - III. Saul in Damascus (Verses 7-9).
  - IV. Saul's Obedience (Verses 17-19).
  - V. Paul's Thankfulness for God's Grace (1 Tim. 1: 12-14).
- Thoughts for Meditation.



## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The conversion of Paul is supposed to have been about three years after the beginning of the church on Pentecost. According to the corrected chronology that would put it in the year A.D. 33. According to the old chronology, the church began in A.D. 34, which would put his conversion in A.D. 37. It was finally discovered that Jesus was born four years earlier than the common reckoning. Strictly speaking, this made his crucifixion come in the year A.D. 30, though in the thirty-fourth year of his age. It was thirty-four years from his actual birth, though thirty years from the time he was supposed to have been born. This is the explanation of the different reckoning, and why both dates are sometimes used.

*Lesson Links.*—Our last lesson was on the conversion of the eunuch. That occurred after Philip left Samaria. How long he was at Samaria before being sent to meet the eunuch we do not know, though it seems improbable that it was a very long time. His going to Samaria was occasioned by the great persecution that was waged against the church in Jerusalem. At that time we have our first mention of Saul, as one who gave his voice against the Christians. He continued his persecution for some considerable time in and about Jerusalem. He then extended his efforts to foreign cities. It was on the way to Damascus that the Lord appeared to him and stopped his mad career. First Timothy, from which our last section is taken, was written some time between A.D. 64 and 67, probably nearer the earlier date. This puts more than thirty years between the conversion of Paul and the writing of First Timothy.

*Lesson Settings.*—Paul's perfect sincerity, and his burning zeal to do what he believed to be right, made him a fit subject to be faced with unmistakable facts in proof of Christ's divinity. His madness against the church did not destroy his sense of fairness. Such men, though great sinners in fact, are more susceptible to the power of argument than those without principle. His many years of practical experience in dealing with difficulties, both in the church and out, prepared him to bring to his advice a rich knowledge of how to deal with circumstances. Added to this was his inspiration which left nothing more needed to make his instruction perfect.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Saul's Persecution of Christ (Verses 1, 2)

*"Threatening and Slaughter."*—In Acts 8: 3 Luke says that "Saul laid waste the church." After digressing to relate the work in Samaria and the eunuch's conversion, Luke says that Saul was "yet" breathing threatening and slaughter. That means he had kept it up during the time Philip had worked in Samaria. Probably the time was about one year. "Breathing" threatening and slaughter is a very emphatic expression, and indicates the persistence and determination with which he pursued his purpose. Like violent exertion that makes one pant, threatening and slaughter was represented as being breathed from his nostrils; or, he was so wholly given to persecuting the saints that his efforts brought physical exhaustion. He was, of course, the most terrifying enemy of the church in that day.

*"Letters to Damascus."*—His unbounded zeal was not satisfied in striking terror to the hearts of the Jerusalem saints; he carried his persecution to other cities. He obtained letters of authority to the



synagogues in Damascus. The high priest, because of his position in the Sanhedrin, had a kind of universal authority over all synagogues. The letter he carried was probably issued by the high priest, but was really from the Sanhedrin. Damascus was a city of perhaps 150,000 people, situated about 140 miles northeast of Jerusalem. As this letter was to Jewish synagogues, it applied only to Jewish Christians; in fact, the gospel had not been taken to the Gentiles at that time.

*"Of the Way."*—The expression referred to Christianity. Even though the church had been established only a short time, a few thousand converts, and continued opposition from enemies, had served to make them well known. "The Way" became a common designation for the disciples, as is seen from the following texts: Acts 19: 9, 23; 22: 4; 24: 14, 22. No mercy was shown to either sex, both men and women being brought bound to Jerusalem to be punished. Perhaps one of Paul's greatest regrets throughout his Christian life was the fact of his dragging men and women to prison and punishment for their faithfulness to the Master. He doubtless in his own imprisonments lived over again in memory those times in which he was persecutor.

## II. The Lord Appears to Saul (Verses 3-6)

*"Nigh unto Damascus."*—As the journey was probably made on foot, it would require several days. It was nearly ended when the Lord halted him by one of the most remarkable events that ever transpired in this world. It is not unreasonable to suppose that Paul's madness against the church had increased, if such were possible, as he neared the city. It was a fitting time for the Lord to providentially bring to an end such a persecution against his people. Our text says that a light from heaven suddenly shown around him. In Acts 22: 6 it is called a "great light," and is said to have appeared about "noon." In Acts 26: 13 the light is said to have been "above the brightness of the sun." Such a light must of necessity have been miraculous. Doubtless these statements are made just to show that it could not have been only an ordinary light of the sun. The miraculous nature of the light is further shown in the fact that Paul was smitten blind with it while his companions were not.

*"Heard a Voice."*—Our lesson text is taken from Luke's record of Paul's conversion; Paul's own report is found in Acts 22: 3-21; 26: 1-23. All the accounts mention the fact that he fell to the ground, while Acts 26: 14 shows that all the company fell to the ground. After Paul had been struck down he heard a voice. It was Jesus who was asking Paul why he persecuted him. In Acts 22: 9 it is said that those with him saw the light, "but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me." This language appears on the surface to conflict with verse 4 of our text. The explanation is in fact that the word "hear" is not used in the same sense in both verses. In our lesson it means that they heard the speaking, while in the other passage it means that they did not understand what was said. The word hear is often used in that sense, as when a man in the back of the audience interrupts the speaker by calling out, "I don't hear you." Jesus answered with the unmistakable words, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

*"Must Do."*—In answer to Paul's question Jesus said for him to arise and enter the city, and it should be told him what he "must do."



Two things in this answer are remarkable: One is that Jesus did not tell him the commands he must obey, but only sent him to the city where a man would give him that information. This shows that since Jesus had given the apostles authority to speak in his name, and they began that work on Pentecost, all men must learn from them, directly or indirectly, what to do to be saved. Even Paul was no exception in this. The other remarkable fact is that he was to be told what he *must* do. Since Ananias told him to be baptized (Acts 22: 16), then baptism is a thing men *must* do to have their sins "washed away." It was Jesus who said "must do," and Ananias, whom he sent to give the instruction, that said he baptized.

### III. Saul in Damascus (Verses 7-9)

*"Stood Speechless."*—There is here another apparent conflict in the records. In Paul's own speech before Agrippa (Acts 26: 14) he says those with him fell to the earth. Here he says they "stood" speechless. If these two expressions referred to the same moment of time, then a contradiction would be evident. But this is an unnecessary conclusion. Nothing would have been more natural than for them to have fallen to the earth on the sudden appearance of the light and, after the first shock, arise and stand watching and listening. After regaining their composure, they stood hearing the speaking that was going on between Jesus and Paul, but they did not see anyone.

*"Led Him by the Hand."*—Paul also arose from the earth. When he opened his eyes, he saw nothing; his sight was gone. His companions led him by the hand and brought him to the city. In this circumstance, as already mentioned, we have the evidence of a miraculous event. Paul could open his eyes, but he was blind. His companions could still see. If it had been only a common natural light of the sun, however intense, it would have affected the eyes of the others as well. There could have been no mistake about his blindness, for it continued for three days. During this time, while he waited for God's servant to come, he did not eat or drink. His anxiety and deep anguish probably took away all desire for food. He was far more concerned about the salvation of his soul than for the comfort of his body. So should all men be.

### IV. Saul's Obedience (Verses 17-19)

*"Brother Saul."*—Ananias objected strongly when the Lord appeared to him and told him to enter the city and instruct Saul. (Verses 10-16.) Naturally he felt that Saul, who had terrified the saints in Jerusalem, had come to Damascus to bind those who were Christ's disciples there. But being assured that Saul was to become a preacher of the gospel, he promptly entered the house to carry out the Lord's command. It was not necessary for Ananias to be told what commands to give Saul; being a Christian he would know what he needed as soon as he found him. Doubtless all that was said is not recorded, but only just those facts that are necessary to bring out the full truth. Ananias laid his hands on him and called him "Brother Saul." From this expression some decide that Saul was already a Christian, but they are mistaken for two reasons: First, such reasoners say that one is saved by being filled with the Spirit. Our text shows that Saul had not been filled with the Spirit

when Ananias called him "Brother." Second, Ananias told him to be baptized and "wash away thy sins." (Acts 22: 16.) Ananias and Saul were both Jews; hence, his brother in the national sense, but not in the Christian.

*"Filled with the Holy Spirit."*—Ananias told Saul he had been sent to him that he might receive his sight and be "filled with the Holy Spirit." He laid his hands upon Saul and scales fell from his eyes and he received sight. It is also said that he was "filled with the Holy Spirit." The text shows one thing as certainly a fact: Saul was not filled with the Spirit till after Ananias laid his hands upon him. It is not said that he was filled with it immediately after; in fact, it does not say when it was. But Saul was to be an apostle and, of course, received the same measure of the Spirit as the other apostles—he was baptized with it. The baptism of the Spirit received by the others was after they had long been Jesus' personal disciples, and was not for their salvation. Then we should conclude that Paul was filled with the Spirit after his baptism, and that it was not for his salvation.

*"Was Baptized."*—The simple statement here is that "he arose and was baptized." Acts 22: 16 shows that his baptism was for the remission of sins. In that matter Saul himself reports the words of Ananias.

#### V. Paul's Thankfulness for God's Grace (1 Tim. 1: 12-14)

*"Enabled Me."*—Paul expresses his deep thanks for the fact that the Lord had counted that he would be faithful, and had therefore appointed him to his service. If this had not been the Lord's estimate of Paul, he never would have given him the great work of bearing his "name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9: 15.) Paul was doubtless especially thankful because before he had been a blasphemer and a persecutor and very injurious to the Lord's people. From the bitterest enemy to perhaps the greatest defender of the church was enough to make anyone profoundly grateful. But Paul acknowledges that such a blessing could not have been his except for the fact that he did it "ignorantly in unbelief." His ignorance and prejudice made him blindly mad against the church, but there was no hypocrisy in his nature. He does not say that his ignorance excused evil conduct, for in verse 15 he accounts himself as having been chief of sinners.

*The Abounding Grace.*—Paul declares here that God's grace "abounded exceedingly"—literally the meaning is a superabundance of grace. He evidently wanted us to understand that it really required an abundance of grace to pardon a sinner like himself. Such brought him to the full enjoyment of a life of faith and love. The words "enabled me" (verse 12) means that God endowed him with miraculous power to accomplish the work to which he appointed him. The Greek word means to endue or clothe with power. It was the same promise made to the other apostles by Jesus before he left them. (Luke 24: 49.)

#### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Those with false doctrines are usually persistent in propagating them. They are generally very zealous missionaries. Too often those who have the truth are content to depend upon the truth alone. The best seed cannot produce unless planted. Why not sow it?



2. All in Paul's company heard the voice speaking, but only he understood what was said. Millions today hear preaching, but very few understand what God teaches. Only understood truth can save.

3. Paul, while blind, had to be led by others. Those spiritually blind have to be led by those who know the truth; for, "If the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit." (Matt. 15: 14.) Men physically blind know they must be led; spiritually blind should know it.

4. Ananias was sent to Saul in order that he might be filled with the Spirit, yet it was only God who could do that work. What Ananias and Saul could do was necessary to it. So in remission of sins. The sinner must believe, repent, and be baptized—all three are necessary to obtain remission—but the remission itself is what God does for us.

5. God's grace is sufficient to save all sinners who will obey his commandments, but none others. He will take vengeance on those who obey not the gospel.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell the story of the Lord's conversation with Ananias. (Acts 9: 10-16.)
2. Give Paul's own explanation about his call to the apostleship. (Gal. 1: 11-18.)
3. Repeat his teaching on the necessity of preaching the gospel in its purity. (Gal. 1: 6-10.)
4. Give Paul's description of himself and his work. (2 Cor. 22-28.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

Why say "yet" breathing threatening and slaughter?  
Why get letters to synagogues?  
Describe Damascus.  
How is the expression "the Way" used here?

#### **II**

What different things are said about the light?  
What shows clearly that it was a miracle?  
How explain the statement about hearing the voice?

How did Jesus answer Saul's question?  
What bearing does his answer have on baptism?

#### **III**

How explain the statements about standing and falling down?  
Why did Saul neither eat nor drink?

#### **IV**

How did Ananias address Saul?  
In what sense a "brother"?  
Why was Ananias sent to him?  
When was Saul filled with the Spirit?

#### **V**

For what did Saul thank God?  
Why did he obtain mercy?  
What is meant by the word "enabled"?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next Sunday?

## Lesson VII—August 16, 1936

## SOWING AND REAPING

Gal. 6: 1-10.

1 Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor.

5 For each man shall bear his own burden.

6 But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.

9 And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."* (Gal. 6: 7.)

TIME.—About A.D. 57 or 58.

PLACE.—Paul was probably in Corinth when he wrote the Galatian letter to the Christians in Galatia.

PERSONS.—Paul and Galatian Christians.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Gal. 5: 16-24.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

August 10.	M.	Sowing and Reaping (Gal. 6: 1-10)
August 11.	T.	The Enemy Sows Tares (Matt. 13: 24-30)
August 12.	W.	Sowing Good Seed (Eccles. 11: 1-8)
August 13.	T.	Social Responsibility (Rom. 14: 13-23)
August 14.	F.	Harvest of Debauchery (1 Kings 20: 13-21)
August 15.	S.	Harvest of Joy (Psalm 126)
August 16.	S.	Fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 16-24)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Restoring the Erring Person (Verse 1).
- II. The Duty of Burden Bearing (Verses 2-4).
- III. Christians to Meet Their Own Responsibility (Verses 5, 6).
- IV. Reaping According to What Is Sown (Verses 7, 8).
- V. Doing Good to Others (Verses 9, 10).

Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The Galatian letter was probably written in Corinth when Paul was there on his second visit. The date is supposed to be about A.D. 57. As the conversion of Saul, which was the main feature of the last lesson, was in A.D. 33, there was a period of about twenty-four years between the lessons. However the last section of



our last lesson, taken from First Timothy, was written about seven years after the Galatian letter. So this lesson, in point of time, comes between the two passages of scripture used in our last lesson.

*Lesson Links.*—The "links" between the main part of the last lesson, the conversion of Saul, and this would include all of Paul's work till his second visit to Corinth on his third missionary journey. This would include his three-year stay in Arabia after his conversion; his return to Jerusalem for a fifteen-day visit; an indefinite stay in his home town Tarsus; his first stay with Barnabas in Antioch; his first missionary tour in company with Barnabas; his visit to Jerusalem for the counsel about circumcision; his second journey in company with Silas; the establishment of the congregation in Corinth, when he stayed eighteen months; his return to Antioch; his third journey, when he remained two years and three months at Ephesus. After his stay there, he returned to Corinth, going by way of Macedonia. It was on this second stay in Corinth that the words of our lesson were written.

*Lesson Settings.*—From Acts 16: 6 it is clear that Paul and Silas went through the region of Galatia on the second missionary tour. On the third tour he went through the same region "establishing all the disciples." (Acts 18: 23.) This indicates that he had established some congregations when he was there first. After he left them some Judaizing teachers must have so disturbed the peace of the churches in that region that caused the rebuke which he gave them in Gal. 1: 6-10. The leading idea in this epistle is the gospel as God's power to save and the abrogation of the old law. He points out the difference between walking by the flesh and the spirit. Our lesson text is a fitting conclusion for his matchless argument by showing that each will reap a reward in strict harmony with the seed he sows.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Restoring the Erring Person (Verse 1)

*"Be Overtaken."*—Overlooking the division into chapters this verse is in strict contrast with the last verse of the preceding chapter where Paul says we should not become vainglorious, provoking or envying one another. Two meanings have been suggested for the expression, "overtaken in any trespass," either of which is in accord with the general teaching of the Bible. The Greek word for "overtaken" may be used in the sense of being unexpectedly overtaken. That would mean that we should tenderly restore, if possible, those who have been trapped or taken in sin without being aware of its danger. That evidently would be the proper thing to do in such cases, but it is just as evident that the spiritual should restore those sinners who are not taken by it unexpectedly. The word "even" in the Revised Version seems to imply the idea that, if a man be overtaken in the very act for which no mitigating circumstance can be offered, still we should make efforts to restore him. That is a thing we might not try to do if the trespass was too grievous. While all sinners should be restored, if possible, the latter view expressed seems the more probable as the meaning here.

*"A Spirit of Gentleness."*—This exhortation to restore the offender is given to those who "are spiritual." This would at least mean that those who attempt to correct the mistakes of others should not themselves be guilty of the same things. Nothing could be more palpably



absurd than a drunkard trying to reform another drunkard. First of all remove the "beam out of thine own eye" should be put into actual practice. The "spiritual" are those who walk according to the Spirit's teaching. This effort at restoration must be done in the "spirit of gentleness." The shame and disgrace of being overtaken in a sin, and the humiliation it brings, are stings that are hard enough without harsh rebukes. Our sense of the fitness of things requires that sad news should be spoken tenderly, and the most painful wounds should be made with extreme care.

*"Looking to Thyself."*—Efforts to reform sinners is an extremely delicate task. It should be done with as little pain to the sinner as possible, consistent with genuine results, but with due protection to the one making the effort. Since no one is proof against sin, the efforts made to restore others should be made with full understanding of our own danger of sin. A full consideration of this danger will be the surest protection for the "spiritual," and assure the best results with the one in the trespass. Spirituality does not exempt one from temptation; our Lord was tempted of the devil, a proof that no one is exempt.

## II. The Duty of Burden Bearing (Verses 2-4)

*"One Another's Burdens."*—When physically considered this is a duty usually recognized. When one is falling under a weight some other one wants to lend a hand to prevent it. There is far more reason for the application of this in spiritual relationships. Many human weaknesses or tendencies to faults are much greater burdens than any material weight that may be bearing us down. We can help to bear these with a true sympathy, and gentle efforts to aid one in overcoming them. The apostle also tells us that in so doing we will "fulfil the law of Christ." The law referred to is that which he mentions in 5: 14 of this letter. There he says the whole law is fulfilled in this: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." That law is carried out in applying the Golden Rule of doing unto others as we would have them do unto us. This is the motive that produces true sympathy and leads to the desire to help others bear their burdens.

*"He Deceiveth Himself."*—Paul here reminds us that there is great danger of one thinking of "himself more highly than he ought to think." (Rom. 12: 3.) If those who claim to be spiritual consider themselves so pious and understanding that they are proof against sin, they deceive themselves. Their very self-assurance is probably one of their special dangers. Thinking ourselves so safe against sin that we can harshly censure the weak and sinful brother is a delusion that is liable to do us much harm. No deception quite equals self-deception. Such people think themselves to be something when they are nothing, according to Paul's words.

*"Prove His Own Work."*—Let each one test his own actions by the example of Jesus and his words. That will show whether he is fulfilling the law of Christ to love his neighbor as himself, or is vainglorious and seeking for personal honor. If he finds his conduct approved by that standard, then he can rejoice because of his own deeds, and not because he is as good or better than his neighbor. Paul told the Corinthian brethren that those who measured themselves by themselves, or compared themselves with themselves, were



not wise. (2 Cor. 10: 12.) Comparisons with faulty standards are discreditable. Reaching such standards leaves one a sinner still.

### III. Christians to Meet Their Own Responsibility (Verses 5, 6)

*"His Own Burden."*—Physical burdens on some occasions may be completely lifted from one's shoulders; not so with moral and spiritual ones. Through encouragement and sympathy these may be greatly lightened, but not removed entirely. Certain features of these cannot be passed to others. Sufferings and sorrow must be borne, and each at the judgment must give an account of himself to God, and must receive according to the things done in the body. (Rom. 14: 13; 2 Cor. 5: 10.) It is no more necessary that we should learn how to practice the law of love in helping others than it is that we learn to meet our own personal responsibilities. An earnest endeavor to meet both of these requirements will make one a successful servant of God.

*"In All Good Things."*—From the matter of bearing burdens, our own and others, the apostle passes to the thought of the partnership we should enjoy in the service of God. The word "communicate" is used to translate a Greek word that means to have fellowship or partnership. The one who receives teaching should have a participation with the teacher in some way. The general application that is here accepted by commentators is that the word "communicate" means for those taught to contribute to the support of the teacher. Of course fellowship is applicable to anything in which there is a common sharing of responsibilities and benefits. But the language of this verse seems clearly to indicate that it should be limited to the giving of material support to those who teach. The same Greek word is used in Rom. 12: 13, where we have this expression, "communicating to the necessities of the saints," and in Phil. 4: 15, where it is translated "fellowship," and is applied to the "matter of giving and receiving." The words, "in all good things," may include a partnership in more than the support in money, but that must be in it if we are to enjoy this fellowship in all good things.

### IV. Reaping According to What Is Sown (Verses 7, 8)

*"Be Not Deceived."*—Perhaps the apostle in this expression warns against one deceiving himself, as mentioned in verse 3. This he could easily do in not understanding his duty in burden bearing. But the thought will apply as well to being deceived by others. One should be constantly on his guard against this. False teachers and hypocrites are probably more numerous now than then. Saying God is not mocked means he cannot be deceived. This shows that, while we might deceive the brethren in both teaching and practice, we cannot deceive God in either. He knows the motives of the heart and the sincerity or hypocrisy of the acts.

*"Whatsoever."*—Paul stresses his warning by reference to a well-known law of nature, namely, that seed bears after its kind. This means that one will reap a harvest of like kind with the seed he sows. This is unfailing in the realm of nature. If seed grows at all, the results always harmonize with this law. When final results are considered, this law will be found just as unfailing in the moral and spiritual world.

*Flesh and Spirit.*—The apostle makes the application of his reasoning to both flesh and Spirit. It has been suggested that by *flesh* and *Spirit* he may mean Judaism and Christianity. But the general application of the illustration of sowing and reaping seems more in harmony with the whole passage. Whatever special application may be made of the language, it is certain that it applies to each one individually. In a temporal sense we know it is true, for those who indulge their animal appetites without restraint will destroy even the physical body. Corrupting the mind and morals will have equally disastrous results. Sowing to the Spirit will lead to eternal life. This text is a strong warning against evil, but it is even more comforting to the righteous. Drought or storm may destroy any seed sown in the soil, but no misfortune can rob one of eternal life, if he governs his life by the Spirit's teaching.

### V. Doing Good to Others (Verses 9, 10)

*"Weary in Well-doing."*—The reaper in natural harvests grows weary with labor in well-doing, but the Christian should never become weary in sowing and reaping in the things pertaining to the work of the Lord. One may reach the limit of what he can do, or be disappointed that he is not able to do more, but he should not become tired in religious service. He never will unless he loses interest in the Lord and the salvation of souls. The reason the sower plants the seed and patiently waits is that he knows the harvest will come in its appointed time. This is just the view to take of spiritual reaping—it will be "in due season." In the Lord's own time—the proper time—faithful servants will be duly rewarded for their labors. We do not know just when that will be, but we are assured that God's promises will not fail.

*"Work That Which Is Good."*—It is always best to do good work of whatever kind it may be. Since the harvest is sure, regardless of whether the work be good or bad, it is highly important that we make it good, if we want a blessing instead of punishment. This good work is to be toward all men, especially toward the household of faith. Naturally, if one is not able to assist all, he would elect to help members of the church rather than outsiders, all other things being equal. This, the apostle says, we should do "as we have opportunity." The margin says "while" we have opportunity; that is, as long as the opportunity lasts. That means that the duty continues over the full period when opportunities are present.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. James says that if one converts a brother from error, he converts a sinner, and shall "save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins." (James 5: 20.) John says "he that doeth sin is of the devil." (1 John 3: 8.) In sinning Christians are, therefore, of the devil.

2. Paul told Timothy that "evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (2 Tim. 3: 13.) This has always been the case with evil men. Sin blinds the eyes, hardens the heart, and drives men away from God.

3. There are two sources of great joy to the people of God: One is the fact that one can serve God for himself in spite of all the difficulties and obstacles that he must meet; the other is that he



can be of much help to humanity in general and Christians in particular.

4. The devil uses schemes and devices to entrap us in sin. Since he transforms himself into an angel of light, presenting himself through his agents as ministers of righteousness, we must be always on our guard against his plans to deceive.

5. When the season for sowing comes we must sow or opportunities will be lost. It will be too late when the summer is past and the harvest is ended; the chance to sow will be gone. It will be too late to serve God when life has ended.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Repeat the parable of the sower. (Matt. 13: 1-9.)
2. Give the Savior's application of the parable. (Matt. 13: 18-23.)
3. Give the parable of the tares and Jesus' explanation. (Matt. 13: 24-30, 36-43.)
4. Give Paul's contrast between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5: 16-25.)

## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

### **I**

What two meanings can be given the words "overtaken in any trespass"?  
Which view is more probable?  
To whom is the command to restore given?  
In what spirit is it to be done?  
Why say "looking to thyself"?

### **II**

What kind of burdens can we help bear?  
Of what does Paul remind us?  
How can each one "prove his own work"?

### **III**

What kind of burdens must we bear for ourselves?  
How will our cases be settled at the judgment?  
What is meant by "communicate"?  
What law of nature does Paul refer to?

### **IV**

In what two ways may one be deceived?  
What contrast does Paul make between flesh and Spirit?

### **V**

What contrast should there be between natural and spiritual workers?  
What is meant by "in due season"?  
To whom shall Christians do good?

### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next Sunday?

*Lesson VIII—August 23, 1936*

## THE GOSPEL FOR ALL MEN

Acts 11: 5-18; Rom. 1: 15-17.

5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners: and it came even unto me:

6 Upon which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw the four-footed beasts of the earth and wild beasts and creeping things and birds of the heaven.

7 And I heard also a voice saying unto me, Rise, Peter; kill and eat.  
8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath ever entered into my mouth.

9 But a voice answered the second time out of heaven, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common.

10 And this was done thrice: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 And behold, forthwith three men stood before the house in which we were, having been sent from Cæsarea unto me.

12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, making no distinction. And these six brethren also accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house.

13 And he told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, Send to Joppa, and fetch Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house.

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning.

16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

17 If then God gave unto them the like gift as *he did* also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?

18 And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3: 16.)

**TIME.**—Probably A.D. 41.

**PLACE.**—Jerusalem.

**PERSONS.**—Peter, other apostles, and brethren.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Isa. 11: 1-5.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS.**—

August 17.	M.	.....	Peter's Vision (Acts 10: 9-16)
August 18.	T.	.....	The Gospel for All (Acts 11: 5-18)
August 19.	W.	.....	Vision of the Kingdom (Dan. 7: 9-14)
August 20.	T.	.....	No Respector of Persons (Rom. 2: 1-11)
August 21.	F.	.....	The Covenant of Grace (Rom. 11: 25-36)
August 22.	S.	.....	A Common Heritage (Eph. 1: 3-14)
August 23.	S.	.....	The Reign of Righteousness (Isa. 11: 1-5)

**LESSON OUTLINE.**—

Introductory Study.

- I. The Vision Seen by Peter (Verses 5-7).
  - II. The Vision Explained (Verses 8-10).
  - III. Peter Directed by the Spirit (Verses 11-14).
  - IV. Cornelius and His House Saved (Verses 15-18).
  - V. The Gospel Is God's Power to Save (Rom. 1: 15-17).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—This lesson is a part of the record that describes the admission of the first Gentile converts into the church. Like a number of the early events in the church's history, the exact time is not easily fixed. Different chronologists place it at different times. Some of the differences in their calculations may be accounted for by the correction in the date of Christ's birth as mentioned in last lesson. It is enough to know that it occurred probably somewhere between



A.D. 36 and 41. This will put it after the probable time of Paul's return to Jerusalem for his visit three years after his conversion.

*Lesson Links.*—Our sixth lesson dealt with Paul's conversion. From Gal. 1: 17, 18 we learn that after his conversion he spent three years in Arabia before returning to Jerusalem. Nothing is recorded of his activities during these years. Acts 9: 19-22 shows that he remained in Damascus for a time before going to Arabia, but how long we are unable to say. In verse 23 of this chapter Luke says that "when many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him." The expression "many days" covers the whole period of his stay in Arabia and time enough after his return to Damascus for the Jews to be stirred up to seek his life. Luke next records his visit to Jerusalem and a period when the churches throughout Judea and Samaria had peace. During this time Peter went through those parts, finally coming to Joppa, where he raised Dorcas from the dead. It was from Joppa that he answered the call of Cornelius to come to Caesarea to preach to the Gentiles. A brief report of their conversion is the main feature of this lesson.

*Lesson Settings.*—Jesus had said to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 16: 19.) It was Peter who preached the first sermon to the Jews on Pentecost, and it is no surprise to find him preaching the first sermon to the Gentiles. This was no accident, for Peter himself later said that God had made choice "that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." (Acts 15: 7.) Cornelius was morally among the best men, and deeply religious; he was anxious for his friends and neighbors to know the truth, and had invited them to be present to hear what the preacher would say. Surely there was never a better audience to hear, nor a better situation in which to present the gospel. This accounts for the splendid results that followed.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Vision Seen by Peter (Verses 5-7)

*"In a Trance."*—Our lesson contains a brief report of the Gentiles' conversion made to the Jewish brethren at Jerusalem by Peter himself. A more detailed report is made by Luke in the tenth chapter. Our text says that Peter was praying and was "in a trance." Luke says it was on the housetop about the sixth hour (noon), and that Peter "fell into a trance." It evidently was some kind of ecstatic state in which he became unconscious of the material things about him much as one does in a dream. He was mentally transported to see the vision as the mind sees things while one is asleep. It was probably similar to Paul's condition as described in 2 Cor. 12: 1-4, or John's being "in the Spirit" on the isle of Patmos. (Rev. 1: 10.)

*The Vision Described.*—What Peter saw had the appearance of a great sheet being let down from heaven by the four corners. It came even to the apostle. This doubtless was done that he might have no difficulty in seeing just what the sheet contained. When he carefully considered it, he saw four-footed beasts, creeping things, wild beasts, and birds of heaven. Such a description included probably all the kinds of beasts with which Peter was familiar. This would mean that in the vision he saw both clean and unclean animals. The Jewish law divided the animals into two classes—clean and unclean. (Lev. 11 and Deut. 14.) The unclean class was prohibited

as food. This law of distinction regarding animals made the vision strictly appropriate as a medium of teaching an important truth.

*"Kill and Eat."*—In chapter 10 it is said that Peter became hungry and desired to eat. It was the time of day for a meal. The situation was exactly right for the command to be given, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." This command would imply that the law making the distinction between clean and unclean animals had been set aside. If this had not been true, the command could not have been given. It was an impressive way of teaching that the Mosaic law had been abolished in all its features. This was a splendid preparation for the true application which was to be made when Peter really understood its spiritual significance.

## II. The Vision Explained (Verses 8-10)

*Peter Objects.*—Naturally Peter understood the voice to mean he should kill and eat any of the beasts he saw in the vision. To his Jewish mind there were two reasons why he should not do it. Since it had been a fixed law for centuries, observed by all Jews, that certain animals were unfit for food, he felt it entirely the wrong thing to do. Then, though he had been preaching the gospel for a few years, there is no evidence that they had any information that this law had been changed. Since it was a national matter, in the interest of cleanliness as they supposed, he felt he could not dare to violate the law. They had certainly rigidly obeyed the law or he could not have refused when such a command was given.

*"What God Hath Cleansed."*—Promptly the voice spake again and told Peter not to make common what God had cleansed. That meant that he should not continue to reject as unclean objects what God was willing to receive. Many years later Paul recorded the fact that the restrictions on unclean meats had been removed by condemning those who "abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving." (1 Tim. 4: 3.) While this restriction was abolished along with the law of which it was a part, yet that was not the special lesson intended for Peter at that time. If that had been all intended in the vision, there would have been no reason why it appeared at that time.

*Three Times.*—The text says the same thing was done three times. Perhaps this had no significance except to impress it on the apostle's mind so he would be certain to get the lesson. After this the sheet was drawn up into heaven. This prepared Peter for a decision which he was to be called upon to make in a little while.

## III. Peter Directed by the Spirit (Verses 11-14)

*The Messengers Appear.*—From Acts 10: 17 we learn that Peter was much perplexed in himself what the vision might mean. He knew what he saw, and understood perfectly what the voice said, but was perplexed at what was intended by the vision. Since the command was to violate a law centuries old, he knew there must be some special reason for it. Just what that was perplexed him. While in this state of mind the messengers from Cornelius made their appearance at the gate and made inquiry if Peter was there. The angel that appeared to Cornelius had given specific instruction where Peter could be found. (Acts 10: 5, 6.)



*The Spirit's Command.*—Peter said the Spirit bade him to go with the messengers. As Peter was still thinking on the vision this command was given. He went down and informed the men that he was the one they sought. (Acts 10: 21.) It should be noted that this direct influence of the Spirit was upon the apostle, for he needed to be convinced that he should go to the house of a Gentile. Moreover the Spirit told him to make "no distinction," or "nothing doubting," as expressed in the tenth chapter. This meant that he should not question the propriety of going to the Gentiles, treating them just as he did the Jews. This revealed to Peter the purpose God had in the vision, for he told Cornelius that God showed him he should not call "any man common or unclean." (Acts 10: 28.) Notwithstanding this, six Jewish brethren went with Peter, doubtless to be witnesses of what might transpire.

*Saved by Words.*—Peter told the brethren at Jerusalem that Cornelius rehearsed what the angel had said to him, explaining that he and his house were to be saved by the words that would be spoken to him. The angel meant, of course, that Peter would tell him what to do to be saved, and he would be saved by obeying the commands to be spoken. This is in perfect harmony with the general teaching of the New Testament. Jesus is said to be the author of eternal life to all that obey him. (Heb. 5: 8, 9.) This is the only way that God's word can save anyone. When the word is obeyed, God pardons the sinner.

#### IV. Cornelius and His House Saved (Verses 15-18)

*Spirit Fell on Them.*—Peter declares that the Holy Spirit fell on them as he began to speak. Since Peter presented in his sermon the proof of Jesus being the Christ and the demand for faith in him, it is evident that the Spirit fell on him before he became a believer in Jesus. The reception of the Spirit did not save him, for one cannot be saved without faith. Moreover, he was to be saved by Peter's words, not by the Spirit's falling upon him. The words "as on us at the beginning" mean that the Gentiles received the Spirit in a similar manner in which the apostles received it on Pentecost—it fell directly from heaven in both cases. It was not to save either the apostles or Gentiles. It miraculously qualified the apostles to preach the gospel (John 16: 13-15; Heb. 2: 3, 4); it showed them in the case of Cornelius that the Gentiles had a right to be saved (Eph. 3: 5, 6). The purposes in the two instances were entirely different. As the Gentiles spake in tongues, we know that no one now receives the same power of the Spirit that they did; hence, the case is not an example unto us. Evidently, Peter had seen nothing like it since Pentecost, for it reminded him of what John had said about the baptism of the Spirit. If such had been a usual thing, he could hardly have made such a remark. This miracle showed him that he should no longer refuse to receive Gentiles into the church.

