

**GOSPEL ADVOCATE SERIES**

**Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary**

**ON**

**UNIFORM BIBLE LESSONS**

**FOR THE**

**CHURCHES OF CHRIST**

**1946**

This commentary is based on the Uniform Bible Lessons for the churches of Christ, and is the second year of the new series of the seven year cycle, 1945-1951  
**FIRST ANNUAL VOLUME**

**PRICE**

Single copy, postpaid .....	95 cents
Five or more copies to same address, each, net .....	.85 cents

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**GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMPANY**  
**NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

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Nashville, Tennessee

## A FOREWORD

These annual lessons were first published in 1922 under the title, ELAM'S NOTES; they were published under this title through 1931, and then they were published under the title, ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY. There were thirteen volumes printed under this title. This is the first volume with the present title, TEACHER'S ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY. It is the second volume on the new series of Uniform Bible Lessons for the churches of Christ. The series includes a cycle of seven years, 1945-1951. This cycle covers the entire Bible with lessons prepared and outlined by members of the church of our Lord.

The lessons for 1946 include the different phases of the church as presented in the New Testament. The lessons of the first quarter are on "The Church" in general; the lessons for the second quarter are studies on "How to Live in the Church"; the lessons for the third quarter are studies on "Missionary Work of the Church"; the lessons for the fourth quarter are on "The Church in the Epistles."

The present volume is prepared especially for teachers. There will be found in the treatment of each lesson suggestions on the context of the lesson, the subject explained, helps for teachers, and comments on the lesson with suggested topics for discussion and points for emphasis. The teachers of the different grades will find suggestions that are helpful in teaching the lesson. It proposes to be true to its title, TEACHER'S ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY.

No claim to perfection is made for these lessons; they have been prayerfully prepared and pedagogically arranged. While they are prepared especially for teachers and supply a much needed publication to help teachers, yet the lessons are treated fully so that the book may be used in classwork as the former volumes have been used. It is sent out with a prayer that it may help all to come to a fuller knowledge of the truth of God and become more efficient teachers of his word.

— THE AUTHOR.

# THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

## ESTABLISHED A.D. 33

<b>FOUNDER</b>		Jesus Christ Matt. 16:18.
<b>FOUNDATION</b>		Jesus Christ Isa. 28:16; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:19, 20; 1 Pet. 2:4-6; 1 Cor. 3:11.
<b>WHEN AND WHERE FOUNDED</b>		Isa. 2:1-4; Mic. 4:1, 2; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:4-8; Acts 2:1-4, 41-47.
<b>Saints</b>		Called of God—Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:8, 9. How Called—John 6:45; Rom. 10:14, 15; 1 Cor. 1:21; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 8:10.
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>Elders</b>	Why Called—Acts 26:16-18; Rom. 10:1-13; 11:23 32:2 Thess. 2:14; Tit. 2:14. Office—Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:5; 5:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-3. Character—1 Tim. 3:7; Tit. 1:5-9. Duty—1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.
<b>Phil. 1:1</b>	<b>Deacons</b>	Office—Acts 6:1-6. Character—1 Tim. 3:8-13. Duty—Acts 6:1-3.
<b>DUTY OF CHURCH TO OFFICERS</b>		To Be Submissive—Heb. 13:7-17. Not to Rebuke—1 Tim. 5:1; 1 Pet. 5:5. Accusations—1 Tim. 5:19. Honor—1 Thess. 5:13; 1 Tim. 5:17. Salute—Heb. 13:24.
<b>NAME</b>		
	<b>Of Organization</b>	Church of God—Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Tim. 3:5. Church of the Living God—1 Tim. 3:15. Body of Christ—Eph. 4:12; 5:23; Col. 1:24. Kingdom of God—Matt. 16:19; John 3:5.
	<b>Of Members</b>	Disciples—John 15:8; Acts 11:26. Saints—Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; Phil. 1:1. Brethren—1 Cor. 15:6; James 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:10. Christians—Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16. Children—Gal. 3:26.

**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), I Sam. 25:14. Wife of Nabal; became David's wife.  
Abimelech (Meleeh is father), Gen. 26:1. King of Gerar in the time of Isaac.  
Abishai (my father is Jesse), I 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 king 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,  
Abimelech (brother of Melech), 1 Sam. 22:11. High priest of 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), I 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), Phile. 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 Judea; reigned forty years.  
 Ashpenaz (horse-nose), Dan. 1:3. Master of eunuchs.  
 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.  
 Baiaam (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 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.  
 Beelzebub (Lord of the House), Matt. 12:24. Title of heathen god.  
 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, fiat), 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.  
 Chemosh (subduer), Num. 21:29. A god of the Moabites.  
 Chinnereth (flute, 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 A.D. 41 to 54.  
 Cleopas (from Cleopatra), John 19:25. One of the two disciples to whom Jesus talked on the way to Emmaus.  
 Corban, Matt. 15:5. An offering to God.  
 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.  
 Cyrcne, 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.  
 Demoniac, Matt. 12:22. One possessing a demon.  
 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.  
 Diotrophes (nourished by Jove), 3 John 9. Nothing known of him.  
 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.  
 Ehai (stone), Deut. 11:26-29. Mountain.  
 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), I 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), I Kings 19:16. Prophet who succeeded Elijah.  
 Elymas (a wise man), Acts 13:6. A sorcerer who opposed Paul.  
 Endor (fountain of Dor), I 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.  
 Etam (lair of wild beasts), Judges 15:8. Place visited by Samson.  
 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.  
 Euraquilo, Acts 27:14. Compounded from two words meaning east and north.  
 Eutychus (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.



Gentile (nation), Acts 11:18. Any one who was not of the Jewish race.  
 Gergesenes (See Gadarenes).  
 Gethsemane (an oil press), Matt. 26:36. Garden near Jerusalem.  
 Gerizim (cutter), Deut. 11:26-29. Mountain in Ephraim.  
 Gibeah (a hill), Josh. 15:57. Located in Benjamin.  
 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 the 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 Elikanah, 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 of 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, and 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 the members of the kingdom of Judah after the separation of the ten tribes; later applied to all Israelites.  
Jeab (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 Kerioth), 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 Mariam 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  
Kohath (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 (wearied), Gen. 29:16. Daughter of Laban, first wife of Jacob.  
Lebanon (white), Deut. 1:7. Mountain range north of Palestine.  
Lehi (jawbone), Judges 15:9. A place in Judah.  
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 of Antioch.  
Luke (light-giving), Acts 13:1; Col. 4:14. Traveled with Paul and wrote the book that bears his name.  
Lyeaonia (landing of Lyeanon, or wolf land), Acts 14:11. A province in Asia Minor.  
Lydia (strife), Acts 16:14. First European convert at Philippi.  
Lysias (ft. 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.  
Manoah (rest), Judges 13:2. Father of Samson.  
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.  
 Mizpah (a watchtower), Josh. 18:26. A city in Benjamin.  
 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), I 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.  
 Nathaniel (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.  
 Nazirite (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 "Nazarite."  
 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 exposition from Babylon to Jerusalem.  
 New Testament (new covenant). Name given to the Holy Scriptures after the advent of Christ.  
 Nieodemus (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 (tableland 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.

Peninnah (coral, or pearl), I Sam. 1:2. One of Elkanah's wives.

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.

Phinehas (mouth of brass), I Sam. 1:3. Son of Eli.

Phebe (radiant), Rom. 16:1. The name of a Christian woman.

Phoenicia (land of palm trees), 2 Sam. 5:11. Country on east coast of Mediterranean Sea.

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.

Sceva (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.

Shechem (back or shoulders), Jno. 4:5. A city of Samaria.  
 Shem (name), Gen. 5:32. The eldest son of Noah.  
 Shiloh (place of rest), Judges 21:19. A city of 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.  
 Timnah (portion), Judges 14:1. Concubine of Samson.  
 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

Zaechaeus (pure), Luke 19:5. A tax collector, publican who lived near Jericho.  
Zaehariah (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), I Chron. 24:3. Name of priest in time of David.  
Zebah and Zaimunna (deprived of protection), Judges 8:5-21. Two kings of Midian.  
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), I 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.  
Zorah (hornet), Josh. 19:41. A town in tribe of Dan.  
Zuph (honeycomb), I Sam. 9:5. A country in tribe of Benjamin.



**MAP LINK**

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## FIRST QUARTER THE CHURCH

AIM.— The aim of this course is to study the church of the New Testament in all of its phases; to learn how to distinguish it from all human organizations; and to know how to appreciate it as the body of Christ.

### Lesson I—January 6, 1946

## CHURCH IN ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD Eph. 3:8-21

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Mic. 4:1-5.

GOLDEN TEXT. : "To the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God." (Eph. 3:10.)

### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

December	31.	M	God Made Everything for His Purpose (Prov. 16:1-4)
January	1.	T	A Time for Every Purpose (Eccles. 3:1-6)
January	2.	W	Every Purpose Established (Prov. 20:16-18)
January	3.	T	A Purpose Declared (Isa. 14:24-27)
January	4.	F	Purpose of Jehovah (Isa. 19:16-19)
January	5.	S	Purpose to Do Evil (Jer. 36:1-3)
January	6.	S	Purpose Against Babylon (Jer. 51:11-14)

### Other Lesson Material Eph. 1:3-23; 2:1-22

### Historical Background

TIME.— A.D. 62, while Paul was a prisoner in Rome.

PLACE.— A Roman prison.

PERSONS.— Paul and the Ephesian church; the Gentile nations; all children of God.

### Lesson Text

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

9 And to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things;

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God,

11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him.

13 Wherefore I ask that ye may not faint at my tribulations for you, which are your glory.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

15 From whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man;

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

19 And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21 Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Christ's Unsearchable Riches (Verses 8, 9).
- II. God's Eternal Purpose (Verses 10-13).
- III. This Purpose Unfolded in Christ (Verses 14-19).
- IV. The Place of the Church in This Purpose (Verses 20, 21).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The book of Ephesians is one of the most profound portions of Holy Scripture. It compares with Romans and Hebrews in its comprehensive outline of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of Christ. The history of Paul's connection with the Ephesians will be found in Acts 18:19-21; 19:1-41; 20:17-38, and should be carefully studied in connection with this lesson. Some of the outstanding characteristics of this letter are: (1) It is a letter of great prayers. (Eph. 1:16-21; 3:14-21.) It is a thrilling recital of Paul's supreme confidence in God's willingness to hear and answer prayers. People seldom pray for the things Paul prayed for in these prayers. (2) It is a far-reaching statement of God's plan for the salvation of the race; and particularly for the inclusion of the Gentile nations in the one body. (3) It is a letter of great unities. Here we learn that Jew and Gentile are one, and that there is one body and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one hope, one God and Father of all. (4) The relationship Christ sustains to his church as both head and body is clearly set forth. The immediate context of our present lesson is a profound statement of God's plan to bring the Gentiles into the one body as fellow heirs with the Jews.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

We are to study in this lesson the place of the church in the divine plan. This is a vital and fundamental lesson it clearly demonstrates the fact that God has always intended to make "known through the church the manifold wisdom of God." Premillennialists insist that the church was merely an "accident," an "afterthought" in the mind of God, and was set up only after the Jews rejected Christ. They attempt to distinguish between the church and the kingdom, and contend that the kingdom was the original plan of God, but that the church was substituted in its stead. They are in error in this view; the church and kingdom are the same in so far as the earth is concerned, and this lesson clearly outlines the place and purpose of the church in God's plan for the salvation of the race. Having always been in his plan, it is not therefore a "contingency," or accident.

### HELPS FOR TEACHERS

The primary and junior teachers will have an excellent opportunity in this lesson to emphasize the hand of God across the centuries, and to show that he has a definite plan and purpose in all that he does. It should be pointed out that a thousand years is with the Lord as one day, and that, however long may be the time, God's

purpose will not fail, but be ultimately achieved. A brief statement of the different dispensations, the essential difference between the Mosaic age and the Christian dispensation in the scope and individuals included will be in line with this lesson. The senior and adult classes will study carefully the lesson text and note how the church fits into God's eternal purpose.

## **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

### **I. Christ's Unsearchable Riches (Verses 8, 9)**

Verses 8 and 9 of our lesson text are a lesson in humility. Here Paul is painfully conscious of the fact that he had been a persecutor of the church, and yet the Lord had called him into his service and empowered him with the responsibility of preaching his word. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" is his way of expressing his consciousness of unworthiness, the great blessing conferred upon him in being selected to do the work, and the richness of the message he was to preach. It will be recalled that in the meeting with the apostles in Jerusalem it was decided that Paul should go among the heathen (Gentiles) and carry the gospel of Christ. Paul's work was therefore largely among Gentile people, although he never lost an opportunity to preach the gospel to his own race. His message was one of great value to the soul; its riches were and are indeed "unsearchable," containing, as it does, man's greatest need, the salvation of his soul from sin. Verse 9 mentions a mystery which for "ages hath been hid," but which now was to be made known through the church. This mystery is revealed in verse 6: "That the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel." We learn then from this section: (1) Paul's special mission to the Gentiles; (2) the value of the gospel of Christ to mankind; (3) Paul's part in the revelation God made to man that Gentiles were to be included in the blessings of Christianity as fellow heirs and fellow members of the one body (the church).

### **II. God's Eternal Purpose (Verses 10-13)**

This statement is a clear exposition of the mind of God touching his purpose and plan in bringing salvation to man through the church. It is through the church that the manifold wisdom of God is to be made known. This is a statement of far-reaching proportions.— As we have already pointed out, it is a clear refutation of the premillennial view that the church was not originally in the purpose of God: We are here informed that not only did God ordain that through the church his wisdom is to be made known to the world, but that this was in harmony with the "eternal purpose" which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. - It follows therefore that there never was a time when the Lord did not intend to bring to man the knowledge of salvation through the church. This being true, it is obvious that the church was not a substitute or afterthought in God's mind. Note, too, that this "eternal purpose" was in Christ Jesus. Thus, as far back in the plan of God as the gift of his Son can be traced, just so far was the church in his purpose. Every promise vouchsafed to man in Christ is a promise to be obtained only in the church. Every function having to do with the

discharge of God's plan for the salvation of man is to be done only through and by means of the church. This, were there no other reasons is sufficient to prove that any human arrangement, any man-made society for the preaching of the gospel, is displeasing to GOD and out of harmony with his plan and purpose. The misunderstanding of the Jews touching God's plan did not warrant it, nor will man's refusal to accept these facts today cause the Lord to substitute it for some other method.

### **III. This Purpose Unfolded in Christ (Verses 14-19)**

It is interesting to note the "progress of doctrine" discernible in the gradual unfolding of God's plan across the years. This may be seen both in the Old and the New Testaments. While it is admitted that the church is not fully revealed in the Old Testament, that it was indeed a "mystery" as Paul puts it in our lesson text, yet gleanings of light thereon may be seen here and there, and Paul fully revealed it, together with God's purpose, to the Gentile world. With the light that we now have, we are able to see that every promise God made to man regarding his ultimate redemption involved and embraced the church. The promise of God to Satan in Eden that the woman's seed would bruise the head of the serpent; the promise to Abraham, that in and through his seed the families of the earth were to be blessed; in a word, every divine promise to be realized in Christ by means of the gospel was in effect an anticipation of the church. This shows us how important it is for us to have clear and comprehensive views of the church of the New Testament. Since the entire series of lessons this year deals with the church, each lesson should be thoroughly mastered, and the pupils urged to form correct views of this divine institution.

Praying that the Ephesians would not faint nor grow weary of heart because of the tribulations Paul was suffering, he said, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God." Children of God are here represented as being the family of God; hence, to be in the church is to be a member of his family, since he has no children not in his family. No other way is there for one to be a child of God except by being a member of the church. This shows us the essentiality of the church; its place in God's plan, and the necessity for being in it to enjoy the blessings that are in Christ. Paul prayed that Christ would dwell in their hearts through faith, that they would be rooted and grounded in love, and that they would appreciate fully the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and have a full measure of all the fullness of God. We thus see: (1) Paul's concern for these brethren; (2) his prayer in their behalf; (3) the relationship children of God sustain to the family of God (the church); (4) how Christ dwells in the heart of the faithful one (by faith); (5) how we are to be strengthened in the inner man; and (6) the availability of all the fullness of God for the faithful.

#### **IV. The Place of the Church in This Purpose (Verses 20, 21)**

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen." Verse 20 is an ascription of praise to God and forms the benediction of the prayer uttered in behalf of the Ephesians. What a grand conception Paul had of the Lord! (1) He is able; all power is his; (2) he is able to do exceeding abundantly, i.e., to an extent beyond what we can even ask or think; (3) it is by an exertion of the same power that works in us, the power inherent in his word. r-V-6fe 21 shows the place of the church in the purpose of God. "Unto him be the glory in the church.", The church is therefore the instrument by which the glory of God is to be shown; and it is by the church that his praise is to be celebrated. Whenever church work stops, then the glory stops! Are we prepared for this conclusion? It is by means of the church that God is glorified in the world; when we cease to function as the New Testament church, we thereby cease to glorify God. If it be asked, What is the mission of the church, we may answer by pointing out that the mission of the church is the same as the mission of Christ. Why did Christ come into the world? That he might save the world. What then is the function of the church? To save the world. By this it is meant that the church is designed to accomplish God's divine purpose as expressed in Christ. It is "through the church" this is to be done. God's mercy is shown in the church, and only there. Throughout the wide universe there has been, under the Christian dispensation, no exercise of mercy, but in the church

Moreover, it is "unto all generations for ever and ever" that the church is to serve as the agent for the manifold wisdom of God. The King James Version renders this, "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." There is a richness and amplification of language here that shows that Paul's heart was full of his subject, and that it was difficult for him to find words to express the grand conceptions he felt. His utterance means in the strongest and most emphatic sense, forever. "It is one of the apostle's self-invented phrases" (Bloomfield), and no version can fully express the meaning. It is, literally, "unto all generations of the ages of ages," or "unto all the generations of the eternity of eternities, or the eternity of ages." It is, truly, the language of a heart full of the love of God, and anxious to make this known in God's own appointed way.

Hence, we have here a benediction. It is a benediction that contains an ascription of praise. It is addressed to the Father. The glory to be derived is in the church. To be in the church is to be in Christ. This glory is to be shown in this fashion forever and ever. May we ever thus glorify him! Let us learn these five things here set forth in connection with Christ and his church: (1) The indwelling of Christ by faith; (2) what it means to be rooted and grounded in love; (3) to be able to apprehend the extent of Christ's love; (4) to fathom the depth, height, length, and breadth thereof; and (5) to be filled with the fullness of God.

**POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

1. God a purposeful Father; the elements of design observable in all his word and works.
2. His purpose regarding Jesus Christ, and the gradual revelation of this plan in the Old Testament scriptures.
3. The relationship of the church to Christ, and its place in the plan.
4. The "mystery" to which Paul refers in the lesson text.
5. The goodness of God as revealed in the provision he has made for the redemption of the race.
6. How God is glorified today.
7. How long he is to be thus glorified.

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. Humility (verse 8).
2. The great privilege of preaching the gospel of Christ.
3. The ample fullness of the plan of salvation.
4. The unsearchable riches to be found only in Christ.
5. How God is glorified in the church.

**Lesson II—January 13, 1946****CHRIST BUILDER OF THE CHURCH****Matt. 16:18-20; 1 Pet. 2:1-10**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Isa. 2:1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "For every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God." (Neb. 3:4.)

**Helps for Lesson Study**  
**Daily Bible Readings**

January	7.	M	Build a Sure House (1 Sam. 2:35, 36)
January	8.	T	Build Thee a House (2 Sam. 7:26-29)
January	9.	W	Save Zion and Build a House (Psalm 69:32-36)
January	10.	T	Except Jehovah Build (Psalm 127:1-4)
January	11.	F	To Build and to Plant (JeR. 18:9-12)
January	12.	S	Christ Will Build (Matt. 16:18-20)
January	13.	S	Build Tabernacle of David (Acts 15:14-18)

**Other Lesson Material****Isar 2:1-4; Dan. 2:1-44****Historical Background**

**TIME.**— For Matthew, probably A.D. 29; for First Peter, different dates are given, ranging from A.D. 60 to 68. Fortunately, it is not absolutely necessary for us to be exact in these matters. In most instances, we are forced to be content with approximate dates only.

**PLACES.**— For Matthew, the coasts of Caesarea Philippi; for First Peter, Babylon. The Romish church contends that Babylon is a figurative term for Rome, and hence infers that Peter wrote from Rome where he is alleged to have occupied the "Holy See." There is no evidence that Peter was ever in Rome that is reliable in its nature; and there is no good reason for assuming that "Babylon" was any other city than that situated on the banks of the Euphrates.

PERSONS.— The Lord and his disciples; Peter and the saints scattered throughout "Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia."

### Lesson Text

18 And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it

19 I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

20 Then charged he the disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ.

1 Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

2 As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation;

3 If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious:

4 Unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious,

5 Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

6 Because it is contained in scripture,

Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious:

And he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame.

7 For you therefore that believe is the preciousness: but for such as disbelieve,

The stone which the builders rejected,

The same was made the head of the corner;

8 and,

A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; for they stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

9 But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

10 Who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Christ Promises to Build His Church (Verse 18).
- II. The Gates of Hades Not to Prevail Against It (Verse 18).
- III. Keys of the Kingdom Delivered to Peter (Verse 19).
- IV. Christ a Living Stone (1 Pet. 2:4).
- V. Children of God Stones in God's Building (Verses 5-10).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The promise Jesus made his disciples in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi to build his church was uttered shortly after the miracle of the loaves and fishes, and during a period of brief retirement. It followed hard on Peter's acknowledgment that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus had asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" and had from them elicited a number of replies. Some thought he was John the Baptist; others, Elijah, or Jeremiah; while others were sure he was one of the prophets. These expressions were doubtless heard as the disciples moved among the people as they feasted on the bounteous repast so miraculously provided a short while before this by the Lord. When the question was submitted to the disciples, there was no hesitancy, no uncertainty. Impulsive, impetuous Peter immediately answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It was then that Jesus uttered the words that form the basis of our study



from Matthew today. Peter wrote to the saints scattered throughout "Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." A great storm of persecution was sweeping over the apostolic church at the time, and he wrote to confirm the saints in the faith, and to encourage them to be firm and steadfast in the midst of their suffering in behalf of Christ. The whole epistle breathes quiet confidence in the ability of the Lord to sustain his own, and it should be read by all who feel the burdens of life resting heavily on their shoulders. Our shepherd and bishop of souls will never leave or forsake us, is the theme of the whole epistle.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

The subject of the present lesson is simple and easily understood. Yet it is highly significant, especially in this day of human institutions. It teaches us that Christ did build the church; that there is therefore a divine institution in the world. This fact has been largely lost sight of, or disregarded. Today, millions feel no interest in the church of the New Testament; and indeed, prefer to be in organizations admittedly human in origin and more recent than the New Testament.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"For every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God." (Heb. 3:4.) The Hebrew writer, from which this statement is taken, is showing the superiority of Christ over Moses. He had just said, "For he hath been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by so much as he that built the house hath more honor than the house." Then follows the passage which we use today for our Golden Text. This is therefore a clear affirmation of the deity of the Lord Jesus. His reasoning runs thus: (1) He who built all things is God; (2) but Christ built all things; therefore, (3) Christ is God. Being God, and thus possessing divinity, he was eminently able to build his church, to make good the promise vouchsafed to the disciples in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi. The church of Christ is therefore a divine institution.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The primary and junior teachers should impress their pupils with the fact that there is a "New Testament church" in the world, and that it was established by the Lord himself. They should also be taught the difference between divine and human institutions, and it would be well to give them a simple and brief discussion of the origin of the different denominations. They will be unable to enter fully into any discussion of the various doctrinal differences, but should be taught to distinguish between that which is human and that which is divine. The senior and adult classes will be able to appreciate a full and complete exposition of the lesson text. This is one of the most important lessons in the whole series; and it would be well to give a thorough exposition of the passages under study today, especially Matt. 16:18-20.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Christ Promises to Build His Church (Verse 18)**

"And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock

I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." We refer the student to the section, "Context of the Lesson," for the contextual background of this statement. It will be observed that Jesus here promised to build "his church." It is, therefore, "Christ's church," or, more euphoniously, as Paul puts it in Rom. 16:16, "The churches of Christ salute you." Thus, any institution, however respectable, however numerous its adherents, not thus built by the Lord is not, and cannot be, the church of the New Testament. As great as were Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, or even John the Baptist, they were never empowered with the authority to build the church; and their institutions possess no identity with the church Jesus built. These points should be always remembered: (1) Christ built the church; (2) it was built in A.D. 33; (3) it was built in Jerusalem. It is called Christ's church, or the church of Christ. One may therefore easily test whether he or she is a member of the church Christ built. If it is lacking in one or more of these characteristics, it is simply not the church about which we read in the Bible.

## **II. The Gates of Hades Not to Prevail Against It (Verse 18)**

This passage has long been a field of extended controversy. The Catholic church has long sought to support her claim of the primacy of Peter, by urging that Christ promised to build the church upon Peter, in this passage. Their reasoning runs thus: The word "Peter" means "rock" in Greek. Hence, when Jesus said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," they contend that the Lord meant to assert that he would build the church upon Peter. Their reasoning is clearly fallacious. The word translated Peter is not the same as the word translated rock in this passage. Peter in Greek is "petros," masculine gender; whereas "rock" is "petra," feminine gender. The essential difference of the two words will appear when we translate thus, "Peter, you are a he-rock, but upon this she-rock I will build my church!" With the genders of the two words thus made apparent, would one ever conclude that it was Peter upon whom Tim. Lord intended to build his church? Moreover, the words do not mean the same thing. Petros, translated "Peter," means a fragment, or small rock broken off a larger rock, a mere pebble, comparatively speaking; while Petra, translated "rock," means a solid bedrock, a definite foundation. The idea thus suggested is therefore this: Peter, you are a mere pebble comparatively speaking; it is not you upon which I shall build my church; instead, I shall build it upon a solid bedrock, a sure foundation, namely, the truth you have confessed that I am the Christ, the Son of the living God. (See Isa. 28:16; 1 Cor. 3:11, in this connection.)

Additional evidence that the Romish view of this passage is erroneous is to be seen in the fact that Peter, in verse 19, is given the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" Peter's position in the church was that of doorkeeper, not foundation. It is to charge the Lord with mixing the figures of speech to have him make Peter both foundation and doorkeeper in the same context.

Others cite this passage in an effort to prove church succession or perpetuity. They point out that the Lord promised that the gates of Hades would never prevail against the church, and that the

church must always have existed, otherwise this promise has failed. They reach this conclusion by assuming that the antecedent of the pronoun "it," in this passage, is "church." This position is erroneous. In the first place, it cannot be shown that there has always been an organized body of faithful believers on the earth. True, there were numerous departures from the Catholic Church during the Dark Ages, but these schisms frequently embraced more error than the body from which they sprang. To assert that there must have been groups of faithful ones holding fast to the doctrine and practice of the New Testament church is simply wishful thinking; no evidence thereof can be found in history. Moreover, both Daniel and Revelation tell us that the holy people would be worn out and destroyed; that the little horn would make war against the saints and overcome them; that the truth would be cast down to the ground. What, then, is the true significance of the passage?

The following quotation is from "The Old Path Pulpit," a book of sermons by the eminent F. G. Allen, one of the leading lights of the earlier days of the restoration movement: "But what is the 'it' against which the gates were not to prevail? . . . Jesus tells his disciples what he intends to do-to build his church-but he informs them that before this work is done, he must die. His body must go into the grave, and his soul into Hades. When this should come to pass, their hopes would be blasted. The joyous prospects of the coming kingdom which filled their souls, they would regard as dashed to the earth. They would look upon his grave as the end of their hopes. All hell would be jubilant over the fact that the Son of God was in Hades and Satan held the keys! Of course, if he should not come forth; if the gates should remain closed against him, his promise to build the church would fail. But he assured them that he would come forth . . . and the gates of Hades, through which he had to pass before its accomplishment, should not prevail against it. They should not prevail against the building of the church. . . If it be objected that the grammar of the passage is against this interpretation, we give the following reasons for thinking otherwise . . . . In this interpretation the pronoun 'it' refers to the abstract idea of building, and has for its antecedent a word understood, a noun implied in the words to build. In his new Greek Grammar, Anthon gives this rule of syntax: 'Adjectives and pronouns are often referred, in respect to gender, to words which are implied in a preceding word, from the sense of that word or its peculiar composition.' Under this rule, we have a number of passages in the New Testament. For example: 'Go ye, therefore, and disciple all the nations, baptizing them.' Here the pronoun in the masculine refers to the noun disciples, implied in the verb, and not to the noun 'nations.' . . . So the feminine 'it,' in the text, may refer to the feminine noun 'oikodomesis,' implied in the verb 'build.' Then it was the building of the church against which the gates of Hades were not to prevail by holding a prisoner within them the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (Pages 41-43.)

### **III. Keys of the Kingdom Delivered to Peter (Verse 19)**

Keys give one access to a building, and this passage simply means that to Peter was given the right to open the doors of the kingdom when it was established. This he did on Pentecost by announcing

the terms of entrance thereinto. When he informed the Pentecostians that they were to "repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38), he gave them the terms upon which they could enter into the kingdom. Thus he opened the door of the kingdom. From that day until this, these terms alone give entrance therein; and no man has the right to set up other conditions, or modify or eliminate these.

#### **IV. Christ a Living Stone (1 Pet. 2:4)**

"Unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men,' but with God elect, precious." The allusion in this passage is to Isa. 28:16: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, of sure foundation." The reference is to Christ upon whom, i.e., the fact that he is the Christ, the church is founded. Christ occupies the same place in regard to the church that a foundation stone does to the edifice built upon it. Note, too, that it is a "living stone." "There seems to be an incongruity in it, in attributing life to a stone, yet the meaning is not difficult to understand. The purpose was not to speak of a temple, like that at Jerusalem, made up of gold and costly stones; but of a temple made up of living materials; of redeemed men in which God now resides. In speaking of that it was natural to refer to the foundation on which the whole rested, and to speak of that as corresponding to the whole edifice. It was all a living temple, a temple composed of living materials, from the foundation to the top." (Barnes.) How different is the building erected upon such a foundation from the edifices of men, constructed hundreds of years after the close of the apostolic age! It is difficult to conceive how intelligent beings could for one moment be content in such institutions; and yet, that millions are satisfied to rest their hope of future happiness therein is a fact too well known to need elaboration here. Denominationalism is wholly unknown to the New Testament. Every religious institution, composing modern denominationalism, was established hundreds of years after the Lord built the church of the New Testament. Such institutions do not rest upon Christ as the foundation; but upon the doctrines and commandments of men. They will all be destroyed, along with all that which does not originate in the will of God. Jesus said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up." (Matt. 15:13.)

#### **V. Children of God Stones in God's Building (Verses 5-10)**

"Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." The figure here used is that of a building composed of stones. The house is the church; the stones which compose it are children of God. They are "living stones," as contrasted with dead, inanimate stones of the temple in Jerusalem. In that temple, the one built in Jerusalem, priests officiated in worship, offering sacrifices. Here, too, priests officiate, but these are not priests after the Levitical order, but the "kingdom and priests" (Rev. 5:10), every child of God being one, and thus qualified to officiate in worship. Here, too, sacrifices are offered, not the bloody sacrifices offered on Jewish altars, but spiritual sacrifices acceptable to

God through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the house the Lord built; this is the church he promised his disciples in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi; this alone is the church of the New Testament. First Peter 2:1-10 should be carefully read and studied to get the whole significance of Peter's teaching regarding the construction of the church.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

1. Christ, not man, the builder of the church.
2. The essential difference between the building of Christ's church and the institutions of men.
3. Points of identity by which the church of the New Testament may be recognized.
4. The refutation of the Catholic claim that the church was founded on Peter.
5. The doctrine of succession in the light of this passage.
6. Contrast between the temple and church as to the nature of material composing each.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The deity of Jesus.
2. The divine origin of the church.
3. Sacrifices under the old dispensation and the new contrasted and compared.

### Lesson III—January 20, 1946 THE CHURCH GOD'S CALLED OUT Acts 2:39-42; Rom. 1:1-7

DEVOTIONAL READING.— 1 Cor. 1:1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "Whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 2:14. )

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

January	14.	M	Abraham Called Out (Gen. 12:1-9)
January	15.	T	Moses Called Out (Ex. 3:1-4)
January	16.	W	God of the Whole Earth Called (Isa. 54:1-6)
January	17.	T	God Has Called Us (Acts 16:1-10)
January	18.	F	Called Us in Peace (1 Cor. 7:15-24)
January	19.	S	God Calls Us by the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-17)
January	20.	S	Called of God (Heb. 5:1-4)

#### Other Lesson Material 1 John 2:15; 2 Cor. 6:17, 18

#### Historical Background

TIME.— For the reference in Acts, A.D. 33; for Romans, A.D. 57.

PLACES.— Jerusalem and Rome.

PERSONS.— The Jerusalem church; the church in Rome; and all children of God.

#### Lesson Text

39 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.

40 And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.

41 They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

2 Which he promised afore through his prophets in the holy scriptures,

3 Concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,

4 Who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus -Christ our Lord.

5 Through whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake;

6 Among whom are ye also, called to be Jesus Christ's:

7 To all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. The Promise to Those God Calls (Verses 39, 40).
- II. Condition Upon Which God Calls (Verses 41, 42).
- III. Paul a Called Apostle (Rom. 1:1-5).
- IV. The Roman Saints Called of Jesus Christ (Verses 6, 7).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The church of our Lord was established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection. Many momentous events occurred on that day, a rather full account of which we have recorded in Acts 2, from which a portion of our lesson today is taken. Fifty-three days before our Lord had been crucified. Meanwhile, he had risen, appeared to his disciples, talked with them for a period of forty days regarding the kingdom soon to come, and some ten days before had ascended on high. In pursuance of his command to tarry in Jerusalem until the endowment from on high, they were all with one accord in one place when the Holy Spirit came on that day, and Peter's speech, Acts 2:14-40, followed the miraculous outpouring. Among those who listened were many guilty of the death of the Lord; and when this tragic deed was brought so vividly to their attention, many came to see their lost condition, and cried out, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered and said, "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." (Acts 2:38.) Our lesson text, recorded in Acts 2:39-42, immediately follows this portion of Peter's speech. The book of Romans, from which the second portion of our lesson today is taken, was written by Paul in A.D. 57. It is one of the most profound portions of the New Testament, and is a comprehensive statement of the doctrine of salvation by faith (not faith only) apart from works of the law (of Moses). The Roman church was one of the few congregations about which we read in the New Testament not established by Paul. Yet even there he had ambitions; he was anxious to see them, confirm them in the faith, and impart to them some spiritual gift. (Rom. 1:11.)

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

The subject, "The Church God's Called Out," is designated to indicate that God has a special people, that certain characteristics

distinguish this people from all others; and that those thus specially designated are to be found only in the church. These points will all be expanded at length in the lesson today.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 2:14.) Several facts follow from this interesting passage: (1) It is God who calls us; (2) he calls us through the gospel; (3) Paul refers to it as our gospel; (4) it is for the purpose of glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ. That the call God issues is not limited is seen from the fact that he calls us through the gospel. The gospel is to be preached to every creature, in all the world (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16), hence every person in the world has access to the blessings of the gospel. True, all do not accept it, but this is not because it is not available to all. By the expression, "our gospel," Paul simply means to indicate the gospel which he and his colaborers preached, the gospel which is God's power to save. (Rom. 1:16.)

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

All teachers should find it easy to make the proper applications of this lesson. It affords an excellent opportunity to stress the distinctive character of God's people-to emphasize that they must live apart from the world. The primary and junior teachers should see to it that their pupils are duly impressed with the fact that those who become members of the church are expected to live a separated life; that they must no longer live as people live in the world. And as time permits it would be well for the teachers of senior and adult classes to deal with the problem of worldliness in the church, and to show that such is highly inconsistent with the fact that God's people are the "called out." This lesson also teaches us that in order to be among those God has called, we must be in his church, which is simply another argument touching the essentiality of the church. These are all vital and highly significant lessons, and the teachers should see that the pupils are learning them well.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. The Promise to Those God Calls (Verses 39, 40)**

"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." Some difference of opinion obtains among Bible students as to what "the promise" of this passage was. Some think it refers to the promise of pardon, others to the gift of the Holy Spirit. This writer inclines to the view that it refers to the promise God made Abraham in Gen. 12:1-3, when he promised Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. Corroborative of this view is the fact that the promise was to the Jew, to children of the Jews, and "to all that are afar off," evidently, the Gentiles. God's promise to Abraham was that Jew and Gentile would through Christ find salvation; and this, virtually, is what Peter said the promise included. Be that as it may, it remains that all, both Jew and Gentile, now through Christ can be saved, and this is what God promised Abraham through his seed. The expression "even as

many as the Lord our God shall call unto him," is not to be interpreted as a limitation of the call of Jehovah. As our Golden Text asserts, God calls by the gospel; and the gospel is to be preached to the whole world. (Mark 16:15, 16.) The following facts therefore appear: (1) God calls; (2) he calls through the gospel; (3) the gospel is to be preached to all the world. All nations are included in its scope. This being true, our responsibility may be seen at a glance. Since God calls through the gospel, the gospel must be preached. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:13, 14.) "And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me." (John 6:45.) Thus, by hearing the gospel men are called to salvation; they may then accept or reject it as they will. It is our duty to see that it is offered; the Lord expects this of us, and will hold us to account for our failure so to do at the last day.

## **II. Condition Upon Which God Calls (Verses 41, 42)**

"They then that received his word were baptized; and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." We have seen that God calls through his gospel; he does not coerce or compel, but recognizes man's freedom of action always. Thus, when the gospel is preached, man may accept or reject it as he will. These of whom we read in Acts 2 received the word, and, as a result thereof, were inducted into the body of Christ. The word "gladly," of the King James Version, does not occur in the Revision. What did these people do when they "received his word"? It will be recalled that in response to their query, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." Hence, in receiving his word, they simply did what he said. It follows, therefore, that all who receive the word of the Lord as preached by the apostles repent and submit to baptism for remission of their sins; those who do not do this do not receive his word. It will be noted, too, that on thus receiving his word, they were "added" unto them, i.e., unto the body of the disciples. It is significant that nothing is said about joining the church in this connection. As a matter of fact, nothing is said about joining the church in all the Bible. Then, people were added to the church by the Lord; they joined nothing of their own volition. One cannot join the church of the New Testament. "Joining" is an act of the creature; "adding" is an act of the Lord. One we do for ourselves; the other, the Lord does for us. One is a human, the other a divine, act. Surely we should be content to let the Lord do the adding. He will make no mistake, nor will he ever add us to the wrong institution. He adds those who receive his word. He will add no others. Hence, the necessity of doing exactly what he has said. Those thus added continued in the acts of worship divinely given. They engaged in song, in prayer, in teaching, in the contribution, and the Lord's Supper. The Lord's people must do these things today.



### III. Paul a Called Apostle (Rom. 1:1-5)

"Paul . . . called to be an apostle." Paul was called to the apostleship in the full and proper sense, like the twelve whom Christ so named and called. (John 15:16-19; Matt. 10:1; Luke 6:13.) He did not arrive at it by his own choice, or through accidental circumstances. "No human instrumentality intervened to throw the slightest doubt upon the reality of the communication between Christ himself and Paul." (Lipscomb on Romans.) This call Paul received in the following words: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me." (Acts 26:15-18.) Paul was not disobedient to this heavenly call, nor did he confer with flesh and blood touching the advisability of accepting it, but acted at once on the command thus given. From that moment until the moment of death, Paul never wavered, never doubted the divine call he had received on the road to Damascus.

Lard observes that "Paul was not merely called to be an apostle, as our common version has it; he was actually one. He might have been called to be one; and yet not have become one for a long time afterwards. This is not the meaning of *kletos*. Paul was an apostle. This was the fact. But he was more; he was a called or chosen apostle. The word apostle tells what he was; the word called, how he became so. The word, called, moreover, must be limited to Christ . . . . The call came directly from Christ to him, and not through another." (Commentary on Romans.)

It was often necessary for Paul to vindicate his divine call to the apostleship. False teachers, bent upon leading the churches astray, often sought to disparage Paul's leadership, by questioning his right to speak as an apostle. Here, and frequently elsewhere in the sacred writings, Paul found it necessary to set forth the basis upon which he was called into the service of Christ, not only as a Christian, but as a commissioned apostle, "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles," in authority under Christ.

### IV. The Roman Saints Called of Jesus Christ (Verses 6, 7)

Having vindicated his own divine right to speak as an apostle of Jesus Christ, Paul then proceeded to show that those to whom he wrote were likewise "called," called into the service of Christ to be saints. "Among whom are ye also, called to be Jesus Christ's: to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." "To all that are in Rome" is not to be understood as embracing all the people of Rome, but is limited to those who are God's children, as the qualifying phrase that follows suggests, "beloved of God." Hence, the title of the book, "To the Romans," appended of course long this side of the apostolic age, and therefore without divine sanction, is misleading: "The letter was not written to Romans as such, in any sense, but to those only in Rome who were Christians, whether Romans, Jews or Greeks." (Lard.) Thus the fundamental fact of the separa-

tion of God's people is here set forth. God's people are called; they are called by the gospel; and as we are now to see, they are called saints. Not only called to be saints; but "called saints," saints called of God, called out from the world.

The word, "saint," means one who is holy or consecrated to the service of God. The radical idea of the word is that which is separated from a common, to a sacred, use. It is properly applied to anything that is set apart to the service of God, to the temple, to the sacrifices, to the utensils about the temple, to the garments of the priests, and to the priests themselves. It was applied to the Jews as a people separated from other nations, and devoted and consecrated to God. Here, it is applied to Christians thus consecrated. The idea then, as applied to those who are children of God, is that they are separated from other men, and other objects and pursuits and consecrated to the service of God. The following scriptures will exhibit the foregoing uses of the word "saint": Luke 2:23; Ex. 13:2; Rom. 11:16; Matt. 7:6; 1 Pet. 1:16; Acts 9:13; 1 Pet. 2:5; Acts 3:21; Eph. 3:5; 1 Pet. 2:9; Phil. 2:15; 1 John 3:1, 2. The term is, in the New Testament, applied to all who claim to be Christians, regardless of their degree of consecration or perfection of character. As we have seen, its radical idea is separation from a common to a holy purpose; and the idea of sinlessness is not inherent in the word. Of course, since those who are separated to the service of God are expected to be holy, the term has come to imply purity of life, but this is a derived, not a primary, meaning of the term. As Brother Lipscomb points out, "there are degrees of sanctification, just as there are degrees of Christian knowledge and fidelity to Christ. The growth in sanctification and holiness is attained by the study of and obedience to the word of God. An increase in knowledge and fidelity is to be gained by a constant and persistent study of God's will and a daily effort to bring one's self into obedience to that will."

Concluding, we have learned that God has a people; they have been called out from the world; they have been called through the instrumentality of the gospel; being thus called, they are saints, consecrated and separated unto every good work. The word, "church," is suggestive of these facts also. It is from the Greek "ecclesia," which is from "ek," out, and "keleo," to call. Hence, the Greek word translated church, means, literally, "the called out." Several important considerations follow from this: (1) God's people are not of the world; they must not "love the world" (1 John 2:15); they must not be friendly with it (James 4:4); they must "come out" and be "separate" therefrom (2 Cor. 6:17). (2) To possess the character of a saint requires such separation. (3) All of God's people have been called; the church is the "called out"; hence, all of God's people are in the church. One cannot therefore be a child of God or saint without being a member of the Lord's church. This is the church of the New Testament, the one Jesus himself built. (Matt. 16:18.) It is called the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16), and its members wear the name Christian. It meets regularly on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper (Acts 11:26; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2).

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

1. The universality of the promise.
2. The conditions upon which "the promise" is realized.

3. The manner in which the Lord calls.
4. Paul's call to the apostleship.
5. Significance of the term "saint."
6. Significance of the word "church."
7. The necessity of being in the church to be saved.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The establishment of the church.
2. God's people, a peculiar people.
3. Meaning of the word "world" in 1 John 2:15.
4. Trend toward conformity with the world today.
5. Our part in God's plan of calling people into his service.

### Lesson IV—January 27, 1946

#### THE CHURCH THE ISRAEL OF GOD Rom. 2; 26-29; Gal. 6:12-16; Phil. 3:1-7

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Rom. 9:6-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

January	21.	M	Jehovah God of Israel (1 Chron. 17:24-27)
January	22.	T	Jehovah Judges Israel (Judges 3:1-10)
January	23.	W	Holy One of Israel (Psalm 71:21-24)
January	24.	T	Jehovah, Holy One of Israel (Isa. 60:9-14)
January	25.	F	Throne of Israel (1 Kings 8:20-25)
January	26.	S	The Israel of God (Phil. 3:1-7)
January	27.	S	Mercy Upon the Israel of God (Gal. 6:12-16)

#### Other Lesson Material Gen. 32:28; Heb. 8:6-13

#### Historical Background

TIME.—Paul wrote Romans and Galatians about A.D. 57. Philippians was written about A.D. 62. The principles enunciated in these lessons are timeless, and are applicable to the people of our day as well as to those to whom Paul wrote.

PLACES.— The church in Rome; the churches of Galatia; the church in Philippi.

PERSONS.— Paul and the saints in Rome, throughout Galatia, and Philippi.

#### Lesson Text

26 If therefore the uncircumcision keep the ordinances of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?

27 And shall not the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who with the letter and circumcision art a transgressor of the law?

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

12 As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

13 For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

16 And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

1 Finally, my brethren rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe.

2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision:

3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh:

4 Though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 As touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless

7 Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Circumcision No Longer Evidence of Righteousness (Verses 26, 27).
- II. The True Jew of Today (Verses 28, 29).
- III. Circumcision an Occasion for Boasting After the Flesh (Gal. 6:12-14).
- IV. In Christ Jesus, Neither Circumcision Nor Uncircumcision Avails (Verses 15, 16).
- V. Paul's Attitude Toward the Flesh (Phil. 3:1-7).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The Jews of our Savior's day prided themselves as being the most favored of God of all the peoples of the earth. They knew that for centuries they had been the chosen people of God; hence felt that this alone gave them superiority over all others. This extreme nationalism and racial pride was a mighty barrier to their reception of the gospel. It was repugnant to their conceptions to concede that they were on the level of all other men, and needed salvation as much as any. Thus they sought to claim acceptance with God on the basis of their descent from patriarchs especially favored of God. This attitude on the part of the Jews led Paul to show that God accepts no man after the flesh; and that the true Israelite is to be traced not by earthly descent but by his spiritual antecedents. This lesson is a weighty argument against those who affect to believe that there remains glory for fleshly Israel in some future state or kingdom. It conclusively demonstrates that those who are Jews after the flesh have lost their favored position with God and that the true Jew is to be found among those who obey the gospel. These points we shall develop at length in this lesson.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

"The church the Israel of God" simply means that Israel is no longer to be reckoned after the flesh but after the Spirit; that God no longer determines what one is by how he was born after the flesh, but rather whether one is born after the Spirit. Israel exists in a very real sense today; but she is to be recognized, not by her fleshly descent from the fathers, but by spiritual descent. "And if ye are

Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." (Gal. 3:29.) The Israel of God today is the church.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32.) The disciples had not been constituted into a church at the time these words were uttered. Jesus here announces his intention to give them the kingdom. This he did on the first Pentecost after his resurrection. The expression, "little flock," is a term of endearment, and indicates the solicitous care Jesus felt for the disciples. This passage, in relation to the subject of our lesson, teaches us that the disciples constitute the kingdom today; and since both Jew and Gentile may be citizens thereof, fleshly descent is no longer of value. The Lord's people are those who do his will regardless of their ancestry. They are the true Israel of God, whatever their fleshly antecedents.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The primary and junior teachers will have some difficulty in conveying the conceptions of this lesson to their pupils fully, and they will do well to present in a general way the fact that God under the Christian dispensation determines character, not by what one's parents or forefathers did, but by what one does himself. This lesson will afford ample material for a demonstration of this fundamental principle. It is suggested that these teachers lead the class in the discussion of what constitutes an acceptable character in the sight of God today. The senior and adult classes will be able to follow the lesson text, and should profit greatly by a clear and concise discussion of the principles hereafter set forth.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **1. Circumcision No Longer Evidence of Righteousness (Verses 26, 27)**

"If therefore the uncircumcision keep the ordinances of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? and shall not the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who with the letter and circumcision art a transgressor of the law?" The "uncircumcision" was the Gentile; the "circumcision," the Jew. Because of his circumcision the Jew felt a superiority over the Gentile; felt that this gave him blessings never intended for the Gentile. This, of course, was not solely because he was circumcised, for the Gentile might also have been circumcised. But circumcision was a mark of the flesh to indicate descent from Abraham, and this ancestry was what led the Jews to feel that they enjoyed privileges not vouchsafed to others. The whole of the second chapter of Romans was designed to teach that simply being a Jew by fleshly descent does not gain for one acceptance before God. It teaches that he who transgresses God's law, whatever his parentage, will be punished; that he who walks in obedience thereto will be blessed regardless of race. "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek; but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek: for there is no respect of

persons with God." (Rom. 2:9, 10.) Paul's argument in this section therefore is this: If a Jew who transgressed God's law lost the value of his circumcision by such transgression, why should not the Gentile by obedience to God's law be accounted circumcised (i.e. in line for the promises) in his uncircumcision? This, he contends, follows logically from their own line of reasoning. Hence, the circumcision, the Jew after the flesh today, has by disobedience become the uncircumcision (those out of covenant relationship with God), while the uncircumcision (Gentiles) have by their obedience to the gospel become the circumcised (those in covenant relations with God). The result of this Paul discusses in our next section.

## **II. The True Jew of Today (Verses 28, 29)**

"For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." This statement is plain and unambiguous; and its consequences far-reaching. It is a clear expression of God's attitude toward those who can claim nothing but fleshly descent from the fathers. True Jewry is not outward, nor is the circumcision that marks the child of God to be found in the flesh. The real Jew of today is determined from within; and the circumcision that indicates it is in the heart and not in the flesh. Of course, there are Jews today after the flesh; Paul does not mean these are Jews in no sense. He means that he is not the kind of Jew that will be acceptable before God in judgment. He is a Jew, to be sure, but not such a Jew as will be saved. The circumcision "is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter." On this Lard remarks, "The circumcision which saves, respects the heart or inner man; and it consists in the excision of whatever is impure or unholy. It has its seat in the spirit, and consists, FIRST, in purifying it, Col. 2:11; and, secondly, in keeping it pure. The true worshippers are those that worship in spirit and in truth. Circumcision in 'letter' can be nothing but the ordinary circumcision of the dew-the outward mark in the flesh." (Commentary on Romans.) It follows therefore that, in order for one to be a Jew God recognizes today, he must be a Christian. Hence, children of God, Christians, the church they make up is the true Israel of God.

## **III. Circumcision an Occasion for Boasting After the Flesh (Gal. 6:12-14)**

"As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." The book of Galatians was written in part to warn the churches of that province against certain teachers who had gone out from Jerusalem teaching that the Gentiles in order to be saved had to submit to the rite of circumcision. The idea that uncircumcised Gentiles might be included among those in line for the promises of the gospel was repugnant to a large section of the early church; and these teachers, usually designated as Judaizers, sought to force the Gentile Christians into conformity with Jewish practices, thus requiring them to be circumcised Paul

strenuously opposed this encroachment upon the liberty of the gospel from the beginning. See Gal. 2 for a telling indictment of these teachers. Many of them were motivated by ulterior motives, they had no zeal for circumcision, but sought to force it upon the Gentile churches, in order to escape the persecution of their Jewish brethren for adherence to the doctrine of Christ. It was not because they felt any particular respect for the law, for they made no effort themselves to keep it. They insisted upon circumcision for Gentiles in order that they might boast to other strict and unconverted Jews that they were making Jews out of Gentile Christians. Thus their motives were neither holy nor religious, but base and selfish. They preached circumcision simply that they might glory, and their glory was after the flesh. Contrast their attitude with that of Paul as set forth in the next section.

#### **IV. In Christ Jesus, Neither Circumcision Nor Uncircumcision Avails (Verses 15, 16)**

"But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." McGarvey expands these words as follows: "Let these glory if they will, in their wicked activity against the cross, but God forbid that I should glory save in that very cross against which they lift their hands, the cross by which the world has died to me, so that it no longer allures me with its false glories, or terrifies me with its frowns and threats; and by which I, in my turn, have died with Christ as to the world, so that I no longer enjoy or take part in its sinful lusts, and no longer rest under its sentence of condemnation." The cross was therefore glory for Paul; and circumcision, in which the Jew took pride, and because of which he looked with scorn on his uncircumcised Gentile brother, Paul reduces to a thing of uselessness.

Would one know what does avail in Christ Jesus? Paul explains it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision. One is neither better nor worse by being circumcised. It is a "new creature" that avails. (See 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:6.) Those who walk by this rule, the rule which rejects outward marks of the flesh which are nothing more than tokens of carnal ordinances, and accepts a regenerated life, a life surrendered wholly to the Lord, upon them, even upon the "Israel of God," be peace and mercy, is Paul's prayer. Here, as in Romans 2, the Israel of God is shown to be determined, not after the flesh but after the Spirit; to consist not of those who traced descent after the flesh but by their spiritual relationship to the fathers. It was Paul's constant contention, often expressed, that Christians are the true Israel, the bona fide sons of Abraham, and therefore in line for all the promises vouchsafed to the chosen people. How careful then should we be to inculcate into our hearts and lives those principles by which alone we may be assured of being accepted in the beloved!

#### **V. Paul's Attitude Toward the Flesh (Phil. 3:1-7)**

In the section of our lesson immediately above we noted that Paul spoke out sharply against those who would attempt to make a show

after the flesh, and to claim distinctions based upon fleshly relationships. This section of our lesson continues this line of thought, and shows that Paul possessed fleshly advantages equal to any, all of which he relinquished in Christ, deeming them of no value whatsoever. He warned the Philippian brethren of "dogs," "evil workers," "the concision," and declared that "we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." "Flesh" is here contrasted with both "Spirit of God" and with "Christ Jesus." The expression, "the flesh," includes all that the Jew values most, and the source of all his vaunted righteousness. It was that which gave him connection with the fathers, and this alone he believed to be sufficient to assure for him eternal salvation at God's hand. Yet, this precisely is what Paul here declares to be of no value whatsoever. As if to offset any charge that if he possessed equal connection with the fathers he would not disparage it, he proceeds to show that he is fully equal to any in fleshly advantages. "Though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more." Fifteen times in this passage the pronoun "I" occurs. He describes himself as Paul the Pharisee-as he would had he been like those who had confidence in the flesh and gives a catalogue of the privileges and advantages he had enjoyed after the flesh. "Circumcised the eighth day," not an Ishmaelite circumcised at thirteen years, nor a proselyte circumcised in maturity. "Of the stock of Israel," hence a true Jew, born of Rachel, a legitimate wife, not of a handmaid; "of the tribe of Benjamin," a tribe of great renown in Israel's history: "a Hebrew of Hebrews," there was no admixture of foreign blood in his veins, neither had he imbibed the culture of heathen nations about him, he had preserved in its most unadulterated state the best that is of Israel; "as touching the law, a Pharisee," hence, scrupulous of all the law required, and loyal to all the traditions of the fathers; "as touching zeal, persecuting the church," jealous of the traditions, and devoutly loyal to the religion of Israel, he felt it his duty to mercilessly stamp out all to the contrary, and this led him even to strange cities where he cast men and women into prison, and consented even to the death of many (Acts 26:10); "as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless." Any righteousness that attached to keeping the law, Paul claimed, for the law he had kept to the best of his ability. He was therefore equal to the . best the Jewish nation afforded. What was his attitude toward it all? "Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. (Yea, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" Need we have additional evidence of the utter uselessness of any fleshly relationships in obtaining the blessings that are in Christ Jesus?

This feeling of superiority simply because of fleshly relationship has long stood in the way of the Hebrew people. It has made them spurn the promises of the gospel and to hope for recognition on the basis of the flesh alone. John the Baptist rebuked them severely for this attitude, saying, "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And even now the axe lieth at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that



bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Matt. 3:9, 10.) The Jews wholly ignore the fact that the promise of blessing based upon fleshly relationships was conditional in its nature. God promised to be with them only when they would be faithful in their attitude toward him. Again and again he warned that he would turn against them if they rejected his word. This they did when they rejected Christ. They are therefore no longer the people of God. The promises are no longer theirs. By their unbelief they have cut themselves off from the true vine. Said Paul, "Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity; but toward thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." (Rom. 11:22.) The Jews should read the warnings so frequently uttered by their own prophets against apostasy, against rebellion toward God. Had they done this and heeded the admonitions given, they would today, along with all the faithful of all nations, continue to enjoy the confidence and favor of God. But their stubborn impenitence, their hardness of heart, and national pride keep them from bowing humbly in submission to the Lord's will. Thus, though Jews after the flesh, they are heathen at heart; and though circumcised in body, they are uncircumcised in spirit, and so outside the pale of God's mercy. They are no longer the Israel of God; those they most despise occupy that favored position. The true Israel (the church) should profit by the unfortunate history of the Jews, and from them be warned of the danger of departing from the living God. "For if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee." (Rom. 11:21.)

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

1. Circumcision a mark of fleshly Israel.
2. Attitude of Jews regarding fleshly descent.
3. Significance of the expression, "Israel of God."
4. How the child of God has become the true Jew.
5. Why men claiming to be Christians still preached circumcision in the apostolic age.
6. The real test of discipleship. (Gal. 6:15, 16.)
7. Paul's advantages after the flesh.
8. His attitude toward his fleshly advantages.
9. Source of confidence today.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is there any basis for the claim that certain nations are, solely by virtue of fleshly descent, superior to other nations of equal attainments?
2. The Hitlerite claim of racial superiority on the part of the German nation, compared with similar claims of Jews today.
3. How is true nobility of character attained?

**Lesson V—February 3, 1946**  
**CHURCH THE KINGDOM OF GOD**  
**Dan. 2:44; Matt. 9:35-38; Col. 1:9-17**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Matt. 3:1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:3.)

### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

January	28.	M	A Kingdom of Priests (Ex. 19:1-6)
January	29.	T	Kingdom Shall Be Established (Dan. 2:36-46)
January	30.	W	Kingdom of God at Hand (Matt. 3:1-6)
January	31.	T	Entrance into the Kingdom (John 3:1-8)
February	1.	F	Kingdom Not in Word (1 Cor. 4:14-21)
February	2.	S	Counted Worthy of the Kingdom (2 Thess. 1:1-5)
February	3.	S	Preaching the Kingdom of God (Acts 28:23-31)

### Other Lesson Material

**Matt. 3:1; Matt. 16:18-20; Acts 1:8; Col. 1:13, 14; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9**

### Historical Background

**TIME.**— For Daniel, about 603 B.C.; for Matthew, much uncertainty obtains regarding the time Matthew wrote, critics dating it all the way from A.D. 41 to 65; for Colossians, A.D. 62.

**PLACES.**— Some scholars are of the opinion that Daniel did not return to Jerusalem following the seventy years of captivity; if not, his prophecy was written from Babylon. It is not certainly known where Matthew wrote his account of the life of Christ. Colossians was written from Rome where Paul was a prisoner of the Roman government.

**PERSONS.**— Daniel, Matthew, Paul, and all children of God.

### Lesson Text

44 And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

35 And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.

36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray and make request for you, that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

10 To walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 Strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory, unto all patience and longsuffering with joy;

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;

13 Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love;

14 In whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation;

16 For in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers all things have been created through him, and unto him;

17 And he is before all things, and in him all things consist.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Kingdom to Be Established (Verse 44).
- II. Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. 9:35-38).
- III. Redemption and Forgiveness Only in the Kingdom (Col. 1:9-14).
- IV. The Church Christ's Body (Verses 15-17).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

By reference to the second chapter of Daniel, it will be seen that the prophet was interpreting a dream of the Babylonian king, in which he revealed God's plan of destroying various kingdoms of earth and of his intention to set up in the days of the Roman kings the kingdom of heaven. The great image the king saw in his dream was representative of various kingdoms, the first of which was represented by the head of gold. This was the Babylonian kingdom. The selection from Matthew deals with the work of the Lord during his personal ministry. "The gospel of the kingdom" means the good news of the kingdom-that the kingdom is to be established soon, and its blessings made available to the people. Less than three years after this time, the kingdom was established-on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ. The Colossian letter sets forth Christ's relationship to the church. He is its head, and therefore, deserving of all pre-eminence.

**SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

"Church the kingdom of God" means that the two are identical; at least, in so far as this earth is concerned. We shall see that they are so related that one cannot be in one on the earth without being in the other. Thus "church" and "kingdom" comprehend the same individuals, laws, territory, and constitution here on earth.

**THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:3.) The poor in spirit are not, as Catholics claim, those who make themselves poor in this world's goods, nor is it those who deprecate themselves in the eyes of others. It is those who recognize their own poverty-stricken condition, and lean wholly upon the Lord. The passage simply means this: "Happy is the man who, in his inner, higher nature, consciously feels his poverty or need of spiritual good from God." The kingdom belongs to such.

**HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

Teachers of the elementary classes will have a rich source of material of an interesting nature in this lesson. They will find the story of Daniel and the great image highly interesting to their pupils, and they should tell it in a simple, graphic way to impress it upon them. The older students should learn the lesson of Daniel's prophecy well and relate it historically to the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman kingdoms. The relationship of the church to the kingdom should likewise be clearly taught, so that the students will be enabled to see their identity. This is an important lesson because of current theories that would distinguish between the church and kingdom, and make the church merely an "accident," or afterthought on the part of the Lord. By reference to the lesson for January 6,

"Church in Eternal Purpose of God," it will be seen that God has always had a place in his plan for the church; and that the church is coexistent with the kingdom. For those who wish to do extra research work on the question, the speeches of H. Leo Boles, in the Boles-Boll Debate, will be very helpful.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

### I. Kingdom to Be Established (Verse 44)

"And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." "The days of those kings" refers to the kings of the fourth empire represented by the feet and legs of the image the king saw in his dream. This image is described as follows: "Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the aspect thereof was terrible. As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay." (Dan. 2:31-33.) Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold. (Dan. 2:38.) Verse 39 reads, "And after thee shall arise another kingdom." The kingdom immediately following the Babylonian was the Medo-Persian. The thrilling story of the fall of Babylon to the armies of the Medes and Persians while high dignitaries rioted is told in Daniel 5. The Medo-Persians came to power in 536 B.C. This government stood until 330 B.C. when the Greeks came into world-wide prominence. In A.D. 63 the Roman government extended its sway over Palestine, with the Caesars on the throne. This was the fourth kingdom of the prophecy, represented by the legs of iron and feet of clay. The kingdom of Daniel 2:44 was to be set up during this period, the period of the fourth empire. Thus it is in complete harmony with this prophecy that the church or kingdom was established in Jerusalem in A.D. 33, while Rome was at the zenith of her power. The image and the kingdoms it represented were as follows:

Image:	Kingdoms:
1. Head of gold.	1. Nebuchadnezzar, kingdom fell 536 B.C.
2. Breast and arms of silver.	2. Medo-Persians, fell 330 B.C.
3. Belly and thighs of brass.	3. Grecian, fell 63 B.C.
4. Legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay.	4. Roman, in power A.D. 33.

When John the Baptist began his ministry, he preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Later, Jesus entered upon his public ministry, and likewise preached its near approach. The time was rapidly approaching for the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy. Thus it was that on the first Pentecost following the resurrection while the Caesars, kings of the fourth empire, were on the throne, and the Herods were in Palestine, the kingdom began. This is the "kingdom of heaven," preached by John, and the gospel of which Christ proclaimed. (Matt. 3:1; Matt. 9:35-38.) That it was established at the time above designated, viz., on the first Pentecost after the resurrection, will be seen from the following facts: In Mark 9:1, Jesus said to his disciples, "Verily I say unto you, There are some

here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power." Several important facts follow from this statement: (1) It was to be in the lifetime of some of those present. This, were there no other evidence touching the matter, is sufficient to establish the fact that the kingdom was set up during the apostolic age.. For, if it has not yet been established, as premillennialists and other future kingdom advocates contend, it must follow that there are those upon the earth who are now well over nineteen hundred years old! Did not Jesus say that they would not die until they saw the kingdom come? It must follow with all the force of a demonstration, that if the kingdom has not yet been established, and our Lord spoke truthfully, some of that number are still living. It will be an interesting question to submit when next the student hears some one assert that the kingdom is not now in existence, and will not be set up until the Lord returns. Ask him kindly to submit the names and addresses of those now alive on the earth who are still living to see the kingdom come and have been for these nineteen hundred years! (2) This passage contains clear evidence of the time the kingdom was established. Note that it was to come with power. When we have determined when the power came, we will know when the kingdom came. The power came with the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to the disciples just before his ascension, "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you." (Acts 1:8.) When did the Holy Spirit come? By referring to Acts 2, it will be seen that the Holy Spirit came on the first Pentecost after the resurrection. Thus the following facts appear: (a) the kingdom would come with power; (b) the power would come with the Spirit; (c) the Spirit came on Pentecost; (d) but the power came on Pentecost; (e) but the kingdom was to come when the power came; (f) the power came on Pentecost; therefore (g) the kingdom came on Pentecost.

That the church and kingdom are the same may be seen from the fact that to Peter was given the "keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 16:19.) "Keys," as thus metaphorically used, simply means the right of ingress into the kingdom. When Peter announced the conditions of pardon on Pentecost he used the "keys of the kingdom." But, the doors of the church were opened on that day; for here for the first time are people said to be members of the church. (Acts 2:47.) Thus in opening the kingdom, Peter opened the church. The church then must be the same as the kingdom; otherwise, Peter opened the wrong institution. More, the Lord's Supper was placed in the kingdom (Luke 22:29, 30), but, Paul in his epistle to the Corinthian church gave instructions touching its observance in the church. (1 Cor. 11:20-34.) If the church is not the kingdom, the Corinthians had no right to the supper in the church. That they were instructed by an inspired apostle to observe the supper in the church is sufficient evidence of the right thereof, and of the identity of the two institutions.

If the student is inclined to wonder why the institution is styled both "church" and "kingdom," the answer is that these terms suggest different characteristics of the same institution. A great many terms are used to describe the body of the Lord's people in the New Testament. It is a "flock," a "body," a "vineyard," a "household," a "temple," etc., etc., all suggestive of different activities. As  
a

"church," it is the "called out," with Christ as head; as "a kingdom," it is an absolute monarchy, with Christ as supreme Lawgiver and Judge.

The church, then, is the kingdom of Dan 2:44. It is impossible to be saved without being in the kingdom (John 3:3); but to be in the kingdom is to be in the church; hence, it is impossible to be saved without being a member of the church. This point we shall develop more at length under the last division of our lesson today.

## **II. Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. 9:35-38)**

"And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness." The word "gospel" means good news; hence "gospel of the kingdom" would suggest "the good news of the kingdom," i.e., its near approach, the privileges and blessings of membership therein, etc. "This was Jesus' second missionary tour in Galilee; the FIRST, Matt. 4:23. 'Cities and villages' were about the same as in modern times; villages were unincorporated and cities were larger centers of inhabitants. This is identified with the tour recorded in Luke 8:1; the first tour occurred some six months before this. His work is expressed by 'teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom: 'Synagogue' was a place of study and worship among the Jews; Jesus visited the synagogue at the hours of worship as a teacher; he had a new message; he both taught and preached; he taught them the will of the father, and proclaimed the glad tidings, or the 'gospel of the kingdom.'" (Boles, Commentary on Matthew.)

As evidence of his divine mission, he performed various miracles as he went about telling the good news of the near approach of the kingdom of God. All kinds of illness and disease vanished before his divine power, and the people were blessed and benefitted not only spiritually but physically by his presence among them. Unfortunately, many were more interested in his miracles than they were in his teachings. The work Jesus thus did was preparatory to the establishment of the church. In preaching the "gospel of the kingdom," Jesus was simply preparing the way for the church. Thus, the "gospel of the kingdom" contained also the "good news" of the church.

As Jesus looked about him and saw the people perishing for the bread of life, he was touched and moved by their great need. Matthew tells us that "when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd." Our Lord felt great concern for the lost; was grieved when he saw them helpless and wandering as sheep without a shepherd's care. Feeling as he thus did, how can he overlook our great indifference toward the lost all round about us? He said to his disciples, "The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." Those who pray for workers to go to the harvest field will soon be impressed with the need of seeing to it that it is possible for workers thus to go. Do we pray for more laborers in the Lord's work, and are we doing our part to see that additional laborers are being sent from time to time into the harvest fields?

### **III. Redemption and Forgiveness Only in the Kingdom Col. 1:9-14**

After assuring the Colossian church that he was constantly praying in their behalf that they might be filled with the knowledge of the Lord's will in all spiritual understanding to walk worthily of the Lord, and to be strengthened with power unto all patience and longsuffering, he reminds them that the Lord had delivered them "out of the power of darkness," and had "translated" them "into the kingdom of the Son of his love." (Col. 1:13, 14.) Satan's kingdom is called the "kingdom of darkness," because darkness is the emblem of sin, error, misery, and death. Darkness is often used to indicate that state that characterizes those who are in sin, lost and without God and without hope in the world. The word "translated" is often used in the sense of removing a people from one country to another. In this instance it means that the Colossians had been removed from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of Christ by transferring their allegiance from one to the other, and by complying with the terms of naturalization necessary in order to become a citizen thereof. These terms were simply the conditions of salvation upon which the Lord adds to his church and saves.

Verse 14 says, "In whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins." In Christ, and in him alone, are men redeemed and saved.

We are baptized "into Christ" (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3.) Hence, without baptism men cannot have redemption and forgiveness. To be in Christ is to be in his body; but the body is the church. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) Thus, to be saved one must be in the church. This church is, of course, the church we read about in the New Testament; the one Jesus built and purchased with his own blood. (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28.) This passage establishes beyond doubt the fact that one must be a member of the church to be saved, not just any church, of course, but the church of Christ. (Rom. 16:16.)

### **IV. The Church Christ's Body (Verses 15-17)**

This portion of our text contains a profound statement of Christ's deity and preexistence with the Father before the world began. In it we learn that Christ is (1) the image of the invisible God; (2) before all creation; (3) the active agent in creation; and (4) the one who maintains the orderly course of all created things at the present time. Moreover, he is the head of the body; the church; and therefore deserving of all the preeminence there is. This passage, along with Eph. 1:22, 23, teaches us that the body of Christ is the church of Christ. Thus, as we have already seen, to be in the body is to be in the church; but since all blessings, including the redemption and salvation of our souls, are in Christ, it must follow that we cannot be saved without being members of the church. This, it will be recalled, is the kingdom of heaven predicted by Daniel and other Old Testament writers, preached in prospect by John the Baptist and Jesus, and established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord. It is therefore a matter of great importance to be able to recognize this institution in which alone is salvation to be found. This will indicate the importance of this series of lessons on the church, the aim of which is "to study the church of the New Testa-

ment in all of its phases; to learn how to distinguish it from all human organizations; and to know how to appreciate it as the body of Christ."

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

1. Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its significance.
2. Meaning of the expression "poor in spirit"
3. Significance of this lesson as it relates to the kingdom question.
4. Proof based on Mark 9:1 that the kingdom has been established.
5. Time when the church was established.
6. Proof that the church and kingdom are the same.
7. Why various titles are used of the church.
8. Proof that it is necessary to be in the church to be saved.
9. Meaning of the expression, "gospel of the kingdom."
10. Redemption and salvation only in the kingdom.
11. Proof that the body of Christ is the church.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Dreams.
2. Nature and type of the kingdom of God.
3. Historical aspects of this lesson.
4. Missionary nature of the work of Jesus.
5. Purpose of miracles.
6. Darkness symbol of sin and death.

## Lesson VI—February 10, 1946

### CHURCH UNDER THE APOSTLES

Acts 15:1-6, 22-29

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Matt. 10:1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." (1 Cor. 15:9.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

February	4.	M	Fear Upon the Church (Acts 5:7-11)
February	5.	T	Persecution of the Church (Acts 8:1-9)
February	6.	W	Church Has Peace (Acts 9:26-31)
February	7.	T	Gathered with the Church (Acts 11:19-26)
February	8.	F	Church Helped Paul (Acts 15:1-3)
February	9.	S	Elders to Feed the Church (Acts 20:26-35)
February	10.	S	Elders in the Church (1 Tim. 3:1-8)

#### Other Lesson Material John 14:26; Acts 2:1-13 Historical Background

TIME.— A.D. 50.

PLACES.— Antioch in Syria, and Jerusalem.

PERSONS.— Paul, Barnabas, certain Judaizing teachers, elders of the church at Jerusalem, the apostles, Judas, Silas, and the church in Antioch.



**Lesson Text**

1 And certain men came down from Judaea and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

2 And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

3 They therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.

6 And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter.

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.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. False Teachers in Antioch (Verse 1) .
- II. The Decision to Go to Jerusalem (Verses 2-6).
- III. The Solution of the Problem (Verse 22).
- IV. The Letter to the Gentile Brethren (Verses 23-29).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

Paul and Barnabas were at the time of this lesson engaged in the preaching of the gospel in Antioch and its vicinity. Their work was largely among Gentiles. The church in Antioch was, in fact, the great missionary center from which the gospel was carried to the Gentile world. Many of the Christian Jews, still obsessed with the idea that Judaism was the last and greatest religion in the world, were seeking to force its requirements upon Gentile Christians, urging that it was necessary for them to observe the law of Moses and be circumcised in order to be saved. The inclusion of Gentiles into covenant relationship was the greatest stumbling block in the way of the Jews. (1) They objected to their reception altogether until convinced by a miracle that God no longer regarded them as unclean. (2) Next, they denied them equal rights in the church and felt they were justified in withholding fellowship from them. Paul

withstood Peter to the face over this matter, holding that his conduct was blameworthy. (Gal. 2.) Finally, they sought to force adherence to the law of Moses upon the Gentiles before they would hold out to them any hope of salvation. These matters were of so great import, were so momentous and far-reaching in their nature, that it was finally determined to go to Jerusalem and lay the matter before the body of apostles and once for all settle it. The decision, the journey, and the results of that conference we are to study today.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

"Church Under the Apostles" simply means that the apostles had first rank under the Lord in determining questions confronting the church. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles . . ." (1 Cor. 12:28), is Paul's way of teaching us that they hold precedence above all others. It will be recalled that before the Lord went away, he promised the apostles the Holy Spirit whose coming would guide them into all truth. They are, therefore, the court of last resort in determining what the will of the Lord is today. This lesson is a demonstration of the fact that the early church recognized their decisions as final. We cannot do less today. The New Testament is the sum of our information on all matters touching our duty to the Lord. We are not at liberty to add to it or take from it.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." (1 Cor. 15:9.) Paul never forgot that, before his conversion to Christ, he had been a persecutor of the church. For an account of his activities as a persecutor see Acts 7:58; 8:1-4. The recollection of his former life kept him ever humble and filled him with a sense of deep humility. The expression, "the least of the apostles," however, does not mean that he was inferior to any of them in authority or that his commission from the Lord was less valid than theirs. He was not a "whit behind the very chiefest apostles" in his right to enforce obedience to the will of the Lord revealed through him.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

Various commentaries on Acts will be found helpful in the exposition of this lesson. Boles' Commentary on Acts and McGarvey on Acts will be found to contain much useful information on teaching the fundamental principles underlying this lesson. The primary and junior classes should be taught the place and rank of the apostles in the church throughout all ages, and respect for their decisions established. The older classes will be able to follow the lesson text. This is an important and much needed lesson. The teachers sustain a tremendous responsibility to their pupils, and should prepare these lessons carefully. All teachers should regularly add to their libraries books helpful in the exposition of the New Testament.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **1. False Teachers in Antioch (Verse 1)**

"And certain men came down from Judaea and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye can

not be saved." The fact that these men were from Judaea, where the church began and where the apostles yet remained, tended to give their utterances much authority with the church in Antioch; and it is possible that these teachers actually claimed authority from the apostles for their teaching. They insisted on circumcision and adherence to the law of Moses as conditions upon which the Gentiles were to be fellowshipped. It should be noted that these men claimed to be Christians; and that these demands on the church in Antioch were made, not by unbelieving Jews openly in repudiation of Christianity, but by those affecting to be a part thereof. Paul and Barnabas knew that this teaching was erroneous, and they opposed it strenuously. With what results we are to see in our next section.

## **II. The Decision to Go to Jerusalem (Verses 2-6)**

"And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." The brethren in Antioch did not properly estimate the value of the words of an inspired apostle, or they would have accepted without question Paul's decision in the matter without the necessity of a trip to Jerusalem. It is probable that these false teachers had created doubts in the minds of the brethren regarding Paul's commission as an apostle, by urging that he was not one of the twelve, and therefore, not qualified to speak as an apostle. Their decision to go before the apostles in Jerusalem followed no "small dissension and questioning" with the teachers from Jerusalem. These words suggest that there must have been much heated debate between them. Finally, when it appeared that no solution could be found, it was determined to send to Jerusalem for a decision in the matter. Paul informs us that he went "up by revelation" (Gal. 2:2). Since the decision to go to Jerusalem was somewhat of a repudiation of Paul as an apostle, it may be that he would have refused to go if the Lord had not expressly instructed him to do this. He took with him Titus, we learn from Gal. 2:1, evidently for the purpose of testing his position in the matter. Titus was a Greek, and according to the position of the Judaizing teachers should have been circumcised. Paul's position was, however, vindicated in the person of Titus; for he says, "But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised." (Gal. 2:3.) The decision reached to go to Jerusalem with the matter, the group begins its journey, and is brought on its way by the church, preaching the gospel of salvation as they went along. On reaching Jerusalem, they were cordially received by the church, apostles, and elders, and "rehearsed all things that God had done with them." It must have been a thrilling story that Paul told of his labors and trials in spreading the gospel among the lost.

Opposition came, however, in the persons of the "Pharisees who believed," in insisting on the same things the false teachers in Antioch had taught. It is likely that they were sent up to Antioch by these very people. "After reading so much in the earlier chapters of Acts respecting the hostility of the sect of the Pharisees to the church, it is a surprise to here meet with some of that party in the church, and occupying a position of some influence, though it is not

a surprise to find them on the wrong side of an important question. They found it no longer possible to resist the evidence in favor of Jesus, and had therefore been baptized into his name; but they still clung tenaciously to some of their former ideas. Long after this meeting, when Paul had come to fully understand their motives, even if he did not at the time, he styles them 'false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: (Gal. 2:4.) From this judicial sentence upon them we ascertain that when they despaired of destroying the church by persecution from without, they deliberately confessed Christ and came into the church for the purpose of controlling it from within. It was their design to keep the church under the bondage of the law, and thus prevent it from very seriously modifying the state of things among the Jews in which the Pharisees were the predominant party." (McGarvey.) "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses." This prompted the apostles and elders to come together to consider the matter. Also present were these false teachers. All were free to take part in the discussion, and there was "much questioning." The word questioning is from the Greek, "zeteseos," which means debating. The brethren simply engaged in debate over the question, the Judaizers in the affirmative, in arguing that the Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law to be saved, and Paul and Barnabas in the negative in denying this. The reader will now turn to Acts 15 and read verses 7-21, inclusive, for some of the speeches made. Having heard from Simon and James, the apostles are now ready to render their decision in the matter.

### **III. The Solution of the Problem (Verse 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." The decision was unanimous that brethren of unquestionable reputation should accompany Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, and once for all settle the question of whether the law of Moses was still binding. That it was decided to send brethren with Paul and Barnabas was no reflection on the two; it was simply a wise and practical course to put the matter beyond doubt once for all. Judas and Silas were "chief men among the brethren," and would carry much weight with the church at Antioch. The decision of the Jerusalem brethren was a great victory for the truth of the gospel. It set forth clearly the freedom of the Gentiles with reference to the law of Moses. More, it confirmed Paul's position, and vindicated him as an apostle on a par with those in Jerusalem. Here, once again, we see the position of the apostles in the Jerusalem church, and in the churches everywhere. Once it was determined that these men were apostles, their decisions were never questioned. They spoke the final word on any question touching the will of God to man. They still do; and it is ours to accept their statements without question or equivocation. The Lord miraculously inspired them, and delivered to them his will. To reject the teaching of the apostles is to reject Christ himself.

**IV. The Letter to the Gentile Brethren (Verses 23-29)**

It will be noted that this document begins by repudiating all responsibility for the teaching of the men who were the cause of the trouble in Antioch, declaring that they had given them no commandment at all. This would indicate that these false teachers claimed to have been sent out by the apostles, and therefore qualified to speak for them. The fact that they were from Jerusalem led the apostles to feel some responsibility in the matter; and their first act is to disclaim all recognition of them. They next express their regard for and appreciation of Paul and Barnabas, referring to them as "our beloved Barnabas and Paul." Judas and Silas were sent along to confirm by word of mouth that which was written in the letter. The letter is declared to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, as well as the decision it contained. "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us," shows that the Holy Spirit determined the decision, and the apostles, elders, and the Jerusalem church acquiesced in it. No instructions were given to observe the law; on the contrary, the Holy Spirit laid upon them only such "necessary things," as abstaining "from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." In his speech, James had stated that they should abstain "from the pollutions of idols," and here it is said that they were to "abstain from things sacrificed to idols." "Some discussion has been had as to the meaning of abstaining 'from blood.' Some think that it means to abstain from murder; others, to abstain from the eating of blood as forbidden by the law of Moses. It seems clear here that 'the blood' is the blood of animals and that it should not be eaten (Lev. 17:10-15). The heathen caught the blood of an animal in a vessel when the animal was slain and ate it as food; this was not allowed to the Jew for the reasons assigned in Lev. 17:13, 14, and Deut. 12:16-23. God had forbidden Noah and his descendants to eat blood. (Gen. 9:4.) Then it was incorporated in the law of Moses, and seems to be forbidden of Christians today. 'Things strangled' means that they were to refrain from eating the flesh of animals that had been strangled. 'Strangled' comes from the Greek 'pniktou,' and means 'life taken without shedding the blood'; hence, animals strangled had the blood left in the body, and in eating the flesh one would eat the blood. They were to keep themselves from fornication, or live chaste lives." (Boles, Commentary on Acts.)

When the brethren reached Antioch, they gathered the multitude together and read to them the "epistle." General rejoicing followed the reading thereof, and the accompanying brethren, Judas and Silas, "exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them." For those who respected the authority of apostles the matter of the law of Moses in relation to the Gentile churches was settled once for all. No man would henceforth dare to force upon them the law at least with the claim that such was in harmony with apostolic decree. This letter was widely circulated among the Gentile churches in all probability, and Judaizing teachers were no longer able to claim the apostles in Jerusalem on their side of the controversy.

There are several interesting things about this letter, apart from the message it carried, and the far-reaching consequences attendant on its circulation. It is, so far as we know, the earliest document ever to issue from the pen of an apostle. It antedates both the

books of the gospel, and all of Paul's epistles. For a time it must have circulated freely among the churches as a separate document before Luke, the historian, incorporated it in the book of Acts. It is called an "epistle," also a "decree:" (Acts 16:4.)