*They Glorified God.*—We are told in the tenth chapter that Peter asked who could forbid their being baptized, since their speaking in tongues by the Spirit was evidence that God wanted them saved. Then he commanded them to be "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." (Acts 10: 47, 48.) Since they were to be saved by Peter's words, then they were saved by baptism, just as he commanded the Jews on Pentecost. (Acts 2: 38.) This information convinced the Jewish

brethren at Jerusalem, and they rejoiced because God had granted the Gentiles "repentance unto life"; that is, he had granted the Gentiles the privilege to repent and obtain spiritual life. But this was on precisely the same terms as the Jews were saved. (Acts 10: 34, 35.)

### V. The Gospel Is God's Power to Save (Rom. 1: 15-17)

*"I Am Ready."*—In Paul's statement that he was ready to preach the gospel to those in Rome to the full limit of his power, we have a practical demonstration that the gospel is for all men, which is the subject of our lesson. He says in the preceding verse that he was debtor both to Greeks and Barbarians. This meant that it was for Gentiles as well as Jews. It had to be thus, for Isaiah said that when the mountain of the Lord's house would be established, "all nations" would flow into it. (Isa. 2: 2.) Jesus had told the apostles that it should be preached to all nations. Our lesson shows the beginning of that work, and this section of the lesson presents Paul ready to take it to Rome for both Jews and Gentiles.

*"The Power of God."*—Paul declared he was not ashamed of the gospel. If he had been, probably he would have hesitated to go to the capital of the Roman Empire with it; but he was not ashamed to preach it anywhere, for he knew it was God's power to save men, and even the emperor needed salvation just as his humblest subject. Would that all gospel preachers had the courage that Paul had. If Paul was not ashamed to preach, neither should we be; and people should not be ashamed to obey it. If they are, Jesus will be ashamed of them at the judgment. (Mark 8: 38.) "Power" to save means that the gospel has within itself saving power. The sense in which God's word saves has already been explained in this lesson. The reason it saves is that it contains the truth which makes men free. (John 8: 32.) Paul calls the truth "the gospel of your salvation." (Eph. 1: 13.)

*"Live by Faith."*—The apostle says "therein," that is, in the gospel is revealed the righteousness of God. The gospel shows God's righteousness in his own acts and his justice and mercy to man. Being his power to save implies all that. It accomplishes its results "from faith unto faith." Probably this expression means that by the manifestation of one's faith another is led to believe, and thus it becomes the power to save many. This is according to a prophecy (Hab. 2: 4) that the "righteous shall live by his faith." The plain meaning here is that man will live by his faithfulness, and is so given in the margin of the prophecy.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. It is either ignorance or unbelief that makes one object when a command is given by the heavenly Father. Peter was ignorant on the matter, but when convinced obeyed without question.

2. When God's will has been spoken by inspired men, or some scriptural statement explained, there is no appeal; men of faith will render prompt obedience, or admit the truth declared.

3. Cornelius was directed by an angel how to get a preacher of the gospel; the apostle was miraculously directed by the Spirit that he might be brought to Cornelius, but the salvation of Gentiles was



effected through the hearing and obedience of the gospel. Paul says they became fellow partakers of the promise "through the gospel."

4. The Spirit fell upon Cornelius and the apostles on Pentecost in a like *manner*, but not for a like *purpose*. It brought to their mind what Jesus had said to them, and guided them into all truth. It did neither for Cornelius, but showed that he had a right to be saved.

5. Knowing God's will and being ready to do it will guarantee salvation to anyone. The gospel is God's power to save, but it cannot save the unbeliever or the disobedient. (Verse 16; 2 Thess. 1: 8.)

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell the story of Peter's stay at Joppa. (Acts 9: 32-43.)
2. Discuss the prophecy of Isaiah regarding Gentiles. (Isa. 2: 1-4.)
3. Tell what Peter later said about the salvation of Gentiles. (Acts 15: 6-11.)
4. Discuss the argument that James made on the question at the same meeting. (Acts 15: 12-21.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

What was meant by falling into a "trance"?

Describe the vision.

What distinctions did the law make on animals?

What command was given?

#### II

Why did Peter refuse to obey?

What was meant by "what God hath cleansed"?

Why was the command given three times?

#### III

What effect did the vision have on Peter?

About what was he perplexed?

What explanation did Peter give of the vision?

How did the angel say they were to be saved?

#### IV

Describe the Spirit's work on Cornelius.

What conclusion did the Jerusalem brethren reach?

#### V

What did Paul say about his preaching?

How is the gospel the "power of God" to save?

What is revealed in the gospel?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.

Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

### Lesson IX—August 30, 1936

### WORLD MISSIONS

Acts 11: 19-21; 13: 1-12.

19 They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews.

20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord.

1 Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant.

6 And when they had gone through the whole island unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus;

7 Who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding. The same called unto him Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith.

9 But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." (Mark 16: 15.)

**TIME.**—About A.D. 37.

**PLACES.**—Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch.

**PERSONS.**—Barnabas and Saul, and others.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Isa. 42: 6-10.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

August 24.	M.	-----The Lord's Commission (Matt. 28: 16-20)
August 25.	T.	-----Missionaries in Antioch (Acts 11: 19-26)
August 26.	W.	-----Paul's First Missionary Journey (Acts 13: 1-12)
August 27.	T.	-----The Holy Spirit in Missions (1 Cor. 2: 1-10)
August 28.	F.	-----Spreading the Gospel (Rom. 15: 15-21)
August 29.	S.	-----Sharing the Gospel (1 Thess. 1: 1-10)
August 30.	S.	-----A New Song in the Earth (Isa. 42: 6-13)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. General Preaching of the Gospel (Verses 19-21).
  - II. Barnabas and Saul Selected as Missionaries (Acts 13: 1-3).
  - III. Their Preaching in the Island of Cyprus (Verses 4, 5).
  - IV. Elymas the Sorcerer Rebuked (Verses 6-10).
  - V. Results of Their Labors (Verses 11, 12).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—In the first section of this lesson Luke returns to the dispersion resulting at the time of Stephen's death for his starting point. This was before Paul's conversion which was probably in A.D. 33. The work described covers the period from the dispersion till Paul came from Tarsus to Antioch to assist Barnabas, which was several years later. The work mentioned in the other sections occurred probably two years later still, possibly as late as A.D. 45. This part of the lesson gives only the starting on the missionary journey.



*Lesson Links.*—In section one the text gives the few things done in the period covered, but too briefly for any connected story of them. The work at Antioch became so important that the church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to assist in instructing and confirming them. He went to Tarsus and brought Paul to help him. They remained there a whole year, during which time the disciples were first called Christians. About that time a famine in Judea caused the church at Antioch to send help to them by Barnabas and Saul. Not very long after this Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, killed the apostle James, and imprisoned Peter, who was miraculously delivered from his hands. A little later Herod was smitten with a loathsome disease and died a horrible death. In spite of all opposition the church grew in numbers. Paul and Barnabas returned from Jerusalem after they had delivered the assistance sent to the famine sufferers.

*Lesson Settings.*—When the persecution drove the saints away from Jerusalem they went everywhere preaching the word. The Samaritans had been visited by Philip and much success attained. Others from Jerusalem had preached as recorded in section one. Peter had admitted the Gentiles into the church in Cesarea. Many Gentiles had been converted at Antioch and the congregation had several qualified workers there. Everything considered, it was the appropriate time to begin seriously the work of going into the "uttermost part of the earth." In this lesson we start with Paul in that great work for which he was especially called—an apostle to the Gentiles.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. General Preaching of the Gospel (Verses 19-21)

*Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch.*—All we know of the preachers here mentioned is that they left Jerusalem after the death of Stephen. How long they were in reaching these places is not known. Phoenicia is a long, narrow plain on the Mediterranean coast west of Galilee. It contained the towns of Tyre and Sidon. How many towns were visited in that country is not mentioned. Some preached in Cyprus, an island in the Mediterranean west of the northern end of Palestine. Others or the same ones later came to Antioch. All this work evidently was done before the conversion of Cornelius, for they preached only to the Jews. This indicates that at that time they had not heard that Gentiles were to be received into the church. This is certain when we learn that later the Antioch congregation was largely Gentile.

*"Greeks Also."*—Some came from Cyprus, we are told, who preached to the Greeks also. This must have been later than the preaching at Antioch just mentioned, for the reason already given. There was ample time for the conversion of Cornelius to become known where the gospel was being preached. In some way those in Cyprus learned that it should be preached to Gentiles before the news went to Antioch. So men from Cyprus were first to preach to Gentiles there.

*"The Hand of the Lord."*—The hand of the Lord was with them means that God's power was with them. Since we have abundant later evidence that preaching was confirmed by miracles (Heb. 2: 3, 4), we know that the hand of the Lord refers to the fact that these preachers, some at least, were able to perform miracles. It is the same as what occurred in Samaria when Philip preached. The lan-



guage here is figurative, while there it says plainly that they heard and saw the signs which he did. (Acts 8: 6.)

*The Result.*—We are told that a great number "that believed turned unto the Lord." This shows the necessity of belief and turning both. The language implies that the turning to the Lord came after they believed. In Acts 3: 19 Peter told his audience to repent and turn that their sins might be blotted out. This put the turning after repentance. In Acts 2: 38 Peter said repent and be baptized unto the remission of sins. Turning to the Lord includes baptism, and remission of sins is after that. This is applicable to both Jew and Gentile.

## II. Barnabas and Saul Selected as Missionaries (Acts 13: 1-3)

*"Prophets and Teachers."*—There were two Antiochs, but the one here mentioned was the capital of Syria, located on the Orontes River a short distance from the Mediterranean Sea. In importance it is said to have ranked next after Rome and Alexandria. The congregation had doubtless become strong numerically to have so many prophets and teachers that deserved special mention. These words represent two classes of teachers, though they might often be applied to the same person. A prophet in the ordinary sense refers to one inspired to foretell future events, but such often taught in the common acceptance of the word teacher. Some doubtless were just preachers or teachers without being able to foretell the future. The reason for so many miraculously endowed preachers or teachers in the church then was the fact that the New Testament had not been written, and the gospel had to be confirmed by signs and miracles. (Mark 16: 20.) We know little or nothing about those mentioned here except Saul and Barnabas.

*"The Holy Spirit Said."*—Since the apostles and other supernaturally endowed men were then in the church, it is no surprise to find that the Holy Spirit directed in the selection of the preachers for this first missionary journey. These men were worshiping and fasting, probably praying for guidance in carrying the gospel to all nations. To "separate" Barnabas and Saul for the work could hardly mean more than doing what was necessary in preparing them for the work. The Spirit had "called them" in the sense that it had designated them as the ones to be sent. The brethren were to do the sending.

*"Fasted and Prayed."*—People fast on serious or solemn occasions. Starting on a long journey into foreign lands to meet the trials and hardships incident to preaching the gospel would be an occasion to call for earnest prayer. It is said they laid their hands on them and sent them away. If there was any set formality as to what manner their hands were laid on them or any set form of words used, the record does not give it. Since Barnabas and Saul both had been preaching the gospel for years, the laying on of hands could not have been to set them apart to preach the gospel. Whatever the purpose was it had no reference to anything except the matter of sending them off to do in other places what they had been doing in Antioch for more than a year. It could hardly have been to impart to them spiritual gifts, for who in that congregation would likely have more of that than Paul and Barnabas? In the absence of anything in the record definite on the point to say that they informally laid their



hands on them as they bade them farewell and asked God's blessings upon them seems reasonable. Such, at least, is the natural and usual way that special friends are sent away with prayers for God's blessings to be with them.

### III. Their Preaching in the Island of Cyprus (Verses 4, 5)

*Work at Salamis.*—Luke says they were "sent forth by the Holy Spirit." This, of course, means that they were sent as the Holy Spirit directed. Their mission was by divine authority because they were selected by the Spirit and sent according to his command. They went to Seleucia, the seaport some sixteen miles from Antioch. Thence they sailed southwest to Salamis on the eastern coast of Cyprus, a distance of about fifty miles. They probably had two reasons for going there. It was the former home of Barnabas (Acts 4: 34), and there was a Jewish population. The text says they "proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews." More than one synagogue indicates a considerable Jewish element. Luke gives no hint regarding the results of their labors in Salamis. John, who was also called Mark, was with them as an attendant. Just what particular kind of assistance he rendered is not stated, though there were doubtless many things he could do that were profitable. He was related to Barnabas. (Col. 4: 10.)

### IV. Elymas the Sorcerer Rebuked (Verses 6-10)

*"Sergius Paulus."*—Cyprus is an island about 130 miles long, Paphos being on the extreme western coast. In reaching it from Salamis they traveled the full length of the main part of the island. There they found a certain Jew who was a false prophet and also practiced sorcery. He was what we would now call a magician or sleight-of-hand performer. Since the Jewish law forbade witchcraft and magic (Lev. 9: 31; Deut. 18: 9-22), we would know that Elymas was a false prophet if he engaged in such practice. Sergius Paulus was a proconsul, a ruler of a Roman province, and a man of understanding, as would be expected of one in such position. But the best thing about him was that he called Barnabas and Saul to him, and "sought to hear the word of God." Ability to understand is of little value unless one really wants to hear what God says. In this particular he was like Cornelius, who wanted "to hear all things" that had been commanded of God.

*"Withstood Them."*—For some reason not given Elymas was with the proconsul, and withstood the teaching of Barnabas and Saul. There are three reasons why he was opposed to their work. He was a Jew and would naturally be inclined to oppose anything in conflict with the law even if he was a false prophet. Their teaching was directly against such practices as he was using to make money. He would be against them because of his business. If their preaching was true, he would have to quit it or be branded as a hypocrite. In the third place, if he had any influence with the proconsul, that would all be lost, if he was converted to Christianity. Unless he was willing to reform, the success of the preaching meant much loss to him.

*"Thou Son of the Devil."*—At this time we find Saul first called Paul, the name by which he was ever afterward known. Just why the change of name is not explained. From this time Paul occupied

the leading place. The expression "filled with the Holy Spirit" means that he was acting under the direction of the Spirit. The rebuke, then, was in reality from the Spirit through Paul as the agent. With an intent gaze upon him Paul charged him with being full of guile and villany, a son of the devil and an enemy of all righteousness. Then Paul asked: "Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" The language seems rather sharp when viewed from a human viewpoint, but when we remember Paul's inspiration, we will know that to criticize his words is to criticize the Holy Spirit, for he was filled with the Spirit when he spake. Man should never reject the Spirit's words.

### V. Results of Their Labors (Verses 11, 12)

*"The Hand of the Lord."*—"The hand of the Lord is upon thee" meant that God's power would come upon him in judgment for his wickedness. A similar expression in 11: 21 refers to God's power being with his servants in confirming their words with miracles. It is evident, then, that the context must show whether the expression means favor or punishment. This was not a matter of vengeance on Paul's part, but only that Elymas might learn of his terrible wickedness in resisting the word of the Lord; it really was for his good. Paul did not ask for him to be permanently disabled, but only that he might be blind "for a season." Such sudden blindness coming at Paul's word could not fail to have a powerful effect upon Elymas. Just what the outcome in his case was we are not told. If his experience did not soften his heart and make him a believer, it probably rendered him more desperate against the truth. The truth usually either softens or hardens the heart when men are forced to consider its claims. Immediately after Paul's words he became so blind that he went about seeking some one to lead him by the hand.

*The Proconsul Believed.*—Doubtless the proconsul, being a man of understanding, was favorably impressed with Paul's preaching. The sudden manifestation of divine justice, at Paul's words, was all that was necessary to convince him that he had heard the truth. Since the word was then being confirmed by miracles, there is nothing strange about this case. It has the same effect upon our minds now, because we believe the record of it. The proconsul saw it; we have heard of it. Written testimony produces the same effect as spoken. Luke leaves us no hint regarding the future of the proconsul or the work of the Lord in the city of Paphos.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. The story in the first section of this lesson shows that the first Christians took seriously the command Jesus gave the apostles to preach the gospel to the whole creation. It also shows that even persecutions may often be turned into some blessing for the church.

2. Whatever efforts we make for the extension of the kingdom, we should never forget that all things should be done in harmony with the direction of the Holy Spirit. We may have our own way about things only when what we do does not conflict with plain Bible teaching, or violate any Bible principle.

3. Preaching often fails to produce visible results even with the best preachers. Paul converted the jailer, but failed on Felix and



Agrippa. The truth must be preached regardless of what the hearer does with it, else the preacher himself may be lost. (Gal. 1: 9, 10.)

4. Satan's purpose has always been to prevent people hearing God's word, or to get it out of their heart if they do hear it. Those who resist the teaching of that word are servants of Satan—children of the devil in that particular. Many would be horrified if they knew the real truth; namely, that they are in conduct "of the devil."

5. So far as we know God is not now visiting sudden physical calamities upon those who reject his word, but the case is nonetheless serious, for missing punishment here is no proof that we will miss it after the judgment. Torment is nonetheless terrible because it may be put off to some unknown future.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe what occurred, and what was done about it, as recorded in Acts 11: 27-30.
2. Tell of Peter's imprisonment, and give the incidents that led to it. (Acts 12: 1-10.)
3. Describe the meeting at the house of Mary. (Acts 12: 11-19.)
4. Repeat the incidents mentioned in Acts 12: 20-25.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

Locate the three places named.  
When did they begin to preach to Greeks?  
What was meant by "the hand of the Lord"?  
What is taught here and in Acts 3: 19?

#### **II**

Describe Antioch as it existed then.  
What was meant by "prophets and teachers"?  
What part did the Holy Spirit have in this matter?

Why did they fast and pray?  
What was the purpose in laying hands on them?

#### **III**

Describe their journey to Salamis.  
What reasons for their going to Cyprus?

#### **IV**

What position did Sergius Paulus have?  
Who was Elymas?  
Why was he against Paul's preaching?  
How did Paul describe him?

#### **V**

What was meant by "the hand of the Lord"?  
What happened to Elymas?  
What effect on the proconsul?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

### *Lesson X—September 6, 1936*

### TURNING TO THE GENTILES

Acts 14: 8-13, 19, 20; Rom. 10: 8-13.

8 And at Lystra there sat a certain man, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.

9 The same heard Paul speaking: who, fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole,

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked.

11 And when the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker.

13 And the priest of Jupiter whose temple was before the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the multitudes.

19 But there came Jews thither from Antioch and Iconium: and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

20 But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city: and on the morrow he went forth with Barnabas to Derbe.

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach:

9 Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame.

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him:

13 For, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 13: 47.)

**TIME.**—For Acts A.D. 47 to 48; for Romans A.D. 58.

**PLACES.**—Lystra, Derbe, Iconium, Antioch in Pisidia, and Rome.

**PERSONS.**—Paul, Barnabas, others, and Roman Christians.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Psalm 72: 6-13.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

August 31.	M.	Turning to the Gentiles (Acts 13: 44-52)
September 1.	T.	Persecution for the Gospel's Sake (Acts 14: 1-7)
September 2.	W.	The Cripple at Lystra (Acts 14: 8-20)
September 3.	T.	Perseverance in the Gospel (Acts 14: 21-28)
September 4.	F.	Justification by Faith (Rom. 9: 25-33)
September 5.	S.	The Universal Call (Rev. 22: 16, 17)
September 6.	S.	The Reign of the Righteous King (Psalm 72: 6-13)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. Healing the Crippled Man at Lystra (Verses 8-10).
  - II. Effect of the Miracle (Verses 11-13).
  - III. The Stoning of Paul (Verses 19, 20).
  - IV. The Necessity of Faith and Confession (Rom. 10: 8-10).
  - V. The Gospel Includes All Nations (Verses 11-13).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

#### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—Our lesson text from Acts records what occurred at Lystra, the place next to the last visited on that journey before they began the return trip to Antioch, whence they started. There is no general agreement as to just how long they were gone. Perhaps none estimate it less than two years. With that calculation this lesson would probably be more than a year later than the last one. If the journey continued more than two years, the time between lessons would be still more. Some place the beginning of this tour at A.D.



45 and others as late as A.D. 47. The book of Romans was written probably in A.D. 57 when Paul was in Corinth.

*Lesson Links.*—Leaving Paphos, Paul and Barnabas sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, thence north about fifty miles to Antioch in Pisidia. Here they went into the synagogue and were invited to speak. Paul rehearsed much of their history as did Stephen, who was martyred in Jerusalem. Then he showed that the promise made unto the fathers had been fulfilled in Jesus. Next he assured them that Jesus became the begotten Son of God by his resurrection from the dead, after which he gave him the sure mercies of David. This the prophet said would be the everlasting covenant. After Paul's speech the people were so interested that they besought that the preachers might teach them again next Sabbath. The next meeting stirred up such opposition that Paul and Barnabas told them they would turn to the Gentiles. This story is found in Acts 13. In Acts 14: 1-7 we have the record of their work in Iconium, and the fact that the opposers determined to stone them, which caused them to flee to Lystra, where the events of our lesson occurred.

*Lesson Settings.*—There is abundant evidence that the apostles were able to heal, and did often do so, but no evidence that they went about looking for opportunities to exercise such power just to show that they had it. The fact so clearly taught in the Bible, that miracles were to confirm the truth preached, is proof that such power was not used unless there was need to confirm the spoken word. They did not seek the afflicted or advertise for them to be brought, but simply used the power when occasion furnished the afflicted and the reason for their healing. They did not perform miracles to gratify curiosity, but to sustain the word preached. This accounts for Paul's healing the cripple who was already at the gate.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Healing the Crippled Man at Lystra (Verses 8-10)

*"Never Had Walked."*—Afflicted beggars usually seek places where people must pass them to facilitate their appeals for aid. This case was similar to the lame man healed as Peter and John were entering the temple enclosure. (Acts 3: 1-3.) Like that one this man had been a cripple from birth. The exact nature of his trouble is not stated, but it was something that rendered his feet powerless. The statement is that he had never walked. This fact, doubtless, was mentioned to show that there was no question about his cure being a miracle. Both the man himself, and his friends who had known him for years, could not be mistaken about what had occurred in his case. Luke probably recorded the miracle because it led to the attempt of the people to deify Paul and Barnabas, and the subsequent stoning of Paul.

*"Faith to Be Made Whole."*—Paul later said that faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10: 17), and the text says this man "heard Paul speaking." The only safe conclusion is that he was made a believer by hearing Paul's preaching. Paul fastened his eyes upon him—very carefully observed the man—and saw that he had faith enough to be healed. That is, Paul knew that the man's faith and the situation justified healing him for the effect it would have in confirming the truth. Possibly Paul saw from his expression that he was accepting what he was hearing. But by inspiration Paul could

have known the state of the man's mind. Although the man's faith was necessary to salvation, yet that is not the point Luke makes here. Paul knew that he believed, and therefore, it was proper to heal him. If he had disbelieved, there would have been no good reason why he should have been healed. Paul meant for God to be honored by one who received such a favor.

*The Cure.*—With a loud voice Paul commanded him to "stand upright." The loud voice doubtless was to prevent anyone misunderstanding just what was being done. God's commands, as well as obedience to them, are all perfectly clear. Nothing is mysterious or hid in the service men are required to render to God. At the command the man leaped and walked. Those who had the power and authority of God to perform miracles did not fail; the results followed at their command, or else they could not do the miracle. In this particular the real miracles of the Bible are entirely different from the pretended healing of modern times. Praying for hours, days, or weeks for results is not the way real healings were done in the apostolic day. A failure to obtain the result at once proves the pretended healer dishonest or misguided.

## II. Effect of the Miracle (Verses 11-13)

*Gods in the Likeness of Men.*—The people of Lystra were heathen and believed in a plurality of gods, and that they came down in some way to interfere in the affairs of men. They saw what Paul had done and knew it was beyond any human power. Their conclusion that their gods had come down in the form of men is not at all surprising. There was nothing else to say, as they viewed matters, unless they had learned enough truth to distinguish between heathenism and Christianity. Evidently the province of Lycaonia had a dialect of its own that differed from the Greek language.

*Jupiter and Mercury.*—Jupiter was the supreme god among the heathen, and Mercury was supposed to be the interpreter of the gods; the god of eloquence. His Greek name was *Hermes*, from which we get the word *Hermeneutics*—the science of interpretation. Probably Barnabas was physically a stronger appearing man and for that reason was supposed to be Jupiter. Paul was the chief speaker and therefore thought to be Mercury, or the interpreter to explain Jupiter's mission among them. A temple to Jupiter was there and its priest brought oxen and garlands to the gate to make an offering to Paul and Barnabas. This idolatrous exercise they could not allow to pass unrebuked. This indicates that the heathen priest must have recognized that the healing of the man was a genuine miracle, though he attributed it to the power of his gods.

## III. The Stoning of Paul (Verses 19, 20)

*"Dragged Him Out of the City."*—When Paul and Barnabas declared themselves men of like nature with the people, and urged them to turn "unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth," they were scarcely able to prevent the multitude from doing sacrifice to them. But some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and persuaded the multitudes to turn against them, and their hatred in persecution became more intense than their zeal had been to honor them. Being disappointed when their sacrifices were rejected, they were easily turned into madmen by the inveterate enemies that had felt



the sting of Paul's preaching at Antioch and Iconium. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, not leaving him till they supposed he was dead. Whether he was stunned by some lick and regained consciousness after the persecutors left him, or was miraculously preserved from death, is not known. This was the first bodily injury he received for preaching so far as we know—at least the first one recorded. Neither do we know why they did not stone Barnabas as well, unless they became more angry at Paul because he did the speaking.

*The Disciples About Him.*—Nothing is here said about how long they were at Lystra before the stoning. It is unnecessary to conclude that everything occurred in one day, though it may have. There were disciples there, for they came to Paul's body after those who stoned him had left. Of course, some may have come there from the dispersion when Stephen was stoned, or they may have come with Paul and Barnabas from Antioch and Iconium, or some may have been converted after they reached Lystra. The disciples may have also thought him dead and came to get his body for burial. We can imagine the joy they experienced when he rose up in their presence and was able to enter the city. On the morrow they left for Derbe where the journey reached its limit. After a successful stay there they retraced their steps through the same places, exhorting the disciples to continue in the faith and assuring them it would be "through many tribulations" they would enter into the kingdom of God. (Verse 22.)

#### IV. The Necessity of Faith and Confession (Rom. 10: 8-10)

*"The Word Is Nigh Thee."*—Since Christ had already been raised, the proof of his claims was before them. They did not have to ask for him to be raised again to believe him; the word or evidence was in their hearts so they could believe it and on their tongue so they could confess it. It was near them—in their grasp—not something afar off that had to be searched for. The word of faith means the word that would produce faith, for he says in verse 17 that belief or faith comes through hearing God's word. This proves that the evidence—God's word—is received in the heart, and harmonizes with John's statement that a believer hath the witness in himself. (1 John 5: 10.) That was the word which Paul said he preached. Being the power of God to save sinners, a curse rests upon anyone who will pervert it or put something else in its stead. (Gal. 1: 6-9.)

*"Thou Shalt Be Saved."*—Paul here shows that both faith and confession are necessary to salvation by saying the believer who confesses "shalt be saved." But he says the thing that must be believed is that "God raised him from the dead." Believing that Jesus as a man was born and lived in Palestine is not enough. One might believe that and reject him as the Son of God. Many do that. His being what he claimed for himself—the Son of God—and therefore the Savior of men depends upon the fact that he was raised from the dead. He said he would be raised the third day; if he failed, he was a false prophet. Paul said the prediction, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," was fulfilled in his resurrection. Therefore he was given the "holy and sure blessings of David," which Isaiah says would be "an everlasting covenant." (Acts 13: 32-35; Isa. 55: 3.) No man believes in Christ to his own profit unless he believes that he was raised from the dead.

*"Unto Salvation."*—The words "righteousness" and "justification" come from the same word in the original. Just which is the proper translation in any given case depends on the nature of the subject being discussed. The preposition "unto" means that the faith leads in the direction of or towards justification; or it might be understood as leading toward the place where one could be considered as righteous. These requirements lead toward salvation, and are therefore essential to it, but baptism is also necessary. We are not baptized toward Christ, but "into" him. (Rom. 6: 3.)

### V. The Gospel Includes All Nations (Verses 11-13)

*"Whosoever."*—Paul says that the scriptures saith, "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame." (Isa. 28: 16.) This promise is not to the Jew only, but to whosoever will believe. At the house of Cornelius, Peter said that God is no respecter of persons, but that people in every nation may be accepted of him. (Acts 10: 34, 35.) Those who accept him will have no reason to be made ashamed.

*"No Distinction."*—The Jews had drawn rigid laws of distinction, leaving the Gentiles outside of God's mercy. It even required several miracles to convince an apostle that he should enter a Gentile's house and preach the word to him. By the vision of the sheet he was shown that he must not call any man common or unclean. Paul, here looking back over many years of labors, in which thousands of Gentiles learned the truth from him, declared that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, and that the same Lord is over both and will be rich unto all that call upon him. That means he will bestow his rich favors upon both if they fear God and work righteousness.

*"Whosoever Shall Call."*—While he will be rich to those who call, there will be no favors to those who reject him. If to call upon him means to pray, the question arises, for what shall one pray? If he prays for pardon before obeying the gospel, his prayer cannot be answered, unless Jesus did not mean what he said when he told people how to be saved. If one prays for light on his duty, the New Testament will supply that just like Ananias told Paul. (Acts 22: 16.) Probably the meaning is that, since God had made a revelation of his will, anyone who was enough concerned to inquire about how to be saved would be able to learn from that will. That is still true.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Jesus exercised his divine power with or without faith on the part of the subject; he raised dead bodies as well as healed afflicted people. Faith is made necessary to salvation, but as a condition, for it is God who pardons sin; faith cannot save in that sense.

2. Men must not only recognize the fact that Jesus and his apostles exercised miraculous power, but they must admit that power is of God. We must concede that God raised Jesus from the dead.

3. Paul told Timothy many years later that those that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. (2 Tim. 3: 12.) This he well knew to be the fact from his own experience. None understood better than he that the ultimate kingdom would be entered through persecutions.

4. God's word has the power to produce faith, but not till it is heard. Paul says all did not "hearken to the glad tidings," and this



he explains by Isaiah's question, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" Nobody can believe who refuses to hear God's word; faith can come in no other way.

5. Paul declares that in Christ Jesus there can be neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female. (Gal. 3: 28.) All enter the church by precisely the same law, and all make up the one body.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe the reasons for Paul and Barnabas turning to the Gentiles. (Acts 13: 40-52.)
2. Describe their return to Antioch. (Acts 14: 21-28.)
3. Give Paul's description of his call to be an apostle. (Gal. 1: 11-17.)
4. Describe the state of the Gentiles when Christ came. (Eph. 2: 11-13.)

## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

### I

Why mention the fact that the man had never walked?  
Why did Luke likely record this miracle?  
What was meant by "faith to be made whole"?  
How are Bible miracles different from pretended ones?

### II

Why did they think Paul and Barnabas were gods?  
What gods did they suppose them to be?  
Why call Paul Mercury?

### III

What did they attempt to do?  
Why did they turn into persecutors?  
How account for disciples being there?  
Where did they go from Lystra?

### IV

What was meant by the "word is nigh thee"?  
What was meant by "the word of faith"?  
What must be believed to be saved?  
What prediction was fulfilled by the resurrection?  
What is meant by "unto" salvation?

### V

How does Isa. 28: 16 prove that all can be saved?  
What is meant by "whosoever shall call"?

### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

## Lesson XI—September 13, 1936

## THE COUNCIL IN JERUSALEM

Acts 15: 22-29; Gal. 2: 1, 2, 9, 10.

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote thus by them, The apostles and the elders, brethren, unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment;

25 It seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things by word of mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

29 That ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.

1 Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem, with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me.

2 And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain.

9 And when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision;

10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another." (Gal. 5: 13.)

**TIME.**—For Acts A.D. 50; for Galatians A.D. 57.

**PLACES.**—Jerusalem, Antioch in Syria.

**PERSONS.**—Certain teachers, Paul and Barnabas, the apostles, elders, and church at Jerusalem.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Rom. 8: 1-10.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

September 7.	M.	.....	The Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15: 1-11)
September 8.	T.	.....	The Decision of the Council (Acts 15: 12-21)
September 9.	W.	.....	The Decrees of the Council (Acts 15: 22-29)
September 10.	T.	.....	Freedom from Idols (1 Thess. 1: 2-10)
September 11.	F.	.....	Freedom from Bondage (Gal. 5: 1-12)
September 12.	S.	.....	One in Christ (Gal. 3: 23-29)
September 13.	S.	.....	The Life-giving Spirit (Rom. 8: 1-11)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. A Letter Sent to the Church at Antioch (Verses 22, 23).
  - II. Reasons for Sending the Letter (Verses 24-27).
  - III. The Decision of the Council (Verses 28, 29).
  - IV. Titus Attends the Council with Paul and Barnabas (Gal. 2: 1, 2).
  - V. Work of Paul and Barnabas Endorsed (Verses 9, 10).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

#### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—The last verse of Acts 14 says that "they tarried no little time with the disciples" at Antioch after completing the missionary tour. The council at Jerusalem, discussed in this lesson, is supposed to have been about A.D. 49 or 50. The "no little time" covers the period from their return till the council. It is thought to be about two years. Whatever the time may have been, it is a period which Luke passes over in silence—recording not one incident in it. Galatians was probably written about the same time as Romans and likely in A.D. 57. Possibly both were written in Corinth.

**Lesson Links.**—The only recorded events between our last lesson and this are those occurring on the return part of the missionary



tour. The most remarkable thing was that they "appointed for them elders in every church." (Acts 14: 23.) It is worthy of note that they did not appoint the elders as soon as the work was started. They evidently waited for some to develop into suitable material. They also appointed a plurality in every church, not one over a district. Elders are mentioned in Acts 11: 30, but here is the first mention of their appointment. This circumstance shows that congregations can exist without elders, but that they should be appointed as soon as the proper persons can be developed. When they reached Antioch they called the church together and rehearsed all that God had enabled them to do, mentioning especially the fact that a door of faith had been opened to the Gentiles.

*Lesson Settings.*—Leaving Judaism for Christianity, an entirely new institution, was a slow and difficult process for the Jews. As Gentiles were not admitted into the church for several years, the Jews were still further confirmed in their notion that they were still God's specially favored people. Antioch was the first congregation that was largely of Gentile membership. This led to Judaizing teachers coming from Jerusalem and insisting that all should be circumcised after the custom of Moses to be saved. Paul and Barnabas had seen ample evidence that God would accept Gentiles without any such submission to Jewish customs; hence, they had no little contention with the certain ones who came from Judea to insist on the observance of the customs. This led to their being sent to Jerusalem to confer with the apostles and elders about the matter.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. A Letter Sent to the Church at Antioch (Verses 22, 23)

*The Case Discussed.*—When they met to hear and decide the case, Peter explained how God had chosen him first to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, declaring they should be saved in like manner with the Jews. Then Paul and Barnabas rehearsed all that had been done on their tour, sustained through signs and wonders. Next James quoted a prophecy to show that Peter did the right thing when he allowed the Gentiles to enter the church by a simple obedience to the gospel. He concluded his speech by saying the Gentiles should not be troubled by Jewish customs, but that they be only required to abstain from things really necessary, such as idolatry, fornication, and eating of blood.