"Certain other points in this meeting had a direct personal reference to Paul himself. His own independent mission had been called in question. Some perhaps said that he was antagonistic to the apostles in Jerusalem, others that he was entirely dependent upon them. All the Judaizers agreed in blaming his course of procedure among the Gentiles. This course was now entirely approved by the other apostles. His independence was fully recognized. Those who were universally regarded as 'pillars of the truth,' James, Peter, and John, gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship and agreed that they should be to the heathen what themselves were to the Jews. Thus was Paul publicly acknowledged as the apostle to the Gentiles, and openly placed in that position from which 'he shall never more go out' as a pillar of the temple of the 'New Jerusalem,' inscribed with the 'New Name,' which proclaims the union of all mankind in one Saviour." (The Life and Epistles of Paul, Conybeare & Howson.)

This meeting in Jerusalem as it relates to so-called "church councils" prompted Brother McGarvey to make the following observations: "While this conference is constantly referred to by Romanists and other supporters of episcopacy, as the first general council, it was no general council at all. It was not composed of representatives from the congregations of a district, however small, but of the members of a single church. Furthermore, it decided, on the authority of the inspired men who directed its decisions, a question of doctrine affecting the salvation of souls; and this no set of men except the apostles have ever had the right to do. In no sense, then, can its action be pleaded as a precedent for the existence of any ecclesiastical court whatever outside of the individual congregation, or for the purpose of settling by authority any question of doctrine." (Commentary on Acts.) Farrar, in his Life of Paul, concedes the same, saying, "The so-called council of Jerusalem in no way resembled the general councils of the church, either in its history, its constitution, or its object. It was not a convention of ordained delegates, but a meeting of the entire church of Jerusalem to receive a deputation from the church at Antioch."

The practical lesson in this for us is that uninspired men have no right either in reason or revelation to meet and decide policies and practices of the church. The Lord has never delivered to man such powers. True, men seek to exercise them in conferences, synods, councils, etc., but they have no authority from the Lord for such, and no man is scripturally bound to adhere to their decisions. The pronouncements of the apostles are final on all questions of doctrine and practice, and we are bound by them until the Lord comes.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

1. Attitude of Jews toward Gentiles in the early church.
2. Demands made upon Gentiles by some Jewish Christians.
3. Meaning of Paul's statement, "least of all the apostles."
4. Teaching of Judaizing teachers.
5. Why they objected to Paul.

6. Decision of Antiochian church.
7. Why Titus accompanied Paul to Jerusalem.
8. Those who led in the debate in Jerusalem for the Judaizers.
9. Why they are now in the church.
10. How the apostles conveyed their decision to Antioch.
11. Effect of the decision on the reputation of Paul.
12. Repudiation of false teachers in the letter.
13. Things Gentiles were to abstain from.
14. Meaning of this prohibition.
15. Effect of the reading of the epistle in Antioch.
16. Interesting things about this document.
17. Why this meeting is not a precedent for church councils today.
18. Practical lessons for us in this incident.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Church troubles and their solution.
2. False teachers, and what our attitude should be toward them.
3. How questions of doctrine and practice are to be determined today.

### Lesson VII—February 17, 1946 SALVATION IN THE CHURCH Acts 4:8-12; Rom. 6:1-11

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Rom. 8:14-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:10.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

February	11.	M	Saved in Christ (Acts 4:5-12)
February	12.	T	Remission of Sins in the Church (Eph. 1:1-7)
February	13.	W	Christians Living Stones (1 Pet. 2:1-8)
February	14.	T	Edification of the Church (1 Cor. 14:1-5)
February	15.	F	Church a Glorious Church (Eph. 5:22-29)
February	16.	S	Church the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:15-22)
February	17.	S	Cast Out of the Church (3 John 1-10)

#### Other Lesson Material Col. 1:13, 14; Eph. 5:23

#### Historical Background

TIME.— The events described in Acts 4 occurred shortly after the establishment of the church in Jerusalem, A.D. 33. The book of Romans was written A.D. 57.

PLACES.— Jerusalem, Rome.

PERSONS.— The church in Jerusalem; civil and religious authorities of that city; Paul, and the church in Rome.

#### Lesson Text

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.

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?

3 Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

4 We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection;

6 Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin;

7 For he that hath died is justified from sin.

8 But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him;

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him.

10 For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Peter's Speech Before the Jewish Council (Verses 8-11).
- II. Salvation Only in the Name of Christ (Verse 12).
- III. Paul Answers a False Charge (Rom. 6:1, 2).
- IV. Obeying the Form of Doctrine Delivered (Verses 3-11).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

That portion of our lesson taken from the book of Acts recounts the difficulty Peter and John found themselves in following the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. (Acts 3:1-26.) The attention which followed this notable deed furnished Peter with an excellent opportunity to preach the word, and he was not slow to take advantage of the same. "And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it was now eventide . . . . And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; 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. And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power, or in what name, have ye done this?" (Acts 4:1-7.) Then follows Peter's speech, which is the text of the first part of our lesson today. The selection from Romans. is taken from that part of the epistle in which Paul is developing his thesis of salvation by faith. The exposition will be found under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

"Salvation in the Church" means that to be saved one must be a member of the church. It does not suggest, nor is it intended to teach, that it is the church that saves. Christ is our Savior. The



realm or sphere in which he saves is the church. (Eph. 5:23.) Thus, if one is saved, it is because he is in that place where the Lord exercises his saving power. This is in the church, as the subject indicates. By the "church" it is not meant any denomination or group of denominations. Denominationalism is wholly unknown to the New Testament. "The church" is the "body of Christ." (Eph. 1:22, 23.) Salvation is only in Christ. (Col. 1:13, 14; Eph. 5:23; 2 Cor. 5:17.) To be in Christ is to be in his church. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) Therefore, salvation is only in the church.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:10.) We learn here what the "heart" of the Bible is—it is that with which we believe. With it we "believe unto righteousness," and with the mouth we confess "unto salvation." It is interesting to note the force of the preposition "unto" as used in this passage. This word means "in the direction of; leading toward." Thus one believes "toward, or in the direction of" righteousness; and confesses toward or in the direction of salvation. Repentance (Acts 11:18) is likewise said to be "unto life." Thus, the three first steps of salvation, faith, repentance, and confession, are said to be toward, or in the direction of, salvation; but baptism is that which puts us "into" Christ. (Rom. 6:3.) Short of obedience to this commandment one is not in that realm or sphere where the Lord saves. This point will be developed at length in this lesson.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This lesson is so simple and its implications so clear that the teachers of the various classes will have no difficulty in making the proper applications. The relation of Christ to the church should be emphasized; and all made to see that salvation is only in the church. It would be well, too, to impress upon the pupils the fact that salvation is not to be found in just any church, but only in the church of the Bible. The facts of this lesson are absolutely essential to all who would be efficient personal workers, and the teachers should see that clear conceptions are obtained by all.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Peter's Speech Before the Jewish Council (Verses 8-11)**

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders, if we this day are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means this man is made whole; 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." Until this interruption, the work of the apostles had gone forth without interference from the Jews following the establishment of the church on Pentecost a short time before. But their emphasis on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead filled the Jews with grave misgivings, and the healing of the impotent man attracted so much favorable attention to the apostles that the unbelieving Sadducees could no longer ignore them. At

first thought one might have expected the Pharisees to take the lead in opposing the spread of the gospel, since they were so active in the persecution and death of Jesus; but here it is the Sadducees who come to the fore. This is explained by the fact that the chief emphasis in the preaching of the apostles was the resurrection of Jesus. Two things about this were especially obnoxious to these Sadducees. (1) They rejected the idea of the resurrection wholly; and (2) they were bitterly opposed to the teaching of Jesus. And so the apostles, Peter and John, were arrested, brought into prison, kept overnight, and on the morrow brought before the council, and charged to tell by what power, and in whose authority they had done this deed of healing the lame man. "The prisoners had been brought into court without a formal charge being brought against them, and the court was now dependent on what might be extorted from them for a ground of accusation. The question propounded is remarkable for its vagueness: 'By what power, or in what name, have ye done this?' Done what? might have been the answer. Done this preaching? or this miracle? or what? The question specified nothing, and the obvious reason is that there was no particular thing done by Peter and John on which they dared fix attention, or on which they could base a charge of wrongdoing. The chief priest cunningly framed an indefinite question, in the hope that the defendants, in their confusion, would furnish a ground of accusation by speaking unguarded words." (McGarvey.)

This indefiniteness could not have served Peter's purpose better, for it enabled him to select the subject on which he was most anxious to speak. This was most unfortunate for these judges, for Peter chose to speak on their own responsibility in the death of Jesus. He boldly laid at their feet responsibility for that crime, and without any hesitation, charged them with being the murderers of the Lord Jesus. "Instead of the Sanhedrin placing Peter and John on trial, these apostles now put the Sanhedrin on trial; they are forced to defend the crime which they had committed, or acknowledge their guilt." (Boles, Commentary on Acts.)

The Jewish council was indeed in an embarrassing position. Peter's statement, regarding the healing of the impotent man, needed no proof; the man stood before them whole, there was no denying the fact that a notable miracle had been wrought; nor could they with any degree of plausibility ascribe the deed to any other power or name than that claimed by those who performed it. To deny that the power was divine would have laid them open to the scorn and ridicule of the people; and to have rejected the explanation of those in position to know most about it, i.e., Peter and John, was equally absurd. The answer was therefore a complete vindication of the apostles and confounded those who propounded the question.

## **II. Salvation Only in the Name of Christ (Verse 12)**

Peter was not slow to press his advantage further. He next declared, "He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. 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." Reference is here made to Psalm 118:22, where David alludes to the "stone which the builders rejected." Peter puts his accusers in the ridiculous po-

sition of laying the foundation of a house, but rejecting the stone which was cut out for the corner, without which the foundation course could not be finished, and therefore no part of the wall built. Christ is "the chief corner stone." Having rejected him, the Jews are outside the pale of God's mercy. They can never be saved until they confess that "blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. 23:39.)

It will be recalled that the temple was built without the sound of tool or hammer. All of the materials were prefabricated, and assembled ready to be fitted into the building without further adjustment. There is a tradition that when the builders came to a certain unique stone, they were unable to visualize a place for it in the building, and hence discarded it. It was covered with debris, and forgotten. By and by it was discovered that the chief cornerstone of the building was missing. The rejected stone was discovered and found to fit perfectly into the corner. Whether these statements grew out of this tradition we do not know but it is true that the Jews, in rejecting Christ, have rejected "the chief corner stone." Their building can never be erected without him. In rejecting Christ, they have caused themselves to be rejected, and are now no part of that building in which he occupies such a prominent place.

Having convicted his accusers of the murder of Jesus; of having rejected the Messiah of the Old Testament, he now plainly declares that there is no salvation for any man except in the name of the Jesus they had crucified. The boldness of Peter and John on this occasion is truly amazing. Instead of evading the question propounded by the council, the apostles unhesitatingly avowed the very principles which they had been preaching, and which had caused them to be haled into court. For the time being it had the effect of silencing their accusers, and the accusers became the accused under Peter's withering charge. It is not at all surprising that the next statement immediately following this is, "Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13.)

The fearlessness thus manifested by these men in the presence of the highest court of the Jews is in startling contrast with the timidity and diffidence that characterize many who claim to be gospel preachers today. The apostles never stooped to equivocation whatever the consequences that would follow their avowal of the principles in which they believed. The church today is sadly in need of more men who have the courage and fearlessness manifested by these men.

Salvation is only in "the name of Jesus." To be saved in his "name" is to be saved by his authority. Salvation may therefore be obtained only in the way he has authorized it. He has commanded us to believe, repent, and be baptized to be saved. (Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46, 47.) Only in compliance with these conditions can we be saved "in the name of Jesus." Those who thus obey him are added to the church. There is no salvation out of the church.

### **III. Paul Answers a False Charge (Rom. 6:1, 2)**

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer

live therein?" Enemies of Paul's preaching argued that if the law was no longer binding and that God's grace was sufficient; and that the more one sinned the more grace abounded, why not deliberately sin the more in order that grace might the more abound? That this charge was leveled against Paul's position, we learn from his own words in Rom. 3:8: "And why not (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose condemnation is just." Thus they insisted that Paul's preaching was an encouragement to sin. He answers this calumny with a strong ejaculation, "God forbid," and then proceeds to show that this conclusion by no means follows his argument. "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" "To die" to sin is to separate oneself therefrom, to cease the life thereof. Having therefore severed ourselves from a life of sin, the apostle points out, how shall we live any longer therein? Assuming that we are maintaining our life of separation therefrom, it is unseemly to argue that we are still living as we formerly did. "Through Christ's death for sinners those who love him and are moved by that love themselves die to sin. To die to sin is to turn from sin to the service of God. Those who die to sin cannot continue in sin." (Lipscomb.)

#### **IV. Obeying the Form of Doctrine Delivered (Verses 3-11)**

The section that follows is an elaboration of the position- announced in the earlier verses of this chapter. It is a development of the relationship the child of God sustains to sin. More, it is a demonstration of the manner in which one passes from Satan's kingdom into the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. In verses 16 and 17, the apostle says this, "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness." Verses 1-6 of Romans 6 is a demonstration of this process. It will be observed that we are saved by obedience to that "form," "pattern," (margin of R.V.) which has been delivered. The basic facts of the gospel are, we learn from 1 Cor. 15:1-3 the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. As Christ died, so we die to the love and practice of sin; as he was buried, so are we "buried with him in baptism," and as he was raised, so are we raised to "walk in newness of life." Once again we are taught the essentiality of baptism in showing us that it is the condition upon which we enter "into Christ." Moreover, the manner in which it is obeyed is, we are told, by being "buried." There is no mistaking the significance of this. A "burial" in water necessitates immersion. "Baptism," as the word indicates, and as the New Testament practice uniformly proves, can be administered only by immersion.

We die to sin when we believe the gospel and repent of our sins. Appropriately following this death to sin, we are to be buried. The burial is consummated in baptism; the symbolism of which is very fitting. Following death and burial is the resurrection. Our resurrection from the grave of water is, in turn, an introduction into

"newness of life." There is no life until the resurrection. Therefore, there is no salvation until after baptism.

In further refutation of the calumny uttered against his position, Paul proceeds to show that "if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (from the watery grave). That is, if we have become members of his body by conformity to his death (by being buried with him in baptism) we shall also be like him in conforming to his resurrection by being raised out of baptism. After Christ was raised from the dead, he no longer lived the life he had lived in the flesh; in like manner we are no longer to live our former life of sin. "The old man" (the life of sin), being crucified with him, is dead, he no longer motivates the individual in producing a life of sin.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

1. The occasion for Peter and John's arrest.
2. Nature of the question asked them.
3. Why the Sadducees, and not the Pharisees, took the lead in opposition.
4. How Peter used the opportunity.
5. Why the charge against Peter and John was so indefinite.
6. Meaning of the statement, "The stone which the builders rejected."
7. Tradition regarding the "rejected stone."
8. Conclusion of Peter's speech, and effect thereof.
9. Fearlessness of the apostles.
10. Significance of the statement, salvation only in name of Jesus.
11. The false charge brought against Paul.
12. Paul's answer.
13. The form of doctrine delivered.
14. Essentiality of baptism shown.
15. Why a life of sin is inconsistent with our baptism.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Effect of persecution.
2. Boldness of Peter and John.
3. Type of preaching most needed today.
4. Why a life of sin on the part of professed Christians is unseemly.

### Lesson VIII—February 24, 1946

#### CHURCH TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:14-22**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Acts 7:44-50.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

February	18.	M	Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6:3-17)
February	19.	T	Temple Rebuilt (Ezra 4:1-6)
February	20.	W	Christ Greater Than the Temple (Matt. 12:1-6)

February	21.	T	Christians Are the Temple (1 Cor. 6:12-20)
February	22.	F	Church the Temple (1 Cor. 3:10-17)
February	23.	S	Sitteth in the Temple of God (2 Thess. 2:1-4)
February	24.	S	Church a Holy Temple (Eph. 2:14-22)

**Other Lesson Material**  
**1 Cor. 6:12-20; 2 Thess. 2:1-4**

**Historical Background**

TIME.— The epistles of Romans and First Corinthians were written A.D. 57. Ephesians was penned A.D. 62.

PLACES.— Romans was written from Corinth; First Corinthians from Ephesus in the spring of A.D. 57 shortly before Pentecost. (1 Cor. 16:8.) Ephesians was written by Paul while a prisoner in a Roman prison, A.D. 62.

PERSONS.— Paul and the churches of Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus.

**Lesson Text**

9 But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

16 Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye.

14 For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition,

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace;

16 And might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh:

18 For through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.

19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,

20 Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

22 In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Sanctifying Influence of the Holy Spirit (Verse 9).
- II. Christians a Temple of God and of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16).
- III. Temple of God May Be Defiled (Verse 17).
- IV. Law Abolished, Jew and Gentile One in Christ (Eph. 2:14-18).
- V. The Church God's Holy Temple (Verses 19-22).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

"The church" is the general subject of our series of lessons for the present quarter. During this period we are to study its various aspects in relation to things both human and divine. Thus far, we have considered the church with reference to God's eternal purpose; Christ its builder; the church God's called out; the church the Israel of God; church the kingdom of God; church under the apostles; salvation in the church; and today, "Church Temple of the Holy

Spirit." Having studied the church in relation to God and Christ, it is in order for us to consider it with reference to the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. All of the passages which form the basis for our present study set forth some aspect of the church as it relates to the Holy Spirit.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

By "Church Temple of the Holy Spirit" it is meant that the Holy Spirit dwells in the church in somewhat the same fashion as God dwelt in the temple on Mount Moriah under the Jewish dispensation. His presence sanctifies it, and his revelation directs it. The relationship that obtains between the church and the Holy - Spirit is permanent. When the disciples were mourning our Savior's going away, he said unto them, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you." (John 16:7.) "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever." (John 14:16.)

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16.) Since the Golden Text of our lesson is a part of our lesson text proper, we shall defer exposition thereof until we come to "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

It will be exceedingly difficult for teachers of the younger groups to convey the lessons to be found in this study today. As a matter of fact, much of this lesson is a mystery to the most profound scholars among us. The Holy Spirit, his origin, character, personality, work, all involve questions of the most difficult nature. It will not be expected therefore that the teachers will be able to explain all about this lesson. It is suggested that the students be encouraged to familiarize themselves with the words of the lesson text and be able to quote them from memory. The following volumes will be found very helpful in preparation for this lesson: Boles, *The Holy Spirit*; A. S. Johnson, *The Holy Spirit and the Human Mind*; Brents, *The Gospel Plan of Salvation*, pages 571-661; and Lipscomb, *Salvation from Sin*, pages 66f.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Sanctifying Influence of the Holy Spirit (Verse 9)**

"But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Earlier, the apostle had pointed out that "they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." (Rom. 8:5.) Thus the flesh is set forth in contrast with the Spirit—each word is representative of a type of life. To live after the "flesh" is to mind the things of the flesh; to live after the "Spirit" is to walk in harmony with the teaching of the Spirit. The Spirit teaches us only through the word; hence, to walk after the Spirit is to walk according to the word. This, the apostle, in the passage above, contrasts

with a life in disobedience to the word, a life he denominates as being after the "flesh." "They that are in the flesh cannot please God," i.e., those whose lives are characterized by disobedience to the word and who walk not after the Spirit. That the word "flesh" is thus used is to be seen from the fact that the apostle immediately adds, "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." He does not mean to say that the Roman saints were living a disembodied existence; they were still in their fleshly bodies; but if the Spirit of God dwelt in them, motivating and directing their lives, they were no longer "in the flesh," that is, they were no longer living a life in which the flesh dominates; rather, theirs was a life of the Spirit, a life directed and governed by the Spirit's teaching. To the same end, Paul wrote to the Galatian brethren: "But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:16, 17.) Christians are, therefore, obligated to live a life in which the Holy Spirit is the directing and motivating force; otherwise, they are displeasing to God. Thus appears the sanctifying influence of the Spirit; by directing us into holy paths he leads us to live a life of separation before God.

The Holy Spirit dwells in us. "If so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you," the apostle plainly says. Yet how he dwells in us is another matter, and here much diversity of opinion exists. It is not a question of whether the Spirit dwells in us, or not; this all who believe the scriptures admit; rather, what is the manner of his indwelling? The following judicious words of Brother H. Leo Boles set forth in an admirable fashion the difficulty: "It is granted that there is mystery connected with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Our spirits dwell in our bodies; there is some mystery connected with this. We may know much about our spirits and more about our bodies; we can know there is a union between the spirit and the body. We know that when the spirit leaves the body death is the result. So with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We do not profess to know all the mysteries connected with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, yet we can know that he dwells in Christians. We can know what the New Testament teaches about this, but nothing else." (The Holy Spirit, page 206.)

This writer teaches how the Spirit dwells in Christians today as follows: (1) God dwells in us, 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 John 4:15; (2) Christ dwells in us, Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:17. In 2 John 9, we learn that in order for us to have God and Christ, we must abide in their word. To have God and Christ in us, we must not only have their word in our hearts; we must be influenced and motivated by this word. Moreover, it is said that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. (Eph. 3:16, 17.) If God and Christ can dwell in us through their word, why not the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Godhead in like fashion? That the Holy Spirit does, in fact, dwell in us in this manner seems clear from Gal. 3:2: "This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" This was, as the context indicates, an emphatic way of saying that the Galatians had received the Spirit by the hearing of faith. God's Spirit strives with man (Gen. 6:3) through the words



of the prophets (Neh.9:27), and man may resist, grieve, and quench the Spirit by rejecting the word of truth. (Acts 7:51; Eph. 4:30; Eph. 1:19). To be filled with the Spirit is to be filled with the word:

"And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms," etc. (Eph. 5:18, 19.)

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms," etc. (Col. 3:16.)

The foregoing passages are parallel statements. Note another similar parallel:

We can call Jesus Lord only by the revelation the New Testament contains. (John 20:30, 31.)

We can call Jesus Lord only by the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:2, 3.)

"When the word of Christ dwells in Christians, the Holy Spirit dwells in them. The Holy Spirit and the word of God are inseparable; the word of God is the word of the Holy Spirit. 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly' (Col. 3:16) is the way for Christ to dwell in us; it is the way for the Holy Spirit to dwell in us." (The Holy Spirit, by Boles, p. 208, 209.)

"But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The words, "the Spirit of Christ," can mean nothing more than the Holy Spirit. To have the "Spirit of Christ," therefore, is simply to have the Holy Spirit, in the manner and after the fashion set forth above.. Obviously one not motivated by the teaching of Christ does not belong to him.

## II. Christians a Temple of God and of the Holy Spirit(1 Cor. 3:16)

"Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" In our lesson for January 13, we learned that God's house, the church, is compared to a building; and in this lesson we are to learn what kind of building it is. The idea of comparing the church to the temple is of Old Testament origin; for the Jews often spoke of the temple as the habitation of God. Since God dwells in the church today, it is fitting to refer to it as a temple also. A temple is an edifice erected to the service of God. The church exists for the purpose of serving him, hence the name temple. "The temple at Jerusalem was not only most magnificent, but was regarded as most sacred: (1) From the fact that it was devoted to his service; and (2) from the fact that it was the peculiar residence of Jehovah. Among the heathen also, temples were regarded as sacred. They were supposed to be inhabited by the divinity to whom they were dedicated. They were regarded as inviolable. Those who took refuge there were safe. It was a crime of the highest degree to violate a temple, or to tear a fugitive who had sought protection there from the altar. So the apostle says of the Christian community. They were regarded as his temple-God dwelt among them-and they should regard themselves as holy, and as consecrated to his service." (Barnes.)

Here again it is asserted that the Spirit of God dwells in his people. But the apostle does not explain how God dwells in us by his Spirit. As God once dwelt in the temple of Solomon, so his Spirit now dwells among Christians. The fact of this is enough for us; it

is not wise for us to engage in interminable controversy over the manner of it.

### **III. Temple of God May Be Defiled (Verse 17)**

"If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye." The King James reading is, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." The Greek word is the same in both parts of the sentence. "If any man destroy the temple of God, God shall destroy him." This is presented in the form of an adage or proverb. The truth stated is based on the fact that the temple of God is inviolable, and God will not permit its defilement. The temple is the church; and the figurative sense is, "If any man by his doctrines or precepts shall pursue such a course as tends to destroy the church, God shall severely punish him." The temple of God was a holy, sacred edifice, and its present counterpart, the church, is likewise an inviolable institution. God looks with severest displeasure upon any man or set of men who would presume to teach precepts contrary to the true doctrine, for all such tends to the destruction of his holy temple. All are charged with the solemn responsibility of seeing that false teachers do not come in to disrupt the unity and fellowship of the one body. We are taught to "prove the spirits," for "many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1.)

### **IV. Law Abolished, Jew and Gentile One in Christ (Eph. 2:14-18)**

"For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh." "Our peace" refers both to the peace which Christ brought to Jew and Gentile in removing the barrier or "middle wall of partition" which had long stood between them, and also to the peace of both with God. Both are made "one" in Christ. Moreover, the law of Moses, the entire constitution given at Sinai, was abolished on the cross, and taken out of the way, that he might "create in himself of the two (Jew and Gentile) one new man" (the church). Now, both are reconciled in the one body (the church) unto God. The same terms of peace were preached to both-to them far off-the Gentile, and to them that were nigh-the Jew. "The union of peace which flows from the abrogation of the law by the death of Christ is progressive so far as it is inward or subjective. The outward work is done. The long feud in the human family is healed. The distinction between Jew and Gentile is abolished. All the exclusive privileges of the former are abrogated. The wall which had so long shut out the Gentiles is removed. There is now one fold and one shepherd. Since the abrogation of the law, 'there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.' (Gal. 3:28, 29.)" (Shepherd.)

**V. The Church God's Holy Temple (Verses 19-22)**

"For through him (Christ) we both (Jew and Gentile) have our access in one spirit unto the Father. So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." Through Christ, both Jew and Gentile now have access to the Father. The Greek word here relates, properly, to the introduction to or audience which we are permitted to have with a prince or other person of high rank. Being thus introduced, we are now reckoned as the people of God. Henceforth Gentiles who have obeyed the gospel are entitled to all the privileges of the household. Moreover, the building into which they are set as living stones rests upon the "foundation of the apostles and prophets," i.e., the doctrine they taught, and upon Christ, "the chief corner stone." Into this building each obedient person is fitted, "fitly framed together," the sacred writer declares. These words mean "to join together, as a carpenter does the framework of a building." Different materials may be used, and different kinds of timber may be employed; but one part is worked into another, so as to constitute a beautiful edifice. Thus fitted, the building grows into a holy temple of the Lord. Some are of the opinion that "each several building" alludes to "local congregations," all of which make up the church in the aggregate; but of this there is some doubt. We prefer to think that Paul, as did Peter in 1 Pet. 2:5, looked upon each child of God as a stone in God's building, all of whom make up a building he figuratively calls the temple of God. Those thus budded together form "a habitation of God in the Spirit." "The church is designed as the place of the special residence of the Holy Spirit on earth. It is the beautiful temple where he dwells; the edifice which is reared for his abode. How holy should that church be; how pure should be each Christian to be an appropriate habitation for such a guest! How holy should be the heart where the Spirit dwells! With what anxious care should we cherish the presence of such a guest; with what solicitude should we guard our conduct that we may not grieve him away! How anxious we are so to live that we may not grieve away our friends from our dwellings! Should an illustrious guest become an inmate in our abode, how anxious should we be to do all that we can to please him, and to retain him with us! How much more anxious should we be to secure the indwelling of the eternal Spirit! How desirous that he should make our hearts and the church his constant abode!" (Barnes.)

**POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

1. The Holy Spirit a permanent guest in the church.
2. Significance of the words, "flesh" and "Spirit," in this lesson.
3. Why those in the "flesh" cannot please God.
4. Why this is a difficult lesson.
5. Most probable manner in which the Holy Spirit dwells in us.
6. Christians a temple of God and of the Holy Spirit.
7. Appropriateness of this designation.

8. Inviolable nature of God's temple.
9. Meaning of the "one body"; reconciliation of Jew and Gentile therein.
10. Manner in which building grows into a holy temple of the Lord.
11. Our responsibility in keeping the temple holy.
12. What is the "habitation of God in the Spirit"?

**Lesson IX—March 3, 1946**  
**THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF THE CHURCH**  
**Rom. 12:4-8; Eph. 1:7-10, 19-22; Col. 2:8-11**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— 1 Cor. 12:20-31.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell" (Col. 1:19.)

**Helps for Lesson Study**  
**Daily Bible Readings**

February	25.	M	Man of God Complete (2 Tim. 3:12-17)
February	26.	T	Perfect in Christ (Matt. 5:43-48)
February	27.	W	Strength for All Things (Phil. 4:10-13)
February	28.	T	God Will Supply Every Need (Phil. 4:17-20)
March	1.	F	God's Grace Sufficient (2 Cor. 12:8-10)
March	2.	S	Christ Dwells in the Heart (Eph. 3:14-19)
March	3.	S	Word of Christ Dwells Richly (Col. 3:12-17)

**Other Lesson. Material**  
**2 Pet. 1:3; Eph. 3:21**

**Historical Background**

TIME.— Romans, A.D. 57; Ephesians and Colossians, A.D. 62.

PLACES.— The saints in Rome, Ephesus, and Colosse.

PERSONS.— The churches mentioned above, together with all of the Lord's people everywhere.

**Lesson Text**

- 4 For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office:
- 5 So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another.
- 6 And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith;
- 7 Or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching;
- 8 Or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.
- 7 In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,
- 8 Which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,
- 9 Making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him
- 10 Unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth.
- 19 And what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might
- 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above ail rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

22 And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church.

8 Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ:

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,

10 And in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Different Gifts but Unity of Body (Verses 4-8).
- II. All Things in Christ (Eph. 1:7-10).
- III. All Things Put Under Christ (Verses 19-22).
- IV. Complete in Christ (Col. 2:8-11).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

This lesson is designed to show the all-sufficiency of the church. The lesson text is an elaboration of this theme, as it points out that every blessing vouchsafed to man essential to his salvation and well-being on earth, and of his future in heaven, is to be received only in and through the church. The selection from Romans shows the diversity of gifts characteristic of the church, and the unity that follows the variety of gifts. The Ephesian text points to the summation of all things in Christ, and in Colossians we learn that the "fulness of the Godhead" dwells in him; hence, every blessing we need he supplies. These points will be developed fully under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

The subject of our lesson is "The All-Sufficiency of the Church." By this is meant that the church is the realm or sphere in which the Lord supplies our every need; not that the church alone does this, but that the Lord, through his church, does it. Thus the necessity of being members of the Lord's church. When we speak of the "allsuficiency" of the church, we mean, of course, the church about which we read in the New Testament—the one the Lord built, and for which he shed his blood. (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28.) No other can claim any blessing from him.

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell" (Col. 1:19.) The word "fulness" here means the sum total of all the divine powers and attributes. It was God's will and pleasure that Christ should possess all the fullness of God as deity. He was lacking in none of those attributes essential to a divine being; and was therefore divine himself. This is a strong affirmation of the- deity of Jesus: This statement, "in him should all the fulness dwell," gathers into a grand climax the previous statements of the immediate context-image of God, first born of all creation, creator, the eternally pre-existent, the head of the church, the victor over death, first in all things. Being all of this Jesus could be only divine. He possessed the fullness of the divine characteristics.

**HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

Teachers of the elementary classes will wish to impress upon their pupils the fact that only in the church are the blessings of salvation to be enjoyed today. It would be well for them to make a list of the various blessings we enjoy in Christ, such as forgiveness of sins, encouragement and comfort in life, promises of life eternal, etc., and show that each of these is to be received only by being in the church of Christ. Teachers of those classes which contain boys and girls old enough to obey the gospel should utilize this lesson to impress upon them the necessity of surrendering their will to Christ and becoming Christians in order that they might receive the promises of the gospel. The older classes will profit much by a close study of the lesson text. The various commentaries on Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians will be of help in expounding this text.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT****I. Different Gifts but Unity of Body (Verses 4-8)**

"For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness" The church is here compared to a human body having many members all of which go to make up one body. Each member fills a different office, and performs a different work, yet all are essential to the proper functioning of the body, and no one member can claim superiority over others. The church, composed of many members, constitutes the spiritual body of Christ. In this each member has his own appropriate work to do, and by virtue of all being members of the one body they are members one of another, each dependent on the life and fidelity of the others for his own spiritual activity and life. In the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians Paul uses this illustration to show the folly of some members of the church being envious or jealous of other members. He said, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; it is therefore not of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now they are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are neces-

sary: and those parts of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness; whereas our comely parts have no need: but God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to that part which lacked; that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice With it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." (1 Cor. 12:12-27.) Each member, however seemingly insignificant his work may be, has a definite function and place in the body, and is not to be despised. This should enable us to guard against envy and jealousy, and fill us with a deeper appreciation of our responsibility in the work of the Lord. All do not have the same gifts or abilities, and the Lord has ordained that each shall work in his respective sphere accomplishing the work for which he is best fitted. Obviously, all cannot, and therefore must not, aspire to the same work. All cannot be song leaders, Bible school teachers, elders, and deacons. There is a work that we can do, however, and we should seek for opportunities to accomplish all we can in the sphere the Lord has placed us. And we may be assured that, unspectacular the work may appear to us, if we do it well, we shall receive a rich reward of the Lord for doing so.

## **II. All Things in Christ (Eph. 1:7-10)**

"In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, I say." Here, again, in a most emphatic way is affirmed the necessity of baptism, and the essentiality of the church. We have seen that to be in Christ is to be in his body; but forgiveness of sins, we are here told, is in Christ; hence, the necessity of being in his body. We pass into Christ by baptism (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3), hence, must be baptized to be in his body. But the body is the church (Eph. 1:22, 23), thus we must be in the church to be saved. Every blessing offered to man is to be found in Christ. In fact, every spiritual blessing is in Christ. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3.) Note, too, that it is "through his blood" we have redemption, the forgiveness of our trespasses. But we are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ. (Rom. 6:3, 4.) His blood was shed in his death. Thus by baptism (preceded, of course, by faith and repentance) we pass into the benefits of his death, and so perceive forgiveness of sins, redemption, and salvation. The expression, "to sum up all things in Christ," is a keynote to the whole epistle of Ephesians, emphasizing, as it does, "the unity that is in Christ." It means that God has ordained that in Christ shall be gathered the things that had been originally one, but had since been separated. Paul's own words constitute a commentary on this passage: "In him were all things created, in the

heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell; and through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens." (Col. 1:16-20.) "All things, to panta. It is remarkable that Paul has here used a word which is in the neuter gender. It is not all persons, or all angels, or all men, or all the elect, but all things. All things are placed under Christ (verse 22; Matt. 28:18), and the design of God is to restore harmony in the universe. Sin has produced disorder, not only in mind, but in matter. The world is disarranged. The effects of transgression are seen everywhere; and the object of the plan of redemption is to put all things on their pristine footing, and restore them as they were at FIRST. Everything is therefore put under the Lord Jesus, and all things are to be brought under his control, so as to constitute one harmonious empire. The amount of the declaration here is, that there is hereafter to be one kingdom, in which there shall be no jar or alienation; that the now separated kingdoms of heaven and earth shall be united under one head, and that henceforth all shall be unity and love. The things which are to be united 'in Christ' are those which are 'in heaven and which are on earth.' Nothing is said of hell. Of course this passage cannot teach the doctrine of universal salvation, since there is one world which is not to have a part in this ultimate union." (Barnes.)

### III. All Things Put Under Christ (Verses 19-22)

"And what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." The "exceeding greatness" of his power is that manifested in turning the sinner from a life of sin, and making of him a temple fit for God's own possession. Only a power of tremendous might could accomplish such a radical change as may be daily observed in those who have turned from darkness into light. The power that stilled the tempest, that gave health to the diseased, and that raised the dead, is the power that operates through the word of our Lord bringing salvation to those who hear, believe, and obey it. This passage speaks of the exaltation of Christ. Observe that God (1) raised him from the dead; (2) made him to sit at his own right hand (3) placed him far above all rule, authority, dominion, power, and every name that is named; (4) put all things under his feet. (5) made him to be head over all things; and (6) constituted him head of the church. Christ therefore exercises all authority in the universe today. It has been expressly vouch-



safed him (Matt. 28:18), and we are to hear only him. (Matt. 17:5.) All authority, including executive, legislative, and judicial, is vested in him. None has the right to speak in his behalf. This passage, were there no others, is sufficient to show the supreme arrogance of the popes of Rome in presuming to speak for the Lord on earth. "The church is the body of Christ on earth of which Christ is the head. Among animals, the head is the center and source of life. Jesus stands as the head of the body, whence it receives instruction and life and vigor. The bodies of men controlled by the Spirit of God are the only manifestations of the church visible to men in the flesh. This relation of the church to Christ, represented by the body to the head, is a spiritual one and is regulated by the Spirit of the head permeating all the members of the body. But the Spirit does this through the word of truth he presents. Spiritual influences are directed to the spirit of man that thinks, considers, wills; purposes, and acts in accordance with that will." (Lipscomb.)

#### **IV. Complete in Christ (Col. 2:8-11)**

"Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power." The word "spoil" now commonly means corrupt, to cause to decay and perish, as fruit is spoiled by keeping too long, but this is not the meaning of the word as here used. The Greek word translated make spoil means to spoil in the sense of plunder, rob, as when plunder is taken in war. The meaning is, "Take heed lest any one plunder or rob you of your faith and hope by his philosophy." They were to be evermore on their guard lest false teachers should plunder and rob them of their faith as an invading army would rob a country of all that is valuable. Philosophical teachers would seek to implant their theories that left the Lord out and an acceptance of them was to apostatize from Christ, to be plundered and robbed of their faith in the Crucified One. This warning is very pertinent today. Human reasoning, specious philosophy, is the order of the day; and many are having their faith and hope stolen from them by atheistic and skeptical professors advocating theories antagonistic to the religion of Christ. Christ is the sum and end of our hopes and aspirations. For comment on "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," see under "The Golden Text Explained." The expression, "And in him ye are made full," is rendered, "And ye are complete in him," in the Common Version. This means that one has no need for any kind of philosophy or tradition from men in order to be saved. All that is necessary to secure salvation is to be found in the Lord Jesus. There is a completion, a filling up in him, so as to leave nothing wanting. This is true in respect of (1) the wisdom needful to guide us; (2) the atonement to be made for sin; (3) the merit by which a sinner can be justified; (4) and the grace needful to sustain us in the trials, and to aid us in the duties of life. "There is no necessity therefore that we should look to the aid of philosophy, as if there was a defect in the teaching of the Savior; or to human strength as if he was unable to save

us; or to the merits of the saints, as if those of the redeemer were not sufficient to meet our wants."

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Leading point in this entire lesson.  
 Meaning of the subject.  
 Significance of the word "fulness" in the Golden Text.  
 Meaning of the heading,  
 "Different Gifts, but Unity of Body."  
 This point illustrated.  
 Practical lesson for us to be derived from this section.  
 Meaning of "All things in Christ."  
 This section with reference to condition of pardon.  
 Significance of "To sum up all things in Christ"  
 Keynote of the Ephesian epistle.  
 Purpose of Christ's coming into the world.  
 Things put under Christ.  
 Extent of his authority.  
 Warning against false teachers.  
 How they may spoil us through philosophy and vain deceit.  
 The sense in which we are complete in Christ.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Jealousy and envy in the Lord's work.  
 Essentiality of the church as taught in this lesson.  
 This lesson as it relates to the exercise of authority by the pope.  
 Church councils, synods, conferences, etc.  
 Dangers inherent in human philosophy.

## Lesson X—March 10, 1946 THEONENESS OF THE CHURCH 1 Cor. 1:10-17; Eph. 4:1-6

DEVOTIONAL READING.— 1 Cor. 12:12-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me." (John 17:21.)

### Helps for Lesson Study

#### Daily Bible Readings

March	4.	M	One Flock, One Shepherd (John 10:12-18)
March	5.	T	Christ and God One (John 10:27-37)
March	6.	W	Many Members in One Body (Rom. 12:3-8)
March	7.	T	Members of His Body (Eph. 5:22-33)
March	8.	F	Baptized into One Body (1 Cor. 12:12-20)
March	9.	S	All the Members Suffer (1 Cor. 12:22-31)
March	10.	S	There Is One Body (Eph. 4:1-6)

### Other Lesson Material

Eph. 2:15; 3:21; 1:10

### Historical Background

TIME.— For First Corinthians, A.D. 57; for Ephesians, A.D. 62.

PLACES.— FIRST. Corinthians was written from Ephesus; Ephesians from Rome.

PERSONS.— Paul and the saints of Corinth and Ephesus.

### Lesson Text

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, save Crispus and Gaius;

15 Lest any man should say that ye were baptized into my name.

16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void.

1 I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism

6 One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. An Appeal for Unity (Verse 10).
- II. Arguments Supporting the Appeal (Verses ii-17).
- III. The Unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:1-3).
- IV. The Seven Basic Unities (Verses 4-6).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The church in Corinth had become rent by factions and parties, and news of this state of affairs having reached Paul's ears, he hastened to pen this sharp warning and admonition to them. The cause of the division we shall discuss at length in the comment on the lesson text. The selection from Ephesians is a powerful exhortation to unity, based upon the basic unity of God and the fundamental items of the Christian religion. In this day of conflicting parties this is a vital and fundamental lesson.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

"The Oneness of the Church" is intended to emphasize the unity of the Lord's people today, both as to their organic structure, and to the common bond that unites them. They are "one" not only in relation to the world about them, but also in relation to themselves. That is, they make up "one body," the church; and they are to exhibit their common aim in maintaining unity among themselves. In this day of varied religious parties this lesson is sadly ignored.

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe

that thou didst send me." (John 17:21.) The words are a portion of our Lord's prayer in the shadows of Gethsemane shortly before his condemnation and death. They breathe forth concern for the saints, and are a petition for the closest union between them. As he and the Father were and are one in aim, purpose, work, so his followers should be one in all things, also. This prayer is not fulfilled in any congregation where there are factions, where all are not "perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." This portion is sometimes, but erroneously, applied to the division that obtains in the religious world, i. e., to the state of denominationalism. The unity here petitioned is unity between those of the Lord's followers, his own disciples, rather than those who are out of covenant relationship with him. It is therefore an improper use of this prayer to apply it to the divided state of the religious world today. It may be properly applied only to the disunity that obtains in the Lord's body, not out of it. The ground upon which his followers should be one is "that the world may believe that thou didst send me" There is no other source of skepticism so fruitful as church quarrels and factions in the Lord's body. They are disgusting to all sincere people, and afford a fruitful source of ridicule to all scoffers. The church can never achieve its purpose in the earth until all members make their own desires and aims subservient to the aims of our redeemer and Lord. Only then will our Savior's prayer for unity in Gethsemane be answered.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

It is suggested that the teachers of the younger classes use this lesson to teach their pupils the essential nature of the church of Christ. Ample material is here provided in the lesson text and comments to indicate to them the "oneness" of the church, both as it relates to the world, and also from its own organic structure. It would be well to use 1 Cor. 12:14-27 to show the diversified responsibilities of the members and the common aim and purpose that motivate all. Many members, many obligations, but one body, is the theme of Paul's effort in that passage. All teachers should labor to show the seriousness of division in the Lord's body, and build up respect in the minds of the students for harmony and peace in all the affairs of the church. Additional material in expounding the lesson text will be found in commentaries on First Corinthians and Ephesians.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. An Appeal for Unity (Verse 10)**

"Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" It should be remembered that at the time these words were penned Greek culture and philosophy widely prevailed, and various systems of ethics were advocated by many prominent teachers in Athens and Corinth and other centers of culture in Greece. Brother McGarvey has observed that "the pride of Corinth showed itself largely in philosophical conceit, and the citizens who vaunted their superior intelligence were divided into sects, of whom Aristotle, Plato, Zeno, Epicurus, and later philosophers,

were the heads. The church became inflated with this same intellectual vanity, and apparently sought to make Christianity the rival of philosophy by exalting her humble teachers to be heads of religious philosophical sects, the rivals of Christ himself." The apostle gives three points touching their divided state: (1) Unity of speech, "that ye all speak the same thing"; (2) unity of organization, "that there be no divisions among you"; and (3) unity of mind and judgment, "that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." He struck first at their speech, because then as now speculative discourses, philosophical dissertations, and unscriptural reasonings were a fruitful cause of division. Next, the divisions themselves are rebuked, the condition produced by the speculative, argumentative spirit above mentioned; and then he proposed unity of mind and judgment as the ideal condition that should characterize them and enable them to return to their former state of unity. The "mind" represents the inner state, the "judgment" the outward exhibition of it in action. To be united in mind and judgment is therefore to be in perfect accord both in theory and in practice.

## **II. Arguments Supporting the Appeal (Verses 11-17)**

"For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." Word had reached the apostle of the unseemly state of affairs obtaining in the church in Corinth from the household of Chloe, likely one of their own number. Paul does not attempt to suppress the source of his information, as is so often done today. He was frank and forthright in his approach to the problem: "Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." From this we learn the nature of the division in the church in Corinth. The brethren had divided themselves into parties, and each party was distinguished by the name of some prominent preacher that had been among them, or by whom they had been baptized. Some were Paulites, others Cephasites, Apollosites; some even used the name of Christ as the head of a faction, to distinguish themselves from the others. It seems certain that they had not assumed the name of Christ in the proper sense. More probably they refused to call themselves by the name of any inferior leader, and wished to regard Christ alone as their head, possibly priding themselves on the belief that they were superior to the other sects for this reason.

This condition the apostle rebukes in no uncertain terms: "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" The church is "the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 1:22, 23), and Paul demands to know if that body can be cut to pieces and parceled out to human leaders! Moreover, he asks if Paul had been crucified for them, or if into his name they had been baptized. Jesus became the author of our salvation and the head of his church through suffering on the cross (Heb. 2:10), and Paul, in order to rival him, should not only have been crucified for his followers, but his sacrifice should have been as efficacious for the cleansing of sin and the procuring of salvation as was Christ's. This was, of course, preposterous. Further, if Paul was the head of their party, they should have been baptized into his name. Instead, they had been baptized in the name of Christ, and into the

body of Christ, and having become members of Christ, how could they belong to Paul? Had they been baptized into Paul's name, they might have worn Paul's name. They were not baptized into his name, hence had no right to wear it. This reasoning is conclusive of the point in issue, viz., that one may wear another's name only when he has been baptized into that name. This is significant in the light of present-day denominational practices. If we had been baptized into the name of Luther, Calvin, Wesley, or Campbell, we might with propriety wear the name of the man by whose authority and into whose name we were baptized. Not having been baptized into any one of these names, it is not in order to wear any of them. This is a telling indictment against the assumption of human names, a practice so characteristic of denominationalism.

Further, the apostle's argument, by implication, establishes the design of baptism. His reasoning is this: We may wear the name of the man by whose authority and in whose name we were baptized. Had we been baptized in Paul's name, we would be Paulites; in Peter's name, Cephasites; in the name of Christ, Christians; not having been baptized, we have no right to any of these names, certainly not Christ's. This establishes beyond all controversy that only those who have been baptized by the authority of Christ have the right to the name Christ. All others who have assumed it have done so without his permission, and hence, without the blessings that attend the proper use of it.

### **III. The Unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:1-3)**

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and, meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The word, "therefore," gathers into one compass the great truths of the Ephesian letter already presented which the apostle deduces as grounds for enforcing the injunction to follow. To walk "worthily" is to walk as becomes those who have been called into the kingdom of God. The word "walk" is often used to denote life, conduct, etc. "The calling" refers to the divine invitation by which we are called from a life of sin and servitude to the devil into the kingdom of Christ. It embraces the call of the gospel which is extended to all. The graces that characterize those thus called are next mentioned: "Lowliness," i.e., humility; "meekness," patience in receiving injuries; "longsuffering," willingness to bear with the foibles, faults, and infirmities of others. The "unity of the Spirit" is the unity which the Spirit teaches through the word, unity of affection, confidence, and love; in a word, all the graces that adorn the character of the Christian. The "bond of peace" is the realm or sphere in which this unity is to be enjoyed. It has been said that American Indians usually spoke of peace as a "chain of friendship" which was to be kept bright. The meaning of this statement is that children of God should be bound together in the sentiments and affection of peace. This is not a mere external unity; it is such that the Holy Spirit produces in the hearts of Christians when he fills them all with the same love, joy, and peace. We are admonished to "give diligence," i.e., put forth determined effort to maintain this unity.

**IV. The Seven Basic Unities (Verses 4-6)**

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." Here are the seven basic unities of Christianity, the acceptance of which would enable the religious world to enjoy the unity that is in Christ. As simple and plain as they are, it is nevertheless a fact that the majority of the religious world refuses to accept these grounds upon which alone unity, scriptural unity, is to be had.

1. There is one body. The body is the church. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) "And put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Yet, the religious world is divided into hundreds of bodies, each striving to maintain itself at the expense of the others. The unity of the body of Christ, the church, is utterly ignored by most religious professors of today. Indeed, the scriptural teaching on this subject is scoffed at, and those who insist on the one body are stigmatized as "narrow," "bigoted," and "intolerant." This, however, is the New Testament way to unity, and those who have regard for God and his word remain unmoved by those who choose to ignore what is therein said. There is but one church, and this is the church of the New Testament. For it Jesus died; all the saved are in it; it alone will stand when the institutions of men are destroyed.

2. One Spirit. This same Spirit was bestowed upon Jew and Gentile, and the revelation he made through inspired men is available to all. He has not made one revelation to a portion of the human family and another to some other portion; he speaks to all alike through the word of truth. The Spirit is blasphemed because of the conflicting doctrines being advocated in the world today.

Men professing to be led by the Spirit, who preach contradictory doctrines allegedly revealed by the Spirit, convict themselves of insincerity, and cause contempt for the Spirit they thus dishonor. The Spirit's teaching is in the word. To it must we go to find what he has revealed. If all would accept what he has revealed, and be content to do that and no more, unity would result.

3. One hope. Wherever called and from whatever state, all are filled with one hope, that of immortality. The meaning here is, Christians have the same hope, and they should therefore be one. They are looking forward to the same heaven; they look for the same happiness beyond the grave. There should be no rivalry, for there is enough for all. How can Christians contend in an angry manner with one another, when the hope of dwelling in the same heaven swells their bosoms and animates their hearts?

4. One Lord. This refers to the Lord Jesus. It will be observed that all the members of the Godhead are included among these basic unities. The Spirit is mentioned in the previous verse, the Father in the verse following. The argument here is, there ought to be unity among Christians because they have one Lord and Savior. He belongs in common to all, and he has a right to rule over one as much as over another. Having the same Lord, we are not aliens but fellow citizens, having a common purpose, common aim, common obligation, and common reward. Why should contentions ever arise between those who have a common redeemer and Lord?

5. One faith. Since there is but one Lord who is the object of our faith, there can be but one faith. The truth of the gospel is one, and but one faith is needed to grasp it. This includes the belief of the same doctrine, as well as the same manner of believing in the heart. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Rom. 10:17.) There is no other way in which it can be received or enjoyed.

6. One baptism. This is baptism in water, into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and is for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 10:47.) This is the baptism of the great commission, and is to be preached to every creature, in all the world, and is to last even "unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:20.) This is sufficient to show us, were there no other statements in the scriptures touching it, that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not applicable to us today. Were it still applicable, Paul would have said, "One Lord, one faith, two baptisms." The last recorded instance of Holy Spirit baptism is in Acts 10, and occurred about A.D. 41. Ephesians was written A.D. 62. Hence, it had been more than a score of years since the last instance of Holy Spirit baptism when Paul penned these words. There was then only one baptism, a baptism in water, for remission of sins. The "one" baptism does not suggest the "mode," since the word "baptism" itself indicates the manner of doing it. The word "baptism," means "immersion," hence, one baptism, one immersion. It is idle as well as unscriptural to talk about the "mode" of baptism. There is but one way to be baptized, that is to be immersed. Any other act is not baptism.

7. One God and Father of all. It should be remembered that the apostle is setting forth reasons for unity among the Lord's people, hence points out that there is but one God, therefore, there should be unity. Were there many gods to be worshiped, there could be no more hope of unity than there is among the worshipers of heathen gods and goddesses. We all have the same object of worship, therefore, should all worship him in the same fashion. Were this done, unity of practice would of necessity follow. We have no means of knowing what pleases God except what he has said pleases him; hence, the only way of being assured that our worship is acceptable to him is to do only what he has said. Were this always done, all would do the same things, and unity would be enjoyed.

Meyer, upon this passage, says that the elements of church unity are: (1) the church itself constituted as a unity: one body, one spirit, one blessed hope; (2) the means by which this united church is built up: one Lord, one faith, one baptism; (3) over all one supreme ruler, the God and Father of all. Another outline of it would be: (1) unity of the head; (2) unity of the Spirit dwelling in it; (3) unity of hope; (4) unity of faith; (5) unity of ordinance for admission; (6) unity of the one Father; (7) unity of organization, one body.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Condition of the church in Corinth.

Significance of the lesson subject.

Meaning of the Golden Text.

Erroneous use frequently made of it.

Three points suggested as essential to unity at Corinth.



Arguments supporting the appeal.  
 Significance of this touching the wearing of human names and designations today.  
 Effect of this reasoning on the design of baptism.  
 Meaning of "Unity of the Spirit"  
 The seven basic unities, and their significance.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

The influence of philosophy on Christianity.  
 Reasons for the divided state of "Christendom."  
 Basis upon which unity may be obtained.  
 The sinfulness of factions and parties in the church.  
 The effect of such on the spread of the gospel.

### Lesson XI—March 17, 1946

#### THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH Acts 9:31; 1 Cor. 4:14-17; Rev. 1:4-7

DEVOTIONAL READING.— 1 Cor. 11:18-29.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "But if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." (1 Cor. 11:16.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

March	11.	M	Established on Pentecost (Acts 2:43-47)
March	12.	T	Christ the Builder (Matt. 16:13-20)
March	13.	W	Christ the Foundation (Eph. 2:14-22)
March	14.	T	A Peculiar People (1 Pet. 2:8-10)
March	15.	F	The Vineyard of the Lord (Matt. 20:1-16)
March	16.	S	House of God (1 Tim. 3:14-16)
March	17.	S	Christ Its Head (Eph. 5:22-28)

#### Other Lesson Material Acts 11:26; Rom. 16:16; Acts 20:7

#### Historical Background

TIME.— For Acts, A.D. 36 or 37; First Corinthians, A.D. 57; Revelation, A.D. 96.

PLACES.—Judea, Corinth, and Asia Minor.

PERSONS.— Children of God living in the places above mentioned.

#### Lesson Text

31 So the church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied.

14 I write not these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children.

15 For though ye have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel.

16 I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.

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. A-men'.

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. A-men'.

### **LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. The Church at Peace (Verse 31).
- II. Paul's Ways in Christ Taught in Every Church (1 Cor. 4:14-17).
- III. John to the Seven Churches in Asia (Rev. 1:4-7).

### **CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

Saul of Tarsus, later to become Paul, the apostle, was among the most active of the persecutors of the apostolic church. When, therefore, he was converted to Christianity, his defection from the ranks of the opposers of Christianity so demoralized them that, for the time being, peace to the scattered disciples was restored, and the churches again enjoyed a period of prosperity. Unmolested, the church took advantage of the opportunity and greatly multiplied. Paul's epistle to the church in Corinth was written to correct certain evils that had arisen among them, and the portion that is our lesson text for today is an admonition to them to adhere only to "his ways in Christ" that they had received from him and followed until their apostasy. The book of Revelation was written by the apostle John and addressed to the "seven churches of Asia," congregations in Asia Minor.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

More than nineteen hundred years have passed since the church of our Lord was established in the city of Jerusalem. Meanwhile, many hundreds of religious institutions have been established, all of which claim identity with that church. Obviously, all cannot be the church about which we read in the scriptures. In order therefore that we may be able to identify it, it is necessary for us to learn the various characteristics of that church, and compare them with churches claiming identity with it today. This is an infallible method, and will lead us unerringly to the church Jesus built. No other course is safe. Only that church possessing the distinguishing characteristics of the church of the Bible is that church today. Hence, the necessity of knowing "The Identity of the Church."

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"But if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." 1 Cor. 11:16.) Except for the fact that the words "the churches of" appear in this quotation, it has little to do with our subject for today. This statement occurs at the close of Paul's argument in 1 Cor. 11, touching the proper headdress of women in the assembly. Four arguments have already been offered why women should wear some artificial covering on their heads in the worship, and this is a fifth argument in support of that view, urging that none of the churches of God followed the practice of allowing the women to appear uncovered. Far from

teaching that the whole matter is of little moment and may be disregarded if some are contentious about it (as it is so often "explained"), its teaching is exactly the reverse. In effect, Paul there says that if the brethren are disposed to call in question all that he has said about the matter, they will at least hesitate to follow a course utterly without precedent in the churches of God, none of them allowing women to appear with heads uncovered. Those interested in pursuing the subject further will find ample material thereon in the various commentaries on First Corinthians. Those by Lipscomb, Alford, Meyer, and Barnes are suggested.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

### I. The Church at Peace (Verse 31)

"So the church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied." It will be observed that the word "church," in this passage, is in the singular number. The King James Version reads "churches," but according to the best Greek texts, the word is "ekklesia," singular, and here, as in most other instances when the Revised Version differs from the Authorized, or King James Version, the Revised Version is the preferable reading. "Luke either regards the disciples in Palestine as still members of the one great church in Jerusalem, or he employs the term 'ekklesia' in a geographical or collective sense covering all of Palestine. 'Church' is used in the strictly local sense in Acts 8:1, 3 and Matt. 18:17, and in the general spiritual sense in Matt. 16:18. Here 'the church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace'; this seems to be used in the general sense" (Boles.) Brother McGarvey observes that "it should be noticed that the term church, or congregation, is here applied so as to include all of the disciples in these three districts, the region of our Savior's personal labors. It is a secondary use of the word, the whole body being contemplated as if congregated together" These different uses of the word church should be carefully noted and fixed in the reader's mind. The primary meaning of the word translated "church" is assembly. Other uses are figurative and secondary. In every instance, whether with reference to a local assembly, or considered as one body, identity of faith and practice must be assumed. An identity of faith and practice ever characterized the early disciples in their ideal state. When divisions arose, these were severely censured, as in the case of the church in Corinth. Permanent divisions and distinct bodies such as exist in the religious world today were wholly unknown in apostolic times.

Enjoying peace, the church was "edified." To be edified is to be built up in the faith, and this is done by means of teaching. It was also greatly strengthened in numbers, being "multiplied." "Being edified" refers to growth in the knowledge of Christ and gain in spiritual power; "was multiplied" indicates rapid increase of numbers. This twofold development should characterize every church claiming to possess identity with the church of the New Testament.

## **II. Paul's Ways in Christ Taught in Every Church (1 Cor. 4:14-17)**

"I write not these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children." In the verses immediately preceding this, the apostle had shown the extreme hardships endured by him in preaching the gospel. His design in setting these things forth was not for the purpose of shaming the brethren in Corinth by showing them how little they had suffered in comparison with him; rather it was for the purpose of admonishing them, as a father admonishes his children. This, indeed, should be the purpose of all admonition. No man, no preacher, ought to reprove another merely to overwhelm him with shame, but the object should be to make a brother better; and the admonition should always be administered as to have this end. Paul's right to admonish them as a father is next declared: "For though ye have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel." The figure of speech here used is a common one. Paul had taught these brethren the truth; had been responsible for their obedience to the gospel, and might fittingly enough refer to himself as their father in the gospel. They had many teachers, yet they sustained a relation to him that differed from all others in this respect, that they had but one father, and he would naturally care more for them than any of their teachers. Paul was also Timothy's father in the gospel (1 Tim. 1:2), a fact we learn in this same passage (1 Cor. 4:17). Sustaining this relationship to the brethren in Corinth, it was not out of order for him to admonish them regarding their conduct in Christ. The tenderness with which he did this is indicated in the next verse, "I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me." The extent to which he desired these brethren to imitate him is shown in 1 Cor. 11:1: "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." This, in the final analysis, is simply to admonish them to imitate Christ, a thing Peter did (1 Pet. 2:21). Paul was willing for these brethren to follow him only as he followed Christ. This is, by implication at least, a disavowal of sinlessness on his part. More than once Paul expressed consciousness of his own imperfections. (1 Cor. 9:27; Phil. 3:13.) Having established his right to admonish them, he proceeds to lay down the rule they are to follow: "For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church." Hindered from coming to them in person, Paul sends his faithful companion and colaborer, Timothy, with the message he would deliver were it possible for him to be there in person. Timothy is to remind them of Paul's "ways which are in Christ," which he taught "everywhere in every church." His "ways in Christ" refer to his teaching and manner of life, his conduct as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, while the expression, "everywhere in every church," indicates to us that Paul taught the Corinthians no new or unusual doctrine, but wanted them simply to conform to the common rules of the churches observed everywhere. The New Testament church observes the same rules everywhere; there is no special laws applicable to some not applicable to others. The church in Rome did not have one constitution and

laws and the church in Corinth still another set. All had the same revelation, and all were to practice the same things. This is a telling indictment against modern denominationalism with its separate communions and distinctive doctrines and practices. A unity of faith and practice characterized the New Testament church. All were to speak the same things and to be of the same mind and the same judgment. Brethren who lived in Corinth would, on their journey to Rome, find a congregation exactly like that at home. So it was in the apostolic church; so it should be today. The conflicting and contradictory claims of the various religious bodies indicate a condition wholly unlike that of the apostolic age. Were Paul here today, he would not find people following "his ways in Christ"; on the contrary, he would find them going after their own ways, wholly indifferent to the New Testament arrangement.

Paul's instruction to the church in Corinth contains the only workable basis of unity. Obviously, it will be impossible for the religious world to agree upon any system of teaching originated since the apostolic age. Any human system, however excellent it may be, is far short of and inferior to that of inspiration. Only by repudiating every human arrangement, and by returning to the apostolic model, may we be assured of unity. Only in this way may our identity with the divine church be established. Paul would be most unwelcome in the system of religion now obtaining throughout the world. He taught the same things "in every church." He could not do this today in the denominational setup. Things acceptable to the Methodists would be unwelcome in the Baptist church, and the Presbyterians would tolerate doctrines acceptable to neither. And so through the whole range of denominationalism. Here, truly, is the only workable basis of unity in religion.

### **III. John to the Seven Churches in Asia (Rev. 1:4-7)**

"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; 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 loved us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; 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. 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." Many things in this section, not pertinent to our present purpose, we must, for the time being, pass over. The reader interested in a thorough exposition of this passage will refer to commentaries thereon, among the best of which are Johnson's Notes on the New Testament and Hinds' Commentary on Revelation. The most exhaustive, and to the mind of this writer the best, treatise available on Revelation is "The Vision of the Ages," by B. W. Johnson, the author of Johnson's Notes. This work is out of print and difficult to find; and those who do not have access to it will find the same system of interpretation set forth in the Notes on Revelation by Hinds, and also in the Notes on the New Testament by Johnson. Either of these may be obtained from the Gospel Advocate Office.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that John's reference

to the "seven churches of Asia" is designed simply to indicate seven congregations located in as many different localities in Asia, all of which were of the same faith and order. Absurdly enough, some, in an effort to find some scriptural support for denominationalism, have cited this. These churches are named in verse 11. They are Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. The term "Asia" did not mean in the first century what it does now, but only the Roman province called Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital. All of the seven churches were in that province. It is supposed that seven; the perfect and sacred number, were chosen, because the seven were to symbolize the whole church of Christ. This, however, is not to be taken as an indorsement of the view that dispensations or periods are indicated by these churches, each supposedly indicating the condition to characterize the church during all subsequent history. There were other churches in Asia at this time, of which Colosse, Miletus, and Hierapolis might be mentioned.

It will be noted that John here declares that God has made us to be a "kingdom." The church, in its collective sense, is synonymous with the kingdom; i.e., in so far as this earth is concerned the church is the kingdom. In the local sense, the church is the Lord's people in that vicinity. These two conceptions exhaust the meaning of the term, in so far as the New Testament is concerned. Fanatical definitions, coined to support the denominational view, are unknown to the scriptures. A great invisible church, made up of all the denominational churches, though a popular and widespread view today, is utterly without foundation in the scriptures. As a matter of fact, the idea of visible and invisible churches is modern in its origin, and came into being simply to maintain an unscriptural position.

To maintain identity with the New Testament church is to show uniformity of practice therewith. What did the New Testament church practice? (1) It taught faith, repentance, and baptism for remission of sins. (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:15, 16.) (2) The Lord added the saved to the church. (Acts 2:47.) No one ever joined the church in New Testament times. (3) That church is styled "the church of God" (1 Cor. 1:1, 2) and "the churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). (4) Its members wore the name Christian. (Acts 11:26.) (5) It met regularly on the "first day of the week." (1 Cor. 16:2.) (6) It observed the Lord's Supper on this day. (Acts 20:7.) (7) Singing was the sole method of praise. Instrumental music was unknown in Christian worship during the apostolic age. If, therefore, one belongs to a church which does not teach faith, repentance, and baptism for remission of sins; which one must join to enter; which does not wear the New Testament names; whose members wear some other title than that of Christian; which does not meet on each first day of the week; which does not meet thus regularly for the purpose of observing the Lord's Supper; and which does use instrumental music in worship, since it is lacking in every essential characteristic of the New Testament church, it cannot be the church of the Bible, and possesses no identity therewith.

This is a vital and fundamental question; and only as we are able to show identity with the apostolic church are we assured of being in the Lord's body. He is the Savior of this body, and no other. (Eph. 5:23.)

**POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

Reason for peace among the churches at the time of our lesson.  
 Importance of this lesson in the light of present-day conditions.  
 The Golden Text explained.  
 Difference between King James and Revised Version in Acts 9:31.  
 Different uses of the word "church" in the Bible.  
 Meaning of the term, "edified"  
 Meaning of the statement, "was multiplied."  
 Twofold development of the church.  
 Purpose of Paul's admonition.  
 Figure of speech used to indicate Paul's relation to the church in Corinth.  
 Meaning of statement, "imitators of me."  
 What this teaches by implication.  
 What Timothy was to remind them of.  
 Meaning of "his ways in Christ," and significance of this statement.  
 The value of this statement looking toward unity.  
 Why no other basis of unity is feasible.  
 Meaning of the statement, "to the seven churches of Asia"  
 Location of the territory "Asia."  
 Sense in which the church is the kingdom.  
 Two conceptions of the church in the New Testament.

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

The curse of religious division.  
 Importance of possessing identity with the New Testament church.  
 Characteristics of the New Testament church.

**Lesson XII—March 24, 1946****NAMES OF THE CHURCH**

**Acts 20:28; Rom. 16:16; 1 Thess. 2:13-16; 2 Thess. 1:3-6; 1 Tim. 3:14-16**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Rev. 1:4-7.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you."  
 (Rom. 16:16.)

**Helps for Lesson Study**  
**Daily Bible Readings**

March	18.	M	Churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16-20)
March	19.	T	Church of God (1 Cor. 11:16-24)
March	20.	W	Church of the First Born (Heb. 12:18-29)
March	21.	T	The House of God (1 Tim. 3:14-16)
March	22.	F	Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 5:1-10)
March	23.	S	The Israel of God (Gal. 6:11-16)
March	24.	S	Bride of the Lamb (Rev. 21:9-15)

**Other Lesson Material**  
**Matt. 16:18; 2 Cor. 11:2; Rom. 7:4**

**Historical Background**

TIME.— Dates of writing the epistles from which our lesson text is

taken today are given in previous lessons, to which the student is referred. First Timothy was written, it is believed, about A.D. 67.

**PLACES.**— It is uncertain where the book of Acts was written; nor is it important for our present purpose. The book of Romans was written from Corinth; the Thessalonian epistles from Athens. The place where Paul wrote First Timothy is conjectural.

**PERSONS.**— All children of God.

### Lesson Text

28 Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood.

16 Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.

13 And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judaea in Christ Jesus: for ye also suffered the same things of your own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews;

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove out us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men;

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved; to fill up their sins always: but the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

3 We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet, for that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another aboundeth;

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which ye endure;

5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God; to the end that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

6 If so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly;

15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness;

He who was manifested in the flesh,  
Justified in the spirit,  
Seen of angels,  
Preached among the nations,  
Believed on in the world,  
Received up in glory.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. The Church of the Lord (Verse 28).
- II. The Churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16).
- III. The Churches of God (1 Thess. 2:13-16).
- IV. The Kingdom of God (2 Thess. 1:3-6).
- V. The House of God the Church of the Living God (1 Tim. 3:14-16).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Space will not permit an extensive study of the context today, seeing we have a number of passages to study. A brief statement about each must suffice. Acts 20:28 is taken from Paul's farewell message to the elders of the church in Ephesus when he called them



down to Miletus on his third missionary journey. Rom. 16:16 occurs in the midst of a long list of salutations from Paul to brethren and sisters in Rome. The Thessalonian epistles were called forth by an erroneous view touching the second coming of Christ; and our selection from First Timothy is a portion of Paul's admonitions to the young evangelist, Timothy. Inasmuch as our purpose today is to examine the various names applied to the Lord's people in the New Testament, we shall not attempt an exposition of all that is to be found in these passages, but shall confine ourselves to a study of the names themselves. Those interested in further study of the context will find sufficient material for thorough exposition in the various commentaries.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

Names indicate relationships; and without a clear conception of the various relationships sustained by the people of God, the titles applied to his people will be largely meaningless. It is the purpose of this lesson to examine the different designations applied to the church, that we may be able to distinguish between scriptural names and those unscriptural. "Names of the Church" simply means the names applied to God's people under the Christian dispensation.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you." (Rom. 16:16.) The part of this passage that has to do with the name of the church is a portion of our lesson text, and we reserve comment thereon, until we come to that part of our lesson. The student will likely feel some interest in the significance of the statement, "Salute one another with a holy kiss," and while not directly on our subject for today, it is of sufficient importance for us to turn aside for the moment and examine it. Occasionally we meet with some brother who is unable to understand why it is not to be followed today, since Paul apparently enjoined it on the church in Rome. The truth is, however, that Paul did not enjoin kissing as a means of greeting on the church. Salutation by kissing has always been common in the East. (2 Sam. 20:9; Luke 7:45; Matt. 26:49.) It was an early practice of the Jews, from whence it passed to the apostolic church. (1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26; 1 Pet. 5:14.) It is still retained in the Greek church; in which the men thus salute men, and the women, women. "Paul is not teaching the Roman church a new custom, but is purifying an old one, insisting that the salutation be holy and void of all such dissimulation as characterized by the kiss of Judas. (Matt. 26:49.) His precept still applies to all our salutations, no matter what their form."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

Teachers of the primary and junior classes should compile a list of all the various titles given to the people of God under the present dispensation and drill their students until they are perfectly familiar with them all. They should not let their pupils pass over this lesson without learning all of them. This is a vital and fundamental matter, and will guard them against unscriptural designations and human names if they are taught to know them now. The other classes,

in addition to learning the names, will also learn the significance of the names, and the relationships they suggest. The importance of this cannot be too strongly stressed.

## **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

### **I. The Church of the Lord (Verse 28)**

"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." The Revised Translation is used throughout in this work, and the reader will note that in this passage the reading differs from that appearing in the King James or Authorized Version. There the church is called "the church of God"; here, "the church of the Lord." The variation grows out of a slight difference in the Greek texts from which the versions were made. The difference is not of great importance in so far as the significance of the passage is concerned, for it is clear that both versions point to Christ, one referring to him as "Lord," the other as "God." He is so referred to in many passages in the New Testament. It is likely that the correct reading is "church of the Lord," and thus we have this as a correct designation of the church today. It is the Lord's; it is his by right of purchase; he is its head; its members constitute his body. More, he is married to it, a fact we learn in Rom. 7:4; 2 Cor. 11:2. It is fitting therefore that his bride should wear his name. It is called the church of the Lord for all of these reasons. It will be noted above that he "purchased it with his own blood." The church is a blood-purchased possession; to minimize its importance is, in effect, to minimize the importance of the sacrificial death of Christ. Every member of the church has been bought with the price of the blood of Christ (1 Cor. 6:20); the members make up the church; hence, the church is that which he bought. It seems strange in the light of these facts that men would relegate to the realm of comparative unimportance such a priceless institution; yet this, precisely, is what all denominational preachers do. They do not value the church of the Lord enough to attach saving importance to it, and they prefer to wear human names instead of the divine ones. May we never be guilty of minimizing the "church of the Lord"; it is a blood-purchased institution.

### **II. The Churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16)**

"Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you." For its contextual relationship, and the significance of the statement, "Salute one another with a holy kiss," the reader is referred to the remarks thereon under "The Golden Text Explained." Here the conception of the church is a collection of congregations, all of them constituting "the churches of Christ." These were congregations with whom Paul had been associated and who desired to send greetings and salutations to the saints in Rome. It will be recalled from earlier lessons that the church is set forth in two senses in the New Testament, in the aggregate, or collective sense, and in the local sense. An instance of the first usage will be found in Matthew 16:18, where Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," referring of course to the church as an institution, containing all of

the Lord's people everywhere. Its local sense may be seen in 1 Cor. 1:2, where Paul addresses "the church of God which is at Corinth," that is, the church located in that city. The expression, "the churches of Christ," means simply a collection of local congregations, each of which is a church in Christ, a number taken together being "churches of Christ."

Smarting under their inability to find any mention of their human institutions, denominational preachers frequently assert that the words "church of Christ" do not appear in the scriptures either. This is a feeble begging of the question. We have seen that Paul calls the church "the church of the Lord" (Acts 20:28), Christ referred to it as "my church," therefore Christ's church, or what is the same, the church of Christ; and here, it is called "the churches of Christ." If it be insisted that it is not called "church of Christ," singular, we ask, Since it does refer to churches of Christ (plural), how could there be a plurality of them without there being one? There was a time when there was but one; if several taken together constitute "the churches of Christ," what should one by itself be called?

### **III. The Churches of God (1 Thess. 2:13-16)**

"And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe. For ye, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus." For the whole of the portion of the lesson text, the reader is referred to "The Lesson Text." It is not pertinent to our present purpose to attempt an exposition of this passage; and if the student is interested in pursuing the matter further, he is referred to the commentaries. Our present purpose is to expound the various names by which the church is known in the scriptures. Thus far, we have seen that the church is called "the church of the Lord," "the churches of Christ," and, in this passage, "the churches of God." The word "churches," in the plural, indicates that the congregational feature appears here, and the expression "of God" signifies that they belong to him. We are not to infer that these "churches" embrace congregations of disciples, differing in faith and practice from those designated as "churches of Christ." The congregations are of God, because he is the owner of all things; they are "of Christ," because Christ founded them and bought them with his own precious blood (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28). Even here, the congregations are associated with the name of Christ, being "the churches of God which are in Judaea in Christ Jesus." We have learned enough thus far to see that it is out of order for us to seize upon one title, even though scriptural, to the exclusion of all others. It is entirely fitting to call the church "the church of God," the "churches of God," the "churches of Christ," or by any other title appearing in the scriptures. It is not a valid objection that certain other religious bodies have appropriated some of these titles and given them a sectarian character. Every feature of Christianity has, at one time or another, been wrongly appropriated and misused. As we have earlier noted, the different names merely indicate different relations of the same body, viewed from different angles.

#### **IV. The Kingdom of God (2 Thess. 1:3-6)**

"We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet, for that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions which ye endure; which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God; to the end that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." Here, the Lord's people are referred to as "the churches of God," and also as the "kingdom of God." The word "church," from the Greek *ekklesia*, means the called out, and indicates the organizational feature of the Lord's people. The "called out" constitute a "body," with Christ as head, and children of God as members thereof. Viewed as a kingdom, we are led to think of his people from the governmental standpoint. Christ is king of his kingdom, and head of his church. This does not mean that the church is one thing, and the kingdom another; each sets forth different conceptions and viewpoints of the same body. The scriptures teach, contrary to the views of future kingdom advocates, that the church and kingdom embrace one and the same group of individuals. For example, in Luke 22:30, we are informed that the Lord's table was to be placed in the kingdom; but in 1 Cor. 11, we have instructions governing its observance in the church. More, Peter was given the "keys of the kingdom," but he opened the "doors of the church" on Pentecost. (Matt. 16:19; Acts 2:1-47.)

The kingdom of Christ is monarchical in type, with the Lord as sovereign thereof. His will is absolute, and is expressed in his law set forth in the New Testament, and can never be modified or annulled. Loyalty to him requires unquestioning obedience to all of his edicts and decrees. To do less than this is to convict ourselves of being unworthy, disobedient, and unprofitable servants.

#### **V. The House of God the Church of the Living God (1 Tim. 3:14-16)**

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Still another name of the church, and therefore another conception of that institution is here set forth, the family feature, "the house of God, which is the church of the living God." The house of God is God's family, and therefore the family of God is the church of God. It is idle to talk of the Lord having children not members of his family, since the children make up the family; and since the family is the church, it follows that the Lord has no children except those who are members of the church. It is scarcely necessary to point out that this is the church of the New Testament, the one purchased with the blood of his Son. No denomination will be so bold as to claim that it and it alone is the family of God; but that the church about which we read in the scriptures is the family or house of God; and it must follow that this church is akin to no denomination on earth.

We have seen that the church is referred to in the sacred writ-

ings as "the church of the Lord," emphasizing its institutional character; "the churches of Christ," which speaks of a collection of congregations all of the same faith and practice, being "of Christ," since he is head and builder thereof; "the churches of God," because God is the ultimate owner of all things; "the kingdom of God," to indicate to us the nature of government under which children of God live in relation to their Lord; and "house of God," to teach us that the church is God's family. It will be noted that the house of God is the church of the living God. Two pictures are here presented of the church. In the first picture the church is presented as a vast assembly of the Lord's people, all his children, with the living God in their midst. It is then pictured as a massive pillar, holding up and displaying before men and angels the truth, the gospel of Christ. May we ever support the truth.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Context of the lesson text.  
 Significance of the lesson.  
 Golden Text explained.  
 Reason for difference in King James and Revised Version in Acts 20:28.  
 Why it is the church "of the Lord."  
 Significance of this in the light of denominational attitudes toward the church.  
 Meaning of statement, "the churches of Christ."  
 Different usages of the word "church" in the New Testament.  
 Force of objection that words "church of Christ" do not appear in the scriptures.  
 Why called "the church of God."  
 Meaning of words "kingdom of God."  
 Type of kingdom.  
 Significance of the statement, "house of God."  
 Reason for different designations of the Lord's people.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

In what way names indicate relationships.  
 The extent of local customs as, for example, of "kiss of greeting."  
 Penchant for wearing human names characteristic of denominations.

### Lesson XIII—March 31, 1946

### THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM

**Acts 1:6-8; 4:1-4; 6:7-10**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Acts 2:5-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem." (Rom. 15:26.)

### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

March	25.	M	The First Church (Acts 2:43-47)
March	26.	T	Peter and John Leaders (Acts 3:1-10)
March	27.	W	Church Persecuted (Acts 8:1-5)
March	28.	T	Liberality of the Church (Acts 4:32-35)
March	29.	F	The Unity of the Church (Acts 4:23-31)
March	30.	S	A Missionary Church (Acts 8:4-13)
March	31.	S	Church Settles Dispute (Acts 15:1-11)

### Other Lesson Material Matt. 16:18; Acts 8:1-5

### Historical Background

TIME.— The church was established in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after our Lord's resurrection, likely A.D. 33.

PLACE.— Jerusalem.

PERSONS.— The apostles, religious and civil rulers of Jerusalem, and the saints.

### Lesson Text

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 Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them,

2 Being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it was now eventide.

4 But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people.

9 But there arose certain of them that were of the synagogue called the synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. The Apostles Inquire Concerning the Kingdom (Verses 6-8).
- II. Peter and John Imprisoned for Preaching the Word (Acts 4:1-4).
- III. The Church Prospers (Acts 6:7-10).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Approximately six months before our Lord's death, he promised his disciples that he would build his church. (Matt. 16:18.) All allusions to that institution thus far have been anticipatory in nature. John the Baptist preached that it was "at hand" (Matt. 3:1), Jesus declared that it was drawing "nigh" (Luke 10:11), and while our Lord was in the tomb Joseph of Arimathea waited "for the kingdom." Having existed only in prospect until now, the time had

come for its establishment. The inquiry of Acts 1:6-8 occurred shortly before our Lord ascended on high, and during the period between Pentecost and the Passover. The persecution of which we read in Acts 4:1-4 grew out of the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, the account of which occurs in Acts 3, and the wonderful growth of the apostolic church recorded in Acts 6:7-10 was the result of the zeal and activity that characterized the infant church.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

"The Church at Jerusalem" is a lesson of great importance, since this was the first church established, and serves somewhat as a model for all others. The history of this church, with its persecutions, disruptions, and final dissolution, is a thrilling recital, and much of the book of Acts deals with it. Of the end of that great congregation, Brother McGarvey, in his sermon on "The Jerusalem Church," writes as follows: "Finally the time came for this church to close its career. It had set an example in everything that we know of it for the churches of all time to come; it had fulfilled its mission on earth, and so, like thousands of churches in later times, it must pass away. The rebellious and unbelieving Jews had in the madness of despair provoked a war with the invincible power of Rome, and the armies which had conquered the world were defied by a handful of fanatics. As the Roman legions begin to surround the Holy City, the disciples, in obedience to the command of their Lord uttered before his death, made a hasty flight, and the church at Jerusalem was no more. All its enemies had not been able to kill it, but it died, as it had lived, in obedience to its Lord. It died as the sun dies at set of day, when it sinks amid a bank of clouds, and fills all the heavens with glory. O what a church was that! God grant that the like of it may yet be seen again, and that multiplied thousands like it may spread over the whole earth, so that the head of the church, when he returns to reckon with us all, may find the model church reproduced in every congregation of his people." (Sermons, page 266.)

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem." (Rom. 15:26.) Macedonia was a country of Greece, bounded north by Thrace, south by Thessaly, west by Epirus, and east by the Aegean Sea. Its capital was Philippi, where Paul and Silas were imprisoned, and where the first of their missionary work on the soil of Europe was done. Achaia was a province of Greece, embracing the western part of the Peloponnesus, with Corinth as capital. Churches in these territories were established by Paul and his colaborers on the second great missionary tour. When news of great hardship and suffering being undergone by the church in Jerusalem reached the ears of these congregations, they purposed to send a contribution to Jerusalem. For an account of their liberality and cheerfulness in making this contribution, see 2 Cor. 8:1-6; 9:2. It was at Paul's suggestion that the contribution was made, but it was made freely and generously. He received pledges

from them a year before they were to make the contribution, and this gave Paul an occasion for boasting in their behalf to other churches as he held them forth as an example of liberality. It was in connection with this contribution that Paul instructed the churches to lay by in store on the first day of the week as God: had prospered them. (1 Cor. 16:2.)

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This lesson affords an excellent opportunity to teachers of the primary and junior classes to form clear conceptions of the New, Testament church as to its establishment and early history in the minds of their pupils. Pentecost is a landmark of mountain peak proportions in New Testament history, and the relation that obtains between events before and after that time should be clearly taught. The first few chapters of Acts contain much historic material, and should be carefully studied in connection with this lesson. Older classes should likewise carefully cover the outstanding events of the period of early apostolic history, and be familiar with the distinctive characteristics of that great congregation. The commentaries on Acts, by Boles, McGarvey and Lipscomb, will furnish rich background for such study, and Brother McGarvey's sermon, above alluded to, will likewise be read with profit.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. The Apostles Inquire Concerning the Kingdom (Verses 6-8)**

"They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. 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 Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." It should be remembered that the Jews believed that a kingdom of the same type and kind as that of Rome, and rivaling it in power and authority, would be set up, and many, if not all of the disciples accepted this view. The "tabernacle of David" had long been in ruins, and the disciples fondly believed that Christ would set it up and restore to Israel her former glory. This inquiry on the part of the disciples was prompted by this conception of the kingdom, and grew out of their desire to see Israel once more among the nations with her own king and regal power. It shows "that even after the resurrection of Jesus his apostles did not understand the nature of his kingdom. It was, clear in their mind that he came to establish a kingdom, but they were still laboring under the misconception that it would be an earthly one. The word 'restore,' as used here, is from the Greek 'apokathistaneis,' and as a double compound, it means 'to restore to its former state: The apostles asked him if he would restore the political kingdom to the Jews as it was in the days of David and other kings. (Boles.)