*Personal Messengers.*—After hearing the reports and the reasoning of Peter and James, the apostles and elders, with the whole church, considered it wise to select out of their own company men to send with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch. They chose Judas and Silas who were "chief men among the brethren." Their every movement showed wisdom. Since the controversy was so heated at Antioch, it was not proper to take any chances of being misunderstood. If only a letter had been sent by Paul and Barnabas, their opposers might have said it did not represent the true decision, or that it may have been changed by them. Personal messengers to confirm the letter prevented any such trouble. Then the ability and standing of the two messengers precluded the possibility of doubt about the letter containing the exact decision of the apostles. This shows that even inspired men needed to use caution to prevent misunderstanding.

*The Greeting.*—They left no chance for the letter to fail in its desired effects. The decision had the approval of the apostles and elders. The preceding verse included the "whole church." When the Antioch church received the letter, they had what the apostles, elders, and church at Jerusalem wanted them to have. They included Syria and Cilicia along with Antioch. This makes it certain that it was not a matter affecting the Antioch congregation alone, but something that affected all nations everywhere. While the decision to send the letter and messengers was by the apostles and elders, the decision itself was from the Holy Spirit according to verse 28. That means, of course, that the Holy Spirit directed them to reach the right conclusion.

## II. Reasons for Sending the Letter (Verses 24-27)

*"Subverting Your Souls."*—The letter began with admitting that certain ones had gone out from Jerusalem and troubled them with words, which subverted their souls. That is always the way it happens when anyone is guilty of false teaching. But the letter gave the positive assurance that the apostles did not give the false teachers any command for any such teaching. Erroneous teaching subverts the soul regardless of the sincerity of the man who does the teaching. This fact should not be forgotten when we are inclined to endorse false teaching because we like the teacher. The letter also said that the decision to send the men had been reached with one accord. It was not a conclusion sustained by a majority against the minority. Not a thing was overlooked to make it a final settlement of the question in dispute.

*Paul and Barnabas Sustained.*—Paul as an apostle did not need to consult anyone to know he was right in condemning those Judaizing teachers. It was only a matter of good policy to have his own teaching endorsed by the apostles and the Jerusalem church. His opposers could not contend against them successfully. Only for the fact that such a course would be more pleasing and probably do less harm he could doubtless have positively asserted his apostolic authority and ended the dispute. Barnabas had long since been prominent in the Jerusalem church; in fact, had been sent to Antioch from Jerusalem. The letter gave warm endorsement to both Paul and Barnabas by saying they had "hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord." The letter finally stated that Judas and Silas were authorized to add their personal testimony as assurance that the decision represented just what conclusion had been reached.

## III. The Decision of the Council (Verses 28, 29)

*"Necessary Things."*—To say it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us means that all that the council advised was by the direction of the Spirit; that is, they were under the Spirit's influence in rendering their decision. Some things are made binding by a specific law that states them; they cannot be refused without rejecting the lawmaking power behind them. Other things are necessary because their nature is such that they cannot be omitted without bad or disastrous results. Things morally right are necessary for all; those morally wrong must be refused by all. Necessary things—those morally right—have belonged to every age, and been required in every covenant.



*The Things Named.*—Of the necessary things from which Gentiles could not be excused the letter names four. All Christians would be required to abstain from all forms of idolatry. This was inherently wrong, for it could not be practiced without rejecting the true God. This the Jewish opposers of Paul and Barnabas would readily admit. Fornication was another sin wrong in the nature of the case. This was an injustice perpetrated against the rights of others, a sin condemned by all. Since the eating of blood was forbidden, the eating of things strangled was also, because animals killed in that fashion still had the blood in the body. The reason assigned for this is that the blood is the life of the animal. (Gen. 9: 4-6; Lev. 17: 10-12.) Eating blood would probably make one lose the element of mercy, and would also be damaging physically. This would apply to all, both Jews and Gentiles. All four things mentioned are therefore of a nature that makes them wrong everywhere and at all times. Hence, the Gentiles could not be allowed to violate these commands; but to require them to observe some Jewish customs, not vital to life, was a different matter. Whatever had belonged to the Jewish system and had not been included in the gospel could not be bound on Gentiles.

#### IV. Titus Attends the Council with Paul and Barnabas (Gal. 2: 1, 2)

*After Fourteen Years.*—In Gal. 1: 18 Paul mentions his fifteen-day visit to Jerusalem after his stay of three years in Arabia, which followed soon after his conversion. It is supposed, and probably is correct, that the visit to Jerusalem mentioned in our text was the attendance at the council. This was probably fourteen years after his conversion. Not being able to fix exactly the time of his conversion, nor the year of the council, the matter is a little indefinite. But from his conversion to the council being the time meant is probably the correct application of the language. Luke in the record in Acts does not mention Titus, but that is no proof that he was not there, or that this text does not refer to the council meeting.

*Went by Revelation.*—In Acts 15: 2 it is said that the brethren at Antioch determined to send Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem about the question. Here Paul himself says he went up by revelation. This means, of course, that he was divinely directed to go. Such direction would assure him that the brethren's decision to confer with the church and apostles at Jerusalem was the proper thing. The particular way this information was conveyed to him is not revealed. It may have been a miraculous impression that he should accept the decision of the brethren, or to suggest to them that it be done. It was important that a matter so vital to the peace of the church should have divine sanction.

*Those of Repute.*—Evidently Paul in a private conference explained the whole case to the apostles and possibly some of the elders or other prominent brethren. The reason assigned was that it might prevent his running in vain or his past work being discredited and destroyed. This again shows wisdom, and may also have been brought about by miraculous guidance. Such an understanding beforehand would likely prevent the opposing element from creating confusion when they met publicly to settle the question. It was not a scheme intended as a way to take advantage of anyone or to suppress any facts, but a common sense way of reaching a settlement with the least friction.

## V. Work of Paul and Barnabas Endorsed (Verses 9, 10)

*"Right Hands of Fellowship."*—Titus, a pure Gentile, was present. Paul refused absolutely to give his consent to require him to be circumcised. This made a test case to show Paul and Barnabas were vindicated in their work among the Gentiles. He then says that when those who were "pillars" in the church saw the grace that had been given to himself and Barnabas, their work was endorsed. Pillars in the church evidently included such as Peter (here called Cephas) and James who gave them the "right hands of fellowship." The language implies that it was only these two apostles that did that. This is a very common gesture in wishing someone well, or bidding him Godspeed in his work. There is nothing here to indicate that it was any kind of church formality. It is more probable that it was only a natural expression of sympathy and love that go with commendation. Others might have joined in the same manner of wishing them well, but only the two apostles were mentioned because of the fact that they were fellow apostles and their endorsement would mean more than all others, since they both had defended the reception of the Gentiles in speeches in their public meeting. The question was definitely settled by the statement that Paul and Barnabas should continue their labors among the Gentiles as they had done before.

*"Remember the Poor."*—The meeting closed with the special recommendation that Paul and Barnabas should remember the poor. This Paul says they very zealously did. A full description of how well the suggestion was carried out is found, so far as Paul was concerned, in the record of his third missionary journey when he made up that contribution for the poor saints which he delivered in Jerusalem himself. Paul's whole career as a preacher of Christ's gospel shows that he never faltered when any gospel duty rested upon him.

## THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. When many generations have followed a beaten track it is most difficult to take another way. The national distinction between Jews and Gentiles was a wall hard to break down. Gentiles who submitted to circumcision became adopted Jews, but accepting the uncircumcised seemed intolerable to Jews. It took miraculous power to convince them.

2. False doctrines not only damage the teacher, but they do incalculable harm to the church. Their first effect is generally the introduction of strife and division within the membership of the church. This in turn prevents the successful preaching of the gospel, and as a consequence the loss of souls.

3. Some things are necessary in the nature of the case. If a thing is sinful in its nature, then it must be rejected. Things morally right in nature may be used, if circumstances warrant; not otherwise. Religious services made obligatory by direct command of God must be rendered. It is sinful to neglect or refuse.

4. Things done by revelation should be accepted as being according to the divine will. Following the teaching of the Bible is going by revelation because those who wrote it were directed by God's Spirit. Men who had authority to write the New Testament should be heard.

5. Endorsing the truth taught and helping those in need are two



plain Christian duties. Teaching error or oppressing the poor are two sins deserving definite rebuke. The former is the more dangerous because it may cause one to be lost.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Repeat Peter's speech before the council. (Acts 15: 6-11.)
2. Give the argument made by James. (Acts 15: 13-21.)
3. Discuss Paul's rebuke of the apostle Peter. (Gal. 2: 11-21.)
4. Give Paul's argument regarding the two covenants. (Gal. 4: 2-31.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

What explanation did Peter give?  
What decision did the apostles and church make?  
Why did they send messengers also?  
Whose decision was it in fact?

#### II

What effect had the false teaching had?  
What did the apostles say about the disturbing teachers?  
Why did Paul, as an apostle, agree to consult others?

#### III

What was meant by it "seemed good to the Holy Spirit"?  
Why are some things always necessary?  
What things are here named?  
Why is eating blood and things strangled sinful?

#### IV

What period was covered by the fourteen years?  
How did Paul go by revelation if the church sent him?  
Why tell some of them privately?

#### V

Who gave the right hand of fellowship, and why?  
What request was made of Paul and Barnabas?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

### Lesson XII—September 20, 1936

### CHRISTIAN LIVING

Rom. 12: 1-3, 9-21.

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your spiritual service.*

2 And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith.

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another;

11 In diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer;

13 Communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.

19 Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.

20 But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Christ liveth in me.*” (Gal. 2: 20.)

TIME.—Epistle to the Romans was probably written in A.D. 57.

PLACE.—It was probably written in Corinth.

PERSONS.—Paul and the church at Rome.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 8: 31-39.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

September 14.	M.	.....	A Living Sacrifice (Rom. 12: 1-8)
September 15.	T.	.....	Christian Ideals (Rom. 12: 9-21)
September 16.	W.	.....	A Divine Standard (Isa. 1: 10-17)
September 17.	T.	.....	Growth in Grace (2 Pet. 1: 1-11)
September 18.	F.	.....	Christian Citizenship (Rom. 13: 1-10)
September 19.	S.	.....	The Ideal Christian (Matt. 5: 1-12)
September 20.	S.	.....	Pledge of Complete Redemption (Rom. 8: 31-39)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. Christian Sacrifices (Verses 1-3).
- II. Brotherly Love Enjoined (Verses 9, 10).
- III. Some Temporal and Spiritual Duties (Verses 11-15).
- IV. Christian Unity Required (Verses 16-18).
- V. Vengeance Condemned (Verses 19-21).

Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The book of Romans, from which this lesson is taken, was written in Corinth probably in the early part of A.D. 57. The first three sections of the last lesson dealt with the council at Jerusalem which Paul attended. That occurred about A.D. 49 or 50. It is safe to conclude that about seven years elapsed between the two events. The last two sections of last lesson were taken from Galatians. It seems quite probable that it, too, was written from Corinth about the same time as the book of Romans. That makes the latter part of last lesson and this one at about the same time.

*Lesson Links.*—Some time after returning from Jerusalem to Antioch, Paul and Silas began what was the second missionary journey. Some of the most important events in Paul's career occurred between the last lesson and the time of writing the Roman letter. Most of these will be noted in the study of lessons that come in the next quarter. In his labors in other lands congregations were established, some by Paul, that became so important as radiating centers for the gospel that letters were addressed to them. Just who did the first gospel work in Rome we have no means of knowing. Paul wrote this letter a few years before going to Rome himself and addressed it to those “called to be saints.” (Rom. 1: 7.) We should observe



that in the early years of Christianity congregations were first established and letters written to them afterward. In that plan the apostles were able to deal with real facts and correct mistakes that had already been made. This was more practical than dealing with theories.

*Lesson Settings.*—The difficulty with which some of the Jewish converts were prevented from binding on Gentiles Jewish customs, as seen in our last lesson, explains the need for such a profound piece of reasoning as we find in the Roman letter. They needed to be made to understand that Jeremiah stated a truth when he declared that Jehovah would establish a "new covenant" not like the one made with the fathers when they came out of Egypt. (Jer. 31: 31-34.) The book of Romans was written for the specific purpose of showing that the gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 1: 16.) In doing this he presented irrefutable proof that even Jews were no longer "under the law." Having settled this matter in the first twelve chapters of the book, he prepared the ground for those exhortations to practical service with which this lesson begins.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Christian Sacrifices (Verses 1-3)

*"A Living Sacrifice."*—Paul here borrows the system of priesthood and sacrifices as a figure through which to present practical Christian service. In the old system animals were brought to the altar in the temple court and killed and their bodies offered; hence, dead sacrifices. In contrast with such sacrifices Christians are to offer their bodies "a living sacrifice." This is not intended to indicate simply the distinction between a dead and a living body, but rather that the full powers of the Christian's body shall be actively and continuously engaged in God's service. This can be, of course, because his body is not dead.

*"Spiritual Service."*—The King James Version says "reasonable service," and the Revised Version puts in the margin "belonging to the reason." The point of contrast probably is this: The Jewish sacrifices were of dead bodies without any rational qualities, while the active offering of our living bodies is a mind service because we are rational beings, and therefore a spiritual service—springing from our spiritual nature. Of course, when we consider all God's favors and the justice of his commands, it is all reasonable; but Paul probably meant that, as we are intellectual beings, the sacrifices we offer are of a spiritual character. Such a service, he says, is holy—without defect—and acceptable or well-pleasing to God. Compare 1 Pet. 2: 5.

*Another Contrast.*—Not fashioned according to "this world"—literally this age—evidently means not to imitate and practice its evil habits; for there might be some good things in any and every age. The apostle must not be understood as condemning anything but evil. But Christians, having left the sinful things of the age, should change their practice to conform to their new relationship. This, he tells us, must be done by renewing our minds—driving out the sinful thoughts which will give room for those that will lead to righteousness. This renewed mind will enable us to find what is acceptable to God, both good and perfect. Paul exhorts us to this course by reminding us of the mercies of God—enough certainly to prompt faithful service.

*Right and Wrong Thinking.*—In verse 3 Paul commands "through the grace" given to him. This probably means he was speaking



according to his apostolic authority, which, of course, extended to every one. The command is that no one should think of himself more highly than he ought. The thought is that no Christian should overestimate himself or feel puffed up because of his attainments. Rather he should "think soberly"—that is, with a sound mind, as the original indicates—and act prudently and modestly. His thinking should be in harmony with his knowledge of the gospel system of faith. This allows no boasting.

## II. Brotherly Love Enjoined (Verses 9, 10)

*"Without Hypocrisy."*—Since proper conduct cannot be when the heart is filled with evil thoughts, the apostle insists on Christians having love for others. The word love in this verse is probably more general in import than the one in the following verse. It may mean here the benevolence or well-wishing that Christians should feel for all, in the church and out. Such a feeling and its manifestations should be perfectly sincere. Hypocrisy is wholly inexcusable in one who claims to be a follower of Christ. Christians cannot be indifferent or neutral toward evil; they must "abhor" or hate it. Evil causes men to be lost; Christians cannot ignore that which defeats the very thing for which they serve Christ. If we cleave to that which is good, as Paul demands, we must hate that which is evil.

*"Love of the Brethren."*—Here the expression is "brotherly love," and seems to be intended to indicate a closer and more intimate relationship than the simple word love. Paul's command to the Galatians was to do good to all men, "and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith." (Gal. 6: 10.) To be "tenderly affectioned" means to have the kindly feeling that one has for his own kin. When we consider the church as the household of faith—the family of God—we know that a more affectionate feeling will dwell in our hearts for Christians than for the sinners in the world. For sinners the feeling is one of deep sympathy and sorrow for their evil; for members of the church it is that of tender affection. The proper spirit of brotherly love will cause us to be willing for others to be honored ahead of ourselves. This really is the acid test of pure love for brethren. Those who have it will not be bothered with envy or jealousy.

## III. Some Temporal and Spiritual Duties (Verses 11-15)

*"Diligence."*—The Greek word translated "business" in the King James Version evidently means "diligence." It would apply to business or anything else we did in God's service. The thought is that we should not hesitate or be neglectful in the Lord's work. As in common things, so in the Lord's service, most of our failures may be charged to our neglect or slothfulness.

*"Fervent in Spirit."*—The word "fervent" means to boil; hence, we should be deeply concerned and desperately in earnest in what we do in the service of the Lord. No half-hearted service will be acceptable to him. In reference to hope we should rejoice. Our confidence in God's promises should so stimulate us that we will rejoice with great joy. This we cannot help doing if we are diligent and fervent.

*Patience and Steadfastness.*—As Christians are able to rejoice in hope of everlasting life, they are stimulated to be patient under



afflictions. In fact, they are the only people who have any real incentive to bear afflictions with patience. Much of the fortitude that sustains Christians in tribulations comes from the privilege of prayer to a loving father. Being steadfast in this service will do much to make one patiently endure the painful experiences of life.

*"Bless, and Curse Not."*—The word translated "communicating" means to share or partake with. It sometimes is used in reference to distributing to the needs of others. This is its application here, even if it be not limited to material help, though that seems to be its meaning; for the next expression is "given to hospitality." This clearly refers to a material benefit. But the instruction rises above helping the needy and demands that Christians bless those who persecute them. This harmonizes with what Jesus taught and did. (Matt. 5: 44; Luke 23: 34.) Those who can pray for their persecutors in true faith can easily rejoice with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep. Those who follow the course here outlined will be blessed.

#### IV. Christian Unity Required (Verses 16-18)

*"The Same Mind."*—This expression does not mean that Christians must never disagree about minor or indifferent things, but that they will make an earnest effort to live in peace and concord, striving to sympathize with each other's weakness. This is all that is required, but it can be done. The way to accomplish this is to have the mind of Christ. (Phil. 2: 5-8; 1 Pet. 4: 1.) If we all have his mind, we are sure to have the same mind toward each other. This condition can be most easily met by practicing the Golden Rule. We cannot do this unless we cultivate humility and shun pride; or, in the language of the text, "Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly." We should not be ambitious to become unduly exalted, but rather to be associated with things that may be despised by worldly minds, knowing that God's wisdom is greater than that of men. (1 Cor. 1: 20-25.) Especially should we be not wise in our own conceits. We should not trust in our supposed superior wisdom or understanding.

*"Things Honorable."*—Not to render evil for evil is a most difficult command to obey. It comes squarely in conflict with human inclination. Getting even with people or taking vengeance is a tendency hard to control, but it is a most necessary thing if we are even passably successful in following Jesus. Be deeply concerned about things which will be commended by all good people is a most practical injunction. Some men, of course, will not approve what is honorable; we should not seek their approval, but that of those who are pleased with things that are right. This view of the admonition is correct, for Paul says "if it be possible," up to the limit of your ability, live peaceably with all men. Paul well knew that some men will not live peaceably with anyone. They do not want to do right, and will not be pleased with others who do right. We cannot be at peace with a man who hates the gospel of Christ. The apostles did not do that. But as far as possible we can let them alone.

#### V. Vengeance Condemned (Verses 19-21)

*"Avenge Not Yourselves."*—Here again we have a command that is hard to accept because we are so often disposed to repay in kind the insults or injuries that we receive from others. But it would be

disastrous for individuals to take into their own hands the punishments due those who do them wrong; certainly Christians could not afford to do it. Physical wrongs will have to be left to the state for settlement; others must be left to God. The state is the accepted minister of God for the temporal punishment of evildoers (Rom. 13: 1-4), and God will, in due time, properly reward all evil men. Vengeance—in this case the punishment for evil—belongs to God; we should not try to take it out of his hands. This may seem a hard requirement, but when all things are considered, it will be found the best plan to follow.

*Treatment of Enemies.*—Feeding and giving drink to enemies stands for kind treatment in all ways. This plan has two very decided advantages: It will prevent our doing evil ourselves which the taking of vengeance would likely lead us to do. It would create a dangerous state of heart that might in turn make us worse than the one we were trying to punish. The other is, that kind treatment might reach the evildoer and bring about his conversion. It might be the difference between two souls saved or two lost. Such treatment might, like coals of fire, burn out his opposition to right, and through shame lead him to repentance.

*"Overcome Evil."*—The struggle in the Christian life is with evil. Will we overcome it, or will it overcome us? If we attempt to execute our indignation against others by inflicting wrong, then the evil will overcome us; if we follow the example of our Master, we will overcome it. Which shall it be? We have the answer in our hearts.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. The law required that sacrifices offered to God be without spot or blemish; surely the gospel of Christ could not require less. It would be a mark of disrespect to present to our heavenly Father anything but the best of whatever offerings we make.

2. Since Christians are all members of the same spiritual body, love of the brethren is just as logically necessary as love among members of the same family; in fact, Jesus himself recognized the spiritual relationship as being superior to the natural.

3. Asking for a blessing on those who persecute you is perhaps the finest Christian trait of all, since it comes so much in conflict with human inclinations. Selfishness is one of the worst evils; its tendency is to destroy all opposition.

4. The human body is made up of many members, but there must be unity under the head. In like manner the church has only one way to keep the unity demanded by the Spirit, and that is to have the mind of Christ—be in subjection to him as head of the church.

5. It is a greater victory for one to control himself than to vanquish an opponent. Justice and vindication may be long in coming, but we can safely leave our case in God's hands. He makes no mistakes.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Give the story of David refusing to sacrifice anything to the Lord that cost him nothing. (2 Sam. 24: 18-25.)

2. Discuss the unity of the body as found in 1 Cor. 12: 12-31.

3. Tell the story of brotherly love as seen in Luke 10: 30-37.

4. Give David's estimate of evil, and how men should feel about it. (Psalm 119: 97-104.)



## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

## Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

## I

What comparison does Paul make in verse 1?  
What is meant by "living sacrifice"?  
What is meant by "spiritual service"?  
What other contrast does he make?  
What advice about thinking does he give?

## II

What is meant by the word "love" in this verse?  
What is the proper Christian attitude toward evil?  
What command did Paul give the Galatians?

## III

What is the application to be made of the word "diligence"?  
What is the meaning of "fervent"?  
Why can Christians be patient in afflictions?  
What are Christians forbidden to do?

## IV

How can Christians be "of the same mind"?  
Whose approval should we seek?  
What instruction does Paul give about peace?

## V

What is the teaching here on vengeance?  
How are Christians to treat enemies?  
Why is it necessary to overcome evil?

## Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

## Lesson XIII—September 27, 1936

## HELPING EACH OTHER

Acts 15: 30-41.

30 So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle.

31 And when they had read it, they rejoiced for the consolation.

32 And Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

33 And after they had spent some time there, they were dismissed in peace from the brethren unto those that had sent them forth.

35 But Paul and Barnabas tarried in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And after some days Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare.

37 And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus:

40 But Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called To-day." (Heb. 3: 13.)

TIME.—About A.D. 50.

PLACE.—Antioch in Syria.

PERSONS.—Paul, Barnabas, Mark, and Silas.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 6: 1-9.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

September 21. M. .... Preparing a Christian Leader (Acts 9: 1-9)

September 22. T. .... Christianity in Antioch (Acts 11: 19-26)

September 23. W. .... Heathen Practice Condemned (Acts 13: 4-12)

September 24.	T.	.....Christianity's Message (Acts 13: 32-39)
September 25.	F.	.....Gentiles Converted (Acts 13: 44-52)
September 26.	S.	.....A Good Report (Acts 14: 19-28)
September 27.	S.	.....The Growth of the Kingdom (Matt. 13: 24-33)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. The Letter Delivered to Antioch, Read and Received (Verses 30-32).
  - II. Paul and Barnabas Still Help the Antioch Church (Verses 33-35).
  - III. A Second Missionary Journey Planned (Verses 36-38).
  - IV. The Missionary Journey Begun (Verses 39-41).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The things mentioned in this lesson began immediately after those described in lesson eleven. The time then is substantially the same for the two lessons. The text in this lesson covers a period long enough for the messengers to Jerusalem to return to Antioch, present the letter, make their report, remain some days and get well on their way in the third missionary journey. Just how long that was cannot be fixed. One thing is evident, their journeys then were not made with much speed. Probably most of them were on foot, or in some other manner equally slow.

*Lesson Links.*—Since the historical links for this lesson are the same as for lesson eleven, the student can turn back to that lesson for the points made. In addition we will note here the judgment James reached in the council after hearing the reports of Peter and Paul and Barnabas. This occurred in the meeting before the decision was reached and the letter written. Peter had just declared that God had chosen him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and that God had borne witness to their right to enter the kingdom by giving them the Holy Spirit as he did the apostles. Paul and Barnabas had also declared the wonders God had wrought through them among the Gentiles. This proves that the Gentiles had already been received into the church. James then quotes the prophecy of Amos (9: 10, 11) to show that Peter, Paul, and Barnabas had done the right thing in receiving Gentiles. The prophet represented God as saying he would return and build the "tabernacle of David, which is fallen"—set it up—"that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles." Since the rebuilding of David's tabernacle was to be done *that* the Gentiles might call upon him, it had already been rebuilt when Peter received the first Gentiles. This means that through a descendant his family had been restored to the rulership. Then Christ, as his son, was reigning at God's right hand, or James made a mistake and got a passage that did not prove what he intended to prove. This cannot be.

*Lesson Settings.*—When the council accepted James' judgment, which was also the decision of the Holy Spirit, the reception of the Gentiles as such by the apostles was approved. With a letter so stating and personal witnesses, Paul and Barnabas went back to continue their labors among the Gentiles. With the whole matter



settled at Antioch, there was nothing to hinder them from freely offering salvation to the Gentiles on exactly the same terms as it was presented to the Jews. Since that time the salvation of Gentiles has never been questioned by anyone who admits the authority of the apostles.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Letter Delivered to Antioch, Read and Received (Verses 30-32)

*"Gathered the Multitude."*—When the letter had been written, the work of the council had been finished and the brethren from Antioch were ready to return. They and the Jerusalem messengers then came to Antioch. The question had caused so much disturbance that the multitude was gathered together to hear the report. This was not only the most practical thing to do, but was likely the only thing that would have been satisfactory. All being interested, all would be anxious to hear how it had been decided. It was necessary that they should know, and all needed the assurance that would come of hearing the brethren who had been sent from Jerusalem.

*"They Rejoiced."*—It was not a matter of little consequence. If it had not been settled, congregations everywhere would have been disturbed and divided over it. Those who have had their congregation torn into contending factions of some local matter, and then have peace restored, can have some idea as to how the Antioch brethren felt about the settlement of this question that threatened to disrupt the whole church. The consolation or exhortation of the messengers added to their joy. Probably the idea is that they received much joy and comfort from the exhortation of the personal reports. Material help in times of need is a very fine thing, but help to avert disaster when the peace of the congregation is being destroyed is far more important.

*"Also Prophets."*—To the personal report of Paul and Barnabas was added the testimony of Judas and Silas, who exhorted the brethren "with many words, and confirmed them." The letter, the report of their own messengers, and the confirmation of the visiting brethren made the evidence complete. Judas and Silas were said to be prophets themselves. Probably that means that they were among those in the Jerusalem congregation that were spiritually endowed. In lesson eleven we learned that they were "chief men among the brethren."

### II. Paul and Barnabas Still Help the Antioch Church (Verses 33-35)

*The Jerusalem Messengers.*—How long the messengers all remained in Antioch is not known. The text says that after they had spent "some time" there they were dismissed. But we have found that such indefinite expressions sometimes cover a much longer period than might be supposed. The record says "they were dismissed in peace." Of course, the purpose of their mission having been accomplished, they could return to Jerusalem. From this statement it would naturally be supposed that both Judas and Silas returned, but the King James Version adds that "it pleased Silas to abide there still." (Verse 34.) This verse, however, is omitted from the Revised Version. Probably Luke did not write this verse, at least the revisers so concluded, but what he did say of Silas in succeeding verses shows

that Silas did remain. It is probably what he says about Silas that caused some copyist to think that some preceding copyist had left that thought out. This led to his inserting it. Likely, Luke just mentioned the fact that the brethren assured them that their work had been satisfactory, and that they might return. Then he mentions the work of Silas with Paul in the next missionary journey. Silas became one of Paul's most faithful helpers in the work of Christ.

*"Tarried in Antioch."*—The statement that Paul and Barnabas tarried in Antioch means that they remained there after reporting their trip to Jerusalem. Here again the statement is indefinite as to time. But the work they did is plainly expressed; they taught and preached the word, but there were many others doing the same thing. Teaching and preaching are alike in some features, but different in others. All gospel preaching is teaching in that it is a way of imparting information. But ordinarily it is applied to a public proclamation of the gospel, while teaching applies to any kind of instruction. Evidently the early disciples did teaching in both ways—"publicly, and from house to house." Then, as now, people needed to learn how to become Christians and how to live the Christian life. This gave the demand for every available kind of teaching either in crowds or to one person. We are sure Paul allowed no opportunity for either kind to pass unused.

### III. A Second Missionary Journey Planned (Verses 36-38)

*Proposed by Paul.*—Paul suggested that he and Barnabas return and visit the brethren in every city where they had preached the word on their first tour. The purpose was to see how they were faring in the work of the Lord. This would have taken them through the island of Cyprus, Perga, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. All these places had been visited in their first journey. But sufficient time had elapsed for disturbing matters to have come up as it had in Antioch of Syria. If nothing of that nature had bothered, they would need encouragement and fuller instruction about Christian living.

*Their Disagreement.*—Barnabas wanted to take Mark with them as they did on the first journey. On this Paul disagreed with Barnabas. When they reached Pamphylia, Mark left them and returned. Why he returned is not stated, neither does it appear that there was any sin in his returning if he thought best. He was a relative of Barnabas, which might account, in some measure, for Barnabas desiring to take him. But Paul objected, and apparently for the reason that he had turned back soon after starting before. This may have convinced Paul that he was somewhat changeable, and was not the kind of person that would be suitable for such labor. The undertaking would call for much opposition and require a lot of boldness and courage to meet it successfully. Paul must have known that there was no very satisfactory reason for his leaving them before. Barnabas may have thought, on the other hand, that he would probably be faithful if he went with them again. There was plausibility in the reasoning on both sides, though nothing but trying him would



have shown who was right. This was not done, and we have no means of knowing whether Paul's estimate of him was correct or not. It is certain that later history is not uncomplimentary to Mark. Paul refers to him tenderly as being of much value to him. (Col. 4: 10; 2 Tim. 4: 11.) The fact that he was given the task of writing the gospel that bears his name is proof that any wavering that caused him to leave them in Pamphylia was only temporary. The circumstance, however, shows that Bible characters were human, subject to temptations, and often failed in some particular deserving of censure. None of their faults, however serious, were any proof against the truth of the system they preached.

*"They Parted Asunder."*—The text says there "arose a sharp contention." I presume that this means each argued strongly that his view of the case was right, and tried to convince the other that he was wrong, but that does not indicate that they were angry or said anything unbecoming a Christian. Contending earnestly for the faith is a Bible injunction. (Jude 3.) There can be no wrong then in contending earnestly for any position one believes is right. The decision they reached was not wrong in itself, and, so far as we know, did the cause of truth no harm; in fact, there is a possibility that it may have been decidedly advantageous to the truth. Preachers today may decide to work together in a certain field and do so with great success; or, other reasons may lead them into separate territory which the facts later show to have been the best thing. No sin will necessarily attach to either decision. It is pure assumption to suppose that Paul and Barnabas had an angry and sinful dispute about the matter.

#### IV. The Missionary Journey Begun (Verses 39-41)

*"Sailed Away unto Cyprus."*—The disagreement regarding what was best in the case of Mark caused them to part asunder, each going the way he preferred. In this they were somewhat like Abraham and Lot. Abraham said to Lot: "If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou take the right hand, then I will go to the left." (Gen. 13: 9.) Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away into Cyprus. This was going the very way they went on the first journey. Since Barnabas was of Cyprus, there was a sentimental reason perhaps that made him want to go that way. Barnabas appeared on the scene as a servant of the Lord before we heard of Paul. For some time he appeared to be the more prominent one, but now he drops out of sight and Luke devotes his history to recording the wonderful events of Paul's career. As we watch Barnabas and Mark sail away toward Cyprus, we are bidding him farewell so far as this world is concerned; but the few references that Paul makes to him later assure us that, if we are faithful to the Lord, we will meet him in the eternal home.

*Paul and Silas.*—Of those left that may have been competent to help Paul in his difficult work, he chose Silas. They left on what turned out to be one of the longest journeys, "being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord." That means that the brethren approved of his plans and asked for God's favor to be upon him. No man can undertake a work with better endorsement. If brethren stand solidly behind him and the favor of God is over him, nothing can be better. This was the second time that Paul left Antioch

with the same kind of moral and spiritual support. The sequel shows that Paul made no mistake in selecting Silas for a helper.

*Syria and Cilicia.*—The text says they went through these countries "confirming the churches." They left the work in Cyprus for Barnabas and Mark while they went overland through the country between Antioch and the end of the first journey—the city of Derbe. We have no record of the establishment of churches in Syria and Cilicia, but Paul returned from Jerusalem and made Tarsus his home again. He was there when Barnabas brought him to Antioch, and had been for a few years. Probably the establishment of churches in those sections may have resulted from the labors of Paul. But regardless of who started them, they were there and enjoyed the labors of Paul and Silas as they started on their long tour into heathen lands.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. The whole phase of helping each other has been summed up by Paul in these words: "And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all." (1 Thess. 5: 14.) This presents our duty to all classes with a general trait that is appropriate to all.

2. There are many ways that we may be helpful to each other, physically, mentally, socially, and financially, but the best help that can be rendered is to assist one in understanding his duty to Christ, and encouragement to influence him to do it. Other benefits pertain to temporal things; this involves eternity. Jesus represents the soul of man as being more valuable than all this world.

3. Personal disagreements are harmless unless they involve the question of vital truth, or manifest useless and unnecessary wrangling. A truth vital to man's salvation cannot be sacrificed or ignored just to retain personal friendship however much such friendship is prized. Arms or legs are amputated when necessary to save life.

4. It is especially interesting to know how much our brethren are accomplishing in the work of the Lord, but we should not be unmindful of that great army of workers concerning whom we have no information. So far as we know much of the general success may depend on that "unknown" Christian soldier who works on without the praise of the brotherhood continually sounding in his ears.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Repeat the story of "Ebenezer" in 1 Sam. 7: 5-14.
2. Sketch briefly the help that Jehovah rendered to the Israelites at the Red Sea. (Ex. 14: 10-31.)
3. Tell the story of the separation of Abram and Lot. (Gen. 13: 5-18.)
4. Describe the first missionary journey, mentioning the places visited both going and coming.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.

#### I

Why gather the multitude for the report?  
Why did the report bring such rejoicing?  
What else caused rejoicing?  
What is said of Judas and Silas?



**II**

How long did Paul and Barnabas remain in Jerusalem?

What is said about Silas?

Why did the Revised Version leave the thirty-fourth verse out?

What did Paul and Barnabas do while remaining at Antioch?

What distinction can be made between "teach" and "preach"?

**III**

What did Paul propose to Barnabas?

What caused their disagreement?

What reasons did each have for his idea?

How was Mark related to Barnabas?

How was he regarded by Paul later?

**IV**

What is said of Barnabas and Mark?

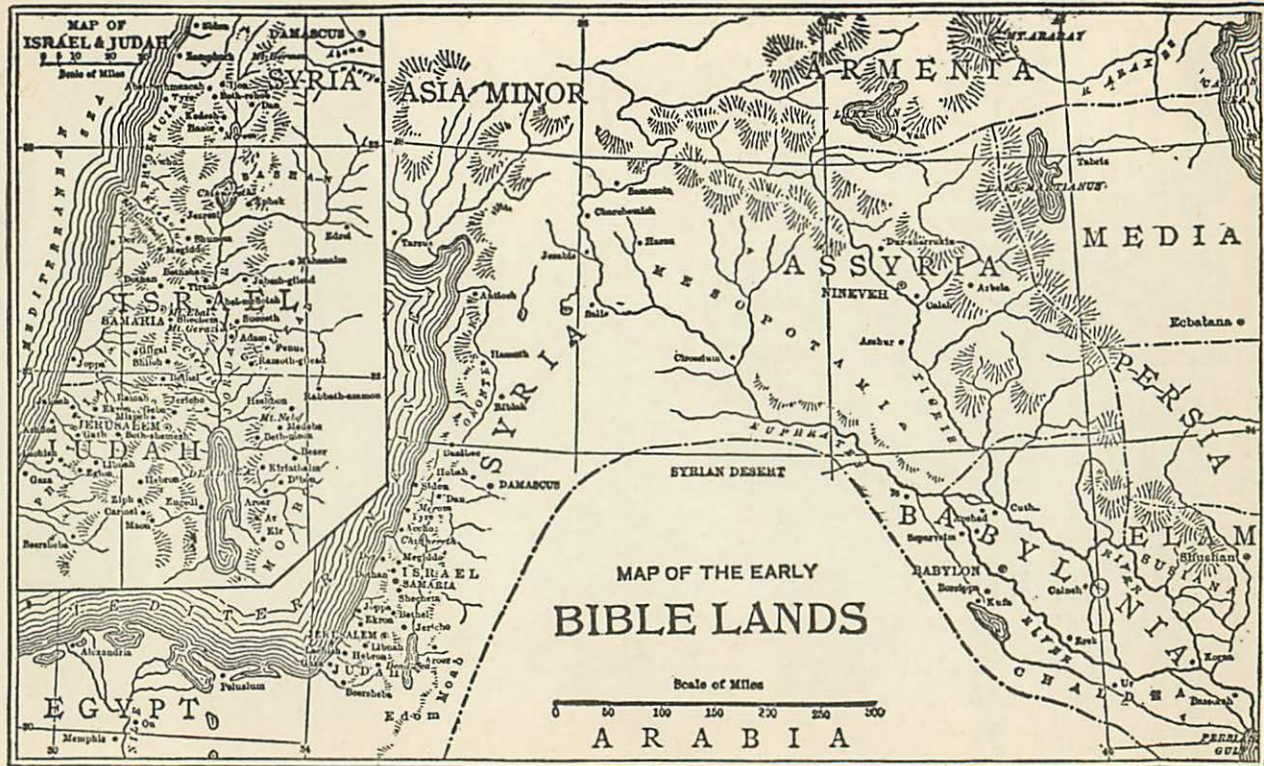
What further knowledge do we have of Barnabas?

Under what circumstances did Paul and Silas leave?

Who planted churches in Syria and Cilicia?

**Thoughts for Meditation**

Repeat these thoughts.





## FOURTH QUARTER

## THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

*Studies in the Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation*

(SECOND HALF OF A SIX MONTHS' COURSE)

Lesson I—October 4, 1936

## THE MACEDONIAN CALL

Acts 16: 6-15; Rom. 15: 18-21.

6 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;

7 And when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not;

8 And passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis;

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days.

13 And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed,

19 In the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ;

20 Yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation;

21 But, as it is written,

They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,  
And they who have not heard shall understand.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.” (Matt. 28: 19.)

TIME.—For Acts A.D. 50; for Romans A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Troas, Philippi, and Rome.

PERSONS.—Paul, Silas, Lydia and her household, and the church at Rome.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Heb. 11: 8-10.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

September 28. M.-----Missions in New Fields (Acts 16: 6-15)

September 29. T.-----Preaching Where Christ Is Unknown (Rom. 15: 18-27)

September 30. W.-----The Burning Bush (Ex. 3: 1-10)

October	1. T.....	The Missionary Challenge (Matt. 9: 32-38)
October	2. F.....	Missionary Responsibility (Rom. 10: 12-17)
October	3. S.....	Missionary Success (Jonah 3: 1-5)
October	4. S.....	A Hero of Faith (Heb. 11: 8-10)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Paul's Company Reaches Troas (Verses 6-8).
  - II. A Night Vision Appeared to Paul (Verses 9, 10).
  - III. The Work Begun in Philippi (Verses 11-13).
  - IV. Lydia Obeys the Gospel (Verses 14, 15).
  - V. The Gentiles Obedient to the Word (Rom. 15: 18-21).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—If the council at Jerusalem was in A.D. 50, which is a probable date, then the second missionary tour may have started that year. Some time was required to visit the churches in Syria and Cilicia before reaching those established on Paul's first journey. At Lystra some little time was spent as seems evident from what occurred there. Then Paul desired to go through other territory not visited on his first tour. This he was forbidden to do, and so came to Troas on the northwest coast of Asia Minor. That they stayed long enough in each place to accomplish what was considered best, if it were possible, harmonizes with Paul's general custom; but how much time cannot be determined. It probably ran into the next year unless they started early in the year.

*Lesson Links.*—One of the most important events that occurred in Paul's ministry happened while at Lystra. Timothy had been converted by Paul when he was at Lystra on the first tour. (1 Cor. 4: 17.) His mother was a Jewess, but his father was a Greek. Probably being considered a Greek after his father, he had not been circumcised. Paul wanted to take him on the tour, but to prevent criticism on the part of the Jews caused him to be circumcised. Since Paul later taught that "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing" (1 Cor. 7: 19), this circumcision of Timothy to placate the Jews seems strange. From Gal. 2: 3 we learn that Paul refused to consent to Titus being circumcised. But Titus was a Gentile, and some Jews were insisting upon the Gentiles being circumcised as a religious rite. In that sense it was nothing, and Paul refused his consent. To the Jews circumcision was a national rite, and Timothy, a half-blood, could be considered a Jew who could keep the rite. It was not for his salvation, but innocent as a national custom, and might be observed to prevent unnecessary opposition to Timothy as a collaborer of Paul.

*Lesson Settings.*—With Paul's experience in preaching to Gentiles in heathen lands, and Silas who was thoroughly familiar with the whole discussion of admitting the Gentiles into the church, and Timothy whose early training and faith made him a competent assistant, there was probably never a more well-fitted company to undertake the task of spreading the kingdom in distant lands. Most of Paul's missionary labors will be included in this quarter's lessons. No more interesting labors have ever been recorded.



## LESSON NOTES

## I. Paul's Company Reaches Troas (Verses 6-8)

*"Phrygia and Galatia."*—They evidently left the route of the first journey at Antioch and went through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia. These were districts in the central part of Asia Minor. The text says they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. The word Asia here does not mean the whole of Asia Minor, for that was a great territory including Phrygia and Galatia and several other provinces. It referred to that part called Asia by the Romans, where the seven churches were located, of which Ephesus was the chief city. The Spirit not allowing them to enter that territory shows that the human wisdom of even apostles often had to be overruled. In this case their judgment about where to go was not best. There is nothing said about what success they had in Phrygia and Galatia, but Paul's letter to the Galatians afterward indicates that churches were established at that time.

*"Suffered Them Not."*—After their work in Galatia they came over against Mysia and "assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." The word "assayed" means that they tried or attempted to go; that is, they were evidently making plans for it. No reason is given for Paul's wanting to go into that section. But later developments in their history show that the Lord had other plans for them and a work that demanded attention first. The fact that an important congregation was established at Philippi is proof enough that the Spirit was directing them into the best field of labor. "Passing by Mysia" does not mean that they did not enter it; for, in fact, they went through it, but they did not stop to do any work in Mysia. They hastened on till they reached Troas, a seacoast town on the west shore of Asia Minor.

## II. A Night Vision Appeared to Paul (Verses 9, 10)

*"A Man of Macedonia."*—Just how this vision appeared to Paul is not stated. The fact that it occurred at night suggests the possibility that it was in a dream. If not, then in some other way the picture appeared to his mental vision so that he saw distinctly a man of Macedonia appealing to him to come to Macedonia and help them. Of course, the circumstance was miraculous. But the description shows that the appearance was so clearly presented that Paul recognized just what it was, and the invitation was so definitely expressed that there was no doubt about what was meant. It is well to keep in mind the fact that true miracles were so performed as to prevent deception being practiced, and God's revelations were so clearly stated that no room is left for misunderstanding. It could not be otherwise and be from God. To suppose less would be to discredit both the wisdom and power of God.

*Their Conclusion.*—After seeing the vision, they concluded that God had called them to preach the gospel in Macedonia. This, naturally, was the only conclusion they could reach from such an appearance. Then, doubtless, they understood why the Spirit refused to allow them to enter certain territory where they purposed to preach. It is said that they "straightway" sought to go forth—began preparations to leave Troas. The language hardly allows for the supposition that they did any preaching in Troas at that time, though we

learn that Paul and his companions worshiped with the brethren at Troas one Lord's day on the return of the third missionary journey. (Acts 20: 1-7.) At this place Luke begins the use of the pronouns "we" and "us," associating himself with them as one of the company. Probably he joined them at Troas, and indicated that fact by the use of these pronouns.

### III. The Work Begun in Philippi (Verses 11-13)

*Trip to Philippi.*—Sailing from Troas they passed the island of Samothrace and reached Neapolis on the second day. This was a Macedonian seaport town a few miles from Philippi. The statement is that they made a "straight" course, probably meaning that they sailed directly before the wind. This accounts for the fact that they made the distance in two days, which would have been impossible against contrary winds. Returning on the third journey it required five days to make the trip from Philippi to Troas. (Acts 20: 6.) It would easily require twice as much time to sail against the wind as with it.

*A Chief City.*—Philippi was a Macedonian city, and the chief one in that district. Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, had rebuilt the city four hundred years before and named it after himself. It was also the place of a Roman colony. That means that people had been settled there by authority of Rome and given all the rights and privileges that went with Roman citizenship. Their local government was in a small way the same as Rome itself. Paul pursued his usual course, and that mapped out by Jesus, by going to centers first. From such places the gospel would radiate in all directions.

*By a Riverside.*—Paul's usual practice was to visit a synagogue first on entering a new territory. The fact that he did not do so here is probable proof that there were no synagogues in Philippi. But there evidently were some pious Jews, for they had learned that there was a place by the riverside where some were accustomed to assemble for prayer. Paul and his company went to this place on the Sabbath day, which was the time that the synagogue worship would have been carried on, if they had had one. Evidently the congregation was of women, since the record says he spake to the women. They were Jewish women or proselytes to the Jewish law or both. The name Lydia is Greek and that fact may mean that she was a proselyte. But she was a worshiper of God, which fact shows that she was not a pure Gentile. The statement "we sat down" shows the custom then was to sit while speaking to the people.

### IV. Lydia Obeys the Gospel (Verses 14, 15)

*"Heard Us."*—Lydia's home was Thyatira, a town in Asia Minor, where one of the seven churches was later established. She was a "seller of purple," engaged in some kind of mercantile transactions in connection with the purple cloth for which the city was famous. She was religious and evidently devout. This the record indicates in the expression that she "worshipped God." This doubtless accounts for the readiness with which she heard Paul preach.

*The Lord Opened Her Heart.*—When the Bible says God does a thing, no one should deny it. That God opened Lydia's heart cannot be questioned by anyone who believes the Bible. But the text does



not say "how" he opened her heart. This point must not be assumed. Paul was there preaching the gospel. Paul later said the gospel was God's power to salvation to both Jew and Greek. (Rom. 1: 16.) Lydia heard the gospel. The word heart means the mind (Heb. 8: 10 compared with 10: 16), not the physical heart. To open the heart means to enlighten the mind. If the gospel will enlighten the mind, then her heart was opened by hearing Paul preach. David said: "The opening of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Psalm 119: 130; see also 19: 7.) Besides all this Paul was sent to "open" people's eyes. (Acts 26: 16-18.) Opening the eyes also means to give enlightenment; hence, the same thing as opening the heart. Since Paul was sent to do that very work, was there preaching the gospel to Lydia, the only reasonable conclusion is that her heart was opened by his preaching. Her mind was enlightened to understand that Jesus was the Christ, and this led her to obey the commands Paul gave.

"*She Was Baptized.*"—She and her household were baptized. Who composed her household is not stated, but certainly no infants were baptized, for Jesus authorized the apostles to baptize believers. Infants cannot believe, and therefore cannot be baptized. That this is true is clear from the fact that there is no case of infant baptism recorded in the New Testament. If it had been a scriptural practice, surely there would have been some cases, and they would have been mentioned. After the baptism she constrained the Christians to abide in her house. Thus, in two verses, we have the record of the first conversion in Macedonia.

## V. The Gentiles Obedient to the Word (Rom. 15: 18-21)

*Gentiles Acceptable.*—In preceding verses Paul says Christ was a minister to the circumcision (Jews) to confirm the promises made to the fathers, "and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy." Then he quotes Isaiah as saying a "root of Jesse" (Jesus a descendant of Jesse) would arise "to rule over the Gentiles." Then he referred to the fact that he had been a minister to the Gentiles, and that they had been made acceptable, "being sanctified by the Holy Spirit." When the Spirit fell on them at the house of Cornelius, they were set apart as a people whose obedience God would accept. (Eph. 3: 5, 6.) To confirm these facts Paul spoke only of what he had done among the Gentiles, both in word and deed; that is, what he had preached and what miracles he had wrought. The latter he explains as "signs and wonders" done by the power of the Holy Spirit. All this proves that the Gentiles had been admitted into God's favor. If so, then Christ was ruling over them, for he was raised for that purpose. He was a reigning king when Paul wrote the words of our text.

"*Another Man's Foundation.*"—Paul mentions his extensive labors, but says he made it his aim to preach where Christ had not been named, lest he should build "upon another man's foundation." He then quotes from Isaiah again words, the sentiment of which justified both his independent labor and his going to the Gentiles. He said he had "fully preached the gospel." Of course no one would doubt that Paul preached all the requirements of the gospel. He had also preached it very successfully, leaving nothing undone to make it effective as God's power to save men. But he had also preached it



## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

October 5.	M.	.....	Becoming a Christian (Acts 16: 22-34)
October 6.	T.	.....	The Christian's Goal (Phil. 3: 7-14)
October 7.	W.	.....	The Secret of Joy (Phil. 4: 1-7)
October 8.	T.	.....	The Trial of Faith (1 Pet. 4: 12-16)
October 9.	F.	.....	The Blessedness of the Christian Life (Matt. 5: 1-11)
October 10.	S.	.....	Hope Beyond Suffering (Rom. 8: 16-25)
October 11.	S.	.....	Comfort in Affliction (2 Cor. 1: 3-10)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Paul and Silas Imprisoned (Verses 22-25).
  - II. The Prisoners Released (Verses 26-29).
  - III. The Jailer's Question and Paul's Answer (Verses 30-32).
  - IV. The Jailer and His Family Baptized (Verses 33, 34).
  - V. Paul's Loss and Gain (Phil. 3: 7-14).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—Since the events of this lesson occurred at Philippi, the time is substantially the same as for last lesson. It is not known how long it was after Paul preached to the women by the riverside, but not likely to have been very long. The statement in verse 18 is that the maid with the evil spirit cried after them "many days," but even that may not have been a long time. Still Paul had done enough preaching to stir up much opposition and to be imprisoned. Philippians was written probably in the year A.D. 61 or 62, which was some nine or ten years after their work in Philippi described in this lesson.

*Lesson Links.*—From verse 16 it seems that they were continuing to go to the place of prayer. As they went, a maid with "a spirit of divination" met them. She followed them, declaring that they were servants of the Most High God, and were proclaiming the way of salvation. This continued for the "many days," till Paul, being sorely troubled with her cries, commanded the spirit to come out of her. He not only became troubled, but evidently decided he could not allow in his behalf the testimony of an unclean spirit. In fact, he could not afford to let it go unrebuked. Jesus refused to allow evil spirits to testify to his divinity. (Mark 3: 11, 12; Luke 4: 34, 35.) Paul followed the Lord's example in this matter. For some reason which we do not understand, Paul did not cast the spirit out for some days. We are sure he was directed to do just what should be done and at the right time. This girl was a slave, and her masters were using her misfortune as a means of making money. Realizing that their source of gain had been taken away, they brought Paul and Silas before the magistrates, and with false charges got them beaten with rods and put in jail. Many things transpired between the time of this lesson and the writing of Philippians. We leave them to be mentioned in other lessons.

*Lesson Settings.*—The Jews naturally hated the Romans because of the bondage in which they were held. The Romans were probably suspicious of any move the Jews made, and were ready to decide against them upon most any charge. The charge that they were



troubling the city was doubtless not true unless Jews were creating it in their opposition to Paul and Silas. There was probably much truth in the statement that Paul was setting forth religious practices that the heathen Roman was not allowed to receive. The angry Jews, however, cared nothing for that fact except to get Paul and Silas under condemnation by the Romans. By so doing they hoped to get them imprisoned and stop their preaching. That they knew would be the quickest way to bring their work to an end.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Paul and Silas Imprisoned (Verses 22-25)

*"Beat Them with Rods."*—The charges before the magistrates inflamed the multitude and they were ready to punish them. The magistrates tore their clothes off and prepared to beat them with rods. It is said to have been the Roman custom to lay the body bare before the beating. It was a brutal, inhuman treatment. Paul said he was beaten with rods three times. (2 Cor. 11: 25.) The other two times are not mentioned. The text says they laid "many stripes" upon them. This shows the terrible pain that was inflicted—each lick leaving a stripe. Paul said that on five occasions he received forty stripes save one. (2 Cor. 11: 24.) The Jewish law forbade giving more than forty stripes. (Deut. 25: 3.) In order not to exceed that by accident they stopped with one less than forty.

*"Cast Them into Prison."*—After the beating they were thrust into prison and the jailer was charged to keep them safely. To let a prisoner get away brought serious punishment to a Roman officer. With prisoners that were supposed to need such scourging the jailer did not take any chances of escape. He put them in the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks. The inner prison was what we call the cell; the stocks were wooden instruments of torture as well as means to prevent escape. The feet were put through holes in a piece of wood and so fastened that they could not be removed by the prisoner.

*Prayed and Sang.*—With bodies tortured with pain from terrific beating and racked from painful position in stocks, their condition was most pitiable. Nothing less than the strongest faith could cause such prisoners to sing and pray. It was doubtless a most strange and unusual sight to the other prisoners. But there was something about their appearance and the calm way that they did it that attracted the attention of fellow prisoners. Evidently it was with special interest that they listened to that unusual thing in a prison cell.

### II. The Prisoners Released (Verses 26-29)

*"A Great Earthquake."*—Their prayers had certainly been heard, and God miraculously bore witness to the fact that they were his servants. The doors were opened, the prisoners' bands were loosed, yet so far as the record indicates no one was hurt. There had been a miraculous liberation among the apostles on two occasions before this. (Acts 5: 19; 12: 7-10.) The jailer was responsible to the extent of forfeiting his life, if the prisoners escaped. Aroused by the earthquake and seeing the doors open, he naturally concluded this his prisoner had fled. Probably after the custom of his time he



preferred taking his own life rather than the disgrace of being executed. Hence, he drew his sword and was ready to inflict self-murder.

*"We Are All Here."*—It is not known exactly how Paul knew he was about to kill himself. It was midnight and may have been dark. A reasonable conclusion would have been that Paul saw him through an open door, if the jailer had a light. But his calling for a light may mean that he did not have one burning. The earthquake would probably have put out one if it had been burning before. Paul may have known through a miraculous vision of some kind what the jailer was about to do. Anyway, Paul hastened to prevent the rash act. He cried with a loud voice and told him to do himself no harm. Then he gave the assurance that none of the prisoners had escaped. There could be no reason then why the jailer should kill himself.

*Fell Down Before Them.*—The statement that he "sprang in" shows how deeply he was affected by the situation. He evidently wanted to learn at the earliest moment whether or not Paul's words were true. If the prisoners were there, his life would not be in danger. This was a vital matter to him. He was trembling with fear. The earthquake and the possibility of the prisoners being gone, both had a part in his fear and trembling. He doubtless knew something of Paul's preaching, and certainly knew of the cruel treatment he and Silas had received before being cast into the dungeon. Finding Paul's words true, he naturally concluded they were more than ordinary men. Hence, after the oriental custom, he fell down before them. The modern theory that salvation comes directly in answer to prayer would have indicated that Paul should have told him to pray to God for salvation right then. What better situation could be found than his prostration before them? The fact that no such instruction was given is strong proof that the theory is not true. The rest of the story is positive proof that the theory cannot be sustained by the record.

### III. The Jailer's Question and Paul's Answer (Verses 30-32)

*"What Must I Do?"*—The text says he "brought them out"; that is, out of the inner prison. Verse 32 shows that he brought them into his house, which was the part of the jail building where the jailer and his family resided. His question was intensely personal, "What must I do?" It is unnecessary to suppose he was not interested in the salvation of his family, but those deeply grieved on account of their sins first of all consider themselves. Since the jailer had been convinced of his not having to forfeit his life because of letting prisoners escape, his question must have referred to salvation in a spiritual sense. He recognized the fact that there must be something to do. If salvation had been unconditional, as some teach, then surely Paul would have said so in answering his question. Paul's answer settles that question—men must do something to be saved.

*"Believe on the Lord."*—In giving a direct answer to the jailer's question, Paul said: "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." It should be noted that this answer was spoken before Paul preached to the jailer. Paul tells us that faith comes by hearing God's word. (Rom. 10: 17.) As the word had not then been preached to the jailer, he could not do what Paul told him to do until the preaching was done. Often instruction is given regarding what must be done before details are given or one is able



to do it. So in the jailer's case. Perhaps some one might say the jailer was made a believer by the earthquake. That might have convinced him of the fact that God was with Paul, but not that Jesus was the Christ. He had not believed that or else Paul would not have required him to do it.

*"Spake the Word."*—To enable the jailer to do what he was told to do, they spake unto him the word of the Lord. The added thought is given that it was unto all that were in his house. This language clearly excludes infants. As one cannot preach to infants, because they are unable to hear and understand, they are not to be included in the number to whom the preaching was done.

#### IV. The Jailer and His Family Baptized (Verses 33, 34)

*"Took Them."*—He had already brought them out of the inner prison into his own house. After the preaching he took them, washed their stripes, and was baptized. Where he took them is not stated, but it must have been out of the house, for the next verse shows that after baptism he brought them up into his house. This is presumptive evidence that he was immersed. Taking them out of the house would have been entirely unnecessary, if sprinkling or pouring had been baptism; in fact, convenience, custom, and good sense would all argue against going out of the house to do a thing that might be done easier in the house. Those who sprinkle do not go out for that service now. The reasonable conclusion is that they went out of the house because they had to in obeying the command. We know there was a river near, for Paul preached to the women by the riverside. The baptism occurred the same hour of the night—midnight. No example here of delay in obeying God.

*"Rejoiced Greatly."*—After the baptism he brought them back into his house, gave them something to eat, and rejoiced greatly. "He and all his" were baptized. Since only believers are to be baptized (Mark 16: 16), then there were no infants in his house, or, if there were, none were baptized. Besides, the fact that Jesus gave authority to baptize only believers, we are here told that all his house rejoiced, "having believed in God." Infants can do neither; hence, none were baptized.

#### V. Paul's Loss and Gain (Phil. 3: 7-14)

*"Counted Loss for Christ."*—In preceding verses Paul had recounted the high honors that had been his as a Jew. He says he had counted them all as loss—relinquished all of them—for the gain that he had received in Christ. He had counted all these Jewish privileges and favors as but "refuse"—the most worthless things—that he might gain Christ. His desire was to be found in Christ, not to his own righteousness which was in the law of Moses, but that which comes through faith in Christ by obedience to his gospel.

*"May Know Him."*—Paul's desire seemed to be, not simply to become a follower, but in addition to have a full experience of the joys that go with his service. To know the "power of his resurrection" would at least be to enjoy all benefits that come because of his resurrection, and might also include a desire to share the ultimate blessings that will come because of his resurrection. To do this Paul wanted to have fellowship in Christ's suffering, that he might be conformed unto his death. This shows that Paul was even willing to become a martyr for the gospel which Christ died to bring into existence. All this he wished to do that he might "attain unto the resur-

rection from the dead." This language does not imply that only Christians will be raised. Jesus says the hour will come when all that are in the tomb shall come forth. (John 5: 28, 29.) Paul simply wanted to be *worthy* of receiving the benefits of the resurrection by being raised unto life.

*Press Toward the Goal.*—Paul said he had not fully attained or reached the completion of his work in Christ; had not laid hold on all that Jesus intended for him to have. He made no such claims for himself, but he was forgetting the things behind—those counted loss for Christ—and "stretching forward to the things which are before"—pressing toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Trying to reach the goal, of course, means perfect conformity to the example set by Christ that one may receive the reward offered.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. On his first tour Paul told the brethren that it would be through "many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14: 22.) At Philippi he finds a verification of his words in his own experience in both stripes and imprisonment.

2. Those actuated by the right spirit never use God's favors to take advantage of even enemies. Though miraculously turned loose they used not that fact to escape from the jail. Paul refused to leave the prison till the authorities dismissed him; his going must be legal.

3. Those in ignorance must know what to do; those who are informed must obey to be saved. The jailer was in both conditions. Learning he was lost, he wanted to know what to do; learning what he must do, he was ready to obey promptly. Thus he made his name known to the world.

4. Those who render genuine obedience that they may receive the promised blessings have every reason to rejoice. In fact, they really have something to rejoice about. Those who rejoice without obedience are simply deceived.

5. It does not make any special difference how much loss we have, if we receive something better in return. Exchanging the Jewish law for the gospel of Christ, or the ways of sin for righteousness, will be great gain.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss faith as one of the conditions in becoming a Christian, using the following passages: Heb. 11: 1; Rom. 10: 17; John 8: 24.

2. Discuss repentance as found in the following texts: Luke 13: 3, 5; 2 Cor. 7: 8-10.

3. Discuss confession. (See Matt. 10: 32, 33; Rom. 10: 9, 10.)

4. Discuss baptism. (Col. 2: 12; Acts 8: 36-39; 1 Pet. 3: 20, 21.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

What does Paul say about being beaten with rods?

How many times did he receive stripes? What did the jailer do with them? Describe the midnight scene.

#### II

On what other occasions had apostles been miraculously freed?

What was the jailer preparing to do?

How did Paul know he was about to kill himself?

What modern theory is here shown false?



## III

What salvation did the jailer mean?  
 Why could he not believe when Paul  
 answered his question?  
 What is shown here regarding infants?

## IV

Where did the jailer take them?  
 When did he rejoice greatly?  
 What shows that no infants were bap-  
 tized?

## V

What did Paul count loss and gain?  
 What was Paul's desire?  
 What did he say he was doing?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

Note: Have you assigned the topics  
 for next lesson?

*Lesson III—October 18, 1936*

## THE SPOKEN AND THE WRITTEN WORD

Acts 17: 1, 5-11; 1 Thess. 2: 7-12.

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews.

5 But the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the city on an uproar; and assaulting the house of Jason, they sought to bring them forth to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus.

8 And they troubled the multitude and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who when they were come thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.

7 But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children:

8 Even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: working night and day, that we might not burden any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

10 Ye are witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe:

11 As ye know how we dealt with each one of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying.

12 To the end that ye should walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own kingdom and glory.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“The word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword.” (Heb. 4: 12.)

TIME.—For Acts A.D. 51; for 1 Thess. A.D. 52.

PLACES.—Thessalonica and Berea.

PERSONS.—Paul, Silas, Bereans, church at Thessalonica, and hostile Jews.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 119: 9-16.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

October 12. M.-----The Word Opposed (Acts 17: 5-11)  
 October 13. T.-----The Word Received (1 Thess. 2: 7-12)  
 October 14. W.-----The Testimony of Scripture (John 5: 39-47)

October 15.	T.	Teaching Accurately (Acts 18: 24-28)
October 16.	F.	Teaching Clearly (Neh. 8: 1-3, 8)
October 17.	S.	Hearing and Obeying the Gospel (James 1: 19-27)
October 18.	S.	The Cleansing Word (Psalm 119: 9-16)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Paul's Preaching in Thessalonica (Verses 1, 5-8).
  - II. The Nobility of the Bereans (Verses 9-11).
  - III. Paul's Willingness to Make Sacrifices (1 Thess. 2: 7, 8).
  - IV. Paul's Unblamable Behavior (Verses 9, 10).
  - V. Paul's Exhortation and Charge (Verses 11, 12).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The incidents that are described in the lesson text taken from Acts follow immediately after those in our last lesson. The time may have been in A.D. 51. The next day after the jailer's conversion Paul and Silas were released from prison. They went to the house of Lydia, where the brethren probably came to see them. After exhorting them they departed. From Acts 17: 2 we learn that Paul spoke three Sabbath days in the synagogue at Thessalonica. From there they went to Berea, where they remained long enough to make believers of many. First Thessalonians was written from Corinth, probably only a few months after Paul left them. (1 Thess. 3: 1-6.)

*Lesson Links.*—Possibly the officers had learned of Paul's Roman citizenship, and were anxious to release them to avoid trouble, since beating Roman citizens was forbidden. Paul, however, refused to go till the authorities came and legally let them out. The officers urged them to leave the city, fearing that Paul might ask for their punishment. The Jews at Thessalonica, learning that Paul and Silas were having success at Berea, went there and stirred up the multitudes. The brethren sent Paul away. When he reached Athens he sent back word for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed. Their remaining when he left Thessalonica is accounted for by the probable fact that the Jews' hatred was especially directed against Paul as the leader. Paul doubtless thought that the young congregation would need the help of Silas and Timothy.

*Lesson Settings.*—The conditions under which Paul began his labors in most new fields were at first favorable. Being a Jew he was, according to their custom, entitled to receive an invitation to speak when he entered a synagogue. This gave him in most cases a chance to deliver at least one speech. But his tact in meeting conditions usually made it possible to speak more than once. The fact that his talks in synagogues converted some and enraged others shows that he did not fail to declare the truth in the fullness so far as it had been revealed at that time. At Thessalonica he spoke three Sabbaths before the opposition drove him out.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Paul's Preaching in Thessalonica (Verses 1, 5-8)

*Journey to Thessalonica.*—Between Philippi and Thessalonica they passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia. The distance traveled was



about 100 miles, and the two towns mentioned divided it into three parts of about equal length. There is no record of their stopping to preach in either Amphipolis or Apollonia. Probably there was no synagogue in either one of them. Perhaps Paul was carrying out literally what he later wrote—the gospel to the Jew first (Rom. 1: 16)—and hastened on to where there was a Jewish population. Then he well knew the advantages of beginning in a synagogue and may not have stopped till he found one. Thessalonica was a large and rich commercial city in Macedonia. His work there was especially successful. A great multitude of devout Greeks and not a few chief women were won to the gospel. The devout Greeks were heathen people who had turned to God and attended the synagogue worship. They may or may not have been adopted into the Jewish family by the rite of circumcision.

*Raised an Uproar.*—As usual the chief enemies of the gospel were Jews. Of course they were unable to overthrow Paul's arguments and became exceedingly angry. With the help of certain "vile fellows of the rabble" they were able to gather a crowd and put the city in an uproar. The base elements of men are usually ready on slight urging to give their help to any kind of lawless disturbance. Those who have some wicked scheme to put over are not ignorant of this fact, and are quick to use any unscrupulous means at hand. The mob assaulted the house of Jason, where Paul and Silas were residing. They sought but did not find them. Possibly being advised of their plan Paul and Silas sought shelter elsewhere.

*"Turned the World Upside Down."*—Probably being enraged by not finding them they turned upon Jason, dragged him and certain brethren before the rulers. Their charge against them was that they had "turned the world upside down." This was, in fact, a true charge, and shows the power of the gospel to affect men if they hear it. It reaches the man who honestly wants the truth; the ungodly sinner is often enraged by its strong denunciations of sin. The sinful world needs to be turned upside down in a spiritual sense.

*"There Is Another King."*—They charged Jason with receiving them and, therefore, being a helper of them. This, of course, was also true. They next charged that the Christians acted "contrary to the decrees of Caesar." This charge was untrue, and could be made to even appear plausible only by placing a false construction on true words. The Christians evidently did teach that there was another king, meaning Jesus, else there would have been no occasion for the false construction of the words. This is direct and decisive proof that Jesus was then king. If so, he was reigning. But his was not an earthly kingdom, and was not therefore in conflict with Caesar's kingdom. Making the impression that he was a rival king was a falsehood, but it disturbed the city. They required security—made Jason and others give bond for peace and then let them go.

## II. The Nobility of the Bereans (Verses 9-11)

*Paul and Silas Sent Away.*—The situation evidently became so tense and dangerous that the brethren decided to send Paul and Silas away. The text says they sent them away "immediately." The fact that they were sent away at night implies it was unsafe for them under such excitement to be seen in daytime. Berea was about fifty miles southwest of Thessalonica. There was a synagogue of



the Jews there, and they went to it on arrival or as soon as they had a meeting.

*"More Noble."*—The nobility of the Bereans consisted in the fact that they were willing to hear and investigate. The text says they "received the word with all readiness of mind." Naturally a readiness to hear and investigate the word led to many believing. That is the result that will always follow in such investigations. The gospel is God's power to save those who believe. No intelligent and honest man can give sincere investigation and remain a disbeliever. Cornelius was another person that really wanted to hear what God had said (Acts 10: 34), and also accepted the truth when presented.