Their inquiry concerning "times or seasons" was not, for the time being, answered. "The answer suggests that the times and



seasons of God's purposes are kept more in reserve than the purposes themselves; and this is in harmony with the known characteristic of prophecy, that it deals more in facts and the succession of events than in dates or definite events." (McGarvey.) It was enough for them to know the purpose of the coming of the Spirit; the time for it, they were to wait patiently for. God does not satisfy idle curiosity regarding the carrying out of his plans. That he will carry them out is sufficient for us.

We have here a token of the establishment of the kingdom that enables us to know, in the light of events following, the time of its beginning, which the apostles could not have known. In Mark 9:1, Jesus had said that the kingdom would come "with power." Here it is said that the power would come with the Holy Spirit. When, therefore, we ascertain the time of the Spirit's coming we will know that the power (and the kingdom to come with it) came. The Spirit came on Pentecost. But since the power and kingdom were to come with the Spirit, it follows that the kingdom came on Pentecost.

Once the Spirit had come with his vitalizing power, the apostles, by his direction, were to go out into the world preaching the gospel. They were to begin their work in Jerusalem, preach it in the province of Judea, the neighboring one of Samaria, and with ever broadening circles carry it to the whole wide world. On this scale should missionary work be planned today. Our obligation is greater to those nearer us, because we can reach them more quickly and with less effort.

## **II. Peter and John Imprisoned for Preaching the Word (Acts 4:1-4)**

"And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it was now eventide. But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand." Peter and John, on the way to the temple, were accosted by a lame man asking- alms. They healed him, and the miracle attracted such attention that a great audience gathered, and afforded the apostles an excellent opportunity to preach the word. For an account of the miracle and sermon that followed, see Acts 3:1-26. They were suddenly disturbed by a body of armed men who rushed through the audience and seized Peter and John, imprisoning them. The "captain of the temple," who led the party making the arrests, was the commander of the guard of the Levites who always stood on duty at the gates and elsewhere, to keep order within the holy precincts. The "Sadducees" are prominently mentioned in connection with the event because of their opposition to the doctrine of the resurrection, an outstanding feature of the preaching of the early church. The "priests" took part because of interference with the sacrifices and established Jewish procedure the activities of the apostles occasioned. But all, whether Pharisee or Sadducee, felt great antagonism toward the apostles, and readily joined in any effort to suppress them.

Because the evening was drawing on, and the hour was too late

to complete proceedings against the apostles, they were put in prison until the next day, at which time the authorities intended to bring them into court, and file charges against them. The effect upon the people was tremendous. The powerful preaching of the apostles, the convincing message presented, and the excitement caused by the arrest, had a decided effect, for "many of them that heard the word believed." Persecution has always had a salutary influence on the church of our Lord. We are never more in danger of apostasy than when all men speak well of us, and prosperity and popularity are enjoyed. The wonderful growth experienced by the Jerusalem church can be attributed, at least in part, to the persecutions that it suffered during much of its history. According to Brother McGarvey the church in Jerusalem lived only thirty-four years. Yet, during this comparatively short period, it underwent five violent persecutions, of which this was the FIRST. The student will do well to collect these accounts from the first twelve chapters of Acts. Four of them are recorded in Acts, the fifth we learn from the writings of Josephus.

The former part of this statement reveals that great numbers obeyed the gospel following this event; and the latter part informs us that the number of the men among those who had obeyed the Lord was five thousand. True to the customs of Oriental nations to this day, the number of men alone is here given, the women not being counted. The whole number of believers of both sexes must have been many more than the figure here given for the men. Two questions have arisen from this statement: (1) Were five thousand converted at this time; or (2) does this indicate the number of men who had obeyed the gospel from the beginning? It is likely that the number converted at this time was two thousand. The church was growing rapidly despite the efforts of unbelievers to retard its growth. For an account of the trial of the apostles, see the following verses of this chapter.

### **III. The Church Prospers (Acts 6:7-14)**

"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." The word translated "increased" means "kept on growing all the more." The immediate occasion for the increase grew out of the fact that the apostles, released from the obligation of dispensing food for the disciples as the result of the selection of the seven, were now able to devote their whole time to the preaching of the word. For an account of the conditions that necessitated the appointment of the seven, see Acts 6:1-6. In keeping with the added activity of the apostles, many more were added to the Lord. The preaching of the apostles and the multiplication of the number of disciples kept pace with each other. No greater evidence of success could be given than the statement that "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." As Brother McGarvey observes, "The peculiar relation which the priesthood sustains to any religion must always render the priests the chief conservators of the old forms, and the most persistent opponents of revolutionary changes. When they begin to give way, the system which they have upheld is ready to fall."

The priests were "obedient to the faith." This is the same as saying that they obeyed the gospel. "Faith," as here used, means "faith in Jesus Christ as the son of God, the gospel." "Obedient to the faith" shows that there is something in the faith to be obeyed. This obedience is rendered, not by believing, for that is to exercise the faith, not to obey it. Faith in Christ demands of us a course in life in accordance with that which we believe, and to follow this course is to obey the faith by yielding to its demands.

"And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people. But there arose certain of them that were of the synagogue called the synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake." Stephen was one of the seven selected to dispense food for the Grecian widows who were being neglected in the daily ministration. For a full account of this, see the sixth chapter of Acts, and for the historical background, consult the various commentaries on Acts. Members of the various synagogues, of which it is said there were 280 in Jerusalem alone, were aroused by the powerful demonstration of the Spirit being wrought through Stephen, and they sought to check his influence over the people by meeting him in debate. It is said that they "disputed" with Stephen. The word "dispute," in this passage, is from the Greek word, "suzeeteoo," which means "to deliberate, to debate," and, in its noun form, "mutual discussion, debate, disputation." (Bagster.) A form of the word occurs in Acts 15:2, where it is said that Paul and Barnabas engaged in disputation with the Judaizing teachers. Stephen was, therefore, by no means averse to engaging in debate with false teachers. He was moreover "full of the Holy Spirit." It follows therefore that those who are full of the Holy Spirit do not oppose debates! If one does object to such discussions, is that not proof that he is not following the behests of the Holy Spirit? This explains why the Jerusalem church increased in numbers so rapidly; the brethren were neither afraid nor ashamed to contend for the truth, regardless of the consequences. The church has always prospered when it went forth courageously to battle with the enemy, and has always suffered periods of apostasy and retrogression when its supporters made peace and consorted with those to the contrary. Stephen was a powerful and effective defender of the truth. The record reveals that "they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake." His opponents were wholly unable to answer his arguments. "He spoke with such fearlessness, clearness of argument, understanding, of the prophecy, and power of the Spirit, that his speech was irresistible." (Boles.)

The church in Jerusalem is frequently referred to as "The Model Church." It cannot be denied that it had many excellencies which ought to be reproduced in the churches of Christ today. In unity, generosity, liberality, and strictness of discipline it is outstanding among the New Testament churches. A sixfold unity characterized it: (1) unity of place; (2) unity of purpose; (3) unity of prayer; (4) unity of power; (5) unity of practice; and (6) unity of possessions. In generosity and liberality it exceeded all others of

which we read in the Bible; the brethren willingly sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all as every man had need. The summary fashion in which Ananias and Sapphira were dealt with indicates the strictness of discipline that motivated this great church.

As has been so well said by another, "A church which preserved, in a large and cosmopolitan membership, a spirit of brotherhood and unity; a church which made wise selection of its officers and conducted its affairs in an orderly and judicious manner; a church under whose ministry thousands were converted in three years; a church which continually attended to public worship, contribution worship, the Lord's Supper worship, and the prayer meeting worship; a church whose philanthropy has not been surpassed in the history of man; a church whose scattered membership went everywhere preaching the word; a church which won against the lawless opposition of the skeptical Sadducees, proud Pharisees, and a stubborn state, is worthy of study, of commendation, and of emulation. Such was the mother church at Jerusalem." (McDaniel, The Churches of the New Testament.)

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Why this lesson is important.  
Meaning of the Golden Text.  
Nature of the kingdom the disciples expected.  
Why the Lord did not satisfy their curiosity.  
Manner in which this passage now indicates time of establishment.  
How the Spirit directed missionary work to be done.  
Occasion for the imprisonment of Peter and John.  
Effect of the preaching on the people.  
Extent of the persecutions of the Jerusalem church.  
Causes of great growth in Jerusalem church.  
Meaning of the expression, "obedient to the faith."  
Why Stephen aroused opposition.  
How he met this opposition.  
Proof of the priority of debates here.  
Why the church in Jerusalem is "The Model Church."

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Disciples' erroneous view of the kingdom same as that of premillennialists today.  
Effect of persecution on faith. The utility of debates.

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## SECOND QUARTER HOW TO LIVE IN THE CHURCH

AIM.— To teach how to enter the church of our Lord, "how to live as faithful members of the church, and how to appreciate the church that Christ purchased with his blood.

### Lesson I—April 7, 1946

#### HOW TO ENTER THE CHURCH

**Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:44-47; Acts 2:43-47**

DEVOTIONAL READING—John 3:1-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." (Acts 5:14.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

April	1.	M	Must Be Born Again (John 3:1-8)
April	2.	T	How Faith Comes (Rom. 10:16-21)
April	3.	W	Faith Necessary to Please God (Heb. 11:1-6)
April	4.	T	Repent or Perish (Luke 13:1-5)
April	5.	F	Confess with the Mouth (Rom. 10:7-15)
April	6.	S	Baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:1-7)
April	7.	S	A New Creature (2 Cor. 5:11-19)

#### Other Lesson Material Gal. 3:27; Acts 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21

#### Historical Background

TIME.— A.D. 33.

PLACE.— For Matthew, a mountain in Galilee; for Mark, Luke, and Acts, Jerusalem and its vicinity.

PERSONS.— Jesus, the eleven, and other disciples.

#### Lesson Text

19 Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.

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.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need.

46 And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.

### **LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. The Great Commission According to Matthew (Verses 19, 20).
- II. The Great Commission According to Mark (Mark 16:15, 16) .
- III. The Great Commission According to Luke (Luke 24:44-47).
- IV. The Great Commission Executed (Acts 2:43-47).

### **CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

Before the cross the law of Moses operated as a middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. During the personal ministry of our Lord the disciples preached under the limited commission. Under this commission they were instructed to "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5, 6.) Inasmuch as Israel was the chosen people during the period of- the law from Sinai to Calvary, it was fitting that the gospel of the kingdom should first be preached to them. But by and by the time came when the Lord determined to abolish the distinctions hitherto existing and make of the two peoples one new man, the church. To this end Paul wrote in the Ephesian letter: "For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh." (Eph. 2:14-17.) The law, therefore, with its barrier, ended at the cross. After his resurrection, our Lord appeared to his disciples and delivered to them the Great Commission, so styled to distinguish it from the Limited Commission under which they had been laboring before his death. It is great because it is universal in scope and age lasting in duration. We have three reports of the commission, one by Matthew, delivered, it is believed, in Galilee to numerous brethren, possibly the five hundred alluded to in 1 Cor. 15:6; Mark, made shortly before his ascension and in the environs of Jerusalem; and Luke, at or about the same time.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

This lesson is designed to teach the conditions upon which the Lord adds people to the church. The Lord adds to the church those that are being saved (Acts 2:47), hence, the terms of entrance into the church are simply the conditions upon which the Lord saves us. It is significant that in no instance did any sacred writer refer to "joining the church." No one ever "joined the church" in the apostolic age. The Lord adds to his church; and in no other way may one enter. There is a vast difference between "joining" the

church, and being "added" to it by the Lord. In the first place, to be added to it by the Lord is a divine act; to join it is a human one. In the one instance, it is something the Lord does for us; in the other, it is something we do for ourselves. Men glibly talk about "joining the church of their choice," as if they had any choice in the matter, and as if there was a variety of churches from which to choose. In other lessons in this series we have seen that there is but one church; hence, there is no choice to be exercised in so far as the New Testament church is concerned; and this passage teaches us that the matter is not of our own volition any way. When we comply with the conditions of salvation the Lord adds us to the church, his Church, the New Testament church; there is no other means of entrance.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." (Acts 5:14.) In our lesson of last Lord's day, "The Church at Jerusalem," we learned something of the remarkable growth that characterized that church in spite of severe opposition and persecution. "'Prosetithento' is the Greek from which we get 'added'; 'mallon' is the Greek for 'more: It means literally that believers 'kept being added.' 'Both of men and women' describes the 'believers'; only believers were added to the Lord; no infants or irresponsible persons were added to the Lord... To be added to the Lord is to be 'added to the church'; and 'to be added to the church' is to be 'converted'; hence, only converted ones were added to the church." (Bodes.) Thus, the Lord adds; the Lord only adds; the Lord adds only those who are being saved.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

It is surely unnecessary to emphasize the great value of this lesson to all the classes, dealing as it does with the conditions of salvation. Each class, from the youngest to the oldest, should study this lesson until the terms of pardon are so clearly understood that each pupil can repeat them in their proper order, and give the references where they are to be found. The teachers should impress the classes with the importance of learning references as well as the words of the various passages, not only in this lesson, but in all others. It is of little value to learn a passage if one can never find it when needed. It is a simple matter to associate the reference with the passage and remember them together.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. The Great Commission According to Matthew (Verses 19, 20)**

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This statement is prefaced by the announcement that "all authority" in heaven and on earth had been committed into his hands. Our



Lord therefore was fully empowered with the authority to announce the terms upon which salvation was to be offered to the world. An analysis of the commission as thus given reveals the following items: (1) go; (2) disciple; (3) baptize into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; (4) teach those who have been baptized the duties of the Christian life. (1) The first requisite of the commission was to "go." This suggests the missionary nature of the church; and any church making claim to identity with the church of the New Testament must be essentially missionary in its practice. The apostolic church obeyed this injunction in a most remarkable way; for Paul declared that the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven (Col. 1:23), and that their "sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." (Rom. 10:18.) (2) Going, they were to "disciple" the nations. A "disciple" is a student, learner, follower of the Lord; and to "make disciples" is simply to enlist people in the school of Christ, induce them to put themselves under his direction, and accept his leadership. To "make disciples," therefore, is to give all kinds of instruction for entrance into the church of our Lord. (3) Those who are "discipled" are to be baptized. The "them" to be baptized are those who have been "discipled." They were not to baptize "all nations"; they were to baptize those of all nations who had been discipled. "Them," in Greek, is masculine gender; "nation" is neuter gender. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in gender; hence, them cannot refer to nations, but to those discipled. This is conclusive evidence that infants are not subjects of baptism. Only those "discipled" were to be baptized; infants cannot be "discipled"; therefore, infants are not to be baptized. (4) Those thus discipled are to be baptized "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Observe that the baptizing is to be done "into" the names of the sacred three. The Authorized, or King James Version, has "in the name," etc. On this point Alford remarks, "It is unfortunate again here that our English Bible [referring, of course, to the King James Version, since he wrote before the Revision was made] does not give us the force of this 'eis.' It should have been 'into.' This is a point of great importance. Not infrequently, gospel preachers, following the older version, baptize 'in' the name these days. The two ideas are not the same. To baptize in the name of one is to baptize 'by that one's authority'; but to baptize 'into' the name means to pass in baptism into an intimate relationship with the ones into whom one is baptized. We are baptized (when the act is done scripturally) in the name of Christ, into the names of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. That is, by the authority of Christ (who delivered this commission) we are to be baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. We should be careful that all our baptizing is done in harmony with this passage." (5) Those "discipled," and properly baptized, are then to be taught the various duties of the Christian life. This involves all that the Lord requires of us to be pleasing to him in this life and to fit and prepare ourselves for the life to come. The Lord did not leave them comfortless or alone in delivering this commission; he promised to be with them always, "even unto the end of the world." His blessed promise still applies to those who labor faithfully under this commission today.

## **II. The Great Commission According to Mark (Mark 16:15, 16)**

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." That which men are to believe is the gospel (Rom. 1:16) ; and on believing and being baptized they are promised salvation. Salvation is therefore conditioned, in this passage, on two items: (1) faith; (2) baptism. "Where salvation is promised to a person, or affirmed of him, on certain named conditions, though it may depend on more conditions than those named, it can never depend on less .... Now, that the passage in hand contains two, and but two conditions, is obvious even to the eye. The Savior promises salvation to, or affirms it of, him who complies with these conditions. This is absolutely certain. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Hence, unless the foregoing rule can be shown to be unsound (which we predict will not be shown), it follows that, although salvation-or, which is the same thing, remission of sins-may depend on more than belief and baptism, the two named conditions, it can never depend on less." (Lard, Review of Jeter.)

As simple and plain as this statement is, it is nevertheless true, that the denominational world is united in rejecting its obvious significance. Jesus asserts that "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," whereas, all denominational preachers preach that "he that believeth and is not baptized shall be saved." They thus nullify our Lord's words. This is a complex, declarative sentence. It is joined by a coordinating conjunction, and. A coordinating conjunction connects similar grammatical elements and puts them in equal ranks. Here, belief and baptism are thus joined to obtain the same result, viz., salvation. The principal statement of the sentence is, "He shall be saved." It is modified by a limiting or restrictive clause. He shall be saved. Who shall be saved? He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved! To say "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" is the equivalent of saying that belief plus baptism equals salvation; all the denominations teach, however, that belief minus baptism equals salvation. They thus destroy the force of our Savior's statement and teach people that they may expect to be saved on fewer conditions than those named-by the Lord himself.

Combining Matthew and Mark's account of the commission, we note: (1) go, teach or preach; (2) what is taught, the gospel; (3) conditions of obedience: Faith and baptism into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; and (4) obligation to instruct those baptized. We are now to consider Luke's account of the same commission.

## **III. The Great Commission According to Luke (Luke 24:44-47)**

"And he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." Two things, pertinent

to our present inquiry, follow from this passage. An additional condition, repentance, is named, and this, too, makes the commission world-wide in its application. We are also told where the preaching of this commission should begin: Jerusalem. Following this declaration, they were told to "tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:49.) They were to wait for the enduement from on high that, clothed with miraculous power, vouchsafed them by the Holy Spirit, they would not err in the proclamation thereof.

As has been so well said, "If we take what these statements say, we will have the truth on what the Lord wants us to do to be saved; if we take all that they say, we will have the whole truth; and: if we do not take anything but what they do say, we will have nothing but the truth on this question." The following arrangement will exhibit what the Lord requires of us in order to be saved, based upon the conditions set forth in the Great Commission:

Matthew		Baptism	
Mark	Belief	Baptism	Salvation
Luke		Repentance	Remission of Sins

Sum: Belief, repentance, baptism, salvation, remission. The confession is involved in the foregoing.

#### IV. The Great Commission Executed (Acts 2:43-47)

Following the deliverance of the Great Commission, our Lord ascended on high. On the day of Pentecost following, about ten days after his ascension, the Holy Spirit, in fulfillment of the promise made prior to his going away, came, and Peter, the appointed spokesman, delivered the great address recorded in Acts 2. He first cleared away a misapprehension in the minds of some regarding the wonderful events of the day, and then proceeded to show that the crucifixion and death of Christ was but the fulfillment of prophetic utterance,, and in harmony with the purpose and plan of God himself. Next, he brought home to their consciences the fact that fifty-three days before some of that number had actually participated in the crucifixion, and were guilty of the blood of the Lord. These facts were so convincingly presented, and came with such weight upon the hearts of his hearers, that many of them cried out and said, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Obviously they were inquiring what to do to be saved, what they might do to escape the consequences of that tragic deed of which they stood guilty. This, at any rate, Peter understood them to be asking about, for in his reply, he set forth the conditions upon which they might receive remission of sins. It should be recalled that at the time this question was asked, the Great Commission was in effect. Peter was an inspired man and therefore able to set forth without mistake the exact significance of the words our Lord had delivered in the commission under which Peter was even then preaching. What did he say? "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" (Acts 2:38.) These inquirers were already believers; this is certain from the fact that they would not have been prompted to make inquiry, or even to recognize their need for remission, had they been unbelievers. Being believers, the next steps were

repentance and baptism, in harmony with the terms of the Great Commission. Numerous other cases of conversion occur in the book of Acts, and in each instance these conditions are set forth or implied. Indeed, no inspired man, under the Christian dispensation, ever offered salvation short of full and complete compliance with these prescribed conditions.

It is sometimes objected that baptism is "because of the remission of sins." Those who subscribe to this view urge that one is first saved, then baptized, and that baptism sustains the relation of "because of" remission. This view is clearly erroneous. Note that the commands to repent and to be baptized are joined by the conjunction "and." Whatever baptism is for, repentance is for the same thing. If, therefore, baptism is because of remission, it must follow that one also repents because his sins are remitted. Already saved, then to repent! This, of course, is wrong. Repentance is a condition of salvation; one is not saved until he repents. But in this passage, an inspired man, laboring under a commission delivered to him by the Lord himself, made baptism as much a condition of salvation as repentance. The Lord joined them together in Mark 16:16, and men should not engage in the unholy business of divorcing them.

As the result of Peter's sermon and clear statement of the conditions of pardon, about three thousand souls gladly accepted the word of truth and were saved upon compliance therewith. These the Lord added to the church. (Acts 2:47.) We live today under the same world-wide and age-lasting commission. Its conditions are just as applicable and just as necessary now as then. And the Lord will as readily "add" us to his church as he did those of the long ago, if we will, like them, bow humbly and submissive before him and obey him.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Effect of the law of Moses on Jew and Gentile.

Termination of the law.

Significance of the words "limited" and "great" as applied to the commissions under which the disciples labored.

Significance of this lesson and purpose.

Difference between being "added" by the Lord to the church; and "joining" one of our own "choice."

Value of this lesson.

Items of the commission as recorded by Matthew.

Meaning of "going"; "disciplining."

Significance of the word "into" in connection with baptism.

What the exact statement that should be used in baptizing.

Duty toward those baptized.

Conditions named by Mark.

Manner in which denominational preachers pervert this.

Two additional facts learned from Luke.

Sum of all taught in the three accounts.

Events leading up to the day of Pentecost.

Peter's sermon on that day; the inquiry it elicited; the answer.

Proof that baptism is not "because of remission."

**Lesson II—April 14, 1946****GROWING IN GRACE****Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 5:11-14; 2 Pet. 3:17, 18**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Col. 3:1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and for ever." (2 Pet. 3:18.)

**Helps for Lesson Study  
Daily Bible Readings**

April	8.	M	Christ Full of Grace (John 1:11-18)
April	9.	T	Grace Given to Us (Rom. 12:1-8)
April	10.	W	Saved by Grace (Eph. 2:1-10)
April	11.	T	Dispensation of Grace (Eph. 3:1-13)
April	12.	F	Singing with Grace (Col. 3:12-17)
April	13.	S	Speaking with Grace (Col. 4:2-6)
April	14.	S	The Throne of Grace (Heb. 4:14-16)

**Other Lesson Material  
2 Pet. 1:1-12; Heb. 3:1ff.****Historical Background**

TIME.— For the Ephesian letter, A.D. 62. Much uncertainty attaches to the time of writing Hebrews and the epistles of First and Second Peter. If we assume, as many scholars do, that Hebrews was written by Paul, and that it is one of the "imprisonment epistles," the time for it would be A.D. 62 also. Second Peter was written about 65 or 66 according to some conservative scholars. Fortunately, no vital truths depend on our knowing the exact time of the writing of these letters.

PLACES.— Ephesians was written from a Roman prison, as was also Hebrews, if the assumption above be correct. First Peter was written from the city of Babylon, on the Euphrates River (1 Pet. 5:13) ; where the second epistle was composed we have no means of knowing.

PERSONS.— Children of God everywhere.

**Lesson Text**

19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,

20 Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

22 In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard of interpretation, seeing ye are become dull of hearing.

12 For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food.

13 For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe.

14 But solid food is for full-grown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.

17 Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, be-

ing carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness.

18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and for ever. Amen.

### **LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Position of Saints in the House of God Today (Verses 19-22).
- II. Milk and Meat of the Word (Heb. 5:11-14).
- III. Admonished to Grow in Grace and Knowledge (2 Pet. 3:17, 18).

### **CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

As we have already indicated under the "Historical Background," the letter to the Ephesians, and possibly Hebrews, was written by Paul while a prisoner of the Roman government in the imperial city. Ephesians is one of the most profound epistles in the New Testament, and ranks with Romans in its broad outline of the fundamentals of the design and purpose of God's plan in saving the race. In other respects it resembles the Colossian letter, written by Paul at the same time. Of the book of Hebrews, Adam Clarke remarks, "The apostle appears to have taken a portion of his own epistle for text, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe, and has most amply and impressively demonstrated his proposition." Second Peter was written to keep the Christian mind stirred up with relation to the duties imposed upon them, and the great reason for diligence in the performance of these duties; to warn them of false teachers that would arise, while holding up to their gaze the reward that awaits the faithful.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

One of the figures set forth in the New Testament to indicate to us the relation we sustain to our God is that of a family with God as our Father, and the saved as his children. Viewed in this light, our salvation may fittingly and appropriately be styled a "birth," as it frequently is in the inspired writings. It is essential that those who have but recently come into the family have the proper food and that development be normal. The Christian life, from its beginning until its final consummation, is a growth in grace and knowledge. This development is effected by means of the word and the exercise provided in living the life of a Christian as set forth in the scriptures. The means by which this growth is attained is our lesson today.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and for ever." (2 Pet. 3:18.) We know of no better comments on this verse than the following by the eminent and scholarly Albert Barnes: "Religion in general is often represented as grace, since every part of it is the result of grace, or of unmerited favor; and to grow in grace is to increase in that which constitutes true religion. Religion is as susceptible of cultivation and growth as any other virtue of the soul. It is feeble in its beginnings, like the grain of mustard seed, or like the germ or blade of the plant, and it increases as it is cultivated." To grow in the knowledge of "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" is to become conversant with all that he has taught and said, and, as far as

is possible, to inculcate these views into the heart and life. To know the Lord Jesus Christ; to possess just views of his person, work, character, and life, and to transcribe it into one's own life, is the sum and substance of the Christian religion.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The elementary and junior classes should be taught the fundamental principle of development and growth characteristic of the Christian religion. They should be made to feel the vital necessity of gradually growing more proficient in the practice of pure Christianity; and should have indicated to them the manner in which this is done. The older classes, in addition to this, will wish to study the lesson text carefully to ascertain the manner in which growth is accomplished; and the teachers should impress upon all the personal responsibility involved. It should be shown from Matt. 11 that we will be called to answer for the opportunities we enjoy in this life; and that our practice of Christianity must keep apace of our knowledge. We know more this year than we knew last year; we should therefore be doing more for the Lord this year than last. These facts should be clearly and impressively presented.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Position of Saints in the House of God Today (Verses 19-22)**

"So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." The student will please read the whole of chapter 2 of Ephesians to get the contextual relationship of this statement. The apostle has just shown that now, contrary to the time of the law, the Gentiles are fellow heirs with the Jews, and have access to the Father. Then, they were afar off; now, they are made nigh by the blood of the cross; formerly enemies, reconciliation has been effected, and the middle wall of partition abolished, with the result that we Gentiles (who have obeyed the gospel) are no longer "strangers and sojourners," but "fellow-citizens with the saints," because we have been called to the enjoyment of equal privileges—privileges formerly vouchsafed only to the Jews. Changing the figure from that of children at home with their loving Father, the apostle next views the Lord's people as being parts of a great building of which Christ is the chief cornerstone and the apostles and prophets are in the foundation. Each child of God has his own peculiar place, being fitted into the building, to perform the function for which he is specifically fitted. As each performs his special function, he contributes to the welfare of the whole, and there is a continual growth thereof. This growth is both inward and outward; inward, as it relates to the growth in proficiency of each member; and outwardly, in relation to the building itself. This building is never finished; but will continue to increase as new stones are added thereto. Finally, the apostle alludes to the purpose of the building. As the stones in a temple are

all properly placed, so as to form a complete house, so children of God are stones in the "temple" (church) of God, constituting a house wherein God dwells and is worshiped. This section of our lesson text is therefore appropriately used in connection with a lesson on growth in grace. We here learn that this growth is gradual in its nature, and that it continues throughout life. We should be impressed with the fact that we occupy a place in the spiritual building of God for which we are specially fitted, and that it is our responsibility to see that we discharge our function properly. Failing to do this, we retard not only our own growth, but also the growth of the "holy temple in the Lord." Means by which this growth is effected we are to consider in our next division.

## **II. Milk and Meat of the Word (Heb. 5:11-14)**

"Of whom we have many things to say, and hard of interpretation, seeing ye are become dull of hearing. For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But solid food is for full-grown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil." The Hebrew writer had just alluded to the priesthood of Melchizidek. This was a difficult and involved subject, requiring much study and meditation in order to understand. The Hebrews to whom he wrote had not made sufficient attainment in the study of the scripture in order to properly fathom the mysteries associated with this question; and the writer felt great difficulty in trying to write to them in their immature state. Though the subject was difficult, this was not the reason for their lack of discernment; it was rather that they had not grown and developed as they should. When they should have been teaching others they were still in need of the most elementary instruction. Nor was it that they had lacked opportunity; they had need again that they be taught, thus showing that they had been taught on some former occasion the lessons they now needed. The expression, "the rudiments of the first principles," is a strong one, and means that they were in need of the very first lessons such as children learn before advancing to higher studies. These elementary lessons are styled "milk," to distinguish them from those adapted to the more advanced students, here referred to as "solid food," but in the King James Version as "meat." Like little children, these people could bear only the most simple nourishment. This means that they were wholly unable to receive the more profound principles of the Christian religion, and were just where they started from when first they obeyed the gospel. Theirs was simply a state of spiritual infancy, as is every one's who like these has not developed in Christian character and grown in knowledge and spiritual discernment.

Several practical lessons follow from the foregoing. We learn first that it is necessary for new converts to the gospel to feed upon the simpler matters of the word until such time as they are able through experience to discern the weightier matters thereof. It is just as essential for those who are young in the faith to restrict their studies to such elementary matters as it is obligatory upon those who are



older in Christ to go on to the more profound ones. Unfortunately, a disposition to be concerned about matters beyond their depth sometimes characterizes young converts usually to their own hurt and retarded growth. Where did the devil come from? Where did Cain get his wife? and a hundred other impractical questions are of more interest to such minds than the simple and plain facts of the gospel. But having laid the foundation, it is then proper to advance to the weightier matters thereof; and to fail to do so is to convict oneself of being yet in a state of spiritual infancy.

Another valuable lesson this teaches us is that all are expected to become teachers of the word, not preachers, mind you, but teachers, individuals capable of teaching others. When for the "time ye ought to be teachers" shows us that in the normal process of development one should eventually come to possess sufficient ability to instruct others in the way of life, as he has himself been instructed. On this point Barnes offers the following judicious thoughts: "Let it be remembered also, that the world derives its views of the nature of religion from the lives and conduct of its professed friends. It is not from the Bible, nor from the pulpit, or from books that men learn what Christianity is; it is from the daily walk of those who profess to be its friends; and every day we live, a wife, a child, a neighbor, or a stranger is forming some view of the nature of religion from what they see in us. How important therefore, it is that we so live as to communicate to them just views of what constitutes religion."

Having shown that the simpler matters of the word are first to be received by the immature, the writer then indicates the purpose of the more profound principles therein. "Solid food is for full-grown men," he tells us, "even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil." The meaning of this is that the more difficult matters of the scriptures yield themselves to those of discernment who have attained thereto, by much exercise of their faculties and by long service to Christ. That is to say, matters wholly beyond one's ability to understand while a novice readily opens to the view of those who by long study, and prayerful meditation over a period of many years, have attained to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the scriptures. The Greek word translated "use" in this passage means "habit," or "practice." It is a well-known fact that one becomes proficient in that which he practices continually. It is for this reason that athletes constantly train in preparation for a contest. In like manner, those who over a period of many years have studied the scriptures attain to an understanding thereof not possible to the immature. For this reason we should be slow to cast aside the views of those who have lived long upon the earth, and have had much exercise in spiritual discernment. Is there some worldly practice in which I delight and can see no harm, but nevertheless is frowned upon by those who are older, wiser, and more experienced than I? If so, let me by all means forego it; let me acquiesce in the judgment of those of riper years than I, until such time at least as I have reached equal years of experience and discernment.

The student will keep in mind that the subject of this lesson is "Growing in Grace." It will be noted that this section from the Hebrew letter is a valuable and judicious exposition of the manner in which we grow, i.e., by feeding upon the word of the Lord. It teaches us (1) the normal process of growth; (2) that inability to understand

after having been children of God for some years is an indication of retarded growth; and (3) the value of continued study in enabling one to attain to great spiritual discernment.

### **III. Admonished to Grow in Grace and Knowledge (2 Pet. 3:17, 18)**

"Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and for ever. Amen." The apostle has just warned his readers against the subversive teachings of false and ignorant men who have perverted the scriptures to their own destruction, and that of those deceived by them. Children of God, he points out, are to be ever on guard lest they, too, be deceived and misled by such teachers. Notwithstanding the fact that these brethren to whom Peter wrote were aware of these things, he nevertheless recognized the danger as so great as to justify another warning. False teachers are the curse of this age; and constitute a greater threat to the welfare of the people than all the war-mad dictators combined. These deceive thousands, it is true, but they soon pass and are forgotten; but countless millions have gone, and are going to the grave unprepared because of the machinations of false teachers who delight to discharge their infamous purpose of teaching people that they do not have to do what the Lord says one must do in order to be saved. It is incredible that gospel preachers could so far overlook the insidious evil characteristic of such men as to find congenial companionship therewith, to fraternize with in ministerial alliances and pastor associations. We can only conclude that such preachers have utterly lost their sense of perspective, and no longer care for the teeming millions being constantly deceived by these men.

We have already discussed the latter portion of this passage, under "The Golden Text Explained," to which the student is now referred. It is interesting to note the alternative to growth the apostle here lays down. "Beware lest, being carried away . . . fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in the grace." That is to say, the only preventive of falling away is to grow in grace. There is no standing still on an inclined plane. If one does not move upward gravity begins to operate and one immediately begins to go backward. There must be continual advance, or there will certainly be decay and corruption. The limb not used soon atrophies; the individual who becomes inactive in the Christian life soon loses all he has attained. The pathway of life is literally strewn with the bones of those who made a good start but eventually fell by the wayside. In nearly every community in the Southland there are numerous individuals who obeyed the gospel and gave promise of being useful members of the body of Christ, but soon dropped out of sight, and became lost to the church. These did not grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. There is therefore a weighty responsibility on all Bible school teachers and preachers to inculcate the vital principles of Christianity in the hearts of those with whom they have to do, and see to it as far as they can that such principles find expression in their lives. This lesson teaches us that there is no other way to usefulness in the service of Christ.

**POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

Ephesians compared with other New Testament epistles.  
 Theme of the Hebrew epistle.  
 Appropriate nature of the figure of a birth as applied to Christianity.  
 Why religion is represented as grace.  
 Context of the Ephesian portion of the lesson.  
 The figures used to indicate relationship of children of God.  
 Why the Hebrew writer had difficulty in writing.  
 Distinction between milk and meat as applied to the scriptures.  
 Practical lessons in the section on milk and solid food.  
 Why immature individuals should listen to the advice of older Christians.  
 The alternative to apostasy.

**Lesson III—April 21, 1946****PRAYING TO GOD****John 15:16; 16:23, 24; James 1:5-7; 4:1-4; 1 John 5:13-15**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Matt. 6:5-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward." (1 Thess. 5:17, 18.)

**Helps for Lesson Study**  
**Daily Bible Readings**

April	15.	M	The Throne of Grace (Heb. 4:11-16)
April	16.	T	How to Pray (Matt. 6:5-8)
April	17.	W	An Example of Prayer (Matt. 6:9-16)
April	18.	T	Pray for Our Enemies (Matt. 5:43-48)
April	19.	F	Always Pray (Luke 18:1-8)
April	20.	S	Praying in His Name (John 16:20-24)
April	21.	S	A Prayer of Jesus (Matt. 11:25-30)

**Other Lesson Material**  
**James 5:16-18; Phil. 5:6**

**Historical Background**

TIME.— Our lesson text today is from the books of James, the gospel according to John, and the first epistle of John. We have little means of knowing when these books were written. Various views have been advanced, but there is little unanimity of opinion among scholars. With reference to the gospel according to John, our own B. W. Johnson says, "It was almost certainly composed between A.D. 75 and A.D. 90" James, author of the book that bears his name, was martyred, if we may credit tradition, A.D. 62 or 63, hence his book was written prior to that time, possibly 62. A late date must also be assigned to the epistle of First John due to the nature of the subject matter, but just when we do not know.

PLACES.— Conservative scholarship places John in Ephesus at the time the gospel of John was written. The epistles of John may have been written from there also. James was likely written from Jerusalem.

PERSONS.— All children of God.

### Lesson Text

16 Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

23 And in that day ye shall ask me no question. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If ye shall ask anything of the Father, he will give it you in my name.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be made full.

5\_ But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed.

7\_ For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord..

1 Whence come wars and whence come fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members?

2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not.

3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures.

4 Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity. with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God.

13 These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God.

14 And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us:

15 And if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Jesus Promises That God Will Hear and Answer Our Prayers (Verse 16).
- II. Prayer to Be in the Name of Jesus Christ (John 16:23, 24).
- III. Characteristics of the Giving God (James 1:5-7).
- IV. Why Some Prayers Are Not Answered (James 4:1-4).
- V. Our Prayers to Be According to the Will of God (1 John 5:13-15).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Since our lesson text is composed of so many passages today, we shall not attempt a discussion of the context of each selection, but shall content ourselves with a brief survey of the books from which the several selections have been taken. Most scholars believe that the gospel of John was written many years after Matthew, Mark, and Luke; and that it was written for the purpose of supplying information regarding the life and work of Christ not found in those books. It thus fills up the gaps in the sacred story left by these writers. It was written "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." (John 20:30, 31.) James, sometimes called the "gospel of common sense," because of its discussion of many practical problems,; was written to persecuted Christians scattered throughout the country to sustain them in their trials and give them encouragement to bear up under the many burdens that weighed them down. In view of this fact, is it surprising that so much is said in the book regarding prayer? First John was written by the apostle John when he was very old; and contains much exhortation and admonition. Here, too, prayer has a prominent place. As a matter of fact, much is said regarding prayer,

throughout the sacred volume. This is in painful contrast with much of our writing today. Holy men of old were firm believers in the efficacy of prayer. The skepticism of this age regarding prayer is widespread.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

Our lesson subject is simple today, and needs no exposition. "Praying to God" involves the proper approach to God through the medium of prayer-prayer characterized by the necessary conditions as outlined in the scriptures. We shall see that a mere petition to God is no assurance that the Lord will hear and answer. He has set forth the conditions upon which he will hear and answer our prayers, and it is our purpose today to examine carefully these requisites and conditions.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward." (1 Thess. 5:17, 18.) We are not to assume that this means we are ever to be literally and constantly in prayer; but simply that we should observe stated seasons in prayer, i.e., practice it regularly. Thus, Luke 24:53, "were continually in the temple, blessing God," means that they went regularly to the temple at the morning and evening sacrifices, and offered their prayers and praises. Brother McGarvey remarks, "This not only means to observe habitual seasons of prayer, and to cultivate a disposition to pray, but to be ever in a prayerful spirit, to have constantly a subconsciousness of the presence of God. Compare 1:9; 2:12; Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2. " Note, too, that in everything we are to give thanks; to cultivate a spirit of thanksgiving and gratitude for the bountiful blessings we daily receive from God. Much ingratitude obtains among the Lord's professed followers today. We constantly receive from his hand the most priceless blessings, yet seldom pause to look up and thank him "from whom all blessings flow." "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider" (Isa 1:3), was the lament of an ancient prophet, and his words might with equal propriety be applied to the Lord's people today. Let us remember that it "is the will of God in Christ Jesus" for us regularly to call upon his name, and thank him for his goodness toward us.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The younger classes should have carefully explained to them what it means to pray, and appropriate examples illustrating acceptable prayer should be given them from the scriptures. The prayers of Abraham, Jacob, and Elijah will serve admirably for this purpose. It would be well, too, to see that they learn the requisites of acceptable prayer. It is suggested that the teachers of the older groups place much emphasis on the blessings and benefits that attend prayer to God; and the assurance that he will hear and answer. The teacher should be prepared to answer objections that will almost surely arise against prayer. Many do not believe in the efficacy of prayer today. They have accepted a fatalistic philosophy that runs something like this: If a thing is going to happen, it will happen whether one prays or not. If it is not going to happen, it will not

happen, if one does pray; so, it does no good to pray at all. The teachers should familiarize themselves with the various examples of the scriptures where the Lord has heard and answered prayer, and thus be prepared to offer concrete cases in support of the Lord's promises touching acceptable prayer.

## **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

### **I. Jesus Promises That God Will Hear and Answer Our Prayers (Verse 16)**

"Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." The first part of this passage alludes to the choosing of the apostles, whom Jesus selected from among the disciples to go forth preaching the gospel of the kingdom soon to be established. The purpose of choosing them was that they should bear fruit; and it is for this purpose that he calls men into his service today. This calling is done by means of the gospel (1 Thess. 2:14) today; and all are called because the gospel is to be preached to all. Not all hear and answer however; and only those who do so become his disciples. The Lord forces no one into his service; it must be willing service or he will not accept it.