*"Examining the Scriptures."*—No thoughtful man is willing to accept a proposition without investigation as to its truth. In testing Paul's preaching they compared it with what the scriptures said. The New Testament was not written then and the scriptures referred to, of course, were those of the Old Testament. The main point in the preaching was the Messiahship of Jesus, and this was a matter to which their prophets had given much attention. Their examining the scriptures consisted in comparing what the prophets said should come to pass with the things that Paul proved concerning Jesus. The same test is appropriate still, but in addition to the Old Scriptures, we have the record in the New Testament of what actually occurred. One's preaching now must harmonize with that.

### III. Paul's Willingness to Make Sacrifices (1 Thess. 2: 7, 8)

*Gentle as a Nurse.*—In the preceding sections of this lesson we have the spoken word of Paul; in the rest of the lesson his written word to the congregation at Thessalonica. He reminded them that he had not flattered them nor covetously taken any advantage as having authority as an apostle, but rather he had been gentle among them "as when a nurse cherisheth her own children." The expression "her own children" indicates that he refers to the mother caring for her own. Since it was through his labors the congregation was started and they had become children of God, he stood related to them in a way very similar to that of the mother to her children. The mother is so affectionately desirous about her children that she is willing to risk her life for them if need be. He felt the same way toward them as his true children in the Lord.

*Impart the Gospel.*—He had taught them how to become Christians when among them; he was still anxious to impart to them anything pertaining to the gospel of Christ. Just as a mother will seek to give her children the best instruction and safest counsel possible, so he was anxious to impart to them such counsel as would protect them against false teachers and an apostasy from the faith. No mother ever addressed her children with more tenderness, or felt deeper concern for their welfare. His personal sacrifices for the church in general are ample proof that his words here expressed the real state of his heart respecting them.

### IV. Paul's Unblamable Behavior (Verses 9, 10)

*"Labor and Travail."*—Paul reminded the brethren at Thessalonica of the fact that they knew his work among them. They evidently remembered his untiring labor and the pain and endurance that it occasioned. This would enable them to appreciate his exhortations



in his letter, and make them feel that he had a perfect right to give them advice in the Lord's work. He mentioned the fact that he worked night and day in order that he might not be burdensome to any of them while he was preaching to them the gospel. Working night and day may mean that he did some labor during the day and taught them at night, thus losing no time. Or the expression night and day may mean that he was continually laboring and enduring that he might preach the gospel. This language implies that he was at Thessalonica quite a while. Paul preferred to labor with his own hands to support himself than to be a burden to the congregation. He received help gladly when brethren were able and disposed to give it, but willingly worked to supply his own needs when the good of the truth demanded it.

*"Ye Are Witnesses."*—In verse 10 Paul told them that they were witnesses of how he had lived among them, and also that God knew about it. This was equal to saying that he was not urging in his defense anything they did not know personally to be true. That God also knew it shows that he wanted them to understand that he could not deceive God, and would therefore have no motive for deceiving them. He said he had lived holily. He had lived before God in such manner that his conduct would receive divine approval. He had lived righteously before men—had treated all men justly. He had behaved himself unblamably before the believers. His conduct had been such that no charge of inconsistency or wrong could be brought against him and sustained. From a personal standpoint his stay in Thessalonica had been without just criticism. The truth had not been disgraced by any evil conduct. Unless there was something wrong with his teaching on the plan of salvation, there could be no ground for rejecting his letter to them. Of course, there was nothing wrong with his personal teaching, and his letter was accepted and passed on to the world as a part of the divine record.

## V. Paul's Exhortation and Charge (Verses 11, 12)

*"As a Father."*—In preceding verses he said he had been as gentle with them as a mother with her children. In this verse he said he had dealt with each one of them "as a father with his own children." A father not only gives proper advice and counsel, but warns against dangers and tries to protect his children from bad influences and sin. This is just as important as the tenderness of the mother in consoling the child when its troubles come. He said that in thus dealing with them he exhorted them. He doubtless presented to them the real motives a Christian has to be faithful in the divine life. In this he could point out the unreasonableness of failing by showing the incalculable loss that would be sustained. He also encouraged them to steadfastness in meeting the trials that were sure to come. He testified or charged them just as a father would earnestly charge his children to make due preparation else they would fail in the undertaking.

*"To the End."*—All this careful advice and earnest encouragement was to the end that they might walk worthily of God. In view of what God has done for man, it means much to walk worthily of him. Paul reminded them of two facts that show God's greatness. One was he had called them into his kingdom, and the other that they were in that new relationship to enjoy his glory. The kingdom had

already been established and the Thessalonians were in it. This fact is also definitely declared in Col. 1: 13. Being in that kingdom they were, as citizens, entitled to all the honors and privileges that go with citizenship. This includes the ultimate glory of the everlasting kingdom—heaven itself. Those who expect to enjoy that final glory must enter the kingdom now and walk worthily of their heavenly citizenship.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. When the gospel is preached with the force and power it should be, it often does turn "the world upside down." That is just the effect it should have with those who are wrong in doctrine and practice. Preaching that does not effect reformation is usually worthless.

2. Nothing can be more noble than a willingness to hear and learn the truth. Jesus said the truth would make men free. Falsehood puts the human family in the bondage of sin. Only obedience to the truth can save men from eternal death.

3. Christians who are not willing to labor, endure hardships, and sacrifice to benefit the church and save souls are not willing to imitate Paul's example. Those who endure unto the end have the promise of salvation.

4. In serving God nothing is more important than making our lives harmonize with what we teach. An unblamable behavior is a most powerful influence in getting people interested in what is taught.

5. The ultimate purpose in all religious exercises is the salvation of men. The exhortations, encouragements, and command, even the enforcement of discipline, all have for their end the eternal safety of men's souls. This cannot be accomplished unless men enter the kingdom of God.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the effects of Paul's work in Berea, and his departure for Athens. (Acts 17: 12-15.)

2. Describe the condition at Athens, and Paul's feelings on arriving there. (Acts 17: 16-21.)

3. Give the substance of Paul's speech on the Areopagus. (Acts 17: 22-31.)

4. Briefly sketch the facts in 1 Thess. 1: 1-10.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

Describe the journey to Thessalonica.  
Describe Paul's work in Thessalonica.  
Describe the uproar that was raised.  
What charge did they bring against the preachers?  
What did their statement about another king show?

#### II

Why were Paul and Silas sent away?  
What does Luke say of the Bereans?  
What scriptures did they examine?

#### III

Of what did Paul remind them?  
What illustration did he use?  
What did he wish to impart to them?

#### IV

What would they remember about Paul?  
What did he say about his work among them?  
Of what were they witnesses?

#### V

What illustration is used in verse 11?  
How does a father deal with his children?  
What was the purpose of Paul's advice?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?



## Lesson IV—October 25, 1936

## CHRISTIANITY AS LOVE

Acts 18: 1-4; 1 Cor. 13: 1-13.

1 After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth.

2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome: and he came unto them;

3 And because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought: for by their trade they were tentmakers.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks.

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.

2 And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3 And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;

10 But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things.

12 For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.

13 But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13: 13.)

TIME.—For Acts A.D. 51; for First Corinthians A.D. 57.

PLACE.—Corinth.

PERSONS.—Paul and the church at Corinth.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 15: 12-17.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

October 19.	M.	.....	A Labor of Love (Acts 18: 1-4)
October 20.	T.	.....	Love Described (1 Cor. 13: 1-13)
October 21.	W.	.....	"God Is Love" (1 John 4: 7-11)
October 22.	T.	.....	Ten Commandments in Two (Matt. 22: 34-40)
October 23.	F.	.....	The Unpaid Debt (Rom. 13: 8-10)
October 24.	S.	.....	Confessing Christ (John 21: 15-17)
October 25.	S.	.....	Christ Our Model (John 15: 12-17)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Paul's Association with Aquila and Priscilla (Verses 1-4).
  - II. The Necessity of Love Declared (1 Cor. 13: 1-3).
  - III. What Love Will Do (Verses 4-10).
  - IV. The Subject Illustrated (Verses 11, 12).
  - V. That Which Abides (Verse 13).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—Our text from Acts mentions Paul's departure from Athens and his arrival at Corinth. It was mentioned in last lesson that the time of Paul's preaching in Berea was probably in A.D. 51. Just how much time elapsed between last lesson and this is uncertain, because we have no means of knowing how long he remained in Athens. It is probable that it was in the same year as last lesson, and in the latter half of that year. The first Corinthian letter was written from Ephesus about A.D. 57, which was some four years after Paul's first visit to Corinth when the church was founded.

*Lesson Links.*—When Paul reached Athens he reasoned in the synagogue with Jews and devout persons on the Sabbath, but in the market place daily with any who met him. He encountered the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, and was invited to the Areopagus, where he delivered his famous speech on the "Unknown God." A few people believed, but nothing is said about establishing a congregation. Paul remained in Corinth eighteen months (Acts 18: 11) before he started on the return voyage to Judea with Priscilla and Aquila. It was while he was at Ephesus, on his third missionary tour, that he wrote the part of our lesson text that is taken from First Corinthians. The record gives us only a few of the interesting things that doubtless occurred in these busy years in Paul's labors. Evidently their record was unnecessary, else they would have been given. We must curb our curiosity when inspiration has not spoken.

*Lesson Settings.*—Corinth, where the events of the first section of this lesson occurred, was the capital of Achaia, the southern province of Greece. It was located on an isthmus that divides two seas and unites two parts of the province. Its location made it a most important commercial city, and it was therefore very rich. It was noted for its Greek culture and corrupt heathen religion; it was largely given over to the pursuit of material pleasures. It is said to have had a temple of Venus with a thousand priestesses engaged in the most impure practices. It was under such unfavorable conditions that Paul began the work which resulted in one of the most noted congregations of the apostolic period. Only an indomitable courage and tireless efforts could succeed under such circumstances.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Paul's Association with Aquila and Priscilla (Verses 1-4)

"*A Certain Jew.*"—Meeting with little apparent success in Athens Paul decided to enter Corinth, the chief commercial city of Greece. He was a stranger, alone and without means—a gloomy prospect in entering a purely missionary field. Being a great commercial city it had attracted a Jewish population. Probably the providence of God directed his movements so he came in association with Aquila and his wife, who were to learn the truth, obey the gospel, and become fellow laborers with Paul in the Lord's work as well as in their tent-making. This couple were born in Pontus, but had a short time before been driven from Rome by a decree of the Emperor Claudius. They had left Italy and come to Corinth. Being newcomers they would naturally have an interest in others of the same race and in like conditions. Having the same trade was another reason for personal sympathy. This evidently influenced them to offer Paul the privilege



of remaining in their home. Such close association was the best possible means of bringing them under gospel influences. They were doubtless pious people and could easily be made to give consideration to what their fellow craftsman had to say about the teaching of their own prophets. It is no surprise to read in later history about the part they played in teaching Apollos the way of the Lord more perfectly.

*Paul's Preaching.*—Luke says he "reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath." This was according to his custom in entering new fields. It was really the best chance to get the truth before some at the quickest moment. This continued for some time, as is indicated by the expression "every sabbath." He sought to persuade both Jews and Greeks. Some Greeks may have attended the synagogue service, though it is not necessary to suppose that Paul did no teaching except that in the synagogue. His first work in Corinth was "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling" (1 Cor. 2: 3); but, when Timothy and Silas came from Macedonia with a good report of the work in Thessalonica, he was encouraged and boldly testified to the Jews that "Jesus was the Christ." When they as a class blasphemed he turned to the Gentiles. However, Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and many of the Corinthians believed and were baptized. (Acts 18: 5-8.) The Lord encouraged him by a vision in which he was told to be not afraid because the Lord had much people in that city. That did not mean that they were already saved, but only that there were many who would become the Lord's people; called his by anticipation. Paul's labors continued there for eighteen months. During this time he wrote the letters to the Thessalonians.

## II. The Necessity of Love Declared (1 Cor. 13: 1-3)

*Speaking with Tongues.*—Clearly the purpose of the apostle in this chapter is to show the superiority of love over all other gifts or graces. In that early day of the church there were supernaturally gifted people in the congregations. In Corinth they were distracted by divisions into parties, and probably envious of each other because of the gifts possessed. In the last verse of the preceding chapter he had told them to "desire earnestly the greater gifts," yet a most excellent way he would show unto them; that is, commendable as it was to desire to exercise spiritual gifts, he would show them something better. Love as a basic principle would not only make them exercise spiritual gifts in a righteous manner, but would make them treat each other in a just way. This would prevent envy and hatred among them. One of the greatest gifts was speaking in tongues, yet to speak the tongues of other men or even that of angels, without love, would be as worthless as "sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal."

*Prophecy and Faith.*—Paul said that if he had the gift of prophecy so he could know all mysteries and all knowledge, but had not love, he would be nothing. Or, if he had that measure of faith that would enable him to remove mountains, but lacked love, it would be the same. By "knowledge" the apostle means miraculous knowledge, not the simple information that comes by hearing God's word. By "faith" he meant a degree of it that would enable him to perform miracles, not the plain belief that results from hearing evidence. Such miracles without love, if that were possible, would render his efforts vain.

*Charity and Sacrifice.*—The Revised Version is evidently correct in replacing the word "charity" with the word *love*. Giving goods to feed the poor is our meaning of the word *charity*. This, however, is without profit to the giver unless it is prompted by the principle of love. Offering the body to be burned could not benefit one unless it were done with proper love. The principle that prompts true charity and sacrifice is greater than these results, however valuable they may be.

### III. What Love Will Do (Verses 4-10)

*"Love Suffereth Long."*—The apostle very touchingly presents the treatment that love will accord to others. In spite of injustice it will be long-suffering, accounting that the salvation of the wrongdoer will be better than getting absolute justice. It will kindly treat the sinner. It will not envy those who may have greater gifts or be able to do greater works. It will not allow bragging about superiority or permit the assuming of great importance. It will act becomingly toward others, seeking to win people to the truth by making it as pleasing and attractive as possible. Its ministrations will be rendered unselfishly with a thought for the good of others; will not be easily provoked and will not impute evil motives for conduct unless forced to do so by unmistakable facts. It will desire that men be found innocent rather than guilty; it will be sorry for sin. That means that it will not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rather in truth. It beareth or covereth all things; that is, it is disposed and even anxious for sins charged to be found not to exist; for the sinner to be proved innocent rather than guilty. It will be anxious to believe good about all things rather than evil. To that end it will endure all things, or patiently wait and hope for the good to prevail.

*"Love Never Faileth."*—After Paul's vivid description of what love will do for human conduct, it is no surprise to hear him say that it will never fail. Being the fountain whence spring all these fine traits, it could not fail to produce proper results. In its very nature it could not cease to be operative. Prophecies, having a special purpose, were to cease when that purpose was accomplished. Speaking in tongues and miraculous knowledge would also be done away. The purpose of miracles was to confirm the truth. (Mark 16: 20; Heb. 2: 3, 4.) When all the truth needed had been confirmed and reduced to record, then miracles ceased. This was after the New Testament was completed.

*Knowing in Part.*—All the parts of a thing make up the whole. The gospel of Christ was spoken a part at a time, and at just the time that that part was needed. As each part was spoken it was confirmed by any miracle that was necessary. For that reason the inspired teachers knew in part; they prophesied or spoke in part—uttered just that part of the truth that was needed at the time. When all the parts had been spoken, then the perfect—the complete—law had been given; and the church had become the perfect or completed institution. Naturally then the necessity for miraculously confirming parts of the truth no longer existed; hence, the miracles ceased. In Eph. 4: 11-16 Paul shows that the exercise of spiritual gifts was for the purpose of developing the church to its "fullgrown man" state.



#### IV. The Subject Illustrated (Verses 11, 12)

*"As a Child."*—As Paul is in this lesson contrasting the childhood state of the church—its development period—with its manhood state, it is natural that he should use the contrast between the child and the grown man as an illustration. He said that when he was a child he spake, thought, and felt as a child. Each step in his growth brought him to some new fact or truth which his development enabled him to understand. Being a child he appreciated childish things. But when he reached his manhood, he ceased to use such things. So of the church. When it was established on Pentecost, as an institution, it was a child. Little by little—part by part—it grew in knowledge till all the instruction had been given for its complete work—it became a full-grown man.

*"In a Mirror."*—Another illustration is the difference between what is seen through a mirror and that seen in its reality. The mirrors used then were made of polished metal, and the images in them were not clear. In the language of the text the things seen in them were seen "darkly." That indistinct vision was put in contrast with seeing the real thing in its fullness. This illustrated the partial view of the church seen while it was in its development by its partial teaching as compared with the full view after all the teaching had been given. Seeing "face to face" means seeing the thing in its real and full form. At the time Paul was writing he knew in part, or just as parts of the truth were being delivered to him; but when all the truth had been revealed he would know fully even as he was fully known. He would have before him all the truth, which others would know just as well as he.

#### V. That Which Abides (Verse 13)

*"Now Abideth."*—To say that certain things abide implies that other things do not abide or will not continue to abide. He had said that tongues and prophecy would cease. We have seen when that would occur. But the faith, hope, and love that then was abiding would continue to abide after the miracles had accomplished their purpose and had ceased. Since faith comes by hearing God's word, and hope is stimulated by the promises it contains, and love prompts obedience to it, there can be no question about the three remaining throughout the entire Christian dispensation. They are all needed in carrying on the work of the Lord. They operate in accord with the truth, and no miracle is necessary to their effectiveness.

*Greatest Is Love.*—Of these three that were to remain till the church completes its work, one is said to be the greatest. Since love is broader in its extent, it would be greater naturally. It is also possible that it is greater because it can never end, while the other two may. So far as we know, faith will be changed to knowledge in the eternal state. Hope may be supplanted by the enjoyment of the things hoped for. But by no kind of reasoning can we conclude that love will ever end. Probably it will glow with greater warmth than it has ever done in human hearts here. From whatever view we may consider love, its superiority is clearly evident.

#### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. No one with talent for the work can be too poor to preach the gospel. He may be too poor to give his whole time to that special

work, but, like Paul, he can preach some while laboring for support. Paul's example cannot be ignored if one expects to please God.

2. Causes produce natural results. There is no ground for fear that the effects will be bad when the causes are good. A pure fountain does not send forth a corrupt stream. A heart filled with true love will produce right living.

3. Proper living takes thought for things honorable in the sight of all men, as well as those that are just and right within themselves. Such is walking worthily of the calling which we have received.

4. Children grow physically till maturity is reached, when growth ceases. So the church grew in instruction till the apostles finished their work, and since that time no additional information has been given.

5. The test of man's love is his obedience to God. Jesus said: "If a man love me, he will keep my word." (John 14: 23.) Those who do not keep his commandments are deceived if they think they love the Lord. The words of Jesus on this are unmistakable.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe the return trip to Antioch. (Acts 18: 18-23.)
2. Describe the work of Apollos in Ephesus and Greece. (Acts 18: 24-28.)
3. Give Paul's description of spiritual gifts. (1 Cor. 12: 1-11.)
4. Give Paul's argument on unity in 1 Cor. 12: 12-31.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

Under what circumstances did Paul enter Corinth?  
Explain how he became associated with Aquila and Priscilla.  
Describe Paul's first preaching in Corinth. What changed when Timothy and Silas came?  
In what sense did God have people in Corinth?

#### **II**

What was the purpose in writing this chapter?

What was the condition of the congregation at that time?  
To what miracles was love superior?

#### **III**

Explain the things love will do.  
Why will love never fail?  
What is meant by knowing "in part"?

#### **IV**

Explain Paul's illustration about the child.  
What is meant by seeing in a mirror darkly?

#### **V**

What is implied in saying certain things abide?  
What things were not to abide?  
In what senses is love greatest?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?



## Lesson V—November 1, 1936

## LAW, LOVE, AND TEMPERANCE

Rom. 13: 1-14.

1 Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God.

2 Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment.

3 For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same:

4 For he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

6 For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

8 Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law.

11 And this, knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed.

12 The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

13 Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth."* (Rom. 14: 21.)

TIME.—A.D. 57 or 58.

PLACE.—Rome.

PERSONS.—Paul and the church at Rome.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 14: 13-21.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

October 26.	M.	Respecting Law (Rom. 13: 1-14)
October 27.	T.	Controlling Appetite (Dan. 1: 8-13)
October 28.	W.	Training for Efficiency (1 Cor. 9: 24-27)
October 29.	T.	Maintaining Good Morals (Gal. 5: 13-26)
October 30.	F.	Seeking the Common Welfare (1 Pet. 3: 8-12)
October 31.	S.	Warning Against Danger (Isa. 28: 1-3)
November 1.	S.	Causing No One to Stumble (Rom. 14: 13-21)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. Higher Powers Ordained of God (Verses 1-3).
- II. Obedience Necessary (Verses 4-6).
- III. Dues Must Be Rendered to All (Verses 7-10).
- IV. The Value of Self-Control (Verses 11-14).

## Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—The probable date assigned for the writing of Romans is A.D. 57, some placing it in the early part of the year, others the latter. As mentioned in our last lesson the first Corinthian letter was written probably in the latter part of A.D. 57 while Paul was in Ephesus. Romans was written after reaching Corinth. Since Paul probably reached Corinth the first time late in A.D. 51 more than six years elapsed since he founded the congregation there; hence, that much time between this and our last lesson.

*Lesson Links.*—After two years and three months in Ephesus, Paul left for Macedonia because he did not find Titus at Troas as he expected. (2 Cor. 2: 12, 13.) In Macedonia he met Titus and was greatly comforted by the report he brought regarding the church at Corinth. Remaining there a few months he wrote the second letter to the Corinthians. During the time he stayed in Macedonia he gave the congregations much exhortation (Acts 20: 2), after which he went to Corinth for three months, during which time he wrote the words of our lesson.

*Lesson Settings.*—Luke in his record in Acts covers this three months' stay in a single verse (Acts 20: 3), in which he mentions that a plot was laid against Paul by the Jews. He was at the time preparing to go with others to take the contribution to the poor in Judea. This he had urged the brethren in Macedonia and Achaia to provide. His enemies had probably planned to meet him as he started to the sea to sail for Syria and to rob and kill him. Learning of their plot he changed his plans and returned through Macedonia. Evidently the Judaizing element that caused the council at Jerusalem to be held to settle the matter of requiring the Gentiles to observe the Mosaic rites were still disturbing the churches. Paul was anxious to prevent divisions in the congregations, and at the same time to show all Jewish Christians that they had been completely freed from the law. He probably had information that this question was likely to disturb the church at Rome. This doubtless accounts for his writing the letter to them.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. Higher Powers Ordained of God (Verses 1-3)

*Occasion for the Lesson.*—The first eleven chapters of Romans are given to the direct proof that the gospel is God's power to save all men; the remaining chapters are instructions on practical Christian living. The lesson chapter begins with man's duty to civil government. The Jews having been God's special people in the past would naturally resent being in subjection to Gentile nations, and would probably avail themselves of any chance to resist such authority. Heathen nations would make no distinction between Christian Jews and others. Resisting constituted authority would bring trouble, and Paul wanted the brethren to be taught against provoking it. If such teaching as he gave fell into the hands of the Roman authorities, it would be favorable to Christians. However, Paul was not reasoning for policy's sake, for what he said was right in principle, good not only for the Lord's people, but for all men. This is clear from his words that "every soul" should be in subjection.



*"Ordained of God."*—Verse 3 clearly shows that "higher powers" refer to civil authorities. The statement that they "are ordained" of God means that he endorses the principle of civil government for the control and punishment of evildoers. Each nation has its own form of civil law. God does not directly appoint any particular form of government, but he does recognize the principle as a necessity. Governmental authority, therefore, exists by his permission and decree. Christians need its protection from evil men just as much as others, and should be ready to be in subjection to it. No other course is consistent even with fairness and justice.

*Resisting Is Sin.*—Law is necessary as a protection to life and property. But law would be worthless unless subjects were obedient to it. Resisting the law is, therefore, wrong in principle. If wrong for others, surely wrong for Christians. Violating law is a sin against the authority making the law. The dignity and power of the state are rejected when citizens disobey its mandates. This is the vital nature of the sin. But in addition to this Paul says that those who resist the civil powers withstand "the ordinance of God." The sin is twofold: against the state and against God. Since God endorses the principle of civil government, and permits men to formulate their own system, violating those laws is sinning against God. If this plain fact were recognized by all Christians, members of the church would all be law-abiding citizens. Of course, Christians are not required to obey civil law when its commands conflict with plain duty to God. Acts 5: 28, 29; Dan. 6: 7-10 furnish illustrations of this from both Testaments. But that does not conflict with the general principle of obedience to civil authority.

*A Terror to Evil.*—Civil laws sometimes may be unjust, but they are not a terror except to the evildoer. Those who obey the law have no fear of the officer who is appointed to enforce it. In fact, in such cases the citizen has the praise of the officer. Officers who do evil are themselves criminals against the law they are appointed to uphold. They are not the ones Paul has before his mind. He is teaching obedience to the law, not a criminal perversion of it.

## II. Obedience Necessary (Verses 4-6)

*A Minister for Good.*—A reason why obedience is necessary is that an officer who justly enforces the law is "a minister of God to thee for good." It is God's design that civil law, properly enforced, shall be for the good of man; if so, most certainly so for those whose profession is righteous living. But, if one do evil, he may expect that the sword will not be borne in vain. The punishment for his disobedience will be given. Since God recognizes the principle of law, the officer is deemed God's minister, "an avenger for wrath"—to inflict that punishment.

*Why Be in Subjection?*—Paul assigns two reasons why we should be in subjection: First, "because of the wrath"; that is, we should obey the law to avoid the punishment to be inflicted upon evildoers. This is reason enough to prevent anyone violating the law. In reality, that is the only reason that civil law offers as a restraint against crime. Paul offers as a sacred reason that we should obey "for conscience' sake." This is a strong appeal to those who are actuated by the high motive of wanting to do right. All Christians are presumed to be in that class. A good conscience can have no peace



under the weight of guilt for rejecting rightful authority. This is especially applicable when the sin committed is against God as well as man.

*An Example.*—For the reasons assigned Paul said they should pay tribute as well as be obedient to other laws. The same authority that was back of other laws was back of that requiring taxes. Christians enjoy the same protection as other citizens, and should for that reason pay their part of taxes. Some might have felt it was all right to withhold the tribute, but Paul's argument would not allow any such exceptions. The officers were continually giving service to protect citizens, and they in turn were always under obligations to contribute to the government's support.

### III. Dues Must Be Rendered to All (Verses 7-10)

*General Application.*—After giving a specific example Paul extends the principle to other things. He says, "Render to all their dues." If the principle applied to one part of the law, it would apply to all parts. He then mentions other things, including the "tribute" which he had referred to in the preceding verse. The words custom, fear, and honor here probably all have reference to the various kinds of obedience to civil authority in paying all kinds of assessments made against citizens.

*"Owe No Man Anything."*—This general statement does not mean that it is wrong to put oneself under obligation to another, but rather that no obligation shall be assumed that one will not pay. In the preceding verse the apostle says, "Render to all their dues." One of these is to pay tribute. This is done because it is owed. On the principle of common honesty no debts should be contracted that one will not pay. But in contrast with the debts owed the civil government, which the text says we must pay, we owe humanity—and especially the brethren—no debt but perpetual love; or we owe nothing except to love men. Those who love their neighbors have fulfilled the law on that point. In material debts when the obligation is discharged, the debt is paid. But in the debt of love every payment perpetuates the obligation. We continue to pay, but never decrease the obligation. Hence, the thought is that we are to continually owe the debt of love, and continue to pay it.

*Law Illustrated.*—The law is to "love thy neighbor as thyself." This is a practical proposition, meaning that one must do unto his neighbor as he would have his neighbor do to him. This will prevent stealing, killing, committing adultery, covetousness, and all other similar crimes. It is for this reason that the apostle declares that love fulfills the law. It is the principle that, if practiced, will make one render obedience to all laws affecting the welfare of his fellow man. The text says plainly that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor." The principle of love must be abandoned before one can do evil to another. When that is done he ceases to admit the debt of love, and rejects the teaching of this text.

### IV. The Value of Self-Control (Verses 11-14)

*A Reason Stated.*—The apostle reminded them that since they knew the time and circumstances in which they were placed, it was time for them to become active as one who is roused out of sleep. Their salvation was said to be nearer than when they believed. In-



dividually that would be true each day that one lived the Christian life. Their eternal salvation would be fixed at the time they died. That is true with all, and each day we come nearer to that time than we were when we first believed. Knowing that fact they were exhorted to become fully awake in the Lord's service.

*"The Day Is at Hand."*—The text says the "night is far spent." This probably refers to the ignorance that existed before Christ came. When Paul wrote these words the church had been established and most of that ignorance had been dispelled; as a night of darkness it was nearly gone—only a little more truth to be revealed. The day, which meant the complete light, was at hand. Having such light in which to walk, they were exhorted to "cast off the works of darkness" and "put on the armor of light." They were to reject all such evil practices as he had mentioned, things which they had done when they were walking in the darkness, and were to protect themselves with the armor of righteousness.

*"As in the Day."*—They were to walk becomingly. This meant that their conduct should be in keeping with their profession, and with the glory of the church as Christ's spiritual body. Since they were in the light, and especially as they professed to walk in it, they should walk as those who viewed them might have reason to expect. Those who walk in the day—in the light—expect themselves to be seen. They could not then be guilty of such evils as are usually committed in the darkness of night. The apostle specifies some things that would naturally be carried on at night. He said they should not be guilty of revelling, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, strife, or jealousy. Revellings mean impure carousals consisting of feasts with singing. Drunkenness included drunken festivals to the gods. Chambering and wantonness referred to filthy and abominable practices. Strife and jealousy would include any and all kinds of quarrels and disturbances leading to division. Of course, true Christians could not for a moment tolerate such terrible evils, and much less could they practice them. It would seem unnecessary to even mention such vile matters as a warning to Christians, did we not know that many of the converts came from people guilty of such crimes. Then we know that human nature is weak and temptations are strong.

*Put on Christ.*—This is a figurative expression that means to imitate him, be filled with his spirit. This, of course, we will do when we let his word dwell in us richly. Then we can easily follow the rest of the instruction not to make "provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." All this means that we will not be guilty of engaging in any of the terrible sins mentioned in the preceding verse.

## THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Things done may be attributed to God in three distinct senses: He may do them by the exercise of his own divine power; he may command them to be done by one of his creatures; or he may permit them to be done by man even though man may be personally in rebellion against him. The last is often true, but man's freedom requires it.

2. Without obedience any law becomes worse than useless. Nothing is more clearly taught in the Bible than the necessity of obedience. The principle of justice requires that the law be applied to all with-

out any partiality. This is true not only in the law of induction into the church, but also in reference to the laws of Christian living.

3. The same principle of right that makes it necessary to pay debts to our neighbors makes it necessary to pay the debt we owe to God. Jesus said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." (Luke 20: 25.) Why do men admit their obligations to each other, but deny them to God?

4. Temperance ordinarily means self-control, and has a much broader application than to the use of intoxicating liquors. Drunkenness is an evil, but there are many others besides. Self-control can and should be exercised in two ways. Place the proper limit and restraint upon things that are right, but prohibit entirely the thing that is wrong. Rigid self-control can do it; nothing else can.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Briefly relate the story of how the apostles were imprisoned because they refused to obey the commands of the authorities. (Acts 5: 17-32.)

2. Give the substance of Daniel's refusing to obey the king's commandment and its results. (Dan. 6: 4-28.)

3. Give Jesus' parable on the subject of being neighborly. (Luke 10: 25-37.)

4. Give the lessons on love that Jesus taught his apostles in the following passages: John 14: 21-24; 15: 9-15.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### *I*

What is the probable reason for this lesson?

How does God ordain civil authorities?

Why do those disobeying civil law sin against God?

To whom is law a terror?

#### *II*

How is a civil officer "a minister of God"?

What reason is there for submitting to the law?

How does Paul illustrate the subject?

#### *III*

What is Paul's next step in argument?

What is meant by "owe no man anything"?

How does love fulfill the law?

#### *IV*

What reason is assigned for waking up to duty?

What is meant by "day" and "night" here?

How were they to walk?

What is meant by putting on Christ?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

*Lesson VI—November 8, 1936*

### THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE

Acts 19: 8-12, 18-20; Eph. 6: 13-20.

8 And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.



10 And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

12 Inasmuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out.

18 Many also of them that had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds.

19 And not a few of them that practised magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20 So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed.

13 Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,

19 And on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.

20 For which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might." (Eph. 6: 10.)

**TIME.**—For Acts A.D. 53 to 56, as Paul remained about three years in Ephesus; for Ephesian letter A.D. 62.

**PLACES.**—Corinth, Jerusalem, and Ephesus.

**PERSONS.**—Paul and Silas, and the church at Ephesus.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—2 Cor. 1: 3-11.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

November 2.	M.	.....	A Militant Ministry (Acts 19: 8-12)
November 3.	T.	.....	A Decisive Victory (Acts 19: 13-20)
November 4.	W.	.....	A Good Armor (Eph. 6: 10-20)
November 5.	T.	.....	A New Attitude (Eph. 5: 5-16)
November 6.	F.	.....	A Brave Minister (2 Cor. 6: 4-10)
November 7.	S.	.....	A Bitter Enemy (1 Pet. 5: 6-10)
November 8.	S.	.....	A Great Deliverance (2 Cor. 1: 3-11)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. Paul's First Labor in Ephesus (Verses 8-10).
  - II. The Preaching Confirmed by Miracles (Verses 11, 12).
  - III. Results of Paul's Labor in Ephesus (Verses 18-20).
  - IV. The Christian Armor (Eph. 6: 13-17).
  - V. Prayer, Watchfulness, and Perseverance (Verses 18-20).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

#### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—This lesson follows in order the fourth lesson which dealt with Paul's first work in Corinth. That was on his second missionary journey. This lesson refers to his work in Ephesus which he reached not long after starting the third journey. He arrived

in Ephesus probably in the latter part of A.D. 53, something near two years after he went to Corinth. This lesson covers the larger part of his two years and three months in Ephesus. The letter to the Ephesians was written probably in A.D. 61 or 62. This was about nine years after Paul began his work there.

*Lesson Links.*—After the events recorded in the fourth lesson Paul returned to Antioch from which place the journey was started. He remained there "some time," the record says, before starting on the journey that brought him to Ephesus. Luke says that previous to his arrival in Ephesus the eloquent Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria, had been there and did much teaching. But knowing only the baptism of John he had been instructed by Priscilla and Aquila in the way of the Lord more perfectly. (Acts 18: 24-28.) He had departed for Greece before Paul reached Ephesus. On arrival Paul found certain ones who had submitted to John's baptism (possibly at the hands of Apollos) whom he baptized "into the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19: 7.) John's baptism was no longer applicable after Jesus had commanded baptism in his own name. These twelve had doubtless been baptized after the great commission became the law; hence, their baptism was not valid. Since the baptism of John is not valid, those who submit to it, if there be such, should be baptized into Christ.

*Lesson Settings.*—Ephesus was a famous city of Asia Minor near its western coast. It was the location of one of the seven churches mentioned in Revelation. On the second tour Paul doubtless intended to visit Ephesus (Acts 16: 6-9), but was forbidden by the Spirit. In addition to the usual Gentile wickedness in morals, it was the seat of the temple of the goddess Diana. As in Corinth Paul here found the opposition that sin generally presents against the truth. Like Corinth it had many Jews in its population as is indicated by Paul's preaching in their synagogue. He faced in Ephesus what was usual in the Gentile cities of that time.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Paul's First Labor in Ephesus (Verses 8-10)

*"Reasoning and Persuading."*—On entering Ephesus Paul corrected the mistake of the disciples who were there before attempting other work. Then he pursued his usual course by going into the synagogue to do his first preaching. The scenes there were very much as they had been in the synagogues at other places. Paul continued this way of preaching for three months, boldly reasoning and trying to persuade them as to the things concerning the kingdom of God. This meant that he explained to them that their prophecies had been fulfilled in Christ and the establishment of his kingdom. This accords with the fact that at Thessalonica the Jews charged him with preaching another king, one Jesus. (Acts 17: 7.) In Samaria, Philip preached the things concerning the kingdom of God. (Acts 8: 12.) The common theme of the preaching was the kingdom of Jesus, not the Jewish one.

*"Hardened and Disobedient."*—The earnest persistence with which Paul pressed the claims of Jesus drew opposition and evilspeaking against the Way. This meant that the enemies of the truth aroused so much antagonism that Paul found it necessary to quit the synagogue and find a place elsewhere to preach. At Corinth he was given



the privilege of preaching in the private house of Justus; in Ephesus he was granted the use of the schoolhouse of Tyrannus. When the opposition became unbearable, there was nothing else to do but to find another meetinghouse for the disciples. The church was referred to as the "Way," because it was the institution by which men were represented as coming to God.

*Extent of Influence.*—The text says that Paul continued this reasoning daily. Probably the very fact that he was put out of the synagogue by the Jews may have made the Gentile more interested in his teaching. This work in the school of Tyrannus continued two whole years. This resulted in the word being heard by all those dwelling in Asia. This probably means that the gospel story went all over that section. It is not necessary to suppose that Paul personally preached in every part, but rather that people from all parts of the country came to Ephesus, heard Paul preach, learned the truth, and took the gospel back home with them. He was successful in reaching both Jews and Greeks.

## II. The Preaching Confirmed by Miracles (Verses 11, 12)

*"Special Miracles."*—There is nothing unusual about the preaching being confirmed by miracles, for that is what Jesus promised the apostles when he gave the commission. (Mark 16: 20.) Moreover, there was a variety of miracles—signs, wonders, and powers. The word used in this text means "powers." The thought is that God used powers of no ordinary kind; or rather with miraculous powers did some unusual things. Divine power is unlimited and uses whatever is best under the circumstances. What was done at that time was so unusual that Luke felt that the matter should be mentioned.

*Miracles Described.*—It was a common and natural custom for the sick to be brought to the apostles or for the apostles to go to them. In this case handkerchiefs or aprons taken from Paul's body were sent to the sick. Though there could be nothing in the garments to cure disease, they could be made a medium through which the power might be used. Jesus sent the blind man to wash in the pool. The water did not open his eyes or have any inherent power to produce the result, yet the power was applied when the means were used. So in the case of the articles sent from Paul's body. The known fact that the handkerchiefs and aprons had no miraculous power in them was evidence that the cures were by divine power.

*Diseases and Evil Spirits.*—The language here makes a clear distinction between disease and evil spirits. However the mystery about evil spirits may be insolvable by us, or however little we may know about the subject, the New Testament makes it perfectly evident that they were not a kind of disease. They were some sort of evil intelligences able to understand and speak. Our inability to understand them is no more strange than our inability to understand the nature or ministry of good angels. In fact, we understand very little about what is really the case in the immaterial realm.

## III. Results of Paul's Labor in Ephesus (Verses 18-20)

*Many Believed.*—Wicked men often become desperate in the face of facts, and hypocrites resort to dangerous experiments to gain their ends. Seven exorcists had been exposed even by the evil spirits they attempted to cast out. When this became known great fear



fell upon both Jews and Greeks which caused the name of the Lord to be magnified. This resulted in many becoming believers. Jesus required not only belief, but repentance and baptism as well. The many becoming believers did not mean that they only believed in the name of Jesus, but also that they obeyed. They were obedient believers. They acknowledged their past evil deeds, and some who used "magical arts" brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. That was evidence of genuine repentance. They wished to destroy the instruction that they had of these secret arts. The price of the books was "fifty thousand pieces of silver." These coins were probably worth about fifteen cents, making the whole amount about seven thousand five hundred dollars.

*Grew and Prevailed.*—The general effect is stated in these words: "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed." Clearly this meant that the word was successfully preached, and it grew in the sense that more and more became obedient to it. It was probably about this time that Paul wrote to the Corinthians that "a great door and effectual is opened unto me." (1 Cor. 16: 9.) He also said that there were many adversaries. This last may have been what he meant when he said he "fought with beasts at Ephesus." (1 Cor. 15: 32.) The word of God is always successful when it gets a fair chance in meeting opposition. It prevails when its friends present it faithfully against all kinds of false doctrines. No real gains are made for the truth when efforts are made to compromise with error. The preaching in Ephesus created such a stir that Paul felt that it was necessary to leave for a time.

#### IV. The Christian Armor (Eph. 6: 13-17)

*"The Whole Armor."*—Paul was in the Roman prison when he wrote the words of this text. Doubtless with vivid recollection of struggles and dangers when he, as a soldier of the cross, had personally defended the truth in Ephesus several years before, he now wrote the brethren there to be strong in the power of the Lord's might and to put on the whole armor of God. He reminded them that they did not contend against flesh and blood, but that they must be prepared to stand against the "wiles" of the devil and resist spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. For that reason they would need the whole armor to be able to stand "in the evil day"; that is, when the trial or test came. Still viewing their duty from a military standpoint, they were to be able to maintain their position as defenders of the gospel. This meant that they should understand their ground thoroughly and should not allow themselves to be driven from it. Having done all to stand carries the idea that no preparation for success should be overlooked or omitted.

*The Armor Named.*—The armor of the Greek and Roman soldiers of his day was the picture Paul had in his mind. The girdle surrounded the body and from it the sword was suspended. The Christian soldier's girdle is truth. Without a knowledge of truth he is wholly unprepared to defend himself or repulse the enemy. By the truth we learn who our enemies are and how they will probably attack us. No man ignorant of Christ's teaching can successfully defend the church. Righteousness is the Christian's breastplate. Unless a Christian is righteous—makes his practice harmonize with his profession—he will not be able to ward off the darts of Satan's



soldiers. The vital part of his nature will be vulnerable. The feet of the soldier must always be ready to march. The Christian likewise should always be walking in the gospel way. Over all the shield was carried to protect any part of the body by diverting a dart from any direction. Faith as the Christian's shield will always be ready to be turned against anything that might damage the church by affecting the lives of members. The Christian's helmet we learn from 1 Thess. 5: 8 is hope. The promised victory over sin encourages the Lord's soldier to fight on in spite of temporary or apparent defeats. All these pieces of armor are defensive weapons; the word of God, as the sword of the Spirit, is all we have with which to defeat the enemy. It is all we need for that purpose.

### V. Prayer, Watchfulness, and Perseverance (Verses 18-20)

*"At All Seasons."*—Paul still presents the Christian life as a warfare. The fighting should be done at all seasons with "prayer and supplication." In God's service we should always remember that we are dependent upon his favors for success. This dependence we should always recognize with proper supplication. We cannot succeed if we are really fighting without God's approval and help. It should also be in the Spirit—in harmony with the Spirit's teaching. Otherwise our efforts must ultimately fail. This recognizing of God's power must be at all seasons. If we need it today, we will need it each following day. An army not only needs leadership one day; it needs it every day.

*"Watching Thereunto."*—Regardless of any and all help we may receive from God, we must realize our personal responsibility. We must be watchful to protect ourselves against enemy attacks. Soldiers cannot shirk individual responsibility. This watchfulness must be with "all perseverance." Nothing short of victory will satisfy a good soldier. He will persistently strive to win a personal victory, but he will do everything possible to make his army a success also. He will want "all the saints" to be successful soldiers.

*Paul's Entreaty.*—Paul realized that, notwithstanding the fact that he was an "ambassador" with the power of inspiration, he still needed the prayers of the saints in his behalf. He was a prisoner, but did not want that misfortune to prevent his boldly opening his mouth to make known the mystery of the gospel.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Paul did not consider the fact that he was privileged to speak in the Jewish synagogue any reason why he should fail to declare the truth regarding Jesus being the Christ. When opposition refused to permit that, he left the synagogue for a place where he could preach it. His example should be followed by all preachers now.

2. The apostles were compelled to confirm their preaching by the miracles which they were able to perform. Preachers now can prove their teaching is correct only by showing that it is in accord with what the apostles taught. There are no miracles now.

3. Preaching that does not lead to a reformation of life is not the kind that was done by the apostles. Accepting the truth as a theory is of little value unless our conduct corresponds with what we profess and teach.

4. Preparation is vitally necessary to the success of soldiers in temporal warfare; it is nonetheless so in the spiritual warfare. Soldiers must not only prepare for their own protection, but to be able to defeat the enemy when attacks are made. Many Christians are not prepared for either.

5. Nothing is more important in providing for one's defense than to recognize his own weakness and dependence upon others. God's wisdom to guide and his mercy to protect are both necessary if we are to be certain of victory. Success often depends upon fellow soldiers.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe in detail the rebaptism of the twelve at Ephesus. (Acts 19: 1-7.)

2. Give the speech made by Demetrius, and its effect upon the people of Ephesus. (Acts 19: 23-34.)

3. Give the speech made to the mob by the town clerk. (Acts 19: 35-41.)

4. Discuss Paul's instruction on the Christian life as a warfare as found in 2 Tim. 2: 1-13.

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### *I*

Describe Paul's first work in Ephesus.

What effect did his preaching have?

What was the extent of the influence of his work?

How did it reach all Asia?

#### *II*

What kind of miracles did the apostles perform?

How are the miracles here described?

What clear distinction is made in verse 12?

#### *III*

How does the truth sometimes affect wicked men?

How were many affected at Ephesus?

What is meant by grew and prevailed?

#### *IV*

What did Paul remember in writing about soldiers?

Why are Christians to put on the whole armor?

Name and describe the armor.

Distinguish between the sword and the rest of the armor.

#### *V*

When should soldiers be prayerful and watchful?

Why should they be such?

What entreaty did Paul make?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

*Lesson VII—November 15, 1936*

### THE HEROISM OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

Acts 21: 12, 13, 27-34; Rom. 9: 1-5.

12 And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

27 And when the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude and laid hands on him,



28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and moreover he brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place.

29 For they had before seen with him in the city Trophimus the Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together; and they laid hold on Paul, and dragged him out of the temple: and straightway the doors were shut.

31 And as they were seeking to kill him, tidings came up to the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion.

32 And forthwith he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down upon them: and they, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, left off beating Paul.

33 Then the chief captain came near, and laid hold on him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and inquired who he was, and what he had done.

34 And some shouted one thing, some another, among the crowd: and when he could not know the certainty for the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the castle.

1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit,

2 That I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart.

3 For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

4 Who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;

5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."* (John 15: 13.)

TIME.—About A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Rome.

PERSONS.—Paul, some brethren, church at Rome, and hostile Jews.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—2 Cor. 4: 7-15.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

November 9.	M.	.....Duty Calls (Acts 21: 10-15)
November 10.	T.	.....The Need of Courage (Acts 21: 27-34)
November 11.	W.	.....Giving Self for Others (Rom. 9: 1-5)
November 12.	T.	.....The Strength of Conviction (Acts 20: 22-27)
November 13.	F.	.....Loyalty to Christ (Matt. 10: 34-39)
November 14.	S.	.....Following Christ (John 15: 18-25)
November 15.	S.	.....Victory Through Christ (2 Cor. 4: 7-15)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

Introductory Study.

- I. Paul's Willingness to Die for the Gospel (Verses 12, 13).
  - II. Paul Seized in the Temple (Verses 27-30).
  - III. The People Attempt to Kill Paul (Verses 31-34).
  - IV. Paul's Deep Sympathy with the Jews (Rom. 9: 1-3).
  - V. God's Favors upon the Israelites (Verses 4, 5).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—After the uproar occasioned by Paul's preaching against all gods made by hands, recorded in Acts 19: 23-41, Paul left Ephesus. This was after the events recorded in our last lesson, and probably at the beginning of A.D. 56. He passed through Macedonia to Corinth getting back to Miletus, where he met the Ephesian elders early in A.D. 57. He reached Jerusalem that spring or early

summer, making about a year and a half between this and the last lesson. As mentioned in previous lessons, he wrote the book of Romans while at Corinth in the year A.D. 57.

*Lesson Links.*—In another lesson we traced the movements of Paul from Ephesus to Corinth by way of Macedonia. His return through Macedonia accounts for the fact that he passed through Philippi and spent a Lord's day with the disciples in Troas (Acts 20: 5-7), and was with them in the breaking of bread. Sailing from there he stopped, as already mentioned, at Miletus and sent for the elders at Ephesus. He gave them what he supposed at the time was his last charge regarding their work in overseeing the church. (Acts 20: 17-35.) Leaving there he sailed past Cyprus and landed at Tyre, where he spent seven days with the disciples. Leaving there he stopped at Cesarea and was entertained in the home of Philip, the evangelist, who was one of the seven selected as deacons at Jerusalem. (Acts 6: 1-6.) The text says this man had four virgin daughters that prophesied. This is the first time we have heard of Philip since he preached to the eunuch more than twenty years before as is recorded in Acts 8.

*Lesson Settings.*—Paul left Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, which was seven days after the Passover (Acts 20: 6). If we count all the days mentioned, we may be reasonably sure that they reached Jerusalem by Pentecost. This feast filled the city with a great crowd, and probably accounts in some measure for the Jews becoming so stirred up that they attempted to kill Paul. He was especially anxious to reach the city, for he wanted to deliver the contribution he had persuaded the Gentile churches to send to Judea. He wanted to know whether it would be kindly received, and whether the Jewish brethren would be pleased with his labors among the Gentiles. It was a tense occasion when very serious things could happen. In fact, the most serious event of Paul's life so far was but a few hours ahead. Our lesson text will give the facts.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Paul's Willingness to Die for the Gospel (Verses 12, 13)

*The Prediction.*—While they remained some days in the house of Philip in Cesarea, Agabus, who was a prophet, came down from Jerusalem and declared that the Spirit said Paul would be bound by the Jews at Jerusalem and delivered to the Gentiles. This so affected the brethren that they besought Paul not to go. Even Paul's traveling companions now joined in the appeal to prevent his entering Jerusalem. They doubtless were thinking of his personal safety, while he was considering the welfare of the church in general. The dramatic way in which Agabus delivered his prediction made a deep impression on the brethren. Their insistence deeply moved the apostle, but did not change his purpose to fulfill that part of his ministry involved in delivering the offering sent by the Gentile churches.

*Bondage or Death.*—With his traveling companions urging him not to go, Paul had none to encourage him. But with his usual confidence in God and determination to do what he thought was best, he insisted that he was willing to take the consequences. He told them that their weeping was breaking his heart—making the burden still heavier to bear. He then assured them, if necessary to accomplish his work, that he was ready not to be bound only, but also to



die for the name of the Lord Jesus. He had already on one occasion learned what it was to be bound and imprisoned. He was ready to be again, if necessary to accomplish his work. The general teaching is that servants of God should be "faithful unto death" (Rev. 2: 10); that is, they should be faithful, if forced to die in doing so. It is worthy of remark that we never think of Paul as having any other mind on the subject. The brethren realized that they could not change his determination to go, and ceased to plead with him. They took the proper view of the matter, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

## II. Paul Seized in the Temple (Verses 27-30)

*Stirred Up the Multitude.*—From verses 17-26 it is evident that some of the Jewish Christians were still observing certain Jewish rites, and they had become prejudiced against Paul because of his teaching in reference to the law. His work among the Gentiles had not helped their feelings any. Of course, the unbelieving Jews would be bitter against him, if he said anything against observing any part of the law. When they saw him in the temple with some who were being purified from a vow, the occasion was presented to raise a howl against him. Certain Jews from Asia were the leaders in stirring up the multitude. They were from the province of which Ephesus was the capital, and may have been influenced in their hatred of him from his work there. They rushed upon him crying for help to take him. Mobs do not stop to investigate charges against their victims, but vent their rage without mercy.

*The Charges.*—They said he had taught against the people, the law, and the temple. It was an easy matter to misrepresent his teaching and make that the basis for the charge. He had taught that they were not under the law (Gal. 3: 24, 25; Rom. 7: 4-6), and that in Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything (Gal. 5: 5). But he had said nothing discourteous against Moses or the law, and had endorsed circumcision for Jews but refused it for Gentiles. (Acts 16: 3; Gal. 2: 3-5.) Whether Paul then considered the matter of assisting those Nazarites in being made free from their vow an indifferent matter, or it was a thing about which the Spirit had not at that time directed him into all truth, is immaterial. His presence in the temple with them was sufficient proof that the charge against him was not true as they meant it.

*A False Statement.*—They further asserted that he had defiled the holy place by bringing Greeks into the temple. Evidently it would have been considered defiling the holy place to bring Gentiles into the inner court, but they had no evidence that Paul had done that. They previously saw Trophimus, the Ephesian, with him in the city, and they took it for granted he had brought him into the forbidden place. Without stopping to investigate this charge their cries were enough to stir the city into a mob that rushed upon Paul and dragged him into the street. The doors of the inner court were quickly closed lest it be defiled with blood that probably was about to be shed. It should be remembered that only regularly consecrated priests were permitted in the temple building proper. Paul and the Nazarites were in the inner court that was between the temple and the court allowed to the Gentiles.



### III. The People Attempt to Kill Paul (Verses 31-34)

*Chief Captain Notified.*—There was a castle overlooking the temple where was stationed a garrison of Roman soldiers to preserve peace in the city. The chief captain was their commander. In their mad fury they had dragged Paul into the street and were seeking to kill him. Their purpose would easily have been accomplished in a short time, if the soldiers had not saved him. Probably those on guard duty sent word at once to the commander, who ordered him taken from the mob. The chief captain at first had no reason to consider Paul other than a criminal, but knew that he should have protection from those who were attempting to kill him. Common legal justice required that much for anyone. Commanders know the mob spirit must be put down.

*Paul Rescued.*—Realizing the danger of murder, the chief captain quickly took his soldiers and ran to Paul's rescue. When the mob saw the soldiers, they ceased beating Paul. Not knowing the nature of the disturbance and who was responsible, the chief captain came to Paul and commanded him to be bound. This served two good purposes: If Paul were a real criminal, it would prevent his getting away, and allow his case investigated; if not a criminal, it would protect him from the fury of the mob. In fact, it was the best thing that could have happened to Paul at that time. He then asked Paul what he had done. He supposed that there must be some charge or there would not have been such an uproar. But the crowd kept shouting, some one thing and some another, and the confusion was so great that the chief captain could not learn what caused the uproar, or what part Paul had in it. He decided to put the prisoner in the castle and wait for more favorable circumstances to examine him. In Paul's case a prison on several occasions became a protection from his enemies.

### IV. Paul's Deep Sympathy with the Jews (Rom. 9: 1-3)

*Declares His Sincerity.*—Paul had asserted that they were no longer under the law, and had boldly preached the gospel to the Gentiles. He wanted his kinsmen in the flesh to know that such teaching did not mean that he no longer had any affection for his people. He very solemnly assures them that what he was about to say was the truth. Saying the truth "in Christ" probably means as a Christian, or in harmony with what a Christian should say, "I speak the truth." The additional statement, "I lie not," is doubtless used to emphasize the thought, and thus give additional assurance. Saying his "conscience" bore witness meant that he was honestly stating what his conscience demanded that he state. The further expression "in the Holy Spirit" indicates that his conscience had been taught by the Holy Spirit, and was therefore right in its decisions. Unless so educated he might have been honest and yet wrong.

*Great Sorrow.*—What Paul wanted his Jewish brethren to understand was that he had deep sympathy for them. It was a "great sorrow" and "unceasing pain" to him to realize that they were not receiving the blessings of God in Christ which he knew had been prepared for those who would believe. They were the people through whom Christ came, and the ones to whom he was first offered, and it was a source of unceasing grief that they refused to accept him.



**Paul's Wish.**—As a way of showing his genuine affection for the Jews, Paul asserts that he "could wish" himself an anathema from Christ for them. That means he would be willing to take their place and bear the punishment, if it were possible for them not to be rejected. He does not say positively that he did wish it, but that he "could" make such a wish if it were right and possible. Neither of which is true of course. But the language does show the limits to which Paul would go to save his brethren in the flesh, if it could be done. This was clear proof that he was not prejudiced against them.

### V. God's Favors Upon the Israelites (Verses 4, 5)

**"Whose Is the Adoption."**—Instead of speaking anything disparaging concerning his kinsman, Paul gladly mentions the signal honors that they had enjoyed for centuries as the special people of God. "Who are Israelites" is the first one referred to. They were the descendants of Israel, the father of the twelve tribes. This was an honor of no mean significance. "Whose is the adoption" is the second item mentioned. Literally this word means *sonship*, and expresses the idea that they had been adopted into the special relationship of sons of God. Naturally they would be the ones to rest under the "glory" of God and have made with them the covenants of God's mercy and love. Or, it may mean that God's glorious covenants had been made with them. To them in their ancestors had been given the law at Mount Sinai with the most majestic display of divine power. No such favors had been bestowed upon any other people.

**"And the Promises."**—Besides all these God had given to them the promises that involved their own prosperity as a nation, but also the coming Messiah in whom they had so much interest. They were of the fathers, which meant they had descended from the most illustrious men in the world. Finally he told them that they were the people of whom Christ was to come. That meant that their Messiah was to be born among the Jews. If so, whenever he came, he was to be a Jew. If that were true, and he preached to them that Jesus was that Messiah (Christ), he was only preaching what had to be true when the Messiah did come. This logically prepared a place for the argument that Jesus really was the Messiah. In this passage Paul showed fully that he had not preached the abrogation of the law because he had any ill will toward his own brethren in the flesh.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. It is always pleasant to please the brethren, but this should never be done, if the service of the Lord will be damaged. It is also pleasant to escape sufferings and punishment, but this must not be done if the truth is to suffer in consequence.

2. Even the truth may sometimes be stated in such way as to convey a false idea. Basing a positive assertion upon a supposition only is one of the worst ways to misrepresent the truth. If a thing *may* not be true, then it should never be asserted as a positive fact.

3. Those who try to serve God by opinion will always be displeased with those who serve him by faith. True followers of Christ will never persecute others; fanatical religionists will.

4. Wisdom will always present disagreeable truths in the most pleasant way possible. Paul was a master at the art. He told the

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.

30 And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him.

31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.

6 For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him.

10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life;

11 And not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4: 13.)

**TIME.**—Paul's first Roman imprisonment A.D. 61 or 62.

**PLACE.**—Rome.

**PERSONS.**—Paul, the Jews at Rome, and church at Rome.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Eph. 3: 14-21.

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

November 16.	M.	Paul's Ministry in Rome (Acts 28: 16-24)
November 17.	T.	Reconciled Through Christ (Rom. 5: 6-11)
November 18.	W.	Alive Unto God (Rom. 6: 12-14)
November 19.	T.	Sufficiency in Christ (Phil. 4: 12-19)
November 20.	F.	"More Than Conquerors" (Rom. 8: 32-37)
November 21.	S.	The Christian's Possessions (1 Cor. 3: 18-23)
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#### Introductory Study.

- I. Paul Invites the Jews to Hear Him (Verses 16-20).
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- Thoughts for Meditation.

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**Chronology.**—After Paul's arrest, as described in our last lesson, he was sent for safekeeping to Felix, the Roman governor at Cesarea. Felix kept Paul two years, expecting money would be given for his release. Failing in this, he left Paul in bonds when he was succeeded by Festus. (Acts 24: 26, 27.) It was probably less than one month when Paul made his defense before Agrippa (Acts 26) and appealed to Caesar. Time allowed for the voyage to Rome, including three months in the island of Malta (Acts 28: 11), would make this lesson



Jews of their manifold favors from God while announcing their rejection as God's people nationally.

5. No higher honor could fall to the lot of any people nationally than to be the source of the world's Messiah. This honor, however, was of little moment as compared with accepting that Messiah and receiving the spiritual benefits he brought to the world. In fact, the national honor was nothing in value so far as personal salvation was concerned.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe Paul's reception at Jerusalem and the request made of him. (Acts 21: 17-26.)
2. Give the substance of Paul's speech on the castle steps. (Acts 22: 3-21.)
3. What were the effects of that speech? (Acts 22: 22-30.)
4. Describe the oath the Jews made and how Paul was protected from them. (Acts 23: 12-25.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

What prediction did Agabus make?  
What effect did it have on the brethren?  
What reply did Paul make to their pleas?

#### II

Who stirred up the multitude?  
What charges did they make against Paul?  
What had Paul taught on circumcision?  
What further false statement did they make?

#### III

What position was held by the chief captain?  
Why did he take Paul away from the mob?  
Why did he bind Paul?

#### IV

Why did Paul assert his sincerity?  
What is meant by "in Christ" in this verse?  
Why was Paul so sorrowful regarding the Jews?  
What did Paul's wish mean?

#### V

What was meant by "adoption"?  
What was their highest honor nationally?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

Lesson VIII—November 22, 1936

### AN AMBASSADOR IN CHAINS

Acts 28: 16-24, 30, 31; Rom. 5: 6-11.

16 And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews: and when they were come together, he said unto them, I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our

about two and a half years after the last one, or probably about A.D. 61. As already stated in previous lessons, the book of Romans was written in A.D. 57. This was four years before Paul reached Rome, as indicated in this lesson.

*Lesson Links.*—As Paul was being taken into the castle after his arrest, he asked permission to speak to the people. The chief captain, learning that he was a Jew, gave his permission, and Paul's speech is recorded in Acts 22: 1-21. This is one of Paul's own accounts of the facts connected with his conversion. He describes how he was forced to accept Jesus as the Christ, and how he learned from Ananias what he had to do to be saved. His speech threw the people into a rage, and the chief captain placed him in prison. The next day he brought Paul before the Jewish council. This meeting was broken up in confusion and Paul returned to jail, after which more than forty Jews bound themselves by an oath not to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. Hearing of their plot the chief captain sent Paul to Cesarea by night to the governor. The high priest and a certain lawyer by the name of Tertullus went to Cesarea to prefer charges against him. They failed to convince the governor, and Paul's case was left undecided. For two full years he remained a prisoner, at the end of which time Felix was put out of office, but left Paul bound for his successor, Festus, to dispose of. After a short time Paul made his defense before Agrippa and was sent to Rome. The journey to Rome is related in detail in Acts 27: 1 to 28: 15.

*Lesson Settings.*—We have no certain means of knowing who established the church at Rome. Of course, it could not have been Paul, for he did not reach Rome till probably A.D. 61, and he addressed his letter to the church at Rome in the year A.D. 57. The congregation had been established long enough to become of such importance as to justify Paul's writing them. It must have been made up of both Jews and Gentiles. The argument to show the abrogation of the laws is proof of one, and his condemnation of Gentile depravity is proof of the other. To such a congregation Paul talked while he was a prisoner. This imprisonment lasted two years.

### LESSON NOTES

#### I. Paul Invites the Jews to Hear Him (Verses 16-20)

*Paul Enters Rome.*—Paul had written the brethren at Rome four years before this that he desired to see them that he might impart unto them some spiritual gift. (Rom. 1: 11.) After his arrest in Jerusalem the Lord appeared to him and promised him that he should bear witness in Rome. (Acts 23: 11.) The time had come for him to enter the gates of the imperial city, but in a far different way from that he probably had in mind when he wrote them. As a prisoner he was delivered to the proper officer, but was allowed to abide by himself with a soldier to guard him. This privilege was doubtless granted through the influence of the centurion who had him in charge during the voyage. He probably related how it was through Paul's counsel that the people on the ship were saved. Instead of entering a synagogue, as was his custom, to proclaim Christ, he was marched to a prison, kept night and day under guard waiting for a trial. How gloomy the prospect for evangelizing the most proud city in the world!



22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against.

23 And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded *the matter*, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.

30 And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him,

31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.

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*"The Chief of the Jews."*—In spite of all gloom there were some encouraging facts. The brethren had read his letter, and, of course, were anxious to see him. Some of the brethren met him before he reached the city and he "thanked God, and took courage." In A.D. 49 the Emperor Claudius had banished the Jews from Rome (Acts 18: 2), but evidently they had been permitted to return; hence, Paul found many when he arrived in A.D. 61. The chief of the Jews probably meant rulers of synagogues, scribes, and prominent men. Very wisely he invited them to hear his case privately. He wanted to disarm them of any prejudice they might have, prevent their opposition to him before Roman authorities and, if possible, save some of them. He asserted he had done nothing against the people or the customs of the fathers. His accusers had failed to convince the Roman authorities in Judea of any wrongdoing on his part, else he would have been condemned there. They had even desired to set him free, and would have done so if the clamor of the Jews had not forced Paul to appeal to Caesar for protection and justice.

*For the Hope of Israel.*—Paul declared to them that the real cause of his imprisonment was that he was preaching the "hope of Israel." In previous speeches he had said it was because of the "hope and resurrection" (Acts 23: 6; 24: 15-21), and the "hope of the promise" made to the fathers (Acts 26: 6). The promise made to the fathers included the coming Messiah, and the Jews must have entertained some hope of the resurrection. Paul had preached that Jesus fulfilled the promise in that God raised him from the dead. So he really was being condemned by his kinsmen in the flesh because he preached to them that Jesus was the fulfillment of the very thing they were expecting. In spite of all that injustice on the part of the Jews, he was not making charge against them. He desired their salvation.

## II. The Jews Reply to Paul's Speech (Verses 21, 22)

*No Reports Received.*—Since Paul had written a letter to the church at Rome, it is most likely that the Jews had heard something of him. It would be strange if the leading apostle, with his widespread and incessant work, was wholly unknown to any in Rome save the congregation. They probably meant that they had received no official letter from the Sanhedrin regarding his case. This shows that the Jews in Judea dropped the matter when they failed to get Paul condemned. Or, it is possible that at that distance from the field of Paul's activity, they had not learned anything prejudicial against him as an individual Christian.

*The Sect Spoken Against.*—While they had nothing prejudicial against Paul as a Christian, they knew that those with whom Paul was associated were considered a sect, and everywhere it was spoken against. This being the common reputation of the saints, the Jews were naturally indifferent to preachers generally. This accounts for the fact that they seemed to know so little about what the Christians taught. This natural indifference probably left them more inclined to listen to the direct personal appeal that he made. The earnestness and frankness with which Paul presented the case challenged their attention. The Jews there called the church a "sect." But, of course, they were mistaken in that; so are people today who think of the church as being made up of sectarian denominations.



## III. Paul Makes His Defense (Verses 23, 24)

*"Expounded the Matter."*—The Jews made an appointment to come on a certain day to hear his defense of his teaching. The text says he continued his explanations from morning to evening; that is, he spent the whole day. But the matter is described in just two verses. Of course, Luke gives only the briefest kind of reference to what he said, yet enough to show the nature of the argument. Great numbers came to hear him. As he was in the habit of doing, he talked about the kingdom of God. This again shows that Paul preached the kingdom. How much he said under that head is not stated, though there is no reason to think he failed to explain its existence and the necessity of being in it to be saved. He did this from both the law of Moses and the prophets. He pointed out how Jesus, in the establishment of his kingdom, was fulfilling both the shadows of the law and the predictions of the prophets. These were the two sources of evidence by which the claims of Jesus to be their king could be established. This evidence was before them; it is before us still.

*Some Believed, Some Disbelieved.*—Paul's preaching to them had the usual effect. Some were favorably impressed and accepted the testimony as being true—they believed; others allowed their prejudice to close their ears against facts—they disbelieved. The same effects follow the preaching of the gospel now. If the Jews then had accepted the spiritual nature of the kingdom, they would readily have believed what Paul taught. That same mistake about Christ's kingdom today leads people into a lot of erroneous teaching; in fact, it forces them to virtually deny what the book says on Christ being on David's throne. Paul told the disbelievers they had fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah in closing their eyes and ears, and would not turn that they might be saved. Also that their rejection of the gospel would cause it to be sent to the Gentiles.

## IV. Paul's Two Years' Imprisonment (Verses 30, 31)

*"Own Hired Dwelling."*—Paul remained in prison two whole years, and had the unusual privilege of remaining in a house he had hired. This gave him a place he could invite any who would come to hear him preach. Those who wished to come would have free opportunity to do so without hindrance. This was decidedly important, for without this privilege he could have preached to only a few. It is not stated how this expense was defrayed, but probably by the congregation and others who might have sent to him. From Phil. 4: 18 it seems clear that the Philippians were contributors to his need.

*"Preaching the Kingdom."*—Here again we find that the burden of Paul's preaching was the kingdom of God. His general themes were the kingdom and the "things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ." If he showed by the prophecies and the facts that Jesus was the Messiah, the Jews were ready to accept him, if they accepted the testimony presented. One of the main prophecies was that one was to be raised up to sit on David's throne (Acts 2: 29, 30), and Paul was prepared to show that Christ had been raised. Hence, he was then sitting on David's throne, and the kingdom was established in fact. Paul, therefore, connected the Messiahship of Jesus and the kingdom as inseparable truths. He made them the burden of his preaching while in prison just as he had been doing before.



## V. Reconciled to God Through Christ's Death (Rom. 5: 6-11)

*"In Due Season."*—Man, both physically and mentally, was incapable of saving himself; centuries had shown his helplessness and need of divine power. But at the proper time, the opportune season, Christ died for the ungodly. The ungodliness—sinfulness that was manifested in humanity—was the reason that mankind was weak. At the time predetermined by the Father Christ died for man. It was at a time when both Jews and Gentiles needed the divine aid most; a time when the types and prophecies could be best fulfilled. In fact, the things that God decides to do are done at the best time for good results.

*Superiority of Christ's Death.*—Men sometimes die for others, but usually to very little purpose. Paul says it would be scarcely possible that one would be willing to die for a man who was only a just man. Being ready to meet all obligations and treat every one justly hardly gains enough sympathy to lead one to offer his life for such a person. There is a greater probability that one might be willing to die for a good and benevolent man. One who goes beyond the requirements of simple justice and does kind and unselfish deeds would be considered more worthy of such a sacrifice in his behalf. Men might so honor such men, but dying for sinners who are our enemies is not in the list of things men are willing to do for others. Christ in dying for us while we were yet sinners gave the supreme example of unselfish sacrifice for men. In this particular God commended his love toward us.