It will be observed that our Lord here sets forth the condition upon which God will hear and answer prayer. Whatsoever we ask, he will give it, provided we ask in the name of Christ. To ask in the name of Christ is to ask by authority of Christ; hence, to pray as he has taught us is to pray in the name of Christ. This teaches us the necessity of knowing what our Lord has said regarding prayer in order that we may properly pray in his name and by his authority. We cannot therefore be assured of an answer to our prayers unless we have ascertained the will of the Lord regarding prayer, and then have prayed in conformity thereto. Let this fact then be clearly fixed in the mind: The first requisite of prayer is that it must be made in the name of Christ. Further evidence of this fact will appear from the next section of our lesson.

### **II. Prayer to Be in the Name of Jesus Christ (John 16:23, 24) .**

"And in that day ye shall ask me no question. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If ye shall ask anything of the Father, he will give it you in my name. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be made full." The sentence, "And in that day ye shall ask me no question," is in the King James Version translated, "In that day ye shall ask me nothing." This is susceptible of two explanations. It may mean, "In the Christian dispensation soon to begin you (my apostles) shall ask nothing of me personally; for you will possess inspiration, and will therefore know of your own selves all things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Or, it may mean, "In that day, the Christian dispensation, you shall ask nothing directly of me; you are not to frame your petitions to me, but to the Father, in my name." It is to this latter interpretation that this writer subscribes. This being true, we are not to make our petitions to Christ. God alone is to be the object of our prayers,

and the one to whom alone we may pray. Brethren frequently ignore this fundamental principle of acceptable prayer; and some time frame their petitions out of harmony therewith. And not infrequently, one is heard to pray in God's name, rather than the name of Christ. To do so is contrary to our Lord's instructions here given.

Thus far, prayer had not been offered in the name of Christ. "Hitherto," the Lord said, "have ye asked nothing in my name." This shows us that prior to the Christian age prayer was not offered in Christ's name. Beginning with the period designated as "in that day," they were instructed to ask "in my name." We have seen that this is to ask by the authority of Christ. It is in this fashion we are to pray during the present age or dispensation. Thus far then, the following requisites of acceptable prayer have appeared: (1) we are to pray according to the will of God, (2) in the name of Jesus Christ.

### **III. Characteristics of the Giving God (James 1:5-7)**

"But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." This is one of the most comprehensive statements in the Bible touching God's goodness in giving; and is quite fittingly cited in connection with this lesson on prayer. If one lacks, let him ask. Who is it of us who does not lack not only wisdom, but all else needful for our well-being in this life? Being in this condition, let us ask of God. This statement might be translated, "If any of you come short of wisdom, let him ask of the giving God." What an encouraging description of God! "The giving God," the God who is accustomed to give, who is known among men and angels as "the Giver." Note, too, the characteristics of our giving God: (1) he gives to all (who ask in faith); (2) he gives liberally-there is no miserly penuriousness in his giving; and (3) he never upbraids. This latter characteristic is so often wanting in us today. Human givers are so interested in their part of any giving transaction that a much solicited person is apt to do or say something which shall remind the receiver of his obligation. Even human parents sometimes do this. Our Father never upbraids. He never points to the misuse we have made of former gifts. He never tires of giving, and never says when we continue to ask of him: "What! you here again? Can you never be satisfied? Where is the blessing I gave you last week? There seems to be no hour of the day or night that you are not asking something." No! He never says such things to us. He is delighted to have us ask him for the things we need.

We must, however, ask in faith. To ask in faith is to ask according to his word (Rom. 10:17). This is but another way of saying that we may ask of him only according to his will; for his will is to be found set forth in his word. Some do not receive because they do not ask in faith, an example of which we are now to consider. This, indeed, is suggested in this section also; for we are told that the man who doubts is like the surge of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed; such an one will receive nothing of the Lord: Prayer must be prompted by confidence in the Lord's power and goodness; in his power, to the end that he can answer; and in his goodness, that he will.

#### **IV. Why Some Prayers Are Not Answered (James 4:14)**

"Whence come wars and whence come fightings among you? come they not., hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures." The word here translated "pleasures" is used to express the pleasures of the senses, and hence sometimes signifies strong desire for such gratification. In this picturesque sentence, they are represented as warriors spreading themselves through the members, seizing the body as the instrument for the accomplishing of their designs and the gaining of their ends. Those above described were possessed of an unholy ambition to gain much material goods, and went to extremely sinful ends to gain their coveted goods. Some of them actually had the temerity to ask God for that which they wanted for no other purpose than to consume it upon their own lusts-to go deeper into fleshly gratification; and of course the Lord will hear and answer no such prayers. Those who thus ask, ask amiss. Petitions conceived and uttered in sinfulness will not be heard. All true prayers made to God are for something which will enable the petitioner to please and serve God. It' is an unhallowed petition which asks for something which we intend to spend on the gratification of our own selfish, sensual, wicked, destroying lusts. We should be careful of our prayers. They show our hearts to God, and ought to reveal them to ourselves. Are we entirely unselfish in our praying? Do we pray for our own good and the good of our fellow man; or do we pray for things only that we may enjoy them in this life? The proper motive must prompt our prayers; otherwise, they will not be answered.

#### **V. Our Prayers to Be According to the Will of God (1 John 5:13-15)**

"These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him." Here again we see the proper and necessary limitation in all prayer. If we pray according to his will he heareth us. God has not promised to grant anything contrary to his will, and it could not be right that he should do it. We ought not to wish to receive anything that should be contrary to what he judges to be best for us. Surely no one could hope for good who considered his own wishes better than the will of God. The limitation, "according to his will," includes at least the following: (1) The things he has declared he is willing to give, i.e., comfort in trials, needful supply of our wants, wisdom to. guide and direct us, and many other things too numerous to mention here; (2) the things he sees best for us. We are not the best judges of what we need. In many things we would be mistaken in what we should have; and should therefore gladly leave the matter in his hands. We ought not even to want to be permitted to ask for that which God would judge not for our good; (3) that which is consistent for God to bestow upon us. We cannot consistently ask, nor expect him to bestow blessings in violation of any of his laws which he has ordained.



For example, it is better that an idle man should not have a harvest, though he should pray for it, than that God should violate the laws by which he has determined to bestow such favors as a reward of industry. The same is true of petitioning God to save people who refuse to obey his will. He will not hear and answer such a petition, however earnest the petitioner or worthy his motive. It is wrong to ask God to do things contrary to his will.

Summarizing, we have seen that prayer to be heard, must be (1) in faith; (2) according to the will of God; (3) in the name of Christ. Moreover, the petitioner must be in covenant relationship with God. The Lord will not hear and answer a sinner's prayer. (John 9:31; 1 Pet. 3:12.) In the first place, an alien sinner cannot address God as his Father (John 8:44); and nowhere has God promised to answer a sinner's prayer. But, those who are his children, and who pray as he has directed, may expect him to answer. We may, as John here asserts, have this "confidence" in him.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Characteristics of the gospel of John, James, and First John.  
 Things involved in prayer to God.  
 Meaning of the Golden Text.  
 Widespread neglect of prayer.  
 Present-day philosophy regarding prayer indicates skeptical attitude.  
 How the Lord chooses disciples today.  
 What it means to pray in the name of Christ.  
 Meaning of the expression, "In that day," and significance of the statement, "Ye shall ask me no question."  
 The name in which we are to pray.  
 James' description of God.  
 Characteristics of the giving God. How he differs from us in this respect.  
 Meaning of the statement, "Ask in faith."  
 Why many prayers are not answered.  
 How prayer reveals the true condition of our hearts.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Possible causes for skepticism regarding prayer today.  
 How can God hear and answer prayer so as not to interfere with the operation of his natural laws?

### Lesson IV—April 28, 1946

#### STUDYING THE BIBLE

**Deut. 6:4-9; John 5:38-40; 1 Tim. 4:13-16; 2 Tim. 3:14-17**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— 2 Tim. 1:3-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "I will meditate on thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways." (Psalm 119:15.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

April	22.	M	Give Heed to Reading (1 Tim. 4:11-16)
April	23.	T	The Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:14-19)

April	24.	W	Study to Be Quiet (1 Thess. 4:9-12)
April	25.	T	Teach Each Other (Tit. 2:1-8)
April	26.	F	Profitable for Teaching (2 Tim. 3:12-17)
April	27.	S	Apt to Teach (2 Tim. 2:22-26)
April	28.	S	Teaching in Songs (Col. 3:12-17)

### Historical Background

**TIME.**— For Deuteronomy, about 1500 B.C.; the gospel of John, uncertain; First and Second Timothy, probably A.D. 67. Note: Dates assigned the various books are only approximate. The lessons taught therein are timeless, and applicable to every day and age, when properly divided. (2 Tim. 2:15.)

**PLACES.**— For Deuteronomy, unknown; the gospel of John, probably Ephesus; First Timothy, somewhere in Macedonia; Second Timothy, Rome.

**PERSONS.**— Israel, Timothy, and all Christian people everywhere.

### Lesson Text

- 4 Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah:  
 5 And thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.  
 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart;  
 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.  
 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes.  
 9 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.  
 38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he sent, him ye believe not.  
 39 Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me;  
 40 And ye will not come to me, that ye may have life.  
 13 Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching.  
 14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.  
 15 Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all.  
 16 Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.  
 14 But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;  
 15 And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.  
 16 Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness:  
 17 That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Israel Commanded to Teach the Law of God (Verses 4-9).
- II. Jesus Commands to Search the Scriptures (John 5:38-40).
- III. Timothy Admonished to Give Attention to Reading (1 Tim. 4:13-16).
- IV. Value of the Sacred Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:14-17).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The selection from Deuteronomy is but one of many similar in

junctions in the Old Testament urging the children of Israel to be diligent in the instruction of the young. Again and again they are impressed with the importance of teaching their children the book of the law in their earlier years. The book of Deuteronomy is a repetition of the law, as the name itself implies, being a compound Greek term from *deuteronomion*, literally, "second law," or "law repeated." For a discussion of the purpose and design of the gospel by John, see Lesson III, in this quarter. The books of First and Second Timothy were written by Paul to his son in the gospel, Timothy to instruct him in the proper procedure touching church organization, and in conduct characteristic of a young evangelist.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

This lesson is designed to teach us the importance the scriptures attach to the study of the word of God. The Bible is God's final and complete revelation to man; and it can accomplish the purpose for which it was given only when man studies it and appropriates its lessons, and incorporates them into his life.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"I will meditate on thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways." (Psalm 119:15.) Inasmuch as the word "meditate" is frequently used in the scriptures to indicate to us the character of study that should ever be true of us, it will not be amiss to study the etymology of this term. It is the translation of the Hebrew word (in its Old Testament usage) which means, literally to mutter; that is, to repeat slowly and softly to oneself. Imagine then, one sitting quietly by himself and so lost in contemplation and study that he softly gives utterance to the thoughts which pass through his mind. It is a word which speaks of concentration, absorption, and intense study. Webster defines it to mean, "To contemplate; to keep the mind or attention fixed upon; to watch; to study; to muse upon, or over; to ponder." One may therefore meditate on the Lord's word and ways, without necessarily having the book open before his view. Indeed, one should so familiarize oneself with the holy scriptures as to be able at all times to mediate upon its sacred teachings. Adam Clarke makes the following observations on this passage: "He should encourage self-examination and reflection; and meditate frequently on God's words, works, and ways; and especially on his gracious dealings toward him. He should keep his eye upon God's steps; setting the example of his Saviour before his eyes; going where we would go, and nowhere else; keeping the company that he would keep, and none else; doing what he would do, and nothing else; and doing everything in reference to the final judgment."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This lesson is so obviously important; so absolutely essential to the well-being of every individual in the world, that the teachers will have little need of suggestions regarding the proper procedure in teaching it. Opportunity is here offered to remind the students of the divine authority of the Bible; the purpose for which it was given to mankind; the manner in which that purpose was fulfilled; and the parts particularly applicable to us who live under the Christian dispensation. The younger classes should be impressed with the im-

portance God attached to the instruction of the young in Israel; and. the older ones the responsibility that is theirs in so teaching the word to their own children today.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

### I. Israel Commanded to Teach the Law of God (Verses 4-9)

"Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." The words, "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah," is the Jewish "Shema," words uttered whenever and wherever Jews gather for worship. It is one of the four passages in the Old Testament which they write on their phylacteries.' On this passage Clarke makes the following observations: "Many think that Moses teaches in these words the doctrine of the trinity in unity .... When this passage occurs in the Sabbath readings in the synagogue, the whole congregation repeat the word *achad* for several minutes together with the loudest vociferations; this, I suppose they do to vent a little of their spleen against the Christians; for they suppose the latter hold three gods because of their doctrine of the trinity, but all their skill and cunning can never prove that there is not a plurality expressed in the word *Elohinu*; and were the Christians, when reading this verse to vociferate *Elohinu* for several minutes as the Jews do *achad*, it would apply more forcibly in the way of conviction to the Jews, of the plurality of persons in the Godhead than the word *achad*, one, against every pretended false tenet of Christianity; as every Christian receives the doctrine of the unity of God in the most conscientious manner."

The command to love God supremely, that is, "with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might," is of frequent mention in the New Testament. Jesus cites it as the first commandment of the law (Matt. 22:36-40), and declares that when associated with the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself, all the law and the prophets hang therefrom.

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates." Observe the divine injunction to have God's commandments in the heart. If they be not in the heart; if one does not love them intensely, and prize, them highly, they will not likely influence the life. The statement speaks of the most intense devotion to the words of the law of God. Moreover, they are to be taught diligently, literally, repeated, iterated, from a term which, in the original, means to whet or sharpen an instrument, which is done by constant friction or grinding. Thus may be seen the spirit of this divine injunction. God expected Israel to teach their children, using the utmost diligence, and with constant repetition until the lessons were thoroughly learned. This is a most difficult task, and requires much patience, much prudence, much judgment, much piety in the parents. They were to be talked

of in the home, on the street, by the wayside, in the evening, and at the break of day. They were to be placed in conspicuous places that, wherever people gathered, they would be reminded of their obligation to the law of God. Is it surprising that, in view of this injunction, the Jews maintain such warm and uncompromising devotion to the law today? True, they have greatly perverted it, and wrested it from its intended use, but their loyalty and devotion to the religion of their fathers stems from such injunctions as this. This is in sharp contrast to the indifference that characterizes many so-called Christian parents today. In many such homes the word of God is never opened; religious literature is conspicuous by its absence, while the members of the family feast upon worldly literature of the most dangerous sort. It is inevitable that children raised under such circumstances should manifest utter disregard and not infrequently obvious contempt for the precepts and admonitions of the most high God.

## **II. Jesus Commands to Search the Scriptures (John 5:38-40)**

"And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he sent, him, ye believe not. Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." This was the severe rebuke administered to the unbelieving Jews by our Lord. The word "search" implies painstaking, exhaustive examination; this the Jews were accustomed to do, yet despite this they rejected the Lord, though the very scriptures they so painstakingly examined were filled with prophetic utterances which pointed only to him. Had they believed the scriptures they professed to study so minutely, they could not have failed to see in him the Messiah who was to come. They did not believe their own scriptures. Jesus later said to these same unbelievers: "Think not that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, on whom ye have set your hope. For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:45-47).

It will be noted that the statement, "Search the scriptures," is in the indicative mood, in the Revised Version. Many scholars think that the words should be rendered in the imperative mood, and it is in this manner that the passage is rendered in the King James Version. Albert Barnes asserts that it is impossible to determine which is the true interpretation. He further says, "Either of them makes good sense .... There is abundant evidence that the Jews did search the scriptures. It is equally clear that all men ought to do it." We learn from this passage that the scriptures teach us the way of life, and that by diligently studying them we may attain to it. The Bereans were commended for searching the scriptures (Acts 17:11); and Timothy is said from a child to have "known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." (2 Tim. 3:15.) The scriptures should be studied throughout life; but especially by individuals in their younger years when the mind is alert, and learns easily, and while life is before one that he may transcribe into his own life the things learned.

### III. Timothy Admonished to Give Attention to Reading (1 Tim. 4:13-16)

"Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching." Timothy was a young gospel preacher; and therefore in need of much study to qualify himself for the work of an evangelist. (2 Tim. 4:1-4.) Gospel preachers and Bible school teachers must study if they are to present effectively the word of life to those with whom they have to do. The qualifications of a teacher are: (1) Faithfulness; (2) ability to teach others (2 Tim. 2:2); and the ability to teach can come only through hard study. There is no royal road to learning. One acquires a workable knowledge of the scriptures only by applying oneself as one would in the acquisition of any other subject. It is likely that reference is here made to the Old Testament scriptures; these Timothy was to read and, as we shall see later, meditate on. Some think the reading here referred to his public reading; and it may be that this is correct. It was customary to read the law and the prophets in the synagogue; and this practice was likely continued in the assemblies. Timothy was therefore to be diligent in reading the sacred writings at home that he might be the better qualified to read and expound them in the public assemblies.

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Since our lesson for today deals with the subject of studying the Bible, it is not necessary for us to expound this verse. It is a difficult one and has been subjected to various interpretations. If the reader is curious to pursue the matter further, he will find a great deal of matter thereon in Adam Clarke's Commentary; Lipscomb on First Timothy, or in any of the commentaries dealing with this book.

"Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all. Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." Timothy was thus instructed to use such diligence in the study of the scriptures that his progress would be apparent to all. He was not to divide his attention with worldly aims and callings. He was to be careful in his life and conduct, and watchful and faithful in the trust committed to his care. This, indeed, should characterize every child of God today. We should first demonstrate the reality of our religion in a life of personal devotion to God, and then teach the principles thereof to all others with whom we come in contact. Timothy could save himself only by faithfully teaching the word of truth delivered to him. Thus in striving to save others he would in fact simply be saving himself. This teaches us that we sustain such a great responsibility to the unsaved about us that we cannot possibly be saved ourselves without making an effort to save others. An ancient prophet of God said, "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand." (Ezek. 33:8.) Hence, not only the salvation of the world, but our own salvation, depends on our faithfulness in discharging the duties here laid down.

### IV. Value of the Sacred Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:14-17)

`But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast

been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." No one, it matters not how well instructed in divine things, is out of the reach of temptation, apostasy, and final ruin; hence the necessity of watching unto prayer, depending upon God, continuing in the faith, and persevering unto the end. Paul had been Timothy's father in the gospel and teacher. It was not enough that Timothy had received the truth of the gospel: it was vital that he abide in it and be influenced thereby. (John 8:31, 32.) Truth merely assented to, and not obeyed, produces no blessing. It is not the hearer of the law, but the doer thereof that receives the blessing. (Matt. 7:21.)

It should be noted that Paul reminded Timothy of his raising, asserting that he had known the scriptures from a babe. We learn something of the faithfulness and fidelity of Timothy's mother and grandmother in the first chapter of this epistle. The richest heritage of anyone is a life directed by a devout father and mother. In comparison with this, every other blessing pales into insignificance. Fathers and mothers indifferent to the well-being of their children in their earlier years will reap the fruit of their neglect in later years. Happy indeed is that individual whose feet are set in the proper path as was Timothy in early years of childhood. The familiarity which Timothy possessed with the Old Testament scriptures (for it was these he learned from his mother and grandmother) enabled him to see clearly the fulfillment of these scriptures in the life and work and teaching of Christ. It was an easy matter for Paul to instruct him in Christianity with the background he had of Old Testament teaching. This, were there no other reasons, is sufficient ground for much study of this portion of God's revelation to man. While its laws are not applicable to us today, yet many fundamental principles there announced have their fulfillment in the Christian age today, and to familiarize ourselves therewith is to make easier our acquisition of New Testament teaching.

The utility of the scriptures is next suggested in matters pertaining to the growth and development of all. In addition to making us wise unto salvation, they contain information designed to teach us our duty to God, to reprove us when we go astray, to correct us when in error, to instruct us in righteousness, and in a word, to supply every needed essential to our welfare here that we may be completely furnished unto every good work. All of this information is inspired, and thus guaranteed against the possibility of error in the production thereof. Containing such a priceless store of information having to do with the most vital concerns in life, we are surely obligated to study them daily, and throughout life. The goodness of God is surely manifest in making such a wonderful revelation to his children, and it is certainly base ingratitude to fail to improve our time by careful and prayerful study thereof. An earnest desire to know the will of the Lord will not go unrewarded for Jesus said, "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself" (John 7:17.) One who studies the inspired word diligently will find it opening up to his view in a

manner that he never considered possible when he first began the study thereof. The Bereans gained for themselves a place among the noble of earth because they searched the scriptures daily, and were desirous of knowing what the truth is. (Acts 17:11.)

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Chief purpose of this lesson.  
 Significance of the word "meditate."  
 Lesson derived from Golden Text.  
 The Jewish "Shema."  
 Practice of Jews touching the use of this statement.  
 Its significance in determining the deity of Christ.  
 Jesus' use of the First Commandment.  
 Meaning of statement that God's words are to be in our heart.  
 Significance of statement "taught diligently."  
 Where, when, and how the word of God is to be taught.  
 Contrast Jewish practice of teaching with so-called Christian practice today.  
 Meaning of the statement, "Search the scriptures."  
 Why the Bereans were commended.  
 Paul's admonition to Timothy.  
 Qualifications of efficient Christian workers.  
 Degree of diligence required by Paul of Timothy.  
 How only could Timothy save himself?  
 Ezekiel's statement in connection with this portion of the lesson.  
 Timothy's ancestry here referred to.  
 The utility of the scriptures.

### Lesson V—May 5, 1946

#### THE SIN OF DRUNKENNESS

**Prov. 23:29-32; Rom. 13:11-14; 1 Cor. 6:9-11**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Isa. 28:1-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20:1.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

April	29.	M	Consequences of Drunkenness (Prov. 23:29-35)
April	30.	T	A Curse Upon Drunkenness (Isa. 5: a-12)
May	1.	W	Woe Unto Drunkards (Amos 6:1-6)
May	2.	T	Warning Against Drunkenness (Luke 21:34-36)
May	3.	F	Reveling and Drunkenness (Rom. 13:11-14)
May	4.	S	Keep No Company with Drunkards (1 Cor. 5:9-13)
May	5.	S	No Drunkards in Heaven (1 Cor. 6:8-11)

#### Historical Background

TIME.— For Proverbs, during the reign of Solomon, about 1000 B.C.; Romans, A.D. 57; First Corinthians, A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Corinth.

PERSONS.—Solomon, Paul, and all children of God everywhere.



**Lesson Text**

- 29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?  
 Who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause?  
 Who hath redness of eyes?
- 30 They that tarry long at the wine;  
 They that go to seek out mixed wine.
- 31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red,  
 When it sparkleth in the cup,  
 When it goeth down smoothly:
- 32 At the last it biteth like a serpent,  
 And stingeth like an adder.

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.

9 Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. The Dangers of the Wine Cup (Verses 29-32).
- II. Watchfulness and Soberness Enjoined (Rom. 13:11-14).
- III. No Drunkards in Heaven (1 Cor. 6:9-11) .

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

The book of Proverbs is a collection of moral and religious maxims containing instruction in right living. There are also brief discourses on wisdom, justice, temperance, industry, purity, etc. Solomon is generally credited with the authorship of a large portion of the Proverbs, although it is quite probable that all were not original with him. Chapters 30 and 31 contain the words of Agur and Lemuel. Our selection from Romans is in that portion of the epistle where Paul is setting forth exhortations regarding Christian living. So, too, of the portion from the Corinthian letter.

**SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

It is the purpose of this lesson to discuss the evils of intoxicating drink as they relate both to the individual and to society at large. The popularity of strong drink is on the upsurge; and it is vitally important for all who have to do with forming character to do their utmost in pointing out the evils thereof.

**THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20:1.) Such is the rendering of the American Standard Version. This passage will likely sound more familiar as it is rendered in the King James Version: "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." The Hebrew word translated "mock" here is frequently applied to men who scorn or condemn that which is good. Here it

denotes their character. As applied to the wine that intoxicates, this word symbolizes the effect of such wine upon the drinker, either in inclining him to mock at serious things, or in the mockery it may (by a figure) be said to make of the good resolutions he forms before partaking of it. The word "raging" is from a Hebrew term that means to make loud sounds and noises. . No words could more aptly describe the character and conduct of an intoxicated person than these. Surely he who errs thereby is not wise.

### HELPS FOR TEACHERS

The reason so many temperance lessons are given is that they are so sorely needed. One has only to look around about himself to see how widespread this evil is. The great wave of drunkenness that is now sweeping the country tends to make many look lightly upon the practice thereof; and the vast amount of advertising being done by liquor companies encourages the weak to indulge therein. The teachers will strive to impress upon the classes the multitude of evils arising from participation in strong drink to any degree. We need not "temperance," but total abstinence.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

#### I. The Dangers of the Wine Cup (Verses 29-32)

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek out mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly: at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." This is a finely dramatic passage, emphasizing in a most impressive manner the evils arising from the use of strong drink. The wise man sits musing upon various classes and types of humanity. In his vision an object in whom is concentrated every species of misery arises, and he asks, "To whom, to what men-to what class of men-belong this cry of lament, this load of sorrow," and the answer is at hand, "Those who sit long and late over the wine, who look upon it when it is red." This is truly a vivid description of a man enslaved by drink. He is full of woe; on his shoulders rest the troubles of the world. His griefs and sorrows are greatly multiplied; and he contends with all who will listen. He bears about in his body various wounds and bruises, caused by his brawling with others and his eyes are bloodshot and red from much tippling. And, however attractive the wine may be, however red and appealing in the cup, it will sting with all the venom of an adder when once it is taken into the body. This should be remembered when reading the alluring advertisements of liquor dealers.

This section teaches us that tipplers and lovers of strong drink are miserable, contentious in word and in deed, subject to marks of violence, betraying their habits by their disfigured faces.

The plea that Solomon here warns against drunkenness only, or the excessive use of intoxicating drink, is contrary to the terms and the spirit of the passage. Drinking, in the sense of intoxication, is not necessarily implied at all; and it is not intoxication, but wine that is described in verse 31; nor can intoxication be said to bite at last. It is manifestly the design of the wise man to point out the

physical cause of all the misery he portrays, and this he finds in the nature of intoxicating liquor, and hence both reason and revelation constrain him to counsel abstinence. When men learn that alcoholic drink abuses them they will cease to talk of the virtue of not abusing it.

There is never any excuse today for the use of intoxicating liquors in any degree. Formerly, it was urged by some that it had medicinal value, and many justified its use for this purpose. But in recent times the medical profession has outlawed the use of liquor for such purposes, and there is therefore no semblance of excuse for indulgence therein today. It is alarming at the apathy that obtains, even among many professed members of the church toward the multifold evils of strong drink. Not infrequently, members of the church actually defend legalized liquor and urge that it is better for the state to license the use thereof than to attempt to prohibit it altogether. Such individuals deserve no milder punishment than to feel the sickening crunch of broken bones and to hear the moans of their loved ones caused by some drunken driver. Claims that there is less drinking today than under prohibition are false; but even if this were true, the nation at least had not legalized and endorsed a vicious evil. Never let it be said that the Lord's people ever made it legal for some boy or girl to saturate themselves in the vile stuff. Our influence should always be against it in every form.

## **II. Watchfulness and Soberness Enjoined (Rom. 13:11-14)**

"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. 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. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." The student will read the whole of Romans 13 to get the significance of the context. The apostle had just been discussing the duties and obligations of the Christian life, and this was just cause for them to awake from any lethargy that may have characterized them, and be fully alive to their responsibilities and obligations of life. The image of awaking out of sleep is often used in the scriptures to designate the rousing up from a state of comparative inaction to one of strenuous effort. (See 1 Cor. 15:34; Eph. 5:14; 1 Thess. 5:6.)

The word "night," in addition to its usual meaning, is frequently believed was not, of course, salvation from past or alien sins, but the ultimate salvation of the soul from the presence of sin—the reception of eternal life in the next world. This teaches us that the consummation of our salvation is not in this life, but in the next.

The word "night," in addition to its usual meaning, is frequently found in the scriptures to signify a state of ignorance and crime, and is synonymous with the word "darkness," as such deeds are commonly committed in the night. This time rapidly passes, in relation to eternity as a whole; it is therefore "far spent"; and the "day," the day of light is upon us, and the hour of accounting draws near; hence, we should put off the work of darkness and put on the armor of light. This is a strong exhortation to faithfulness and devotion to the cause of Christ while time and opportunity yet permit.

These things being premised, it is our duty to walk "honestly," not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness. To walk "honestly" (King James rendering), or "becomingly" (Standard Version), is to walk in a decent or becoming manner; in a manner appropriate to those who are children of God. The word "revelling" signifies licentious conduct, a life of disorder and sensuality. It is translated from the Greek word "kosmos." Cosmos, the God of revelry, is represented as a young man wearing a garland, and with a torch falling from his hand, or burning at his side, as he lies in a drunken sleep. The cosmos was either a festival in his honor, or a private feast where revelers were accustomed to gather, and engage in the most corrupt practices. "Chambering" is lewd, immodest behavior, and includes illicit indulgences of all kinds. Finally, Christians are admonished to avoid all strife (contentions, disputes, litigations, etc.) and jealousy (vehement, fervid passions) and put on the Lord Jesus Christ, making no provision to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. There are three classes of sins here mentioned: (1) reveling and drunkenness; (2) chambering and wantonness; (3) strife and jealousy. Observe the class of sins into which drunkenness falls. It is a companion of every type and kind of sin. When one finds drunkenness, he will find almost every other evil thing. This is the reason so much is said in the Bible against the use of intoxicating liquors. (See Prov. 20:1; 23:29-32; Isa. 28:7; Hab. 2:15; 1 Cor. 6:9-1; Eph. 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:7, 8.) A drunkard brings suffering and trouble, poverty and want, upon so many innocent ones. Parents cannot impress too strongly upon their children the evils of strong drink and the danger of indulging therein. The only safe rule touching its use is to use it not at all under any circumstance.

### **III. No Drunkards in Heaven (1 Cor. 6:9-11)**

"Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God." The unrighteous are those who, for any reason are unjust; here, the term is applied particularly to those who defraud and do their brethren wrong. It is a comprehensive term and can include all kinds of wrongdoing. Then follows a long list of evil persons who cannot enter the kingdom of God. These are: (1) fornicators; (2) idolaters; (3) adulterers; (4) effeminate; (5) abusers of themselves with mankind; (6) thieves; (7) covetous individuals; (8) drunkards; (9) revilers; (10) extortioners. Fornicators are those who engage in any kind of unlawful sexual practices; idolaters, those who worship false gods; adulterers, individuals guilty of cohabitation with those to whom they are not married; effeminate, those who make self-indulgence the rule of their life, who live for this life only; abusers of themselves with mankind, an unspeakable vice of great prevalence at the time Paul wrote this epistle, and not unknown even today; thieves, those who steal; covetous persons, stingy, penurious, tightfisted individuals. It is remarkable that the apostle always ranks the covetous along with the most abandoned classes of men. Note

the company a covetous man keeps. Revilers, translated from the same Greek word as that rendered "railer" in 1 Cor. 5:11. Extortioners, those who obtain that which is of value by force; drunkards, persons who are addicted to the use of intoxicating liquors. Such need not be deceived: they cannot enter the kingdom of God. This implies that (1) it is possible for one to be deceived regarding these matters; (2) there is no necessity for being deceived, the scriptures are clear and plain on this subject. We may deceive our own selves by adopting a specious philosophy regarding such practices, and thus go along feeling justified, and find ourselves unprepared at the last day. We may allow ourselves to be deceived by others by accepting an erroneous view regarding such things only to find it will not justify us at the judgment.

We learn from this section that the unholy cannot be saved. So God has determined; and this purpose cannot be avoided and escaped. It is fixed; and men may think of it as they please, still it is true that there are large classes of men who, if they continue such, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The fornicator, the idolater, the drunkard, and the covetous cannot enter heaven. So the judge of all has said, and who can unsay it? So he has decreed, and who can change his decree? And so it should be. What a place would heaven be if the drunkard, and the adulterer and the idolater were there? How impure and unholy it would be! If none of these can be saved as they are, what a host of people from among our own number and within the realm of our own acquaintance are traveling down to hell. How large a part of every community is made up of such persons. Prominently mentioned among this number are those addicted to the use of intoxicating liquors. For them is the same fixed destiny that awaits the vilest of earth. In view of this fact, how can we be longer deceived by the specious philosophy that a moderate use of such is innocent? That which has tied up with it the most far-reaching consequences cannot be considered harmless and innocent. There is but one sensible course for the Christian to pursue: let him abstain from it throughout life.

Notwithstanding the fact that these vices had characterized the brethren in Corinth, when the gospel was preached to them, and its claims upon their lives felt, they immediately abandoned their former life, and received the apostle's approbation for the same. "And such were some of you," but now "ye were washed, ye were justified, ye were sanctified." This teaches us that those who have been washed, justified, and sanctified must not engage in the practices that formerly characterized them. This is sufficient to indicate to us that the Lord is not pleased when those who wear his name revert to the practices that obtain among those who make no pretension to Christianity.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Nature of the book of Proverbs.

Meaning of Golden Text.

Reason for so many temperance lessons.

Vivid description of a drunkard in Prov. 23:29-32.

Plea that Solomon merely warned against overindulgence examined.

The claim that liquor has medicinal value.

Whether Christians should favor legalized liquor.

Appropriate figure used by Paul to indicate activity.  
 Meaning of expression, "Salvation nearer."  
 Terms of this section (Rom. 13:11-14) explained.  
 Why Bible has so much to say regarding dangers of strong drink.  
 Company drunkards keep in Bible.

## Lesson VI—May 12, 1946

### SPEECH OF CHRISTIANS

#### James 3:1-14

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Psalm 19:7-14; James 3:1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but a grievous word stirreth up anger." (Prov. 15:1.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study

##### Daily Bible Readings

May	6.	M	Warning Against Corrupt Speech (Eph. 4:25-32)
May	7.	T	Speak with Grace (Col. 4:1-6)
May	8.	W	Deception of Speech (Col. 2:1-5)
May	9.	T	Sound Speech (Tit. 2:1-8)
May	10.	F	Idle Words (Matt. 12:31-37)
May	11.	S	Speak the Truth (Eph. 4:11-16)
May	12.	S	Speak Evil of No Man (Tit. 3:1-7)

#### Other Lesson Material

##### Psalm 15; Psalm 50:20; 5:9

#### Historical Background

TIME.— Much uncertainty attaches to the tulle of the writing of the book of James. According to Josephus, James was martyred about A. D. 63. The book therefore was written earlier than this date; how much earlier we have no means of knowing.

PLACE.— Probably Jerusalem.

PERSONS.— All children of God everywhere.

#### Lesson Text

- 1 Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment.
- 2 For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also.
- 3 Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also.
- 4 Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth.
- 5 So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!
- 6 And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell.
- 7 For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind:
- 8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, ft is full of deadly poison.
- 9 Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God:
- 10 Out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

- 11 Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter?  
12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? neither can salt water yield sweet.  
13 Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom.  
14 But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Responsibility of Teachers (Verse 1).
- II. Evils Which Grow Out of the Improper Use of the Tongue (Verses 2-12).
- III. The Importance of Wisdom (Verses 13, 14).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The book of James was written by James, "the Lord's brother" Jerusalem and one of the most permanent resident of the city of prominent disciples in the early church. He was one of the chief figures in the council held in Jerusalem, described in Acts, chapter 15, and was by Paul considered to be one of the "pillars" of the church. (Gal. 2:9.) The letter is addressed to the "twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion," and was written to instruct in the various practical duties of the Christian life, and to offer encouragement in the face of the trials that beset the faithful in those days. Because it deals with so many practical problems, it has been called "the gospel of common sense." The third chapter, from which we are to study today, deals with the evils that grow out of the improper use of the tongue. This chapter should be read and studied regularly by all members of the church. We all sin with our tongue.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

"Speech of Christians" suggests the proper use of words that should characterize those who are children of God. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and we indicate what we are to those about us by the way in which we speak. The control the Lord expects us to exercise over our tongues is the lesson for us today.

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"A soft answer turneth away wrath; but a grievous word stirreth up anger." "Gentleness," as Adam Clarke observes, "will often disarm the most furious, where positive derangement has not taken place; one angry word will always beget another, for the disposition of one spirit always begets its own likeness in another: thus kindness produces kindness, and rage produces rage. Universal experience confirms this proverb."

### HELPS FOR TEACHERS

This is one of the most important lessons in this series. The most common sins of the day are those committed with the tongue; and in this respect we all sin. Students should be made to see the widespread abuse that characterizes the improper use of the tongue, and should be taught to keep watch on it constantly. It would be an interesting and profitable exercise for the teachers to collect the various terms descriptive of the abuse of the tongue and read the pas-

sages to the class. These can be easily gathered by means of a concordance. It is truly an ugly catalogue of sins that will be thus collected.

## **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

### **I. Responsibility of Teachers (Verse 1)**

"Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment." The sacred writer does not intend to discourage children of God in aspiring to the work of instruction in the service of God. On the contrary, the normal, natural procedure for developing individuals is to receive such instruction as will fit and prepare oneself for the work of teaching others. The Hebrew writer rebuked the people to whom he wrote for not making such development themselves. Said he, "For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God." (Heb. 5:12.) The purpose of James was to warn of the danger of rushing into the teaching office unprepared. Teachers will give an account of their work to God. Their responsibility will necessarily be heavier than those who do not teach. One should therefore be hesitant about assuming this responsibility until fully prepared to teach correctly the word of life. There seems to have been a tendency on the part of the Jews to desire places of prominence; and many coveted the name "rabbi" (teacher). This fondness for the office of teaching seems to have been brought into the church by those who obeyed the gospel. Paul wrote of certain ones who desired "to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm." (1 Tim. 1:7.)

The warning against rushing into the work of teachers unprepared is given because those who teach shall receive "heavier judgment." This means that such will be held to stricter account for the work they do. We should not lose sight of the general context here, and the light it sheds on this passage. A lesson is to be given on the tongue: He who teaches must of course use his tongue. He will be held strictly to account for the manner in which he uses it. Let him then be duly warned of the greater responsibility he sustains.

### **II. Evils Which Grow Out of the Improper Use of the Tongue (Verses 2-12)**

"For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also." The tendency to stumble and fall is characteristic of all of us. This is true of teachers as well as all others. But since theirs is the responsibility of guiding their own life and the life of others as well, their error is more far-reaching than that of others; and since they must render an account for their teaching, to teach error is especially serious. So widespread and universal is the weakness to err with the tongue that if one were able to exercise perfect control thereof, and never sin in this fashion, he would be sufficiently in control of his body to keep it ever in the proper way. James' object is not to represent the man thus described as perfectly spotless and free from sin, for he has just said that in many things we all "stumble." His design is to show that if a man can control his tongue he has com-



plete dominion over himself and will not be liable to err in any respect.

To indicate the importance of exercising control over the tongue, despite the fact that it is a very small object, he offers the following illustrations: "Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also. Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth." That is, with a bridle, a huge animal may, with ease, be turned about by means of the slightest application of force. So, too, of a great vessel. It can be directed at will by the mere impulse of the steersman, as he wields the rudder. The tongue is a small member, in its size not unlike the rudder as compared with the ship. Yet the proper control of the tongue in respect to its influence on the whole man is not unlike the control of the rudder in its power over the ship.

"So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!" Because the tongue is small in size, we are not to conclude that it is insignificant in the sphere where it operates. It boasts of great things. Its claims are not unjustified. It has all the influence in the world, for good or for evil. Just as a small spark can make a great conflagration, so the tongue, though small in size, can stir up much trouble. In fact, the tongue, in its operation, is not unlike a fire, as James next shows: "And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell." The meaning of this is, the tongue is a little world of evil within itself. There is concentrated, in miniature, all sorts of iniquity that exist on the earth. And what evil is there which may not be originated or fomented with the tongue. What else is there that might with such propriety be represented as a little world of iniquity? With all the good which it does, who can estimate the amount of evil which it causes? Who can measure the evils which arise from-scandal, and slander, and profaneness, and perjury, and falsehood, and blasphemy, and obscenity, and the inculcation of error, by the tongue? Who can count the number of broils, and contentions, and strifes, and wars, and suspicions, and enmities, and alienations among friends and neighbors, which it produces? Truly, it is a "world of iniquity," and flames with all the fire of hell.

In contrast with birds and beasts and creeping things, the untamable nature of the tongue is next set forth: "For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil; it is full of deadly poison." Additional reason why we should ever be on our guard in matters pertaining to the tongue is the fact that it cannot be tamed. Are we thence to conclude that the Lord does not expect us to exercise control thereof for this reason? The whole context is against this view. The chapter is designed to teach the heed of constant care lest we sin with the tongue. Shall we assume, on the other hand, that being untamable we are nevertheless to answer for its abuse, in spite of our inability to tame it? This, too, seems contrary to our conception of God's dealings with man. What, then, is the true significance of this pas

sage? Birds and beasts, however wild and ferocious in their native state, when once tamed are no longer harmful. One does not have to keep a tamed beast under leash. Once the taming process has been finished, the beast is no longer harmful and may be allowed to go about at will. But note: The tongue can never be tamed. One may keep it under leash for forty years, and yet in an unguarded moment it becomes a dangerous, hurtful thing. This passage is designed to teach us the necessity of ever being on our guard against the improper use of our tongue. Man can never tame his tongue. He may rule it to a certain extent, but it still does its evil work in the world.

Oh! How conscious all of us are of the fact! How often have we thoughtlessly given utterance to sentiments, the moment said we would give the world to recall. It is impossible to call back the cruel, unkind statements we so often give utterance to.

"The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on;

Nor all of piety nor wit can lure it back

To cancel half a line; nor all our tears wash out a word of it."

How important then that we keep constant vigilance lest we be ever sinning with our tongue.

"Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? neither can salt water yield sweet." Here the utter inconsistency of the tongue is set forth. No such absurdity is known in nature. A fountain does not give out two kinds of water, nor does a tree bear two opposite kinds of fruits. A tongue ought therefore not to be put to such contradictory uses. The same organ that blesses God is used to curse men, who are made in God's image. Such things, the sacred writer says, "ought not so to be." These illustrations are very striking, and show the absurdity of that which the writer reproves. They show the power of the tongue; they show the evil that flows from our failure to exercise control thereof.

### **III. The Importance of Wisdom (Verses 13, 14)**

"Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show, by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed." If one would demonstrate that he is really wise, he can do so, the writer avers, only by manifesting the right kind of life and speaking only that which is good. True wisdom does not speak boastfully, nor use the tongue improperly. If jealousy and a factious spirit obtain, one's boasting is all in vain. Moreover, all such is positively false. Those who thus do, simply lie. To be thus influenced is not to possess the true wisdom; it is not to be governed and motivated by the wisdom which is from above, but that which springs from below; that which is earthly, of the devil and not of God; sensual; fleshly; and devilish, demoniacal in nature. Where envying and strife pre

wail, all is confusion and tumult. There is no mutual confidence; there is no union of plan and effort; there is no cooperation in promoting a common object; but every evil work obtains. When we take into account that by far the most common cause of strife is the abuse of the tongue, we are enabled to see the importance of heeding the admonitions here given.

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace." The "wisdom that is from above" is the divine wisdom which God gives to those who ask in faith (James 1:5; Rom. 10:17), and is here put in contrast with that wisdom which is from below; which is earthly, sensual, devilish in its nature. The wisdom that springs from above is "pure," chaste; "peaceable," the attitude that disposes a man to live in peace with all others; "gentle," mild and moderate in conduct; "easy to be entreated," not stiff, stern, obstinate, and unyielding in attitude: "Full of mercy," disposed to show compassion to others; "without partiality," making no distinction between brethren, and not hypocritical in life and conduct. This wisdom not only bears righteousness as a fruit, but sows this fruit as a seed to produce peace. How important then, that we be motivated and influenced by the wisdom from above in all our affairs of life.

### CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS ON THE TONGUE

The word from which "devil" is translated is "diabolos," and means a calumniator, a slanderer, and accuser, a false witness. He is also called a liar, and the "father of lies." Sins committed by words are blasphemy, to speak evil of God, or that which is sacred in nature; sacrilege, an offense against God; perjury, to bear false witness in the limited, legal sense, to tell a lie when under oath; slander, flattery, backbiting, whispering, lying, prevarication, false suggestions, etc., etc. A deceitful tongue is frequently condemned in the scriptures: "Deliver my soul, O Jehovah, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue. What shall be given unto thee, and what shall be done more unto thee, thou deceitful tongue?" (Psalm 120:2, 3.) Solomon says of evil speech: "As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbor, and saith, Am not I in sport? For lack of wood the fire goeth out; and where there is no whisperer, contention ceaseth. As coals are to hot embers, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to inflame strife. The words of a whisperer are as dainty morsels, and they go down into the innermost parts. Fervent lips and a wicked heart are like an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross. He that hateth dissembleth with his lips; but he layeth up deceit within him: when he speaketh fair, believe him not; for there are seven abominations in his heart." (Prov. 26:18-25.)

In *Cymbeline*, Act III, Scene IV, Shakespeare tells of a deceived husband, who believing his wife to be disloyal, writes his servant, accusing her of infidelity, and commands him to kill her. The servant shows the letter to the accused wife, whom he believes to be innocent. Watching the effect of the letter upon her, he says:

"What, shall I need to draw my sword? The paper  
Hath cut her throat already. No, 'tis slander

Whose edge is sharper than the sword; whose tongue  
 Outvenoms all the worms of the Nile; whose breath  
 Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie  
 All corners of the world; kings, queens, and states,  
 Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave  
 This viperous slander enters."

It is said that the great theologian, Augustine, had enscribed over his table the following couplet in Latin, which, translated, reads:

"He that is wont to slander absent men  
 May never at this table sit again."

The irretrievable loss one suffers in having his reputation impaired is expressed by the great poet thus: "He who steals my purse, steals trash; but he who filches me of my good name takes from me that which does not enrich him, but makes me poor indeed."

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Characteristics of the book of James.  
 Significance of Golden Text.  
 Importance of present lesson.  
 Meaning of James 3:1.  
 James' purpose in this passage.  
 Significance of "heavier judgment."  
 Exposition of James 3:2-12.  
 Illustrations used.  
 Meaning of "tongue cannot be tamed"  
 Two kinds of wisdom contrasted.  
 Wisdom from above described.  
 Concluding observations.

### Lesson VII—May 19, 1946

### CHRISTIANS EATING THE LORD'S SUPPER

1 Cor. 10:16-22; 11:23=29

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Matt. 26:20-28.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11:26.)

### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

May	13.	M	Lord's Supper Given (Matt. 26:26-30)
May	14.	T	Mark's Account of the Supper (Mark 14:22-26)
May	15.	W	Luke's Account of the Supper (Luke 22:14-23)
May	16.	T	The Last Supper (John 13:21-30)
May	17.	F	Disciples Meet to Break Bread (Acts 20:7-12)
May	18.	S	Meet on the First Day of the Week (1 Cor. 16:1-9)
May	19.	S	Forsake Not to Assemble (Heb. 10:19-25)

### Historical Background

TIME.— A.D. 57.

PLACE.— Ephesus.

PERSONS.— Paul; the church in Corinth; all Christians everywhere.

### Lesson Text

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood

of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ?

17 Seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one bread.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh: have not they that eat the sacrifices communion with the altar?

19 What say I then? that a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?

20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have communion with demons.

21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons.

22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

23 For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread;

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. The Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ (Verses 16-18).
- II. No Communion with Demons (Verses 19-22).
- III. Paul's Account of the Institution of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-25).
- IV. The Supper Observed in Anticipation of the Lord's Return (Verse 26).
- V. Personal Examination Necessary (Verses 27-29).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Many of those converted from heathenism brought with them into the church views growing out of paganistic practices. Many in the church in Corinth had been idol worshipers prior to their obedience to the gospel. Their friends were still engaged in the worship of idols, and questions arose touching the proper attitude that should characterize Christians in their association with their erstwhile pagan brethren. Should they go into the heathen temples with their friends? Would it be wrong for them to join in the festivals dedicated and devoted to idol worship? What of the feasts held in the temples? Could they participate therein? These and kindred questions constantly confronted them; and it is with these that Paul deals in 1 Cor. 10:16-22. In 1 Cor. 11, Paul reveals that the Lord delivered to him an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper, and showed him the purpose and design thereof. The Corinthians had abused the supper by turning it into a common meal. Some were even getting drunk at the Lord's table. He describes the condition thus: "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper: for in your eating each one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and put them to shame that have not? What

shall I say to you? shall I praise you? In this I praise you not." (1 Cor. 11:20-22.) It was to show the proper purpose of the supper that Paul penned the words that formed this portion of our lesson text today.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

The New Testament church was instructed to assemble regularly on the first day of the week, at which time they were required to observe the Lord's Supper. To learn the proper attitude that should characterize its observance, the manner in which it should be done, and the blessings that flow therefrom, is the purpose of our study today.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." The bread of the supper is a symbol of the body of our Lord; the cup is a symbol of his blood. To eat of the bread and drink of the cup is therefore to symbolize the body and blood of our Lord-the body given for us on the cross, and the blood shed for our sins. The supper is a sermon on the Lord's death and return. In its observance is shown (1) his death; (2) "till he come." Thus the supper looks forward as well as backward. The constant observance of this feast through the centuries is one of the strongest of the external evidences of the truth of gospel history. By a chain of weekly links it connects the first and second comings of our Lord; after which there will be no further need of symbols. This retrospective and prospective significance of the supper should not be overlooked.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The word translated "proclaim" in the statement, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come," means more than merely to represent or signify. The Lord's death is preached in the observance of the supper. This fact should be clearly taught in all the classes. It would be well for the teachers of the older classes to make some investigation of the doctrine of "transubstantiation," as taught by the Catholics, who hold to the view that there is a change in the bread (mass as they designate it) that makes it the actual body of the Lord. It should be shown that the bread and wine (fruit of the vine) portray the body and blood and never lose their essential characteristics. The younger classes should be taught the importance of the supper; the necessity for its regular observance, and its significance insofar as they are able to receive it.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. The Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ (Verses 16-18)**

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not -a communion of the body of Christ? Seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one bread." The word

"communion" means "participation in," or "common ownership of," and suggests the common bond that characterizes all those who assemble about the table of the Lord. Note that the "we" of this passage includes all who partake thereof, and shows that the blessing and breaking were not the acts of a minister exercising priestly functions, but the acts of a whole congregation. The words "cup of blessing" do not mean "the cup which brings blessing" (although it does this), but the cup over which the blessing is spoken-the cup consecrated by the benediction. This, incidentally, sheds light on the controversy over the number of containers that should be on the Lord's table. Those who object to individual containers on the table cite this and similar passages as evidence of the fact that only one "cup" is mentioned, hence only one cup (container) should be used on the table. It is, however, clear from this that the "cup" does not refer to the container, but to the contents. Obviously we do not bless the container; nor, do we partake of the container. The "cup," as here used, is the contents. Hence, regardless of how many containers there may be, there is still but one "cup," the fruit of the vine. It is clearly stated that there is but one bread. (1 Cor. 10:17). There are many loaves used throughout the world to symbolize the one bread, just as there are many containers holding the one "cup."

Though we are many members, yet there is but one bread and one body (the church). "Paul is deducing the mutual communion of believers from the fact of their communion with their common Lord. By each and all receiving a piece of the one loaf, which represents Christ's body, they signify that they are all bound in one spiritual body, united to Christ and therefore to each other." (Vincent, Word Studies, Vol. 3.)

## **II. No Communion with Demons (Verses 19-22)**

"Behold Israel after the flesh: have not they that eat the sacrifices communion with the altar? What say I then? that a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have communion with demons. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons." Part of the Jewish sacrifice was eaten by the worshiper as an act of worship (Deut. 12:18), and part was consumed upon the altar, as a sacrifice to God; that is, as God's part. Thus the worshiper had communion with the altar; a portion of the meat of the sacrifice entering his body and becoming a part of him, and a portion of it typically entering and becoming part of the Lord. To serve at the altar was, therefore, to have communion with the God of the altar. For this reason the Corinthians should have no part in the heathen feasts. But, they might urge, "An idol is nothing, it is a nonentity; therefore, your reason cannot apply to these feasts." This was true in part, but not wholly so; and Paul then explains that to have communion at an heathen altar is to have communion with demons, because the idol represents a reality back of it, and this reality to both Jews and Greeks was a demon. Among Jews and Christians the word "demon" represented an evil spirit; and to the Greeks the term signified demigod, or minor deity. Socrates regarded himself under the influence of a good demon. Some were

considered good; others evil. Thus at the core idolatry was demon worship, and if the Christian who ate the Lord's Supper communed with the Lord, and if the Jew who, under Moses, ate the sacrifice of the altar communed with the God of the altar; so the man, be he pagan or Christian, who partook of the idol sacrifice, communed with the demon who appropriated the worship offered the idol. Christians, of course, could have no fellowship with demons; hence, must not participate in such feasts.

This teaching, in principle, governs our participation in any form of false worship today. Christians cannot join in the worship that is corrupted; to do so is to have fellowship in that which is displeasing to God. For this reason, children of God should never participate in worship corrupted by human hands, or modified by the tastes of worldly-wise professors. It is interesting to note that the Lord

will not tolerate a divided allegiance. One cannot serve at the table of the Lord and at the table of demons at the same time and please him. To do so is to provoke the Lord to jealousy. Jealousy is the passion that arises from wounded love. (Isa. 54:5; Eph. 5:23-32; Ex. 20:5; Lev. 22:17-26.)

### **III. Paul's Account of the Institution of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-25)**

"For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." We thus learn that Paul did not receive his knowledge of the Lord's Supper from the other apostles or other witnesses, but by direct revelation from the Lord himself. (See Gal. 1:11, 12.) For an account of the institution of the supper see Matt. 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; and Luke 22:14-23. The details should be thoroughly mastered and passed on to the class. The students should be urged to learn in detail the procedure the Lord followed in the institution thereof. Jesus took bread and broke it, having given thanks for it, and gave it to the disciples. The Greek word for giving thanks is eucharistia, and from it comes the word Eucharist, applied by many to the Lord's Supper. It is never called this in the Bible and should not be today. The Bible refers to it as "The table of the Lord" (1 Cor. 10:21), "The Lord's supper" (1 Cor. 11:20), and "the communion" (1 Cor. 10:16). The King James Version reads, "This is my body, which is broken for you"; the Revision leaves out the word "broken." Next, the Lord took the cup, after supper, and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." The cup is, therefore, as much a part of the supper as the bread; and Catholics have erred greatly in separating the two, and withholding the "cup" from the "laity." It is interesting to note that Jesus, in instituting the supper, said with reference to the bread, "take, eat; this is my body." But in passing the cup to the disciples, said, "Drink ye all of it" (Matt. 26:26, 27), i.e., all of you drink of it, as if in anticipation of the doctrine



of Rome in denying the cup to the people. While all were to eat of the bread, yet the statement is much more emphatic with reference to the fruit of the vine.

The King James rendering of "testament" in connection with the statement, "This cup is the new testament in my blood," is rendered in the Revised version "covenant." The cup is a symbol of Christ's blood which ratified the new covenant. The Revision is, therefore, the better rendering in this passage.

#### **IV. The Supper Observed in Anticipation of Our Lord's Return (Verse 26)**

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." The apostle has just pointed out that the supper is observed in remembrance of him. Here he indicates that the observance thereof has both a retrospective and prospective significance. The bread, representative of his body, and the fruit of the vine, symbolic of his blood, points backward to his death on the cross, and forward to his return at the end of time. It therefore preaches a sermon on the beginning and ending of his work of redemption for man. These facts should not be lost sight of in the observance of this sacred feast. Much thought and care should be exercised that we worship in an acceptable manner in eating these emblems of his body and blood.

#### **V. Personal Examination Necessary (Verses 27-29)**

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body." The words "unworthy manner" suggest the same idea as the word "unworthily," of the King James Version. It has to do with the manner of the observance, rather than the condition of the individual observing it. Some, mistakenly assuming that the word forbade an unworthy person to partake of the supper, have refused to partake thereof on the ground that they are unworthy. On this basis no sinful, human being could eat the Lord's Supper. This is not the meaning of the statement. An unworthy person may still eat the supper worthily, i.e., in a prayerful, reverent, repentant spirit. The Corinthians were observing the supper under conditions that were disgraceful; and this, the apostle warns against in this section. We should carefully partake of the emblems, rightly discerning their purpose and intent; to do otherwise is to be in violation of this passage.

One is first to prove (test) himself, i.e., see if he is sincere (2 Cor. 13:5); determine if his heart is right (Matt. 5:22-24), and ascertain if he is eating in a submissive spirit, and in loving remembrance of the Lord. To eat otherwise is to eat and drink damnation to oneself, not discerning the Lord's body. The Corinthians had apparently lost sight of the real significance of the supper; and had added to it a common meal where some feasted and others were drunken. The bread, representative of the body of the Lord, and the fruit of the vine, emblematic of his shed blood, no longer symbolized these things, and the observance thereof was without discernment. The

whole affair was, therefore, mockery; and highly displeasing to God. This teaches us that we may observe the supper only in a prayerful, thoughtful, intelligent manner; and that to do otherwise is to sin against him whose death we purpose to remember. In view of these facts, what of the levity that characterizes the observance of the supper on the part of many? What of the thoughtlessness that obtains with those in every audience today?

We have seen that the supper has a fourfold significance for us today: (1) It looks backward; in it we show forth the Lord's death. (2) It looks forward; we show forth his death until he comes. (3) It looks inward; we are to examine ourselves and so eat. (4) It looks outward; we show forth his death till he comes. It was to be observed regularly on the first day of the week, a fact we learn from Acts 20:7. The church had a regular custom of meeting on this day, and among the items of worship is prominently mentioned the Lord's Supper. This observance was by the behest of the Spirit. We learn this from the fact that the disciples continued steadfastly in "the apostle's teaching" (Acts 2:42); and in thus continuing, were led to partake of the supper once each week on the first day thereof. The apostles were guided in such teaching by the Holy Spirit. (John 16:13; Acts 2:1-4.)

An improper observance of the supper contributes to spiritual ill-health, a fact we learn from the passage immediately following the last portion of our text. Because the Corinthians had failed to obey the Lord properly in this respect, Paul declares that many among them were "weak and sickly, and not a few sleep." (1 Cor. 11:30.) There is no reason to doubt that the wrong observance of the supper, like the improper observance of any other religious duty, will be followed with the expression of God's displeasure, and with a spiritual blighting of the soul. Those who neglect attendance at the Lord's table soon weaken and falter in the performance of the other duties of the Christian life. This, indeed, is usually the first indication of apostasy from the Lord's work, i.e., absence from the table of the Lord. Temptation to remain away from the Lord's day worship should always be resisted; it is often fatal to the soul to succumb thereto.

#### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Why question of participation in idol feasts arose in early church.

Abuse of church in Corinth of Lord's Supper.

Significance of statement, "Proclaim the Lord's death."

Meaning of word "communion."

Light this sheds on "cup" question.

Why participation in heathen feasts forbidden.

Principle involved applicable today.

How Paul received the supper.

Terms used to describe supper.

Indication here that Catholic doctrine wrong.

What the supper anticipates.

Meaning of words "unworthy manner."

What they do not mean.

Significance of word "prove."

Fourfold significance of supper.

What improper observance of supper causes.

What first indicates apostasy from Lord's work.

**Lesson VIII — May 26, 1946****HOME LIFE OF CHRISTIANS****Eph. 5:22, 23; 6:1-4**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Prov. 1:7-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." (Eph. 6:1.)

**Helps for Lesson Study  
Daily Bible Readings**

May	20.	M	Duties of Parents (Deut. 6:4-9)
May	21.	T	A Worthy Woman (Prov. 31:10-31)
May	22.	W	Duty to Parents (Prov. 7:1-7)
May	23.	T	Duties of Parents and Children (Eph. 6:1-4)
May	24.	F	Training Children (Prov. 22:5-9)
May	25.	S	A Home Jesus Visited (Luke 10:38-42)
May	26.	S	Hospitality in the Home (1 Tim. 5:1-12)

**Historical Background**

TIME.— Ephesians was written A.D. 62.

PLACE.— Rome.

PERSONS.— Paul, the church in Ephesus, and all children of God.

**Lesson Text**

22 Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise),

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. The Relationship of Husband and Wife (Verses 22, 23).
- II. Duties of Children to Parents (Eph. 6:1-3).
- III. Duties of Parents to Children (Verse 4).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

The book of Ephesians was written by Paul, A.D. 62, while he was a prisoner in Rome. It is therefore one of the "imprisonment epistles." Other books written at the same time and under the same circumstances are Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. The portion of the epistle from which our lesson is taken today draws a parallel between the relationship of Christ and the church, and a man and his wife. Following this the apostle points out the various duties and obligations sustained by members of the household. It is a vital and fundamental lesson, and one much needed today.

**SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

By "Home Life of Christians" is meant the proper attitude and conduct that should characterize members of the same family in their relationship to each other. It is a fact that Christianity governs every relationship that one sustains, setting forth the rules touching

one's conduct applicable in any given relationship. Since this is a most common and intimate relationship, this lesson is applicable to every person who has obeyed the gospel.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

The Golden Text of this lesson is a part of the lesson text. For an exposition of it and a discussion of the principles involved, see under (2) of the "Lesson Text Outlined."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This lesson is so vital and important that the teachers will have no difficulty in teaching it. Here is an excellent opportunity to impress upon the students the vital need of adhering closely to New Testament teaching in all matters pertaining to the home. These are days of great laxity in parental control of children; and many children are growing up without any regard for their duties to their parents. The sanctity of marriage, the inviolable nature of the marriage contract, the evil of promiscuous divorce, and many other matters growing out of this lesson need to be constantly taught these days.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. The Relationship of Husband and Wife (Verses 22, 23)**

"Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body." The principle upon which wives are admonished to be in subjection to their husbands is that the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the church. It is, therefore, no more unseemly for the church to attempt to assume headship of Christ than for a woman to attempt the same with reference to her husband. A godly, Christian woman would no more think of resenting, or rebelling against this arrangement than a faithful congregation would consider throwing aside the headship of Christ. The relationship sustained by both man and woman is set forth by Paul in his letter to the church in Corinth, thus: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." (1 Cor. 11:3.) As man must recognize his subordination to Christ, so must woman recognize her subordination to man. "But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything." That is, let the wives recognize that theirs is the same relationship that obtains between Christ and the church; and as the church is to be subject to Christ at all times, so let her be in subjection to her own husband.

It is, of course, unnecessary to point out that the apostle is here contemplating a Christian husband who makes no unfair demands on his wife. Obviously, he is not suggesting that a woman must do everything her husband asks—even the things that are wrong. As a matter of fact, in the event a husband should forbid his wife to serve the Lord or discharge her Christian duty, she not only may refuse, she is obligated to do so, even to the point of severing her family life with him. "And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband .... Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart. The

brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us in peace." (1 Cor. 7:13-15.) We do not interpret this to teach that such a brother or sister is free to be remarried; we think this is not what Paul had in mind. He is discussing the obligations growing out of the relationship of husband and wife. Assuming that a brother or sister cannot continue to serve the Lord and at the same time perform the duties of married life, what should be done? Let the unbelieving depart; proceed with obedience to the Lord, regardless of the consequences. This, however, does not mean that such an one is free to be married again. In fact, Paul says in this same connection: "But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband); and that the husband leave not his wife." (1 Cor. 7:10, 11.)

As to the nature of the subordination characteristic of a wife to her husband, we have found nothing better than the following discussion thereof, from Barnes' Notes on Ephesians: "Man by the fact that he was first created; that the woman was taken from him; that he is better qualified for ruling than she is, is evidently designed to be the head of the little community that constitutes a family. In many other things woman may be his equal; in loveliness, and grace, and beauty, and tenderness, and gentleness, she is far his superior; but these are not the qualities adapted for government .... In every family there should be a head, some one who is to be looked up to as the counselor and the ruler; some one to whom all should be subordinate. God has given that prerogative to man, and no family prospers where that arrangement is violated. Within proper metes and limits, therefore, it is the duty of the wife to obey, or to submit herself to her husband.

"Those limits are such as the following: 1. In domestic arrangements the husband is to be regarded as the head of the family; and he has a right to direct as to the style of living, the expenses of the family, the clothing, etc. 2. In regard to the laws which regulate the family, he is the head. 3. In business matters the wife is to submit to the husband. She may counsel with him if he chooses; but the affairs of business and property are under his control, and must be left to his disposal. 4. In everything except that which relates to conscience and religion, he has authority. But there his authority ceases. He has no right to require her to commit an act of dishonesty, to connive at wrongdoing, to visit a place of amusement which her conscience tells her is wrong, nor has he a right to interfere with the proper discharge of her religious duties. He has no right to forbid her to go to church at the proper and usual time, or to make a profession of religion when she pleases. He has no right to forbid her endeavoring to exercise a religious influence over her children, or to endeavor to lead them to God. She is bound to obey God rather than any man, and when even a husband interferes in such cases, and attempts to control her, he steps beyond his proper bounds, and invades the prerogative of God, and his authority ceases to be binding ....

"While, however, it is conceded that the husband has authority over the wife, and a right to command in all cases that do not pertain to the conscience, it should be remarked: (1) That his command

should be reasonable and proper. (2) He has no right to require anything wrong, or contrary to the will of God. (3) Where commands begin in this relation, happiness usually ends; and a moment the husband requires a wife to do anything, it is usually a signal of departing or departed affection and peace. When there are proper feelings in both parties in this relation, there will be no occasion either to command or obey. There should be such mutual love and confidence that the known wish of the husband should be a law to the wife; and that the known desires of the wife should be the rule which he would approve."

Incidental to this study is the fact that it is here stated that Christ, being the head of the church, is the Savior of the body. The church is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22, 23); hence, Christ is the Savior of the church. This, were there no other reasons, is sufficient to indicate to us the essentiality of the church. To be among those the Lord saves, one must be in his body, since he is "the saviour of the body"; but since the body is the church, to be among the saved, one must be in the church. There is no salvation out of the church of our Lord.

## **II. Duties of Children to Parents (Eph. 6:1-3)**

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." There are many reasons why it is right for children to obey their parents in the Lord. (1) The good order of a family, and hence of the community, depends on it; no community nor family being prosperous where there is not due subordination in the household. (2) The welfare of the child depends on it; it being of the highest importance that a child should be early taught obedience to law, as no one can be prosperous or happy who is not thus obedient. (3) Because the child is not competent, as yet, to reason on what is right, or qualified to direct himself; and while that is the case, he must be subject to the will of some other person. (4) Because the parent, by his age and experience, is to be presumed to be qualified to direct and guide the child. (5) Because the family government is designed to be an imitation of the family and government of God; to accustom a child to be obedient to the family government is to assist in laying a foundation of character that will enable him to be obedient to the government of God.

Children are to obey their parents in the Lord, i.e., as far as their commandments agree with the commandments of the Lord; but no further. No parent, on the pretext that a child must obey him, has the right to require a child to He, steal, cheat, assist in committing murder, or do anything contrary to the will of God. Nor has the parent the right to forbid the child doing that which is right and proper. The duties and rights of children in such cases are similar to those of wives, see above under (1).

"Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." It is interesting to note that the apostle mentions two things touching the responsibility of children to their parents: (1) obedience; (2) honor. Obedience is the duty, honor the disposition of which the obedience is born. Where the disposition to obey is lacking, there will be no obedience in the true sense; any conformity to the will of the parents will be wanting in the proper

attitude that should characterize obedience. Clarke observes that "there is a degree of affectionate respect which is owing to parents, that no person else can properly claim. For a considerable time parents stand, as it were, in the place of God to their children; and therefore, rebellion against their lawful commands has been considered as rebellion against God. This precept, therefore, prohibits not only all injurious acts, irreverent and unkind speeches to parents; but enjoins all necessary acts of kindness, filial respect, and obedience. We can scarcely suppose that a man honors his parents, who, when they fall weak, blind, or sick, does not exert himself to the uttermost in their support. In such cases God as truly requires the children to provide for their parents, as he required the parents to feed, nourish, support, instruct, and defend the children, when they were in the lowest state of helpless infancy." Solomon says that "the eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." (Prov. 30:17.) Disobedience to parents is named among the dark sins of the heathen of reprobate mind (Rom. 1:30), and a token of the great apostasy foreshadowed in New Testament history is that some would be "disobedient to parents" (2 Tim. 3:2.) Ours is truly a day of much looseness and laxity in parental control. It is said that in this day of electricity the only things about a house not controlled by a switch are the children!

This is the first commandment with promise. The promise was that those who honored their father and mother would live long in the land which the Lord would give them. This indicates to us the great importance attached to filial obedience. In Deut. 5:16, it is said, "And that it may go well with thee"; we may therefore conclude that it will go ill with the disobedient. It is still true that obedience to parents is conducive to length of life; and that those who are most obedient in early life, all else being equal, have the best prospect of living long. This occurs because: (1) Obedient children are saved from the vices and crimes which shorten life. (2) Obedience to parents is connected with virtuous habits conducive to a long life. (3) God will watch over those who are obedient. If he regards a falling sparrow (Matt. 10:29), and if he numbers the hairs of our heads (Matt. 10:30), will he not overshadow with his wings of protection the little boy who honors him by honoring his father and mother? We think he will.

It is significant that the word "piety" is used both in connection with our duty to God and to our parents. The word means "dutifulness toward God and toward parents." It is impious to disobey a commandment that relates either to our duty to our parents or to God. While it is wicked to kill, He, steal, etc., anything that injures another; impiety deals with filial disobedience. This is an important distinction. The violation of any of the subsequent commandments is wickedness, sin; but a violation of the four commandments relating to God and the one commandment relating to parents is impious. This word is used in the following passage in the New Testament to indicate this duty: "But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God." (1 Tim. 5:4.)

Not only is parental discipline essential to the well-being of the

child, but it makes for peace and prosperity for the parents. God said of Abraham, "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him. For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice." (Gen. 18:18, 19.) Another remarkable example of this is the house of the Rechabites: "And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus said Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he commanded you; therefore thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." (Jer. 35:18, 19.) Geikie's "Hours with the Bible" cites a testimony from a traveler who in 1862 found a tribe of these Rechabites still living and flourishing thousands of years after this remarkable prophecy, a living monument to the truthfulness of sacred writ, and the certainty with which God fulfills his promises.

### **III. Duties of Parents to Children (Verse 4)**

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." This is addressed to fathers, because they are the heads of the family and its government is especially committed unto them. The object of Paul here is to show parents that their commands should be reasonable and proper, and such that can be easily obeyed. If children are required to be obedient to parents (and they are), it is highly proper that the commands be such as can be obeyed, or such that the child shall not be discouraged in his attempt to obey. Parents are not to provoke their children to wrath by unreasonable commands; by needless severity; or by the manifestation of anger. The apostle has here hit on the very danger to which parents are most exposed in the government of their children. Parents violate this instruction when (1) the requirement is impossible, absurd, or unreasonable and severe; (2) the parent is angry with the child and punishes and makes demands on the child while in this frame of mind. There is no principle of parental government more important than that a father should command his own temper when he inflicts punishment. He should punish a child not because he is angry, but because it is right; not because it has become a matter of personal animosity toward the child, but because God commands it. The moment when a child sees a parent punish him under the influence of anger, that moment the child will likely become angry too, and his anger will be as proper under the circumstances as the parent. And yet, how often is punishment inflicted in this manner! And how often does the child feel that the parent punished him simply because he was the strongest, and not because it was right! Parents should ever be on their guard against leaving a conviction with the child that wrong has been done him.

These considerations being premised, it is proper and right, yea, necessary to inflict punishment on recalcitrant children. To fail to administer punishment for infractions of duty when deserved is fully as wrong as to punish when not deserved, or in the wrong manner. Most children are unable to reason, and there comes a time in the lives of them all when they are influenced only by coercion.



To "spare the rod is," in most cases, "to spoil the child." Nothing is so unlovely as a disobedient child; and to allow children to grow to maturity without recognition of authority, and without discipline, is to foist on society a dangerous and untamed animal. Children need discipline for their own sake; and they need it for the benefit of society. To suffer a child to grow up without instruction in obedience is the same as suffering a garden to grow up without culture. Such a garden will soon be overrun with weeds, briars, and thorns. A child who grows up without proper regard for the authority for parents will feel the same rebellion against the authority of the land.

Having instructed parents in what not to do, i.e., not to provoke their children to wrath, the apostle then proceeds to tell how they should be brought up: "But nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." This embraces the whole of the parents' duty to train their children in accordance with the instruction herein given, teaching them their duty to their parents, to others about them, and to their God. This is, truly, a weighty responsibility. Parents should prayerfully and thoughtfully seek to discharge it to the best of their ability. This, they can do, only by inculcating religious principles; by setting the proper example before their children, and by encouraging them to be faithful in their service to God.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Nature of present lesson.

Principle upon which wives are to be in subjection to husbands.

Headship suggested in 1 Cor. 11:3.

Limitation of this principle.

What a brother or sister may do if improper demands are made.

Implications toward divorce and remarriage growing out of this.

Nature of the subordination; limits thereof.

Nature of husband's requirements in order to be obeyed.

Lessons incidental to this study.

Why it is right for children to obey parents.

Meaning of statement "in the Lord."

Meaning of "first commandment with promise."

What two things required.

What this involves.

Why this is an important lesson today.

Significance of word "piety."

Examples of the blessings of parental discipline and obedience.

Meaning of "provoke."

Wrong discipline described.

Importance of proper correction.

How children should be brought up.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Modern child psychology compared with New Testament teaching.

Utility of punishment in child training.

**Lesson IX—June 2, 1946****MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE****Gen. 2:18, 21-24; Matt. 19:3-9; 1 Cor. 7:39, 40**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— 1 Cor. 9:1-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Matt 19:6.)

**Helps for Lesson Study  
Daily Bible Readings**

May	27.	M	Marriage Commanded (1 Tim. 5:14-16)
May	28.	T	Marriage Had in Honor (Heb. 13:1-6)
May	29.	W	Better to Marry (1 Cor. 7:1-9)
May	30.	T	Marry in the Lord (1 Cor. 7:36-40)
May	31.	F	Marriage to Continue (Eph. 5:22, 23)
June	1.	S	Cause of Divorce (Matt. 19:3-11)
June	2.	S	Charge to the Married (1 Cor. 7:10-16)

**Other Lesson Material****1 Cor. 7:39; Rom. 7:1-3****Historical Background**

TIME.—For Genesis, 1500 B.C.; for Matthew, uncertain; for First Corinthians, A.D. 57.

PLACE.— This lesson not limited to any locality.

PERSONS.—Moses, Jesus, the disciples, Paul, the church in Corinth, and all children of God.

**Lesson Text**

18 And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.

21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof:

22 And the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

3 And there came unto him Pharisees, trying him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh?

6 So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

7 They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so.

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.

39 A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

40 But she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgment: and I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. An Helpmeet Made for Man (Verse 18).
- II. Woman Taken from Man's Side (Verses 21-24).
- III. Jesus Teaches on Divorce (Matt. 19:3-9).
- IV. Widows May Remarry Only in the Lord (1 Cor. 7:39, 40).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

The selection from the book of Genesis is a portion of the history of man's beginning and early life prior to the fall. It recounts man's existence in Eden before the expulsion; and of God's recognition of man's need for an "help meet," her creation, and the manner in which it was effected. In Matt. 19:3-9, Jesus teaches on marriage and divorce, contrasting his teaching with that of the law of Moses. Paul, in 1 Cor. 7, discussed various phases of married life, and deals particularly with the question of whether it is feasible for a widow to remarry; and if so, the conditions upon which she may safely do so. All of chapter seven of First Corinthians should be carefully read and studied in connection with this lesson. The Bible has much to say on the question, and the following passages, in addition to those of the lesson text, should be examined: Rom. 7:1-4; I Tim. 5:14-16; Eph. 5:22, 23; Heb. 13:1-6.

**SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

It is our purpose today to study what the scriptures teach is permissible in the way of divorce and remarriage. Legally, there are many grounds upon which a divorce may be obtained in the courts; but we shall see that the scriptures do not recognize many of the grounds acceptable in courts of law. Who may scripturally be divorced and remarried; together with a brief examination of the institution of marriage is our lesson subject for today.

**THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

Our Golden Text is again a part of the lesson text proper; and we defer our exposition thereof until we come to it under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

**HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The institution of marriage, its purpose, its duration, its inviolability, the evils of promiscuous divorce and remarriage, the laxity that obtains today, the ease with which marriages are dissolved, and the increase thereof should all be dealt with and discussed carefully today. The teachers should learn this lesson well themselves; and not let any delicacy of feeling for some who may be violaters thereof in the class deter them from teaching the truth on this question. One reason so many in the church today are living questionable lives and have a doubtful future is that teachers and preachers have not done their duty in teaching plainly and positively on these vital questions.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT****I. An Helpmeet Made for Man (Verse 18)**

"And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him." The Revised Version

has a marginal note over the words "help meet," which reads "answering to," that is, woman is an help answering to man's needs. The Jewish commentary by Hertz offers these comments on this passage: "'It is not good.' From this verse the Rabbis deduce that marriage is a divine institution, a holy estate in which alone man lives his true and complete life. Celibacy is contrary to nature. A help: A wife is not a man's shadow or subordinate, but his other self, his 'helper' in a sense in which no other creature on earth can be. 'Meet for him.' To match him. The Hebrew term k'negdo may mean either 'at his side,' i.e., fit to associate with; or, 'as over against him,' i.e., corresponding to him."

The practice of celibacy, to live in an unmarried state is, therefore, contrary to the design of God who created us. It is a sad commentary on man's perverted character to note that great portions of the human family subscribe to the view that it is better to live an ascetic and hermitic life than to live as God ordained. As Clarke observes, "As man was made a social creature, it was not proper that he should be alone: for to be alone, i.e., without a matrimonial companion, was not good, whether it be on the side of the man or the woman. Men may, in opposition to the declaration of God, call this a state of excellence, and a state of perfection; but let them remember that the word of God says the reverse."

## **II. Woman Taken from Man's Side (Verses 21-24)**

"And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Here, evidently, was the first use of anesthesia! To make Adam insensible of the pain that would necessarily follow such an operation the Lord mercifully put him to sleep! The word translated sleep implies that something mysterious and awe-inspiring was about to take place. See Gen. 15:12, for another, occurrence of the term. While he slept a rib was taken from his side, and from it the woman was formed. It is significant that she was not made directly from the dust as was Adam. Certainly the Lord could have formed her as he did man, but it may be that had he done this man would have considered her distinct and apart from him, a being to whom he had no natural relation. But as the Lord formed her out of a part of himself, he save that she was of the same nature as he and he was quick to recognize and confess this: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." The other creatures that had passed before him were of a different nature and constitution; none of these was suitable for him; therefore it was said, "For Adam there was not found a help meet." Now, however, this has been changed, and Adam recognized that this creature which had been taken from him was, in every way, suitable to be his companion.

Some have seen significance in the fact that woman was taken from man's side. Had she been taken from his head, it might be

assumed that she was designated to be his ruler and head; had she been made from his feet that she might be a slave and servant for him; but the fact that she was taken from his side and nearest his heart implies that she is, indeed, an helpmeet, ever to be by his side to assist, and to be loved and protected by him. Scholars have not been slow to seize upon this fact and comment on it. For example, Driver says, "The woman is formed out of the man's side; hence it is the wife's natural duty to be at hand, ready at all times to be a 'help' to her husband; it is the husband's natural duty ever to cherish and defend his wife, as a part of his own self." Whether this be fact or fancy it is interesting. Preachers usually weave this sentiment into the marriage ceremony.

As Adam is a type of Christ, the "second Adam," so the woman taken from his side is a type of the church, Christ's bride. (Eph. 5:28-32; Rev. 21:2.) There is a beautiful analogy in the opening of Adam's side to remove the rib from which the woman was made, and the opening of Christ's side on the cross when the blood was shed with which to purchase the church. This, incidentally, sheds light on when the church was established. As there was no woman prior to the opening of Adam's side, so there could have been no church before the death of Christ on the cross.

This creature taken from Adam's side is called Woman. Much speculation has been done regarding the significance of this word by the unlearned. One good brother informed this writer that inasmuch as woman was the crowning act of creation as well as the final act thereof, the Lord simply said "wo," meaning stop, hence "wo-man." Others have explained it to mean that since Eve was Adam's woe he shortened the term to "wo," thus making her man's wo, or "woman." All such is worse than absurd. The word "woman," in Hebrew, is the feminine form of the word "man." Ish, man; Ishah, woman, thus literally, she-man. Our English word "woman," is from the Angle-Saxon, "wombman," of which "woman" is a contraction, and means the man with a womb. Thus the propriety of Adam's observation: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: and she shall be called Woman [wombman, or female man], because she was taken out of man."

### **III. Jesus Teaches on Divorce (Matt. 19:3-9)**

"And there came unto him Pharisees, trying him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" It is clear that the Pharisees were not sincere in propounding this question. They were not interested in learning his views on the question of marriage and divorce. They simply wanted to entrap him, that they might impair his influence with the people. If he reaffirmed his teaching on this question, presented first in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:32), they hoped to make it appear that he had despised the law of Moses. On the other hand, if he ratified the law, they would show that he was contradicting his former teaching. The Pharisees were a religious sect of Jews who professed great allegiance to the law, and manifested great antagonism toward Jesus. There were two schools of thought prevalent among the Jews at this time regarding divorce. One, known as the school of Hillel, said that a man might divorce his wife for any offense, or any dislike he might have of her. The other, known as the school of Shammai,

maintained that divorce was unlawful, except for adultery. The people generally were much divided on this question, and argued it at great length. Whatever opinion Jesus expressed would be in opposition to the views held by many of the Jews of that day, and it was expected and hoped that this would involve him in difficulty with some of the people at any rate.

"And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Jesus here refers to the passage in Genesis that we have already studied in this lesson for the purpose of showing the original law propounded by the Lord regarding marriage. He shows (1) that marriage is a fundamental principle of the social order, God having it in view from the creation, for which reason he made male and female. (2) That the relation of marriage is superior even to parental relation. (3) That by it the pair becomes one flesh, so that man is as much joined to his wife as he is to his own flesh. As originally intended, it would be as impossible for a man to separate himself from his wife as it would from his own body, death being the only possible means of separation of each. Since man can be separated from his own body only by death, an act of God, it follows that only a similar act can dissolve the relationship that obtains between a man and his wife. Thus no man, or body of men whether acting in private, civil, or ecclesiastical capacity, can dissolve marriage other than according to the decrees of God.

"They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away?" They objected to our Lord's reasoning in the preceding paragraph by pointing out that Moses allowed divorce (Deut. 24:1); hence, if he allowed it, they inferred that divorce could not be unlawful. Moreover, they thought this involved him in a difficulty and put him in conflict with Moses on this question. They overlooked the fact that Jesus had only quoted scripture; and that if there was any difficulty it was in the minds of the Pharisees, and their erroneous application of the passages in controversy.