*Justified and Reconciled.*—Being saved or justified from past sins through his blood (poured out in his death), we shall be more certainly saved from eternal wrath through him. This is equivalent to saying that since Christ has begun a good work in saving us from sins here, he will be sure to finish that work with eternal salvation. The only thing necessary is to obey him as we did to receive pardon. In another view the apostle says: "If we were reconciled, while enemies, through his death, we shall be saved by his life"; that is, by him who has been raised from the dead. Not only is that true, but that very truth gives us ample ground for rejoicing. This rejoicing is in Christ, because it is through him we receive the reconciliation. This salvation in Christ is enough to give joy even though one be in chains for truth's sake.

## THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Peter says it "is acceptable, if for conscience toward God a man endureth griefs, suffering wrongfully." Also this further: "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." (1 Pet. 2: 19, 20.) Paul was a marvelous example of the obedience to this teaching.

2. Because a people are called a sect, or their teaching false doctrine, does not prove them to be wrong. Jesus pronounced a blessing upon his disciples when people say all manner of evil against them falsely because of his name.

3. The gospel is the power of God to save, but only to those who believe and obey it. The disbeliever Jesus said would be damned. Some will disbelieve no difference who does the preaching, because they are not willing to receive the truth.

4. Some of man's best work is done under handicaps. No situation excuses one from doing what he can. If Paul could serve God successfully four years in prison, we should not complain at little hindrances.

5. John said: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!" (1 John 3: 1.) He commended his love to us in the death of his Son for us while we were enemies. We should love him because he first loved us. The evidence of our love is that we keep his commandments. (John 14: 21, 23.)

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Give Paul's answer to the speech of Tertullus. (Acts 24: 10-21.)
2. Give Paul's speech before Felix and Drusilla, and its effect. (Acts 24: 22-27.)
3. Give an outline of Paul's address before Agrippa. (Acts 26.)
4. Give the experiences in the island of Malta. (Acts 28: 1-11.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### **I**

What had previously been said about Paul's going to Rome?  
What favor was granted to him?  
Through whom?  
What encouraging things had occurred?  
What was the purpose in inviting the Jews to hear him?  
For what reason did Paul say he was a prisoner?

#### **II**

What did they mean by not receiving reports?  
How did they describe the church?

#### **III**

How much is here included in two verses?  
What subjects did he talk about?  
What Old Testament scriptures did he use?  
What was the effect of the sermon or teaching?

#### **IV**

What was the advantage in being in his own hired house?  
What subjects did he continue to preach?

#### **V**

What was meant by Christ dying in "due season"?  
In what was Christ's death superior to all others?  
How are we justified and reconciled?

#### *Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

*Lesson IX—November 29, 1936*

### CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD

Phile. 1: 4-20.

- 4 I thank my God always, making mention of thee in my prayers.
- 5 Hearing of thy love, and of the faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints;
- 6 That the fellowship of thy faith may become effectual, in the knowledge of every good thing which is in you, unto Christ.
- 7 For I had much joy and comfort in thy love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through thee, brother.
- 8 Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting,
- 9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus:
- 10 I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus,
- 11 Who once was unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me:



- 12 Whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart;  
 13 Whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel;  
 14 But without thy mind I would do nothing; that thy goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will.  
 15 For perhaps he was therefore parted from thee for a season, that thou shouldst have him for ever;  
 16 No longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord.  
 17 If then thou countest me a partner, receive him as myself.  
 18 But if he hath wronged thee at all, or oweth thee ought, put that to mine account;  
 19 I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it: that I say not unto thee that thou owest to me even thine own self besides.  
 20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my heart in Christ.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"There can be neither bond nor free, . . . for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3: 28.)

**TIME.**—Near the close of Paul's first imprisonment, A.D. 62 or 63.

**PLACES.**—Rome and Colosse.

**PERSONS.**—Paul, Philemon, and Onesimus.

**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Eph. 3: 14-21.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

November 23.	M.	Paul to Philemon (Phile. 1-7)
November 24.	T.	Paul for Onesimus (Phile. 8-20)
November 25.	W.	The Centurion's Appeal (Matt. 8: 5-10)
November 26.	T.	Duties of Masters and Servants (Eph. 6: 5-9)
November 27.	F.	Christian Freedom (John 8: 31-36)
November 28.	S.	Christian Democracy (Gal. 3: 23-29)
November 29.	S.	Brotherly Love (1 John 4: 7-13)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. Paul Praises Philemon's Love and Faith (Verses 4-7).
  - II. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus (Verses 8-10).
  - III. Paul Sends Onesimus Back (Verses 11-16).
  - IV. Paul Offers to Bear Any Loss Sustained (Verses 17-19).
  - V. Paul's Final Appeal for Onesimus (Verse 20).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

#### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

**Chronology.**—The text of this lesson is taken from the brief personal letter from Paul to Philemon. It was written while he was in the Roman prison, which was the time of our last lesson also. Probably Paul reached Rome in A.D. 61. It was early in the year, for on account of the shipwreck they were kept three months—winter months—on the island of Malta. This made Paul's arrival early in the spring of A.D. 61.

**Lesson Links.**—Our last lesson covered the whole two years of Paul's imprisonment in Rome. It, therefore, includes the time when this lesson was written. All we know about events in the period is the brief statement that Paul was preaching the kingdom and the things concerning Jesus Christ. He wrote Ephesians and Colossians about the same time he wrote Philemon. It is supposed that Colossians and Philemon were sent at the same time by the same mes-

senger. The occasion for the letter was the following: A slave by the name of Onesimus had run away from his master, Philemon, in Colosse and had come to Rome. He heard Paul preach, was converted and by Paul sent back to his master. It is not stated how he happened to hear Paul preach, but it is possible that he had heard him in Colosse, and for that reason sought him out when he came to Rome. Paul had probably become well known because of his preaching while a prisoner.

*Lesson Settings.*—Philemon is one of the few brief letters addressed to individuals. Philemon is supposed to have lived at Colosse, and to have been a well-to-do man and prominent in the church. The second verse speaks of the "church in thy house." This probably means that the congregation assembled in his house—a thing that often occurred in that day when congregations did not have church houses of their own as they do now. That he owned a slave or slaves also implies that he was a man of some prominence in a business way. Onesimus was his slave, but after his conversion in Rome was sent back to his master with this letter from Paul in his behalf. The letter deals with a private matter, but involves a moral question. It shows the feeling that Paul had for Philemon and the deep interest he had in Onesimus. It manifests the Christian spirit in a most beautiful and touching way.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. Paul Praises Philemon's Love and Faith (Verses 4-7)

*Reason for Thankfulness.*—Paul mentions his continual thanksgiving to God because of Philemon's worth as a Christian. He further adds that he made mention of him in his prayers. The reason for this was the fact that he had heard of the love and faith which Philemon had toward the Lord Jesus and all the saints. As Paul probably converted Philemon himself, he knew of his early love and faith. But the thing that delighted Paul and gave cause for thankfulness was that he had heard of the continuance of that love and faith after his conversion. Another splendid feature of the love of Philemon was that it was not only a sentiment toward God, but a practical working thing that had a real manifestation toward the brethren. This is the real test of love.

*Fellowship of Faith.*—Paul also thanked God that the fellowship of Philemon's faith had been effectual in the knowledge of every good thing. The word "fellowship" here probably means contributions or gifts for the welfare of the saints for which Philemon was noted. Such manifestations of his faith in Christ Paul hoped would become so effectual with others that they would acknowledge every good thing that was in him as a servant of Jesus. If this were the case, then others would give honor to the Lord through the noble deeds of one of his servants. This would be an effect for which Paul would be exceedingly thankful. He assured Philemon that he had much joy and comfort in the fruits of his love because he had refreshed the hearts of the saints by his charitable gifts.

### II. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus (Verses 8-10)

*"To Enjoin Thee."*—With exquisite skill and tact Paul makes his appeal in behalf of Onesimus. He reminds Philemon that he, as an apostle of Christ, would be justified in using boldness in commanding



the thing that would be befitting under the circumstances. This would really be nothing more than would be in keeping with the authority Christ had granted to the inspired apostles. But instead of using that right he chose rather to assume the form of a suppliant and "beseech" Philemon for love's sake to do what he felt the true spirit of Christianity required. A warm and affectionate brother, though having authority to command, is beseeching an absent friend in behalf of a needy servant.

*Reasons for This Manner.*—Paul was in prison at the time and beseeching would be more in keeping with one who himself was a prisoner. Acknowledging his own humble situation, he could appeal for one who might be in danger of punishment or prison. He then refers to himself as "the aged." Paul was probably about 58 years old at the time. He could hardly be referred to as "the aged" in the ordinary sense, if the length of life then be considered. However if the Greek word be understood in the sense of an elder, he may be understood as meaning that he was making the request as a mature man with seasoned judgment; that it was not a rash appeal from an inexperienced person. The margin gives *an ambassador* instead of "the aged." If this be the correct idea, he said that though an ambassador for Christ he was then in prison. He could appeal to them as one who had a right to command, but was in a position to know fully what it meant to suffer loss of rights.

*"My Child."*—His final appeal was that Onesimus was his child in the faith, one begotten through the preaching of the gospel while he was in prison. That meant that he would plead for him as a father would for his son in the flesh. He was converted at Rome.

### III. Paul Sends Onesimus Back (Verses 11-16)

*"Profitable to Thee and to Me."*—Paul admits that Onesimus had once been unprofitable to Philemon. In this he probably refers to the fact that Onesimus was a bond servant—slave—to Philemon and had run away to avoid rendering proper service; hence, as a slave, he had been unprofitable. But he was at the time Paul was writing in a condition to be profitable to both Philemon and Paul. He could still in his changed condition render proper service to Philemon as a slave and be of greater service because a servant of Christ. He could be of much service to Paul if he had stayed in Rome in supporting the work that was being done there. He could even be of service to Paul if back in Colosse with his master by giving an accurate account of Paul's condition and need. Since Onesimus was Philemon's slave, a sense of justice required Paul to send him back; a conscience of legal right required Onesimus to return. Hence, Paul sent him back to his master. He did so with a full sense of what the legal state of Onesimus demanded. He wanted Philemon to understand that he wished the legal rights in the case to be properly met.

*Paul's Desire.*—Paul admitted that, had there been no legal difficulties, he would gladly have kept Onesimus to minister to himself while he was in prison. He said he would have considered such ministrations as being in behalf of Philemon, who also as his convert could be considered as a child in the gospel and under obligations to minister to him. If Philemon's servant should do it he could consider it as coming from Philemon himself. But Paul said he would not keep Onesimus without Philemon's mind (consent), because he did



not want his consent to be given as of necessity, but of free will. If he had written to be allowed to keep Onesimus, Philemon might have reluctantly given permission; but if he was sent back to Colosse, and then returned to Paul, it would be a clear case of free will. So Paul sent him back.

*"For a Season."*—Paul very delicately suggests that Onesimus was parted from him for a season, perhaps, in order that he might have him forever. This fine result would, of course, be attributable to the providence of God in overruling for his good what seemed an unfortunate situation. He went away an unfaithful slave; he remained away a short time and returned a faithful brother in Christ. He would therefore be ready to render that faithful service which his faith in Christ would require. Through what seemed a loss for the time Philemon would ultimately receive better service. Whatever his material relationship in the future, Philemon would not have to give him up because he was a member of the church—God's family. Henceforth he could be considered as even more than a servant, even a beloved brother in the Lord, loved by both Paul and Philemon. He should rather be much beloved by Philemon because he had in him both a fleshly and a spiritual interest. This should compensate for any loss sustained by the time Onesimus was away from his service.

#### IV. Paul Offers to Bear Any Loss Sustained (Verses 17-19)

*"Receive Him as Myself."*—Paul next appealed to the friendship and love that Philemon had for himself. He urged Philemon to receive Onesimus as a partner and friend just as he would receive him if he should come to Colosse. This appeal was based upon the fact that Paul considered Onesimus a saint, and for him to be received as a Christian brother by Philemon Paul would account as receiving himself. Moreover, Paul said that, if Onesimus had wronged his master in any way or owed him anything, it should be charged to his account. If Philemon still considered that any monetary loss had been sustained on account of Onesimus leaving him, Paul agreed that he would see that the amount was paid. Evidently he did not think that Onesimus had really damaged his master enough to justify a material payment, when he was returning so much better prepared to render good service. But if there were any such loss in Philemon's estimation, he was willing to make the loss good. This was leaving to Philemon to say what he considered just and right. Such a magnanimous offer would thoroughly convince Philemon that Paul really had perfect confidence in his slave.

*I Write It.*—By way of impressing his appeal in behalf of Onesimus Paul said he had written the letter with his own hand. His promise to repay any loss was therefore a genuine offer from every consideration. Probably Paul's custom was to dictate his letters to another, but sign them, or write the salutation. (See 2 Thess. 3: 17.) In this case he wrote the letter himself. It was, therefore, a matter of common courtesy that Philemon would make some reply to his appeal, and let him know what he would do in the case. Paul evidently would have been glad if Onesimus had been returned to him, but he did not require it. But he did want Philemon to receive him kindly, treat him as a brother in Christ, and excuse him from any extra burdens because of his absence. This was certainly manifesting the true spirit of Christian brotherhood.



### V. Paul's Final Appeal for Onesimus (Verse 20)

*"Let Me Have Joy."*—Paul makes his final appeal by saying that, if Philemon would grant his request, it would give him joy. This joy Philemon was able to give; if received, it would be of him. It would also be in the Lord. It would be granting such a favor as would be right, but also something that could be received only in the Lord. It would be something that would be for those in the Lord, and something with which the Lord would be well pleased. Paul also said that if the request were granted it would refresh his heart in Christ. He would be greatly pleased. Besides, as the spiritual teacher who had converted Philemon, he had a right to insist upon that much; looking at the matter from the standpoint of debt, Philemon owed him that much. To receive Onesimus in the way that Paul suggested would be paying that debt in no small measure.

*"Having Confidence."*—Paul expressed his full confidence that Philemon was so obedient to the right that he would gladly do as he had suggested; he even complimented him by saying that he was confident that he would do even more than he had asked. This was not a bit of flattery spoken for effect, yet it was a very tactful statement. Knowing the character of Philemon, he doubtless expressed just how he thought his suggestions would be received. If there was a possibility that Philemon would not be willing to bestow such favor upon Onesimus, Paul's words in closing his letter were most appropriate as probably deciding him to do it. The letter may have been written toward the close of his imprisonment; at least, Paul must have thought he was soon to be released, else he would not have suggested that Philemon prepare him a place to lodge. At least, Paul hoped that through Philemon's prayers he would be granted the liberty of visiting at Colosse. Phil. 2: 24 shows that Paul did expect to be released soon.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. The faith that one has in Christ and the manifestation of his love for the brethren will always be effectual on those not Christians. Many will be led to consider the truth by such influence, some will be saved, and even those who cannot be reached with the gospel will have more respect for the church.

2. Even those with authority can often accomplish more with entreaty than by commands. It is always proper to use every favorable circumstance to make your appeal effective, but entreaties should not be based upon what is not true.

3. A thing might be profitable in many ways and yet not be right. Neither Jesus nor any of the apostles advocated forcible interference with established forms of government. They respected legal as well as moral rights. Rejecting lawful authority is sinful. (Rom. 13: 1-3.)

4. The generosity that prompts one to do more than he is legally bound to do pays wonderful dividends in good results. Meeting one more than halfway is a most effectual plan not only in settling difficulties, but also in doing constructive work.

5. There is much joy in doing what is right for the sake of the right, but doing more than the situation would seem to require is like having a surplus of more material things than may be needed.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the Savior's explanation of the two greatest commandments. (Matt. 22: 34-40.)
2. Give the Savior's estimate of material and spiritual things. (Matt. 16: 24-28.)
3. Repeat the Savior's parable on neighborliness. (Luke 10: 25-37.)
4. Give the grounds upon which we can have an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom. (2 Pet. 1: 5-11.)

## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

*Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

**I**

What reasons did Paul have for thankfulness?  
What did Paul mean by the word "fellowship"?  
What effect did Paul expect it to have on others?

**II**

What right did Paul have in such cases?  
Why did he not use his right?  
What was Paul's probable age at that time?  
What did he mean by "the aged"?

**III**

How could Onesimus be profitable to Paul?  
How could he be of more service to Philemon if sent back?  
What desire did Paul have in the case?  
What did Paul suggest as to why Onesimus had been away?

**IV**

How did Paul ask Philemon to receive his servant?  
What did Paul offer to do?  
Why did he say he wrote the letter himself?

**V**

What was Paul's final appeal?  
What confidence did he express?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

*Lesson X—December 6, 1936*

## PAUL'S PARTING COUNSELS

1 Tim. 6: 6-16; 2 Tim. 4: 16-18.

- 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain:  
7 For we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out;  
8 But having food and covering we shall be therewith content.  
9 But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition.  
10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.  
11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.  
12 Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses.  
13 I charge thee in the sight of God, who giveth life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession;  
14 That thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:  
15 Which in its own times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;  
16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power eternal. Amen.  
16 At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account.



17 But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18 The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."* (2 Tim. 4: 7.)

TIME.—For First Timothy A.D. 63 or 64; for Second Timothy A.D. 66.

PLACES.—Probably First Timothy written from Laodicea; Second Timothy from Rome.

PERSONS.—Paul and Timothy.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 121.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

November	30.	M.	Goals of a Good Life (1 Tim. 6: 6-16)
December	1.	T.	The Lord Delivers (2 Tim. 4: 16-18)
December	2.	W.	Faithful to the End (2 Tim. 4: 3-8)
December	3.	T.	Moses Counsels Courage (Deut. 31: 1-8)
December	4.	F.	"We Will Serve Jehovah" (Josh. 24: 14-18)
December	5.	S.	The Promised Home (John 14: 1-4)
December	6.	S.	The Lord Our Keeper (Psalm 121)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. The Gain in Godliness and Contentment (Verses 6-9).
  - II. "The Love of Money" (Verses 10-12).
  - III. A Charge to Timothy (Verses 13, 14).
  - IV. What the Lord Will Show (Verses 15, 16).
  - V. Paul's Confidence in God (2 Tim. 4: 16-18).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

#### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—It is understood that Paul was released from the Roman prison as the last lesson showed he was expecting. First Timothy, from which the first lesson text is taken, was written after his release. Just when is not known, but probably as late as A.D. 64 or even later. Second Timothy was written while he was in prison, and just a little while before he was executed. That was his second Roman imprisonment, ending probably in A.D. 67. The statement, "Give diligence to come before winter" (2 Tim. 4: 21), indicates it was in the latter part of summer or fall.

*Lesson Links.*—If the calculation is correct that Paul reached Rome for his first imprisonment in the early part of A.D. 61, he was released in A.D. 63. After his release he was able to visit again some congregations he had expressed a desire to see. Doubtless Philippi was among the first. (Phil. 2: 24.) As we found in our last lesson he had urged Philemon to provide him an abiding place in Colosse. (Phile. 22.) Several years before he had expressed a desire to visit Spain. (Rom. 15: 24, 28.) It is thought probable that this wish was also gratified. When he bid the Ephesian elders farewell, as he passed to Judea on his third missionary tour, he felt that he would see them no more. (Acts 20: 25.) But he must have visited

them again after his release where he left Timothy while he went into Macedonia. (1 Tim. 1: 3.) He also was in Crete, where he left Titus to set in order the things that were wanting. (Titus 1: 5.) He was also at Corinth and Miletus, where he left Trophimus sick. (2 Tim. 4: 20.) After these journeys we find him again in prison where he wrote his last letter—the second one to Timothy.

*Lesson Settings.*—When Paul wrote First Timothy he was probably in Macedonia enjoying the freedom of visiting the churches he had founded or had been instrumental in strengthening. When he wrote the second letter to Timothy, he was awaiting what he felt sure was the near approach of the end. He had given Timothy much instruction, no doubt, when they had traveled together over a period of many years. In the first letter he left in permanent form much that vitally affected the work and worship. In the last letter he reminded him of the dangerous times that would come to the church, and gave his final charge which was the finest and most important bit of warning and instruction that he left on record for those who undertake the proclamation of the gospel of Christ. (2 Tim. 4: 1-5.)

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Gain in Godliness and Contentment (Verses 6-9)

*Take Nothing Out.*—Paul declares that “godliness with contentment is great gain.” He then assigns reasons why it is so, and why it should be so. He says first that “we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out.” This is a self-evident truth. If we bring nothing into the world, we are not justly entitled to take anything out. But since we cannot take anything out, why worry about accumulating wealth which we must give up when we leave? Having a sufficiency for what we need here is all we can use. Why strive to get what we cannot use, and which we cannot take with us? It really is foolish. Hence, the conclusion that, if we are godly and contented we have a great gain, is strictly true.

*“Food and Covering.”*—In verse 5 Paul says some suppose that godliness is a way of gain; that is, they use their pretended godliness as a means to obtain material gain. Instead of perverting gospel privileges into a way of getting riches, one should learn to be content with “food and covering,” which is all that is absolutely necessary. The King James Version uses the word “raiment,” but the Revised Version translates the original word by the more general term “covering.” This would include not only clothing for the body, but other things necessary to bodily protection, such as a house in which to live; for, in fact, one does need to have more than clothes and something to eat. But the clear import of the passage is that, having the common necessary things for the life and comfort of the body, one should be satisfied, because that is really all that one must have. Satisfaction with enough is a fine Christian trait; if more is possessed, it can be used with great advantage for the good of the church.

*Danger of Riches.*—Those “minded to be rich” probably means those who have their hearts set on securing an unnecessary abundance or they are determined to become rich at any cost. The apostle says they “fall into a temptation.” They are so anxious to be rich that they fall into temptation in using sinful methods to accomplish their purposes. In these temptations they are caught, like a bird in a snare, before they realize the danger. Their success in gaining money



results in their indulging in many foolish and hurtful lusts. The free gratification of the appetites and other indulgencies drown them in destruction. They soon reach the place where they are insensible of either their sins or the danger that threatens them. Hence, like a drowning man, they are overcome.

## II. "The Love of Money" (Verses 10-12)

*A Root of Evils.*—We should not ignore plain facts or misrepresent the text by saying that money is a root of evil, or of all kinds of evil. There is nothing wrong with money as money. The sin we may practice to get it, or the use we make of it after getting it, is where the sin may lie. Paul could not have charged those rich in this world to lay up for themselves "a good foundation against the time to come" if money had been sinful in itself. It is the love or inordinate desire for money that makes one commit sin. There is probably no sin in the whole catalogue that men will not commit because they love money. This, of course, is not true with all men, but those who have such desire for money will be constantly in danger of committing most any kind of sin in order to get it.

*Pierced with Many Sorrows.*—The sins that are committed in order to get money will often, like daggers, pierce one through. The desire for money will become so strong that it will be easy to be led astray. The sorrows may be either the piercing of conscience because of the knowledge of guilt, or the fear of what is known to be the danger of a just punishment. The possibility of such results will usually be overlooked in the excitement of gaining the riches.

*"Flee These Things."*—Paul urges Timothy, as a "man of God," to flee these things. One who proposes to honor God, seek the city of God, and enjoy eternal life should flee from such dangers as he would a pestilence or a wild beast. The way to safety and protection is to follow after such Christian traits as righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. That requires strict justice, a desire to be like God, unswerving faith in his word, a love for truth and right, with a steadfast dependence upon God's mercy. Such only can successfully resist the temptation to become rich.

*The Fight of Faith.*—That such a struggle against wrong will have all the features of a genuine fight is certain. It will be a victory that is possible, but not accomplished without a terrible struggle. It will be a fight of faith, because the destiny of the soul and the welfare of the church will be at stake all the time. It will be a good fight, for it will be a contest in which the best that is in man may be lost. All fights carry the possibility of failure and loss of that which is highly prized. Hence, the apostle urges Timothy to "lay hold on the life eternal." Eternal life is the prize to be lost or won in the fight that Christians are required to wage daily. Timothy had been called to this reward by the gospel of Christ (2 Thess. 2: 14) as all others had. He had confessed his faith as others had done, and to fail would subject him to the charge of inconsistency as well as failure. This alone should prompt him to make a successful fight.

## III. A Charge to Timothy (Verses 13, 14)

*"In the Sight of God."*—Paul enforces the charge in a most solemn way. Here Timothy is reminded that his acts are before both God and Christ. In 1 Tim. 5: 21 a similar charge is given with the added

statement that it is before "the elect angels." It all means probably that Timothy was to understand that his conduct was under the eyes of God, Christ, and the elect angels. Of God it is said that he giveth life to all things or preserveth all things alive. This was intended to impress the thought of seriousness in being seen by the heavenly Father. Jesus had made the good confession before Pontius Pilate, and one who realized that Jesus saw him should not be afraid to confess Jesus before men.

*The Charge Stated.*—The charge was that he should keep the commandment without spot and without reproach. The "commandment" evidently means the gospel of Christ, the law of salvation. To keep it without spot means, of course, to keep it in full—do what it requires in all things—both in the matter of becoming Christians and in living the Christian life. If some of it were rejected or disobeyed, it would be like blotting out a part of its requirements; that would leave the page spotted. Moreover, it should be without reproach; that is, his obedience should be so full that he would not be reproached for his inconsistency. This constancy of service was to continue till "the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." Of course, this could not continue with Timothy till Christ comes, for he has long since died and the Lord has not yet come. But Timothy was to so live and teach it that it would be perpetuated after his death on through the ages till Jesus does come. It is substantially the same thought as expressed in his second letter, that the things which Timothy had heard from Paul he should commit to faithful men who would teach others also. (2 Tim. 2: 2.) It is only in that sense Timothy could keep the commandment till the appearing of the Lord.

#### IV. What the Lord Will Show (Verses 15, 16)

*"Its Own Times."*—Having mentioned the appearing of Jesus, Paul next says this appearing will be in its or his own time. He means that the Lord will come at a time which is only known to the Father. (Matt. 24: 36.) The plural "times" may be used to indicate all the events connected with his coming; to show that each item will be as promised and at the time God determines.

*"He Shall Show."*—The one who will show is called "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." It is further stated that this one "only hath immortality." If the one here referred to means God himself, then he has "only immortality" in the sense that he is the source of immortality—has it in himself—and does not receive it from any other. In this view he is also the final source of authority, not being subject to Christ as King, and the one who committed all authority to Christ as the present Ruler. If the language be applied to Christ, then since his return to the Father he has only immortality in contrast with what he had while here in the flesh, and what all men still have. He did die, but in his present and future states he is not subject to death. Both God and Christ are now dwelling in light which man, while in the flesh, cannot approach. In fact, man cannot see such glory. (Ex. 33: 20-23.) The fact that the light put out Paul's eyes when the Lord appeared to him after his ascension is proof that man in the flesh cannot endure the sight of divine majesty in full.



## V. Paul's Confidence in God (2 Tim. 4: 16-18)

*"At My First Defence."*—Paul referred to several brethren, mentioning the facts that Demas had forsaken him, Alexander the copper-smith had done him much harm, and that only Luke was with him. He said that at his first defense no one took his part, but all forsook him. His prayer was that it should "not be laid to their account." This first defense probably means his first trial after being arrested the second time. The brethren were perhaps so fearful of results that they were driven away from him. But when the brethren left him the Lord stood by him with help and power to make his defense. It seems evident from the first eight verses of this chapter that he was not condemned at that trial, though he was confidently expecting to be tried again soon and executed. This escape from conviction at his first defense was that the message might be fully proclaimed to the Gentiles. He had not yet done all the preaching the Lord intended for him to do, and he was providentially protected longer that his work might be fully done.

*Delivered from Every Evil Work.*—Not being convicted at his first defense Paul called being "delivered out of the mouth of the lion." He escaped the emperor's condemnation—the sentence of death. He said God would deliver him from every evil work and would save him unto "his heavenly kingdom." This shows unmistakably that the state called heaven is also called a kingdom. Peter refers to the same in his words in 2 Pet. 1: 11. Calling the final state a kingdom does not prevent applying the same expression to the present church state. That is the ordinary use of the word kingdom in the New Testament.

## THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Jesus said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 19: 24.) In a parallel passage (Mark 10: 24) Jesus condemns the man who "trusts" in riches. That is, what one will do who *loves money*. There is genuine gain to lay up treasures in heaven rather than on earth.

2. It makes little difference how hard the struggle is, or how many sacrifices are required to gain a reward, it is a worth-while thing. The only safe way to win in such struggles is to flee from anything that might take our hearts away from the object.

3. Keeping the commandments is the only possible way to be entitled to the promises made. "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified," says Paul. (Rom. 2: 13.) This is true of all laws, human and divine.

4. We should not worry ourselves to find out what God has not revealed. The fact of the Lord's coming back is a plain statement; just when he will come is left with the Father to bring about at the proper time.

5. The more serious the difficulties we are forced to meet, the more closely we should cling to our God. When others forsake us, our heavenly Father is the one to whom we should go.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the further teaching of Paul on the subject of riches. (1 Tim. 6: 17-19.)

2. Discuss the sinful state that Paul predicted in 1 Tim. 4: 1-9.
3. Discuss the advice Paul gave different classes in Titus 2: 1-10.
4. Repeat Paul's description of the wickedness he foresaw would be in the last days. (2 Tim. 3: 1-7.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, places, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

How is godliness shown to be gain?  
With what should we be content?  
What is probably included in "covering"?  
What was meant by "minded to be rich"?

#### II

What does the text say about money?  
What shows that riches are not wrong?  
What results will the love of money produce?  
What did Paul tell Timothy to do?  
What did Paul say about fighting?

#### III

How did Paul enforce his charge?  
What was the charge?  
How could Timothy keep it until the Lord appears?

#### IV

When will the Lord appear?  
Who is referred to as the only Potentate?

#### V

When did Paul have his first defense?  
What did he say about the brethren and God?  
What is meant by "heavenly kingdom"?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

Lesson XI—December 13, 1936

### JOHN'S VISION ON PATMOS

Rev. 1: 4-18.

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits that are before his throne;

5 And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood;

6 And he made us *to be* a kingdom, *to be* priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

9 I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience *which are* in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet

11 Saying, What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And having turned I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 And in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

14 And his head and his hair were white as white wool, *white* as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 And his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters.

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.



17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last,  
 18 And the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one."* (Rev. 1: 17, 18.)

TIME.—Probably A.D. 96.

PLACE.—Isle of Patmos, in Aegean Sea.

PERSONS.—John and the seven churches.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 15: 35-44.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

December 7.	M.	Seeing the Glorified Jesus (Rev. 1: 9-18)
December 8.	T.	The Ascension (Acts 1: 6-11)
December 9.	W.	Stephen's Vision (Acts 7: 54-60)
December 10.	T.	The Exalted Christ (Phil. 2: 5-11)
December 11.	F.	The River of Life (Rev. 22: 1-5)
December 12.	S.	The New Jerusalem (Rev. 21: 1-5)
December 13.	S.	Man's Fairest Hope (1 Cor. 15: 35-44)

LESSON OUTLINE.—

### Introductory Study.

- I. John's Address to the Seven Churches (Verses 4-6).
  - II. The Coming of Jesus Declared (Verses 7, 8).
  - III. John Declares His Position (Verses 9, 10).
  - IV. John Is Commissioned to Write (Verses 11, 12).
  - V. Christ's Appearance Described (Verses 13-18).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—Perhaps the most generally accepted date for the writing of Revelation is about A.D. 96. There is no way to definitely fix the time, and it might have been some time later. As Paul is thought to have been executed in A.D. 68, the last letter to Timothy could not have been written much earlier, for he said the time of his departure was at hand. It is quite probable that it was in the same year of his death or late in A.D. 67. This would make the time between this and our last lesson at least 27 years, and more, if Revelation was written later than A.D. 96.

*Lesson Links.*—In A.D. 64 the larger part of Rome was destroyed by fire. It is said that Nero, the emperor, charged it on the Christians, for which reason he persecuted them with great cruelty. These persecutions probably had something to do in causing Paul to be condemned. In the year A.D. 70 Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed with great loss of life to the Jewish population. Jesus had predicted this destruction of the city and warned those in Judea to depart. (Luke 21: 20-24.) Of course, none but his followers would be ready to obey his command. The apostles may have left Jerusalem during the siege and some time before the city was taken. Just how long after this till John went to Asia Minor is not known, but it is understood that he probably made Ephesus his headquarters. From this place he could have easily visited the seven churches to

which he was directed to write the letters. It seems to be the opinion of those near the apostolic age that John was released from the exile and returned to Ephesus where he died. Just how long the exile lasted or just when he died is not known.

*Lesson Settings.*—The book of Revelation, from which this lesson is taken, was a revelation which God authorized Jesus Christ to show unto his servants, and was presented to John by an angel. (Verses 1, 2.) These visions appeared to John while he was banished to the isle of Patmos. It is not known whether he wrote this book while in exile or after being permitted to return to Ephesus. The words "*was in the isle that is called Patmos*" seem to imply that the writing was done after he left the island.

## LESSON NOTES

### I. John's Address to the Seven Churches (Verses 4-6)

*Grace and Peace.*—The seven churches here addressed are described in the second and third chapters. They were located in Asia Minor at the following places: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Notwithstanding most of them deserved severe condemnation, yet John asked for the grace and peace of Jesus Christ to rest upon them. Of course, he wanted them to correct their mistakes and become worthy of the Lord's favors. But the purpose in addressing letters to them was to bring about their reforms wherein such were necessary, and to encourage them to more faithful service to the Lord. The expression, "who is and who was and who is to come," is probably a reference to God, meaning that his existence is eternal including all the past, present, and future. This grace and peace are also from the "seven Spirits that are before his throne." This probably means the Holy Spirit in completeness of his power or seven angelic beings about God's throne; likely the former. They are also from Jesus Christ. This all indicates that grace and peace will come to saints through the combined power of divine intelligences; or, to express it in other words, through the full Godhead.

*What Jesus Is.*—In the text he is declared to be "the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth." A faithful witness means one whose testimony is true. (John 8: 14.) The first-born from the dead means either that he was raised to die no more, and was the first so raised, or his resurrection considered as the first fruits (1 Cor. 15: 20) was the guarantee of the resurrection of all as the harvest later; that is, at the judgment. Just as the first fruits were a pledge of the harvest, so his resurrection is a pledge of a universal resurrection. In that sense he is the first-born. As a "ruler of the kings" he is entitled to be served by all earthly kings, for his authority is far above any of them. In other words, he is the chief in the realm of rulership.

*What He Has Done.*—The first statement is that he "loveth us." He loved us to the extent he was willing to die for us; hence, he "loosed us from our sins by his blood." Remission of sins is here, as throughout the New Testament, attributed to the blood of Christ. This loosing from sin is past both as to its shedding and as to its application when one is saved. He has also made us "a kingdom." The words "to be" are in italics, which means they have been supplied by the translators, but there is nothing in the original for



them. However "made us to be a kingdom" is substantially the same as "made us a kingdom" as it would read with the italicized words left out. In either case it is past tense, and shows that the kingdom has already been made. It is, therefore, already in existence, not yet future as some teach.

## II. The Coming of Jesus Declared (Verses 7, 8)

*"Behold, He Cometh."*—The return of the Lord is the clear teaching of the New Testament, but the exact time of his personal return is not known. Jesus said no one knew the hour of his coming, and that it would be as unexpected as the flood in the days of Noah. (Matt. 24: 36-39.) Paul said it would be like the coming of a thief at night. (1 Thess. 5: 2, 3.) It is further stated that he will come "with the clouds." Jesus himself promised to come on the clouds. (Matt. 24: 30; 26: 64.) At the ascension the angels announced to the eleven he would return as they saw him go. (Acts 1: 11.)

*All to See Him.*—In the vivid picture of the judgment, when Jesus will come to "sit on the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25: 31-46), he said that all nations should be gathered before him, and he would separate them as a shepherd divides between sheep and goats. He further said his coming would be like the lightning flashing from the east to the west seen by all at the same time. How this can be is incomprehensible to the human mind, but it does teach that his coming will be unexpected and to all at the same time. After mentioning that every eye will see him he specifies those "that pierced him." This may be taken literally to mean those who really crucified him, but probably means all those who condemn and reject him as virtually endorsing his death. It will include all the sinners on the left hand. This rejection of the wicked will cause mourning among all the tribes of the earth.

*Alpha and Omega.*—The words of verse 8 might apply to either God or Christ. The expressions describe the divine being in a most exalted manner. Jesus was with the Father in creation (John 1: 1-4; Col. 1: 13-17) and will be in the judgment. From Alpha to Omega means that his existence is eternal. His power and coming cannot therefore be doubted, for he is abundantly able to fulfill his promises.

## III. John Declares His Position (Verses 9, 10)

*"Partaker with You."*—This is the third time in nine verses that the writer refers to himself as John. He is generally supposed to be the apostle John who wrote the gospel and the three short letters. He said he was a brother to those to whom he wrote and shared with them in certain afflictions and blessings. The persecutions that came upon the church had come to him—he was enduring tribulation. He was also in the kingdom, for the language demands that meaning. If so, the kingdom was in existence; he could not be in a kingdom that did not exist. He had already said (verse 6) that Jesus had made them a kingdom. John was in the kingdom, or he either did not know where he was or he misrepresented facts. Notwithstanding his tribulation he was with them maintaining patience or steadfastness.

*In Patmos.*—At the time referred to he was in the isle of Patmos. This was a small rocky island about forty miles from the west coast of Asia Minor and opposite Miletus. He says he was an exile there

"for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus." That means that he was sent into exile because of his preaching the word of God. Refusing to turn his back upon the Lord, but rather to boldly proclaim him as the Christ, enemies of the truth secured his banishment. We do not have the facts detailed, but his words imply what has just been expressed.

"*On the Lord's Day.*"—Being "in the Spirit" means that he was under the influence of the Spirit, so he would be enabled to receive and record the visions and teachings that came to him. The time this coming under the influence of the Spirit occurred is stated definitely to have been "on the Lord's day." The general view that it refers to the first day of the week is by far the most probable meaning. In 1 Cor. 11: 20 the expression "the Lord's supper" has the same form of Greek word for "Lord's." This passage clearly refers to Christ. There is no day that refers to Christ with any particular significance except the first day of the week—the resurrection day.

#### IV. John Is Commissioned to Write (Verses 11, 12)

"*Seven Churches.*"—While in the Spirit John heard behind him a great voice telling him to write in a book what he saw, and send it to the seven churches. These churches are named in verse 11. It is not stated just why seven churches were addressed, for there were probably more than these in Asia Minor. Seven is a Bible number that is supposed to represent perfection or completeness. It may be that these seven were selected to be addressed because they furnished just the occasion for saying all that should be said at that time. In a way they may stand for or represent the whole church. There is probably no instruction in general which any congregation would need that is not found in these letters.

"*What He Saw.*"—John turned to see the one whose voice spake to him and saw "seven golden candlesticks." Here the real vision began to appear. The golden candlestick had seven prongs with seven lamps. It was the only light allowed in the tabernacle. Again seven indicates perfection, while gold probably signifies preciousness. What John saw was the seven-lamp candlestick, but it represented the seven churches. This is plainly declared in verse 20. The vision here therefore has reference to the seven churches. John also saw in the midst of these lights one "like unto a son of man." This expression either refers to Christ himself, or some heavenly being in the form of a man to represent Christ. This would indicate that Christ was in the midst of the seven churches to advise and instruct. This symbolic view of the relationship of Christ and the church is plainly expressed when he is called the head of the church which is his body. (Col. 1: 18, 24.)

#### V. Christ's Appearance Described (Verses 13-18)

"*His Dress.*"—He appeared with a robe down to the feet, and girt about with a golden girdle. He was dressed probably much like the high priest, for he is in fact our high priest in heaven, the most holy place of the spiritual scheme of things. (Heb. 9: 11, 24.)

"*Personal Description.*"—His head and hair were said to be as white as wool or snow. This color may represent his antiquity and glory and perhaps also his purity. His eyes a flame of fire may be the emblem of limitless power to know what man is and what he needs.



A penetrating vision that sees all things harmonizes with divine power. His feet as burnished brass, which metal with its stability and durability, indicates the permanence of his work and the perpetuation of his spiritual body. The voice, as of many waters, would show the power by which the Lord's commands are given. Such a description is awe-inspiring, picturing the majesty of a divine being, one with authority to command and with power enough to carry out his plans. In verse 16 it is said his "countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." This finishes the personal description. His face was as bright as the sun in the fullness of its light.

*What He Had.*—The text says he held in his right hand "seven stars." In verse 20 the seven stars are said to be the "angels of the seven churches." The word "angel" simply means messenger. Just who these messengers of the churches were we do not know. It may have been the elders, also called bishops. But whoever they may have been, they were under the authority of Jesus as head of the church. This is represented by the fact that he held them in his hand. Out of his mouth proceeded a sharp sword. This undoubtedly means the teaching of Jesus—the word of God. The word of God is said to be the sword of the Spirit. (Eph. 6: 17.) That means these angels of the churches are limited to what Jesus said for the law to govern the church.

*"Fell at His Feet."*—The vision evidently was too glorious for John's human view, and he fell down as dead. The vision must have appeared to John as being right at him. Hence, when he fell, it seemed that he was falling right at the feet of Jesus. The divine being laid his hand upon John and repeated what he had said about being the first and the last—the eternal one. He said he had been dead but was alive, and had the "keys of death and of Hades"; that is, he had authority over both death and Hades. He had power to abolish the former, and bring the spirits out of the latter.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. In some real, though inexplicable sense, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are one in the plan of saving men. Hence, any favors of a spiritual nature may be attributed to all three.

2. It is encouraging to be assured that our Lord will return to receive his faithful saints. To know when he will come is not necessary. If it were necessary to know that, the Lord would have revealed it.

3. Christians should be partakers with each other; should be willing to share with each other in both afflictions and blessings. This is the true idea of Christian fellowship. One should not be unwilling to share the responsibilities that go with positions.

4. John was allowed to write what he saw; the visions were to be delivered to him by an angel of the Lord. We are allowed to teach only what has been revealed in the divine record. Adding to or taking from the record will subject us to the curse of God. (Gal. 1: 6-10.)

5. Since the Lord has all authority in heaven, on earth, and in Hades, there is no possible chance to reject his teaching and be safe.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Briefly describe Christ's relationship to the Father. (John 1: 1-18.)

2. Give Christ's description of his kingdom. (John 18: 33-38.)
3. Give John's description of those acceptable to God. (1 John 2: 1-6.)
4. Give the substance of the letter to Ephesus. (Rev. 2: 1-7.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

#### Introductory Study

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### I

Name the churches addressed.  
From whom were grace and favor to come?  
What is Christ declared to be?  
What is he said to have done?

#### II

What do we know about the Lord's coming?  
What picture does Jesus give of the judgment?  
How is he represented as coming?

#### III

Of what was John a partaker?  
What is shown here about the kingdom?  
Describe the island of Patmos.  
What is the "Lord's day"?

#### IV

Why were just seven churches addressed?  
What is meant by the "golden candlesticks"?  
Who is meant by "one like unto a son of man"?

#### V

Describe the Lord's dress.  
Describe his personal appearance.  
Tell what he had.  
What did John do?

#### Thoughts for Meditation

Repeat these thoughts.  
Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

### Lesson XII—December 20, 1936

## THE SUPREME GIFT OF LOVE

1 John 4: 7-19.

7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

12 No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us:

13 Hereby we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God.

16 And we know and have believed the love which God hath in us. God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him.

17 Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, even so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 We love, because he first loved us.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." (Luke 2: 14.)



TIME.—Probably A.D. 90 to 97.

PLACE.—Probably written from Ephesus.

PERSONS.—John and all believers.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 15: 12-17.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

December 14.	M.	.....	The Supreme Gift of Love (1 John 4: 7-19)
December 15.	T.	.....	The Gift in the Manger (Luke 2: 10-16)
December 16.	W.	.....	The Gift of the Cross (John 3: 16-18)
December 17.	T.	.....	Love Manifested (John 14: 21-24)
December 18.	F.	.....	The Constraint of Love (2 Cor. 5: 14-19)
December 19.	S.	.....	Christ Never Fails Us (Rom. 8: 35-39)
December 20.	S.	.....	"Love One Another" (John 15: 12-17)

#### LESSON OUTLINE.—

##### Introductory Study.

- I. The Value of Love Stated (Verses 7, 8).
  - II. The Manifestation of God's Love (Verses 9, 10).
  - III. The Necessity of Loving One Another (Verses 11-14).
  - IV. The One Who Loves Abides in God (Verses 15-17).
  - V. Reasons for Perfecting Our Love (Verses 18, 19).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

#### INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—While the exact date of this book from which our lesson text is taken cannot be determined, it is supposed to be in the latter part of the first century, probably between A.D. 90 and 97. If the apostle John was the writer, which is generally admitted to be the fact, it was doubtless written before Revelation, from which the last lesson was taken. This would indicate that this lesson was written at least a few years earlier than the last. This is also some fifteen years after the death of Peter and Paul.

*Lesson Links.*—A comparison of John 1: 1-5 with 1 John 1: 1, 2 will show with much certainty that these two books were written by the same person. In the epistle the writer refers to the fact of his having seen Jesus with his eyes and handled him with his hands. Since being with Jesus was a condition of one being an apostle (Acts 1: 21, 22), this passage is presumptive evidence that the writer was an apostle. John is plainly declared to be the writer of Revelation (Rev. 1: 1, 9), and the evidence points to the same John. As mentioned in the last lesson, John had probably left Judea a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. His movements during the interval between that event and the time of his banishment on the isle of Patmos—about twenty-five years—are not recorded. It was during this time that he wrote the three epistles that go by his name. It is certain, however, that he was continually aiding congregations. This first letter, which is not addressed to any congregation or individual, is evidence of his general care of the Lord's people.

*Lesson Settings.*—In these letters John refers to himself as the "elder" (1 John 5: 21), and speaks of those to whom he wrote as "little children." This indicates that, in addition to his inspiration as an apostle, he was then of great age and experience, and perfectly

qualified from that standpoint to give advice to the saints. Evidently many false teachers had arisen and were disturbing the churches with their dangerous doctrines, for John speaks of "antichrist" and those who had gone out from them. (1 John 2: 18, 19.) The entire letter is, in fact, a fatherly appeal to love and obey God as a means of escaping the consequences of sin. His closing words were an entreaty for them to "guard yourselves from idols."

## LESSON NOTES

### I. The Value of Love Stated (Verses 7, 8)

*"Love One Another."*—John addresses his readers as "Beloved." This was an affectionate appeal. They were beloved by John, but much better still they were beloved of God. In 1 John 3: 1 the apostle exclaims: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God." If God could love man, a sinful creature, man should love his fellow man who is on the same plane. The apostle finds the reason for this exhortation to love one another in that great divine fact, almost incomprehensible to man, that "God is love," and therefore it is also true that "love is of God." The Greek word for love in our text is the same that Paul uses in 1 Cor. 13: 1-8, and means that benevolence that sincerely wishes one well; that disinterested and unselfish desire for the good of others. This John seems to think is a part of God's very nature; hence, those who manifest it towards others are of God, acting with his approval and in harmony with his command.

*"Begotten of God."*—As God is the embodiment of love, man cannot love as here demanded without being begotten of God. In this same book (5: 1) John says: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." The one who believes accepts the evidence of God's love and brings himself in harmony with the principle that prompted God to give his Son. For this reason the one who believes is also said to love and be begotten of God. Plainly the belief of the testimony that Jesus is God's Son makes one love God; hence, the principle of love—unselfish benevolence—is in his heart. The King James Version says that the one who believes or loves is "born" of God. But the Revised Version is correct. Children are begotten of the father. People are begotten of the gospel (1 Cor. 4: 15), but born of water and the Spirit (John 3: 5).

*"Knoweth God."*—The one thus begotten knows God, for faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10: 17), and the entrance of that word gives light. Such an one understands what God requires men to do, and the principles and motives that led to his commands. He views God's acts from what he knows an unselfish father would do for his children. He can, therefore, have the proper appreciation of what God does for man. The one who is not begotten of God does not so understand the Father, for he is destitute of that faith and love that enables him to comprehend a being wholly unselfish.

### II. The Manifestation of God's Love (Verses 9, 10)

*Sent His Son.*—By the word "herein" John means that he proposes to state what God did to manifest his love toward us, in us or in our case, as expressed in the margin. What God did was in our behalf, but it is also "in us," in the fact that we fully appreciate in our



hearts the evidence of his love. He sent the "only begotten"—the only one that stands related to him in that peculiar relationship of Son to Father. This represents the highest form of unselfish sacrifice in behalf of others, a divine benevolence. The purpose in sending this Son was that we might "live through him." John says (5: 11) that God gave us eternal life and this life is in his Son. He also says: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3: 16.)

*"Herein Is Love."*—This means that the real love is manifested in another evident fact; namely, that he loved us, not that we loved him. He did not send his Son because we had already loved him, and he wanted to show his love in return, but he loved us and gave his Son for us when we were enemies and yet in our sins. Without worth or merit on man's part God gave his Son that we might be saved. To be a propitiation means that in some way Christ's death made it possible for our sins to be blotted out; it must therefore carry the idea of a sufficient sacrifice to enable God to be "just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." (Rom. 3: 26.) Just how these results can justly be effected by the blood of Christ is too deep for human minds to understand, yet we know that somehow it is true, and that Christ is in reality the propitiation for our sins. In 1 John 2: 2 we learn that this propitiation is for the whole world.

### III. The Necessity of Loving One Another (Verses 11-14)

*An Evident Duty.*—John's first proof is the fact of God's manifesting his love. He says, "if God so loved us," we should love each other. The text says "ought" to love, which means that there is a reason why we ought. By the word "if" the apostle does not mean to express any doubt about God's love, for he has already declared that he has manifested his love in giving his Son. The thought is that since God loved us; then in view of that fact we should love each other. Or, God's love for us becomes an example that we should follow in our relationships to each other. If one follows examples in conduct he should select those of the highest type; none, of course, equals those of Jesus and his Father.

*God in Us.*—John says that "no man hath beheld God at any time." By this expression he must mean that man while in the body cannot behold God in his real form. His majesty and greatness would be too much for human nature to endure. But the fact that men do not see him is no proof that he does not exist, or that he does not dwell in us in a spiritual sense. If we manifest the proper love, we will have God dwelling in us, though his bodily form is not seen. In the next verse John not only says that God abides in us, but also that we abide in him. These expressions must both be understood in a spiritual sense. Paul says, "In whom (Christ) ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." (Eph. 2: 22.) This becomes the fact when we are "built upon the foundation," and thus become a part of the temple of the Lord, also called the "household of God." (Eph. 2: 19, 20.) This brings the perfection of God's love, for it then accomplishes his purpose.

*"Bear Witness."*—The apostle says we will know that union with the Father exists because he hath "given us of his Spirit." His Spirit has revealed the evidence of God's love, shown sinners what to



do to be saved, and those who have obeyed him have complete evidence of God's love. Paul says the fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." (Gal. 5: 22, 23.) The person that truly loves the saints has the fruits of the Spirit, and does have the Spirit abiding in him in a spiritual sense just as Christ abides in us. John declares he had seen and was bearing witness that God had sent his Son to save the world. Being an apostle he had been in position to see such things that his words were authoritative testimony to the fact that Jesus was the Savior.

#### IV. The One Who Loves Abides in God (Verses 15-17)

*"Whosoever Shall Confess."*—John said that he had borne witness to the fact that God had sent his Son to save men. Then he passes to the general statement that whosoever confesses the Son of God, God abideth in him and he in God. The reason of that is that one confesses what he believes, and one who believes understands the love of God. But he tells us in this same book (2: 3-6) that we know that we know him, "if we keep his commandments." One who says he knows him, but does not keep his commands, "is a liar, and the truth is not in him." But by keeping the commands the love of God has been perfected. To abide in God implies a previous coming into him. Abiding in him is necessary to be saved, for it is only by so doing that we can perfect God's love in ourselves. It is a mutual relationship; God abides in us and we abide in God. This demands that we use these expressions in a spiritual sense; for, if understood naturally, one could not be in God at the same time that God was in him.

*Boldness in the Judgment.*—The object in thus making our love perfect, or perfecting God's love in us, is that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. If we believe, love, and confess Jesus here, then we will have boldness to acknowledge him in the judgment. We are in the world, but so was Jesus at one time. His success in obeying the Father should encourage us to be obedient. It can be done, and we should be ashamed not to heroically try. Only such temptations as are common to man will meet us; we know we are safe, if we overcome them.

#### V. Reasons for Perfecting Our Love (Verses 18, 19)

*"No Fear in Love."*—There are two kinds of fear. One is the dread of punishment, the other is the holy fear of being displeasing to our heavenly Father, or that by chance we may do something to bring punishment. The first is manifest by the ungodly man who has no intention of right living—the hardened criminal; the other by the pious individual who desires to be an obedient child. The servile fear is cast out by perfect love. To the person who appreciates God's love and is manifesting his own love, there is no fear of punishment at the judgment. The fear in the heart of the disobedient is continually dreading punishment, because he feels that in justice he must receive it. It follows, then, in the language of the text, that "he that feareth is not made perfect in love." The fear of torment is always present when one does not obey God's commandments, for we are unable to resist the conviction that God's commands are just what we need to do to be eternally happy. We are then prepared



to accept John's statement that "whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected." Again the practical results of such love are stated in these words: "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him." (1 John 2: 10.)

*"He First Loved Us."*—The text here refers to a well-known human characteristic—the inclination to return good to those who do us good. If there were no other reason for loving God, or exercising the power to love, the fact that he has loved us would be sufficient. Just the sense of fairness, as we admit in general, would require that we love both God and man. The manifestation of his love in the matchless gift of Christ for us demands some response in sentiment and conduct on our part. An example of unselfish love that required the most extraordinary sacrifice is too much to be ignored or neglected. But the final thought on this duty is that one that loves God as he should will love his brother also. As he is under obligations for unmerited favors from God, so he is toward his brother.

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. To walk in the light is to walk as the gospel requires. Jesus is the light of the world. (John 1: 4-8.) His gospel is God's power to save those who believe and obey it. (Rom. 1: 16.) John says: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1: 7.)

2. God is said to have "so" loved the world. This does not alone refer to the magnitude of his love, though even that is incomprehensible, but also to the quality of it. It is the "what manner" of that love which causes John to exclaim regarding it. Human minds can neither comprehend nor explain it fully.

3. The reception of favors entails obligations; this is accepted in all forms of human relationships. There is nothing that man can do to be of direct benefit to an infinite Being, but he can do something that will show his appreciation of what has been done for him. Loving each other is accounted as loving God.

4. If there is an inherent blessing in a certain state, then the continued enjoyment of that blessing depends upon remaining in that state. If loving God (manifested in obedience) is necessary to coming into God, then continued obedience is necessary to abiding in him.

5. The most appreciated favors are those that come to us voluntarily, unsolicited on our part. Their value is increased in our estimation, if we are conscious that the giver is under no obligations to us, but is prompted by the spirit of genuine benevolence.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss Paul's application of love in 1 Cor. 13: 1-8.
2. Give the Savior's teaching on love in the following texts: John 14: 21-23; 15: 9-14.
3. Discuss the subject of love as found in 1 John 2: 5-17.
4. Discuss the relationship of faith and works. (James 2: 19-25.)

## QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.  
Give the Lesson Outline.

*Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.  
Repeat the Lesson Links.  
Explain the Lesson Settings.

**I**

What does John say of God's love in 1 John 3: 1?  
What does the word for "love" here mean?  
How are persons "begotten" of God?  
What is meant by "knoweth God"?

**II**

What was the purpose in sending Christ?  
What is meant by "herein is love"?  
What is meant by Christ being a "propitiation" for sins?

**III**

What proof does John give that love is a duty?  
What is meant by "no man hath beheld God"?  
When does God dwell in us?  
How does the Spirit "bear witness"?

**IV**

How do we know that we are in God?  
What is the object in perfecting our love?

**V**

What different kinds of fear are there?  
What will perfect love do?  
What will be the result of loving one's brother?  
Why should we love God?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

Note: Have you assigned the topics for next lesson?

*Lesson XIII—December 27, 1936*

## THE LAST WORDS

Rev. 22: 10-21.

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.

11 He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still.

12 Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is.

13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.  
14 Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.

15 Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.

20 He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24: 35.)

TIME.—Probably A.D. 96.

PLACE.—Isle of Patmos, in Aegean Sea.

PERSONS.—John and all men.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 119: 105-112.



## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.—

December 21.	M.	Searching the Scriptures (John 5: 30-40)
December 22.	T.	Power of the Word (Heb. 1: 1-4)
December 23.	W.	Scriptures Cannot Be Broken (John 10: 30-39)
December 24.	T.	The Word of Life (Phil. 2: 12-18)
December 25.	F.	Let the Word Abide in You (Col. 3: 12-17)
December 26.	S.	Word of God Is Living (Heb. 4: 8-13)
December 27.	S.	Judged by It (John 12: 44-50)

## LESSON OUTLINE.—

## Introductory Study.

- I. No Changes After Death and the Judgment (Verses 10-13).
  - II. The Obedient Promised Eternal Life (Verses 14, 15).
  - III. Jesus Asserts His Royal Lineage (Verse 16).
  - IV. The Universal Invitation (Verse 17).
  - V. Changing the Record Is Forbidden (Verses 18-21).
- Thoughts for Meditation.

## INTRODUCTORY STUDY

*Chronology.*—Since there is no way to know how much time John used in writing the book of Revelation, we have to consider the last and first chapters as belonging substantially to the same period. This then puts this lesson at the same time as lesson eleven. The chronological notes for that lesson may be consulted for this one also. The time of the writing was probably about A.D. 95.

*Lesson Links.*—So far as John is concerned personally, or the writing of the different parts of the book, there are no lesson links. The book in its contents clearly covers the period from the time that John wrote till the ultimate consummation of all things into their final state. To attempt to trace all that would be to write a commentary on the book. That, of course, is out of the question here. Since we are more than eighteen hundred years this side of the time John wrote the book, many of the events recorded have already passed, and some are yet to come.

*Lesson Settings.*—The book of Revelation is noted for its highly-wrought symbols and figurative language, for which reason many despair of being able to ever learn its lessons. That such language does make the task of getting its teaching quite difficult is admitted by all who have given it a casual examination. The first three chapters, however, are not so hard to understand, for they deal largely with the situation that existed then with the seven churches in Asia—plain simple facts. The words of our lesson text, though of an exalted character, are simple enough to make it sure we have the general truth they contain. This will best be seen as we proceed with the notes on the words themselves.

## LESSON NOTES

## I. No Changes After Death and the Judgment (Verses 10-13)

*Introductory Thoughts.*—In the first five verses of our chapter there is a vivid description of the final state—heaven itself. The remaining verses of the chapter, containing a few miscellaneous matters, are a conclusion to the book; the visions are all in the preceding

part. In verse 6 we have the truthfulness of what had been revealed confirmed, and in verse 7 the promise of Jesus that he would come quickly. This means that the unchangeable decree on the good and bad would soon begin to take place. Hence the blessings of God would rest upon those that "keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book." When John heard and saw the things in visions and those spoken, he was ready to worship the angel, but was forbidden to do so on the ground that angels are fellow servants, and all should worship God.

*Seal Not the Prophecy.*—In this verse John seems to be repeating what the angel said to him, and the words appear to follow logically after verse 7. He told John to "seal not up the words of the prophecy." That means it was to be proclaimed or that it was to be left open for study. The reason assigned for this command is that "the time is at hand." The book opens with a like statement. (Rev. 1: 3.) In 1: 1 John says he was to be shown things "which must shortly come to pass." The visions of Revelation contain many different things which evidently in their fulfillment extend over a long period of time. Hence, saying the time is "at hand" means that the time for the prophecies to begin to be fulfilled was at hand; not the fulfillment of all of them or the personal return of Christ. If none of the prophecies were to have been fulfilled for many centuries, he would probably have been told to "seal it up"—lay it away till the time it would be needed.

*Unrighteous Still.*—From the expressions in verse 11 it is clear that a time was coming when the wicked could not or would not be changed. We should remember that the visions of this book go from the time John wrote till the redeemed enter the new Jerusalem. The few verses of our lesson are a conclusion to all that teaching. Hence, the lesson here may be that after the resurrection there can be no changes. In a general way we know the teaching here is that people must change to righteousness in this life or it will be too late. The holy and filthy will remain as they are here. Or, the reference may be to the fact that some of the things prophesied were so near that it would be difficult to make any changes; rather many of them would become more filthy. This is the idea put in the margin. From a practical standpoint it may be applied to all. Death at best is so near that whatever changes we have to make must be made quickly, else it may be too late, and we will face the judgment unrighteous instead of holy.

*First and Last.*—Again the shortness of the time is referred to by the saying, "I come quickly." Either he meant that some of the things predicted would come soon or his final coming would be unexpected, and many would be found unprepared and have to remain in that condition. The same will be true in many instances when death comes. Jesus repeats what he said in the opening of the book, that he is the first and last; was with God in the beginning and would be in the closing scenes. His authority will last till the judgment.

## II. The Obedient Promised Eternal Life (Verses 14, 15)

*"Blessed Are They."*—The King James Version says that those who will be blessed are "they that do his commandments." The Revised Version says "they that wash their robes." Again the conclusion



of the book states the same thing as the beginning. It says blessed are they "that keep the things that are written therein." (Rev. 1: 3.) Though the two versions have a different reading here, there is no conflict in the thought, for one who washes his robes will be keeping the commandments, and one who keeps God's commandments will wash his robes. Of course, washing robes is a figurative expression that means sins are pardoned through the blood of Christ. (Acts 20: 28.) But remission of sins is promised to those who render obedience to the commands to believe, repent, and be baptized. (Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 28.)

*"The Tree of Life."*—This obedience is specifically said to be that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter into the city. These expressions mean that the obedient will be permitted to enter the New Jerusalem, described in Rev. 21: 1-7, and enjoy eternal life. Plainly this means everlasting life in heaven. As the obedience specified brings one into the church, it follows that one must be a member of the church to be saved; or, that the church is Christ's way from earth to heaven.

*Those Without.*—By implication verse 14 shows that the disobedient will not enter heaven, but the next verse states it plainly by saying they are "without." The classes that will not be permitted to enter the New Jerusalem are here named. "Dogs" are a symbol of the vile and notoriously wicked. Sorcerers stand for all kinds of religious fraud; fornicators, for all kinds of personal impurity; murderers, for all kinds of killing; and idolaters, for the devotees of all kinds of heathenism. To this last is added "every one that loveth and maketh a lie." This includes all those who delight in falsehood, love the lie and practice it.

### III. Jesus Asserts His Royal Lineage (Verse 16)

*"I Jesus."*—In this verse Jesus expressly declares himself the speaker, and thus ratifies what had been said by the angel. He plainly states that he had sent his angel to testify these things; that is, to reveal them for the churches. Of course, this revelation was sent first directly to the seven churches, but through them unto all congregations that need the instruction. Since humanity will always remain the same, this instruction will from time to time be applicable to individuals and congregations. This is true, of course, of all instruction that is given congregations in other New Testament books.

*"Offspring of David."*—During his personal ministry Jesus once asked the Pharisees whose son the Christ had to be. They replied, "The son of David." (Matt. 22: 41-43.) When Jesus entered Jerusalem in his triumphal entry, they cried, saying, "Hosanna to the son of David." That the Messiah was to be a descendant of David was a settled conviction among the Jews. Peter said on the day of Pentecost that God had sworn with an oath that he would raise up one of David's descendants to sit on his throne, and that the promise had been fulfilled in Jesus. (Acts 2: 29-35.) For that reason he had been exalted, was sitting at God's right hand, and would remain there till his enemies are made his footstool. To say that he had descended from David was to show that he had the royal right to reign over his kingdom and that Christians must submit to his authority. That he is now reigning is so clearly the import of the passage in Acts just referred to that nothing but a false theory could



make one deny it. Christ is also referred to as the "bright, the morning star." This indicates his power to light the way and lead to the right destination.

#### IV. The Universal Invitation (Verse 17)

*Spirit and Bride.*—Since only those who have their robes washed—have obeyed Jesus—can have the right to the tree of life, justice requires that all may be allowed to obey if they will. In this verse, nearly the last words of heaven to men, we have that universal invitation to come. What John wrote to the seven churches was considered the language of the Spirit—"what the Spirit saith to the churches." (Rev. 2: 7, 17, 29.) The invitation here to come must be understood as being the words of the Spirit. "The bride" must refer to the church—body of Christ—for there is nothing else to which the expression can refer. Paul uses the relationship of husband and wife to represent the relationship of Christ and the church. (Eph. 5: 22-33.) In verse 32 he states plainly that he is speaking of Christ and the church. The church unites its voice with the Spirit's here and also invites sinners to come. This is on the principle that those who appreciate their own salvation will want others to be saved, and will ask them to come. In Rev. 19: 7 the illustration of the wife is also used to refer to the church.

*"Water of Life."*—In the description of the new heaven (Rev. 22: 1) John saw "a river of water of life" proceeding out of the throne of God. This water of life—joys of eternal existence—those who overcome are promised as a final reward. This, however, cannot be had unless we come into the church and come up through great tribulation. (Acts 14: 22.) Any one who hears—heeds—the invitation and comes to the Lord should tell others to come. Any one who is athirst, let him come. If he desires salvation as a weary traveler may become athirst in the desert, let him enter the church. Whosoever will, let him partake of the blessings in Christ now, for only in so doing will he be prepared to drink from the river that flows from the throne of God.

#### V. Changing the Record Is Forbidden (Verses 18-21)

*"I Testify."*—Whether the speaker in this verse means the same as in verse 16 and refers to Jesus is not absolutely certain. Some so contend; others think it refers to John himself. It really makes no difference which is meant, the authority is the same. It was a revelation from Jesus through an angel unto John. Whoever then was the speaker, the authority was divine; to reject it is to reject the authority of Jesus. It applies to "every man that heareth."

*"Prophecy of This Book."*—Evidently the language applies directly to the words of the book of Revelation, for there is no evidence that all the books of the New Testament were then collected into one volume. If not, the words would have to be applied to the book John had just written, and of which they were a part. The principle involved and the lesson taught is equally applicable to any and all of God's words. (See Deut. 4: 2; Prov. 30: 6; 1 Cor. 4: 6; Gal. 1: 8-10.) As copies were made by hand, John knew there would be the temptation to the copyist to add notes of explanation in the manuscript, which, if it should be done, would later be considered a part



of Revelation. This possibility he sought to prevent by pronouncing a curse upon those who might dare to do it. The plagues written in the book for the disobedient would come upon them.

*Take from the Words.*—The temptation to take away from the words of the book would be just as strong as to add to them. Some who were terrified by the awful condemnation of sins might want certain parts of the book left out. Others who felt that some of it was inexplicable might be inclined to leave it out of their copy as not being of any special value. This warning is enforced by the solemn assurance that, if one did take anything away from this book, his part in the tree of life and the holy city would be taken away. Plainly, he would fail to receive the eternal reward—would be lost finally. After this warning the sacred record closes with the assurance that the one who testified these things would “come quickly.” This means that the things predicted would soon begin to be fulfilled. That would be a guarantee that all would be fulfilled. With the Bible’s closing words we end the year’s lessons: “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.”

### THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

1. Only timely preparation can protect one against an inevitable calamity. One of man’s saddest experiences is to find that he has lost when it is too late to prevent it. In death or at the judgment is too late for preparation.

2. Men may ignore or reject the Bible, but there can be no reason for one’s not obeying it if he admits it to be true. A disobedient believer is an inexcusable absurdity.

3. If Jesus had not been David’s descendant, he could not have been the Christ. He would not have fulfilled the prophecies; he would not have been entitled to occupy the throne as king. If he had not become a king, his own promises would have been proved false.

4. Nothing but neglect or willful disobedience can keep any responsible person from being saved. The reward has been prepared; the blood of Christ has made it available; the invitation from heaven and earth is extended. Whosoever will may come.

5. If human wisdom is not able to give a perfect law, then it is not able to change God’s without making it imperfect. For man to tamper with the Bible would be to endanger the salvation of the world. This is too serious to be allowed. Man risks his soul when he tries it.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe the judgment scene. (Rev. 20: 11-15.)
2. Describe the state of those who enter that city. (Rev. 22: 1-5.)
3. Briefly describe the city. (Rev. 21: 9-27.)
4. Describe the coming of the New Jerusalem. (Rev. 22: 1-8.)

### QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON

Give the subject, Golden Text, time, place, and persons.

Give the Lesson Outline.

#### *Introductory Study*

Give the Chronological Facts.

Repeat the Lesson Links.

Explain the Lesson Settings.

#### *I*

What is found in the preceding verses of this chapter?

Why say “seal not” the prophecy?

What is meant by “at hand” in this place?

What is the lesson in being unrighteous still?

What is meant by “come quickly”?

## II

Who are promised a blessing?  
Upon what terms will they be blessed?  
What lesson is in the expression "tree of life"?  
What classes will be lost?

## III

To whom does this revelation apply?  
Of whom must the Christ be a son?  
What argument did Peter make on Pentecost?

## IV

Where is the Spirit's invitation found?  
What is meant by the "bride"?  
What other invitations are mentioned?

## V

Who is referred to by "I" in verse 18?  
What book is referred to here?  
What prohibitions are uttered?

*Thoughts for Meditation*

Repeat these thoughts.

Note: Discuss the topics.



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