"He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so." In reply to the objection above Jesus points out that Moses suffered (not commanded, as the Pharisees would have it) men to put away their wives because at the time when the law was given the wickedness of men made such a concession beneficial. "Moses granted the privilege of giving a 'bill of divorcement' when the husband put away his wife. This was a written certificate of her being divorced and the cause of the divorce; this was done so the woman could be married again, if she so minded." (Boles.) Had the law propounded at creation been re-enacted by Moses, many would have refused to marry at all, preferring an illicit life to the hazard of matrimony under a stringent law, and others finding themselves unhappily married would have secretly murdered their wives to gain their liberty. As a choice of two evils, God therefore temporarily modified the law out of compassion for the woman. But, "from the beginning," i.e., as originally intended, "it hath not been so," God intending the mar-

riage contract to be binding until the death of one of the parties. Having explained the original intention of the law, and its modification under Moses, Jesus next proceeds to set forth his will touching the matter applicable to the present dispensation: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." This is a reaffirmation on his teaching presented in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:32). It shows clearly that the marriage contract is irrevocable and can be dissolved only through infidelity of one of the parties. "Except for fornication" is the only exception to the rule thus given that "whosoever shall put away his wife .... and shall marry another, committeth adultery." "Emphasis should be laid here on the word 'L' This was the opinion of Jesus, this he proclaimed to be the law of his kingdom, this the command of God ever afterwards. Indulgence had been given by the laws of Moses; but that indulgence was to cease, and the marriage relation to be brought back to its original intention. Only one offense was to make divorce lawful. This is the law of God. And by the same law, all marriages that take place after divorce where adultery is not the cause of divorce are adulterous. Legislatures have no right to say that men may put away their wives for any other cause; and when they do, and where there is marriage afterwards, by the law of God such marriages are adulterous." (Barnes.)

We have noted (1) the law of God touching the marriage relation as originally given; (2) its modification under Moses; (3) the will of Christ concerning it. Since we live under Christ, it is to his law alone that we are amenable. Hence the teaching of Christ today is, only in case of fornication (illicit intercourse by one of the parties) may one obtain a divorce and remarry scripturally. Two extremes obtain among brethren touching this' matter. Some would ignore our Savior's teaching here and allow other exceptions; others would ignore the one exception, and urge that there is no ground for divorce and remarriage. We must not go beyond what is said either to do less or more; and it is just as wrong to deny the one exception as it is to set up additional ones. In either case there is an officious handling of the word of God. Jesus had good and sufficient reasons for fixing the matter as he did, and it is ours to accede thereto without question.

In 1 Corinthians 7, and Romans 7, the general principle governing divorce and remarriage is laid down. The marriage relation is an irrevocable one, dissolvable only by death of one of the parties. That is the general law. Jesus mentions one exception. In every other case the general law operates. There is no contradiction. If I say whosoever drives an automobile sixty miles per hour shall be arrested, I do not contradict myself if I then say that an ambulance may exceed sixty miles an hour without violating the law. All understand what the general law is. One must not drive over sixty miles per hour, but in cases of emergency, may exceed this. So, of Jesus' teaching concerning divorce.

#### **IV. Widows May Remarry Only in the Lord (1 Cor. 7:39, 40)**

"A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if

the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. But she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgment: and I think that I also have the Spirit of God." Here again the general law, "A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth," is stated. (For the one exception, see Matt. 5:32; 19:9.) Assuming that the husband is dead, may a widow remarry? Paul answers thus, "If the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." What is the significance of the words, "in the Lord"? To be in Christ is to be in his body. But the body is the church. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) Hence, to be in the Lord is to be in the church; a widow may, therefore, remarry, only when she marries a Christian. This is so plain and simple as not to be open to misunderstanding. Unfortunately, many widows ignore this and bring upon their graying heads the displeasure of God and plunge themselves into a life of wretchedness and misery.

As a matter of fact, it is a serious mistake for any one to marry out of Christ. The Lord has always looked with severest displeasure upon his people when they consorted with aliens, and intermarried with those who lived contrary to his will. The following judicious words from Barnes seem especially applicable to this question: "Do they not expose often to ridicule, reproach, to persecution, to contempt, to pain? Do they not often lead into society, by a desire to please the partner in life, where there is no religion, where God is excluded, where the name of Christ is never heard, and where the piety is marred, and the beauty of simple Christianity is dimmed? And if so, are not such marriages contrary to the law of Christ? I confess that this verse to my view proves that all such marriages are a violation of the New Testament."

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Meaning of the words "help meet."  
Evil of celibacy in light of this passage.  
Story of woman's creation.  
Meaning of "this is now bone of my bones," etc.  
Significance of rib.  
Typical nature of the creation of woman.  
Meaning of the word "woman."  
Pharisees' attitude toward Jesus.  
Pharisees' purpose in questioning Jesus.  
Two schools of thought regarding divorce among Jews.  
The original law of God regarding marriage. (Points implied in this.)  
Basis of Pharisees objection to our Lord's teaching.  
Jesus explains why Moses allowed divorce.  
Jesus teaches concerning divorce under present dispensation.  
Statement of general law, and the one exception.  
Three different laws regarding marriage.  
1 Corinthians 7, and Romans 7, harmonized with Matt. 5:32; 19:9.  
Conditions under which widows may remarry.  
Implications touching marriage in general.



**Lesson X—June 9, 1946****CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO HUMAN GOVERNMENT****Rom. 12:17-21; 13:1-7**

DEVOTIONAL READING.— Mark 12:13-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.— "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21b.)

**Helps for Lesson Study****Daily Bible Readings**

June	3.	M	Obedience to Law (Tit. 3:1-7)
June	4.	T	Things of Caesar and of God (Mark 12:13-17)
June	5.	W	Jesus Paid Tribute (Matt. 17:24-27)
June	6.	T	Tribute to Roman Government (Matt. 22:15-22)
June	7.	F	.Our Citizenship in Heaven (Phil. 3:17-21)
June	8.	S	Honor the King (1 Pet. 2:11-17)
June	9.	S	Obey God First (Acts 4:13-21)

**Other Lesson Material****Acts 4:13-21; Matt. 17:24-27****Historical Background**

TIME.— A.D. 57.

PLACE.—Corinth.

PERSONS.— Paul; the church in Rome; children of God everywhere.

**Lesson Text**

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.

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.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

I. The Christian's Attitude Toward Those About Him (Verses 17, 18).

II. The Christian Not to Avenge Himself (Verses 19-21).

III. The Christian to Be in Subjection to the Higher Powers (Rom.. 13:1-3).

IV. The Purpose of the Civil Ruler (verses 4-7).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The book of Romans is one of the most profound portions of Holy scripture. B. W. Johnson says that "the depth of thought, logical reasoning, and profound comprehension of the divine government shown in this epistle have always been recognized." Luther called it "the chief part of the New Testament." The great German theologian, Meyer, says that it is "the grandest, boldest, most complete composition of Paul." Godet termed it "the cathedral of the Christian faith." "That it should be what Coleridge says, 'the most profound work in existence,' is not wonderful when we bear in mind that it was written by the greatest of the apostles, in the full vigor of his manhood, at the height of his activity, and addressed to the church of the great imperial city which was the center of influence and power for the whole world." (Johnson.) The occasion for its composition was the departure of Phoebe from Corinth to Rome. Paul had longed to visit that city and preach the gospel there, but had been hindered. The visit of Phoebe to Rome suggested the opportunity of carrying word to the saints of that city, and she evidently bore the epistle for him. The theme of the letter is set forth in Rom. 1:16: The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew FIRST, and also to the Greek." This theme is discussed with many illustrations and in various phases through chapters 1-11. Chapters 12-16 contain exhortations and practical applications. It is from this latter portion that our text is taken for today.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Christians are not only citizens of the kingdom of heaven, they are also subjects of the government under which they live. As subjects thereof, they sustain a responsibility to their civil rulers. The extent of that responsibility, its exceptions, principles governing our obligations to the powers that be, and the Christian's course in case of conflict between the law of God and the laws of man, is our study for today.

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21b.) The Jews were annually required to pay a large sum of money to the Roman government as an acknowledgment of their subjection. This tribute was bitterly resented by the Jewish people, and caused frequent uprisings among them. About twenty years before this Judas of Galilee had stirred up the people to resist payment thereof, with bloody results. The Pharisees, knowing well these facts, came to Jesus with this query, "Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" The question was designed to trap him regardless of the answer he made. If he pronounced in favor of the tribute money, it would alienate the Jews, If, on the other hand, he said that the tribute should not be paid, it would involve him in treasonable conduct toward the government in advising rebellion against it. It was a dilemma they thought he could not escape from. "But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why make ye trial of me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a denarius. And -he saith unto

them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." "What," as Brother McGarvey asks, "but divine wisdom could escape from so cunningly devised a dilemma?" Verse 22, in the light of our Lord's handling of this situation, is not surprising: "And when they heard it, they marveled, and left him, and went away."

The principle here announced is applicable today. In all matters pertaining to Caesar (the civil government) we are to render that which is due; and in all matters pertaining to God we are to do likewise. In case of conflict between the requirements of Caesar and of God, Peter's statement in the presence of the Jewish council applies: "We must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29.)

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This is a vitally important lesson, and has a particular urgency for the days in which we live. Christians are not of the world, but they are in it, and- cannot escape the responsibility of their relation to the things about them. Moreover, the Bible teaches us that we sustain a definite obligation to our civil authorities, and we cannot please God without properly discharging this obligation. Many theories of government prevail, some of which would enslave the subjects thereof, and make them amenable to the demands of their civil rulers without regard to whether such demands are right or wrong. How far one is justified in bowing to the behests of civil authorities, and what should be done when their requirements conflict with the teaching of the scriptures, are matters of far-reaching significance to us all. The teachers should use great care in properly presenting these matters, and leave their classes with well-defined conceptions of the relation between the laws of men and the law of God.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. The Christian's Attitude Toward Those About Him (Verses 17, 18)**

"Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men." These verses forbid any attitude on our part toward others about us that is not peaceable in its nature. The word "render" means "give" or "return," and we are not to give or return evil, when evil has been done unto us. This is probably one of the most difficult precepts of Christianity; man is prone to return evil for evil; and the human nature is such that it is far easier to return evil for evil than it is good for evil, or even good for good. But the law of Christ on this subject is unyielding. It is a solemn demand made on all the followers of Christ and must be obeyed. The Sermon on the Mount is full of such teaching. Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:38, 39). Note the contrast here presented: Ye have heard that it was said, i.e., the prevailing view regarding such matters is that you may render evil for evil, but I say unto you, "Resist not him that is evil"; but if one strike you on one cheek,

"turn to him the other also." These passages are plain and decisive of the attitude that should characterize children of God. Jesus also said, "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 5:43-45.) Our sonship is conditioned on our manifesting this attitude toward our enemies. God's people must not, in the light of this teaching, (1) return evil for evil; (2) resist one who does him evil; (3) hate his enemy. On the contrary, we must (1) provide things honorable in the sight of all men, i.e., let our conduct be such as to gain their approval; (2) to live at peace with all insofar as we are able; (3) love our enemies; and (4) pray for them. If it be urged that this is exceedingly hard to do, it need only be recalled that our Lord demonstrated it in his own life. Every principle here enunciated is clearly demonstrable in his life among men. He is our great exemplar; and has not required of us that which is impossible for us to do. It may be very unpopular, and may involve principles in opposition to those that prevail, but it is true, and this should be consideration enough for those who profess to be his followers.

## **II. The Christian Not to Avenge Himself (Verses 19-21)**

"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. 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. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Under our heading, "The Christian's Attitude Toward Those About Him," we have seen that children of God are forbidden to do evil under any circumstances to any man. In the light of our Savior's teaching there considered, no provocation could be so great or injury so grave, as to justify a child of God in disobeying the precepts given. This section advances a step further, and forbids our doing evil even when we have suffered evil at the hands of another. Children of God are forbidden to exercise vengeance upon those who wrong them. To avenge is to seek satisfaction for an injury by inflicting punishment on the person who injured us. This we must not do; and for the following reasons: (1) God's people must never render evil for evil; (2) they must always do good to their enemies; (3) they must pray for those who evilly treat them. Such exhortations are hopelessly irreconcilable with the practice of retaliation. Hence, vengeance is in God's hands, and he alone will exercise it. The divine wisdom is here manifested as always. We could never, with our imperfect minds, be assured that we are properly administering punishment. Some we might punish too much; others might escape with too little punishment for their misdeeds. We are to leave it all in the hands of God. God will abundantly vindicate his people. (2 Thess. 1:6-10; Rev. 6:9-11; Deut. 32:40-43.) Instead of seeking vengeance on our enemy, if he hungers, we are to feed him; if he is thirsty, we are to provide him with drink, and in so doing heap coals of fire on his head by making him ashamed of his evil conduct toward us. Finally, we are admonished to "be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," i.e., subdue and vanish evil by doing good to others. Barnes observes that "this

is the noble and grand sentiment of the Christian religion. Nothing like it is to be found in the heathen classics; and nothing like it ever existed among heathen nations. Christianity alone has brought forth this lovely and mighty principle; and one design of it is to advance the welfare of man by promoting peace, harmony, and love. The idea of overcoming evil with good never occurred to men until the gospel was preached. It never has been acted on except under the influences of the gospel. On this principle God shows kindness; on this principle the Savior came, and bled, and died; and on this principle all Christians should act in treating their enemies, and in bringing a world to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus."

### **III. The Christian to Be in Subjection to the Higher Powers (Rom. 13:1-3)**

"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. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment." These facts follow from this passage: (1) God ordains civil governments: (2) he requires his children to submit thereto; (3) to refuse such submission is to rebel against God, who ordained these governments. These facts being premised, several important questions arise: What is the nature of the allegiance required? How far shall the Christian go in submitting to the behests of civil authorities? What should be done when they interfere with the discharge of duties to God? Are the requirements of this passage conditional or unconditional? To what type or kind of government is such submission to be rendered? With reference to this last question, all of the governments of the world, at the time these words were written, were pagan governments. The laws were made by pagans and were adapted to the prevalence of heathenism. The kingdoms had been founded in conquest and in blood and opposition. Many of the monarchs were blood-stained warriors and unprincipled men, polluted in their private and oppressive in their public character. The beneficent principles of democratic government were unknown to the world in those days. It was to such a government that Paul bade submission in this passage.

This is an important fact. Some seek to avoid the force of this reasoning by urging that Christians are required to be in submission only to those governments that are founded upon Christian principles, and would exclude from the scope of this passage wicked and oppressive governments whose design is power and conquest and oppression. A correct exegesis of this passage will not permit such an exception. Paul allowed for no exceptions in the rules thus given. Moreover, it would be difficult to find a government farther removed from the principles of Christ than the one in power at the time these words were penned. A few years later this same power waged a cruel and bloody war against the Jews and destroyed the city of Jerusalem. To such a government Paul commanded submission. The principles thus given are applicable to all governments, good or bad. The German Christians, if such there are, are required to be in subjection to their government as much so as we are to our own. So of all others of all races and nationalities. The passage

will admit of no exceptions. To refuse submission to the "powers that be," whatever their nature, is to rebel against God who ordained them.

To what extent are Christians required to submit? If this statement is unconditional, then children of God must bow to the behests of government, however much such demands may conflict with what the scriptures teach is right. The test is, What has the government commanded; not what is right; for if submission to governmental decree is unconditionally required, then one needs only to determine the demands of government to find his course open for him. Obviously this is wrong. Children of God must resist that which is wrong, it matters not from what source it may spring. Even the apostles were confronted with cases where it was right to resist the law of the land. When laws interfere with the rights of individuals; when they command the performance of that which is wrong, it is the duty of God's people to refuse submission. When Peter and John were brought before the Jewish council charged with violation of their edict touching the preaching of the gospel, they made reply, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." (Acts 4:19.) The principle, then, in determining how far a Christian may go in submitting to the "powers that be" is that which determines the course in any matter: Is it right? Is it in harmony with what the Bible teaches? If yes, then it is open to the participation of Christians. If no, it matters not from what source it may come, it is wrong, and children of God must refuse it.

What is the significance of the statement, "The powers that be are ordained of God"? So long as men live in a state of society, it is necessary for them to have some form of government. God therefore entrusts men with power and ordains that they shall exercise it for the benefit of the people. This does not mean that (1) he approves of their conduct always; or (2) that what they do is always right; or (3) that it is our duty always to submit to them. Growing out of the needs of society, God gives men power; but when they abuse it, the obligation to obey them ceases. Barnes observes that "it could not be and never was a question, whether they should obey a magistrate when he commanded a thing that was plainly contrary to the law of God. But the question was whether they should obey a heathen magistrate at all. This question the apostle answers in the affirmative, because God had made government necessary, and because it was arranged and ordered by his providence."

These facts follow conclusively from the foregoing: (1) Christians are required to be in subjection to the law of the land in which they live; (2) God ordains government for people, but does not designate the nature of the government that shall prevail, i.e., he does not ordain the democratic form of government for some, the monarchical type for others; (3) to resist the edict of government when such does not involve that which is wrong is to rebel against God; (4) but when the "powers" under which we live require of us that which is wrong, we must refuse.

**IV. The Purpose of the Civil Ruler (Verses 4-7)**

"For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil." Normally, rulers operate for the benefit of the law-abiding, and consequently their actions do not terrorize those who conform to law, but those who do not. Christians should have nothing to fear from submission to such; on the contrary, such rulers are to them a blessing. Continues Paul, "And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good." The civil ruler preserves law and order; he makes it possible for children of God to pursue their way unmolested, and to worship God as they believe his word directs, and this is a great blessing. We should be exceedingly grateful that we live under a form of government that recognizes our right to worship and protects us in it against evildoers. Suppose, however, this same government should issue edicts forbidding us to worship God and serve him? Would we then be required to be in submission to such a decree? Suppose it should demand of us that we worship idols, commit immoral acts, or violate the commandments of Jehovah? "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." Bearing in mind the purpose of all government, to preserve law and order, the law-abiding need have no fear of the civil ruler. But he bears not the sword in vain. Since he exists for the purpose of executing vengeance on evildoers, his sword is not a meaningless symbol; he will use it, by the decree of God, upon those who do evil. Christians will live in harmony with the best laws for society, since they live according to the teaching of God's word; hence, will seldom find themselves in conflict with the civil ruler. Certainly as long as the ruler performs the function designed for him he will not terrorize children of God.

"Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake." Two reasons are thus assigned why Christians should be in subjection to the civil powers: (1) If one fails to obey, he will fall under the wrath of the civil ruler and be punished; (2) God has commanded us to be under obedience to them, and the demands of conscience therefore require submission.

"For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing. Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." The taxes gathered from the Roman provinces were called tribute; these taxes went for the support of the servant of the law; since God ordains human governments, it is right and proper to support them with our taxes. Moreover, we must render to all that which is due them: "Tribute," direct taxes; "customs," the toll on goods, similar to our modern tariff; "honor," respect owed to those in high places.

This lesson clearly sets forth the functions of human governments and the relationship of Christians thereto. It is the duty of the former to preserve law and order; it is the duty of the latter to maintain and support them. Insofar as the former conforms to the law of God, Christians must be in submission to them; when

they go beyond this, they must resist. It is highly significant that Paul keeps distinct the functions of government and the duties of Christians. It is not the duty of the Christian to bear the sword, to be a terror to evildoers, to execute vengeance. All of this children of God are forbidden to do. We have seen in the earlier part of this lesson that they must not execute vengeance, but that this function is in the hands of God. God uses the civil ruler to execute the vengeance he forbids the Christian to do, at least so far as vengeance in this world is concerned. God's people must not therefore become a part of the "powers that be" in the administration thereof, nor in the exercise of the functions of government such as bearing the sword, terrorizing evildoers, and executing wrath and vengeance upon those who are disobedient.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Characteristics of the book of Romans.  
 Meaning of the Golden Text and its contextual significance.  
 Why this lesson is important.  
 Our attitude toward those about us.  
 Meaning of word "render" in this passage.  
 Statement in Sermon on the Mount.  
 What God's people must not do in light of this teaching.  
 What we must do.  
 Christians forbidden to avenge themselves.  
 Who only may exercise it.  
 What we are to do for our enemies.  
 Duties of Christians to the higher powers.  
 Facts that follow from Rom. 13:1, 2.  
 Type of government under which the Roman Christians lived when Paul wrote them.  
 Extent of the principle here given.  
 The extent to which Christians are required to submit.  
 Principle upon which this is to be determined.  
 Meaning of statement "Ordained of God."  
 Purpose of the civil ruler.  
 Two reasons assigned for submission.  
 Distinct duties of "powers that be" and God's people.  
 Implications of this in determining our duty.

### Lesson XI—June 16, 1946 THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS MONEY Luke 12:13-21; 1 Tim. 6:7-10, 17, 19

DEVOTIONAL READING.— James 5:1-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal." (Matt. 6:19.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

June	10.	M	Treasures in Heaven (Matt. 6:19-24)
June	11.	T	Why We Should Work (1 John 3:13-18)



June	12.	W	Maintain Good Works (Tit. 3:8-14)
June	13.	T	Earn Their Own Living (2 Thess. 3:7-15)
June	14.	F	Difficulties of the Rich (Matt. 19:23-30)
June	15.	S	Warnings to the Rich (James 5:1-6)
June	16.	S	Woe Unto the Rich (Luke 6:20-26)

**Other Lesson Material****1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8, 9****Historical Background**

**TIME.**— Luke was written during the 27 years following the resurrection, and before the composition of Acts, written also by Luke; First Timothy was written about A.D. 66 or 67.

**PLACE.**— Uncertain.

**PERSONS.**— Luke, Paul, and all children of God.

**Lesson Text**

- 13 And one out of the multitude said unto him; Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me.  
 14 But he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?  
 15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.  
 16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully  
 17 And he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits?  
 18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my grain and my goods.  
 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry.  
 20 But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?  
 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.  
 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.  
 17 Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.  
 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Jesus Teaches Against Covetousness (Verses 13-15).
- II. The Parable of the Rich Fool (Verses 16-21)
- III. The Danger in Great Riches (1 Tim. 6:7-10) .
- IV. Paul's Charge to the Rich (Verses 17, 19).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

The setting of that portion of our lesson which is taken from the gospel according to Luke is an incident which occurred during the

year of our Savior's popularity and before opposition of the Pharisees had crystallized into the bitter hatred that later characterized them. The multitudes were exceedingly great in these days. Luke 12:1 reads, "In the mean time, when the many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trod one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples. . " From the multitude thus assembled came "one" who submitted the request that forms the basis of our study under "Jesus teaches against covetousness." This, in turn, led to the parable of the rich fool. The dangers involved in the possession of great riches, the responsibility such possession entails, and a charge to the rich is the portion of scripture we are to study from Timothy. It should be remembered that Timothy was a young evangelist and would be confronted frequently with problems growing out of the matter of riches. It was important that he be taught what should be done in the matter of teaching those who were possessed of much of this world's good. First and last, the scriptures have much to say about riches.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

To find oneself in possession of great riches involves a tremendous responsibility. The proper use thereof and the attitude that should characterize one toward his possessions are matters of much significance. It is the purpose of this lesson to teach us the proper use of our means whether they be little or much and the grave dangers involved in failing to use them in the manner our Lord intended.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal." (Matt. 6:19.) "Treasures, or wealth, among the ancients consisted in clothes or changes of raiment, as well as gold, silver, gems, wine, lands, and oil. It meant an abundance of anything that was held to be conducive to the ornament or comfort of life. As the Orientalists delighted much in display, in splendid equipage, and costly garments, their treasures consisted much in beautiful and richly ornamented articles of apparel. See Gen. 45:22, where Joseph gave to his brethren changes of raiment; Josh. 7:21, where Achan coveted and secreted a goodly Babylonish garment. This fact will account for the use of the word moth. When we speak of wealth we think at once of gold and silver, and lands and houses. When a Hebrew or Orientalist spoke of wealth he thought first of what would make display; and included, as an essential part, splendid articles of dress. The moth is a small insect that finds its way to clothes and garments and destroys them. The moth would destroy their apparel, the rust their silver and gold; thus all their treasures would waste away." (Barnes.) In view of these facts, Jesus admonished the people to "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." (Matt. 6:20.)

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

Jesus has taught that where a man's treasure is, there will his

heart be also (Matt. 6:21) ; our attitude, therefore, toward material things determines what our character is, and this indicates the vital importance in having a proper attitude toward the things we accumulate in this life. The regard one has for his money, be it little or much; the way in which he spends, or does not spend, is an infallible index to his real life. All classes should therefore be impressed with what the Bible teaches on this vital subject and should be encouraged to maintain the proper attitude thereto throughout life. Jesus has taught us that no man can serve two masters; he will of necessity hate one and love the other. (Matt. 6:24.) The servant of God cannot at the same time obey him and be avaricious or seek constantly and solely the treasures of earth.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

#### I. Jesus Teaches Against Covetousness (Verses 13-15)

"And one out of the multitude said unto him, Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me. But he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Apparently this man had engaged in a dispute with his brother about the settlement of their inheritance; and recognizing that Jesus exercised a great influence over the people, he endeavored to secure him on his side of the question and thus gain his point. The fact that Jesus gave the parable against covetousness immediately following this seems to indicate that the man had no just claim; and besides, if he did, he could have gone into the courts and obtained justice. Jesus refused to be drawn into the controversy, saying, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" It was not his purpose to settle such controversies. True, he gave principles, the proper application of which would settle all such, but he did not personally enforce them; he left it up to the people then and now to appropriate and apply them for themselves. This teaches us that civil affairs are to be left to the magistrate. "Jesus emphatically refused to become an arbitrator or umpire in secular matters. He repudiated the position of judge in family fusses and lawsuits. Jesus here is rendering unto Caesar the things of Caesar (Luke 20:25) , and showed that he had nothing to do with worldly affairs, that his kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36)." (Boles.)

This afforded Jesus an excellent opportunity to teach against covetousness. "Covetousness," is greedy or unlawful desire for something; Jesus here warns against "all covetousness," i.e., all kinds of greediness or grasping for gain. He expressed the true philosophy of the Christian life by saying that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Millions, ignoring this truth, spend their days in fruitless effort to find happiness in building up a store of this world's goods only to find that the felicity they seek eludes them. Some of the most miserable and unhappy people on earth are those who live amid luxurious surroundings, and some of the happiest people are those whose lives are spent in poverty and obscurity. Solomon gives the true recipe for successful living by saying, "This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty

of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Eccles. 12:13, 14.) To the same end, Paul wrote, "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:11-13.)

## **II. The Parable of the Rich Fool (Verses 16-21)**

The word parable is from a Greek word which signifies "to compare together," and denotes a similitude taken from a natural object to illustrate a spiritual or moral subject. It is a narrative of some fictitious or real event, in order to illustrate more clearly some truth that the speaker wished to communicate. The parable of the rich fool shows that abundance of earthly possessions did not save the rich man, but became the means of his condemnation. It was delivered to illustrate our Lord's statement that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses. Here was a man who had been eminently successful if we are to judge him by the standard by which the world determines success; yet, he was a fool, because he thought only for the here and now, and made no provision for the future. Just as he had prepared himself to live, so he thought, he was snatched into eternity unprepared. It is no wonder that the Lord addresses him as "Thou foolish one." If there is any supreme folly, it is this. To think that riches can prolong life or secure health and happiness is sheer fantasy; yet millions are spending their best years and efforts in the pursuit of that which can only bring them vanity and vexation of spirit. So often today, just as one is preparing to live comes the sentence to die. "This night is thy soul required of thee" is a warning that may soon come to us. Jesus tells us that we, too, may be like the rich fool, in that we do not make preparation for the next life. "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." This is an impressive lesson in the proper attitude that should characterize us in dealing with the possessions of this earth.

We learn the following from this parable: (1) wicked men are often signally prospered; (2) riches always bring with them an increasing load of care and anxiety; (3) they tend to steal the affections away from God and fix them upon that which is earthly, temporal, and worldly; (4) riches cannot prevent the approach of death, nor secure their owners from the grave; (5) the man who trusts in his riches is a fool in God's sight; (6) the path of true wisdom is to seek first the kingdom of God and to be ready to die, and then it will matter little what our portion is here, or how suddenly or soon we are called away to meet our judge. If our affections are not fixed on our riches, we shall leave them without regret. If our treasures are laid up in heaven, death will be but going home, and happy will be that moment when we are called to rest.

## **III. The Danger in Great Riches (1 Tim. 6:7-10)**

Our lesson text under this section is prefaced by the remark of

the apostle that "godliness with contentment is great gain." The word "contentment," Clarke declares, means a competency, a sufficiency, "that measure of secular things which is necessary for the support of life. Not what this or the other person may deem a competency, but what is necessary for the mere purposes of life in reference to another world—food, raiment, and lodging. So if a man have the life of God in his soul, and just a sufficiency of food and raiment to preserve and not burden life, he has what God calls great gain; an abundant portion." The temporal nature of all that which is material is suggested by the fact that "we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out; but having food and covering we shall be therewith content." Here again the word content means a competency. Hence, when he says, "We shall be therewith content," he means that having food and raiment, this is sufficient for our needs here, and with them we should be satisfied. The word translated "contentment" in verse 6 suggests an inward self-sufficiency; the ability to be satisfied by the power of one's own will without the need of temporal circumstances.

"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." The words "minded to be rich" mean "they that desire to be rich," the love of them, not the possession, being the occasion of the temptation here set forth. These are they who are determined to get rich; who make this their object and aim in life; who live to get money, who get all they can, save all they can, and keep all they get. These, thus impelled, will likely resort to devious schemes to accomplish their purposes, hence, fall into many temptations and snares, and are guilty of many foolish and hurtful lusts which will surely plunge them into perdition and ruin. Clarke observes "that the whole conduct of such a person is a tissue of folly, scraping, gathering and heaping up riches and scarcely affording to take the necessities of life out of them for himself; these lusts and desires are not only foolish, but they are hurtful; the mind is debased and narrowed by them, benevolent and generous feelings become extinct, charity perishes, and selfishness, the last and lowest principle in mental degradation, absorb the soul."

"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." The King James Version renders this, "For the love of money is the root of all evil." It is likely that the evils referred to are those mentioned in the preceding section. There are of course many evils which do not spring from the love of money. However, looking at it from the other angle, all evils do flow out of the love of money, and in this sense "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." What crimes have men committed to obtain money; or having it, use it in the commission of crime! This verse is sometimes carelessly quoted thus, "Money is the root of all evil." This is not true. It is the love of it that leads to evil. The words "reaching after" are from a word which means insatiably desiring, longing for so intently that they are led astray from the faith, apostatize from it, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows. The words "pierced through" are from a Greek word which signifies to be transfixed in every, part,

and is an allusion to the snares mentioned in verse 9, where a hole is dug in the earth and filled full of sharp stakes and being slightly covered over with grass is not perceived, and whatever steps on it and falls in is pierced through with these sharp stakes. In this manner does an insatiable desire for riches lead one into a trap and snare from which he cannot escape.

#### **IV. Paul's Charge to the Rich (Verses 17, 19)**

"Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on Cod, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. Having taught the dangers involved in the accumulation of riches, the apostle now addresses himself to the problem of those who are already in possession thereof. Timothy is to charge them that are rich to avoid the temptations that are common to riches, i.e., arrogance, pride, vanity and self-satisfaction, and to keep their minds fixed upon the Lord and to remember that it is he from whom all blessings flow. Riches are, he points out, at best uncertain, and therefore may not be safely trusted in. We may rely on God. He gives, gives richly, gives all things that we enjoy. The rich are instructed to do good, "be rich in good works," "ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed." Only in this way can they be assured of preparing for the life eternal. Riches do not constitute an impossible barrier to heaven, but they certainly make the way more difficult by increasing the responsibility of the possessor thereof. We must not assume that one must have an immense fund of money in order to be rich in the sense here intended. Jesus teaches us that one is rich who trusts in his riches, and one might do this with an insignificant sum. Many valuable lessons are set forth in this study; may we learn them and live them in our lives.

#### **POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

The setting of the lesson.  
Nature of the present lesson.  
Meaning of the Golden Text.  
Occasion for our Savior's lesson.  
On covetousness.  
Why Jesus refused to be drawn into the controversy.  
Lessons from this.  
Meaning of "covetousness."  
Jesus' statement of philosophy.  
Paul and Solomon's corroboration.  
Meaning of word "parable."  
Significance of parable of rich fool.  
Lessons learned from this parable.  
Meaning of "godliness with contentment is great gain."  
Meaning of word "content."  
Significance of "minded to be rich."  
What is a root of all kinds of evil. How this is true.  
What happens to them.

Paul's charge to the rich.  
What they are not to do.  
What they are to do.

### Lesson XII—June 23, 1946

#### THE WORSHIP OF CHRISTIANS

Matt. 15:7-14; John 4:19-26

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rev. 4:8-11.

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

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

June	17.	M	Worship God (Matt. 4:7-11)
June	18.	T	Vain Worship (Matt. 15:1-9)
June	19.	W	Object of Worship (Acts 17:22-28)
June	20.	T	Warnings Against False Worship (Rom. 1:18-25)
June	21.	F	Worship and Bow Down (Psalm 95:1-11)
June	22.	S	Praise God in Worship (Psalm 100:1-5)
June	23.	S	Thanksgiving in Worship (Phil. 4:4-9)

#### Other Lesson Material Acts 17:23; Col. 2:23

#### Historical Background

TIME.—Dates of writing Matthew and John uncertain.

PLACE.—Unknown.

PERSONS.—Children of God everywhere.

#### Lesson Text

7 Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying,  
I will come with their lips;  
But their heart is far from me.  
So they worship me,  
Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.  
10 And he called to him the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:  
11 Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man; but that which proceedeth out of the mouth,  
this defileth the man.  
12 Then came the disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, when they  
heard this saying?  
13 But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up.  
14 Let them alone: they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit.  
19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.  
20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought  
to worship  
21 Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in  
Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.  
22 Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews.  
23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth:  
for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.  
24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

### **LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. An Example of Vain Worship (Verses 7-14)
- II. Our Lord's Conversation with the Samaritan Woman. (John 4:19-22).
- III. Requisites of Acceptable Worship (Verses 23-26).

### **CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

While Jesus was teaching in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee, Pharisees from Jerusalem came and inquired of him why he did not follow the traditions of the elders in the matter of eating meat. A tradition had arisen among the Pharisees that required them to wash their hands as a religious rite before eating; and observing that Jesus and his disciples did not follow this well-known custom of the Jews, they asked him, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. And he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God said, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is given to God; he shall not honor his father. And ye have made void the word of God because of your tradition." Then follows the lesson on vain worship we are to study about today. For the setting of the lesson text found in John 4, see under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

It is not possible for one to worship God accidentally. There are certain well-defined rules touching acceptable worship that must be observed if we please God in so doing. It is our purpose today to examine what the scriptures teach regarding worship, both with reference to types of worship forbidden and the true worship therein set forth. Hence, by "The Worship of Christians" is meant the kind of worship Christians are to do in order to please God.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Luke 4:8b.) These words were uttered by our Lord in the mount of temptation, when Satan bade him worship him. The full text reads: "And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led in the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, being tempted of the devil. And he did eat nothing in those days: and when they were completed, he hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become bread. And Jesus answered unto him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone. And he led him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 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. If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." God only is the object of our worship and to him alone may it be given. The first three commandments of the Decalogue prescribed worship to Jehovah alone. The first forbade worship directed to other gods; the second prohibited the use of graven images in worship; and the third guarded the name of God, forbidding the profane use thereof.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

Every child of God must, if he is pleasing to his heavenly Father, engage in worship acceptable to him. It is not enough simply to be conscious of having worshiped; we shall see in this lesson that it is possible for one to worship; to worship God; yet not worship him acceptably. Unless, therefore, one knows the items of worship, the spirit that must characterize the worshiper, and the requisites of acceptable worship, one cannot be assured of pleasing God in worship. The teachers should therefore see that the classes receive well-defined conceptions of what worship is, and is not, in order that they may be able to serve him acceptably in this respect.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. An Example of Vain Worship (Verses 7-14)**

The student is asked to refer to that section of our lesson styled "Context of the Lesson" for the background of this portion of our study today. Following our Lord's rebuke of the Pharisees for having set aside the commandments of God by their tradition, he continued by saying, "Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." This quotation from the prophecy of Isaiah is taken from Isa. 29:13. Observe that Jesus begins it by saying, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you"; that is, rightly, truly, aptly did Isaiah speak of them; his prophecy correctly describes the attitude of the Pharisees in rendering lip service, in manifesting outward devotion, when their heart was far from him. This is hypocritical; and many today do as these Pharisees did, they profess to worship him, they sing his praises and utter words of devotion to his cause, while their heart is far from him. All who thus do render vain worship.

The word "vain" means empty, void, mere formality in worship. In such worship there is the performance of the items of worship, but the heart is not there; it is meaningless participation, and therefore highly unacceptable to God. (See Prov. 15:8; John 4:24.) Much worship done to God today would fall into this classification. When one enters into worship without proper heart preparation; when the lips utter words of praise or prayer that the heart does not sincerely suggest, all such is vain worship. These Pharisees were engaging in vain worship, after the doctrines and precepts of men. It should be noted that the word "doctrines" is in the plural number here. Without exception, when this word is plural, it always

refers to false doctrines, the teaching of men; when it is singular; the true doctrine is intended. (See Acts 2:42.)

The following, from H. Leo Boles' Commentary on Matthew, should be carefully considered: "The quotation from Isaiah and Jesus' application of it show clearly that to profess to worship God, yet to intermingle in that worship things not commanded by God is regarded by God as evidence that the heart is not right' in the sight of God, that the heart is not loyal and true . to him, but is far from him. Any disposition to add things resting upon the precepts or commandments of men to the service of God is evidence that the heart is disloyal to God, is far from him. Anything offered as service to God, even if commanded by God, if done because it appears wise and fitting to men, becomes offensive to God. When we worship God, it must be what he commands, and we must do it to honor and obey him, or he is not pleased with the service. We cannot be too cautious in serving him."

This is not the only example of worship rendered to God unacceptably. In Acts 17, Paul reveals that the Athenians had set up an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. He said to them, "Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance; -this I set forth unto you." (Acts 17:22, 23.). These were worshipping; worshipping God; but Paul declares that it was being done in ignorance. To "worship in ignorance" is to worship without an intelligent understanding of what God requires; and this understanding can be obtained only from his will revealed to us in the scriptures. Millions there are on the earth today who subscribe to the view that worship is acceptable to God if it pleases the worshiper; and many ask for and require no other rule by which to determine the acceptability of an act than this, Does it please me? If yes; no other reason is sought for. As a matter of fact, if there be no other reason than this, this is clear proof that it is wrong! In Col. 2; 23, Paul tells us about certain things which have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body, but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh." The word "willworship" here is translated from a Greek word which means a worship originating in the human will; acts of worship which have no higher authority than the will of the worshiper.

We have seen that it is possible for one to worship; worship God; yet not worship him acceptably. One may worship him in vain-engage in idle, meaningless formality. One may do it ignorantly — without an intelligent understanding and appreciation of what he requires. One may worship him presumptuously-by engaging in things pleasing to the worshiper. All of these types of worship must be studiously avoided if we are to please our heavenly Father and render unto him that devotion he so richly deserves.

## **II. Our Lord's Conversation with the Samaritan Woman (John 4:19-22)**

The whole of chapter 4 of the gospel according to John should be read before proceeding with the study of this portion of the

lesson. The journey our Savior was taking, the geographical section of country into which he had come when this conversation took place, and the occasion for the conversation should be carefully noted. Much of the conversation is not pertinent to our present study, and we therefore pass to that portion of it dealing with the subject of worship. The Samaritan woman sought to draw our Lord into the age-old controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans regarding the proper place of worship. Said she, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." (John 4:19, 20.) The Jews, of course, taught that only in Jerusalem and in the temple could acceptable worship be rendered to Jehovah; and noting that Jesus was a Jew, the Samaritan woman assumed that he would make the same contention about the place of worship his brethren did. She was prepared to defend the Samaritan view that Mount Gerizim, near where they stood, was the proper place. A Bible dictionary should be examined for the historical background regarding the Samaritan people. They were descended from the Jews, but were a mongrel race, and greatly hated by them. The Samaritan woman evinced surprise that Jesus would even speak to her, saying, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman?" (John 4:9.) Mount Gerizim stood only a little way from the city of Sychar, near where was Jacob's well, and where Jesus and the woman talked. The Samaritans had built a temple there somewhat similar to the one erected by the Jews in Jerusalem. It is curious to note why they built their temple on Gerizim. The Samaritans accepted the five books of Moses, and their Pentateuch had the word Gerizim, instead of Ebal, in Deut. 27:4. On this account, as well as the fact that the patriarchs are mentioned as having worshiped in Shechem, they supposed that that was the proper place to erect the temple.

Jesus refused to be drawn into the controversy with the woman regarding the proper place of worship. As a matter of fact, he took advantage of the opportunity to teach her that the time was speedily approaching when the place, insofar as a material building is concerned, would become wholly unimportant. He said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father." That is, there is soon to become such an abrupt change in the mode of worship that neither according to the Samaritan view or Jewish view will men worship. What the worship would be, he next sets forth: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers." The time was near when the old dispensation would pass away and the new would appear, under which God would seek sincere worshipers, men who worshiped sincerely, and from the heart, and not in meaningless forms such as characterized many of that day. What that worship would require, we are to note in our next section.

### **III. Requisites of Acceptable Worship (Verses 23-26)**

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24.) Three requisites of acceptable worship

are here set forth: We must worship God; we must worship God in spirit; we must worship God in truth. God is the object of all acceptable worship. The first commandment forbade the worship of any other being. It said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Deut. 5:7.) Verse 9 of this passage reads: "Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I, Jehovah, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me." Hence, however sincere might be the idol worshiper, his worship is highly displeasing to God, because it fails in the first of the requisites above given. It is not directed to God.

Secondly, worship must be in spirit, i.e., proceeding from a sincere heart and rendered with attention and understanding. This forbids worship that is merely formal, worship that consists of rites and ceremonies in which the worshiper may engage without attention. Catholicism is a system of such worship where the worshiper may not know, and indeed is not expected to know, the significance of much in which he engages. There is some danger that this type of worship should come to obtain in the churches of Christ. The unvarying routine of services, the formal and mechanical participation in song, prayer, and Lord's Supper, the failure to give attention and enter heartily into the service leads to worship that is not in spirit. This is that which Jesus rebuked in the Pharisees in Matthew 15:9, vain worship. Such worship him with their lips and give utterance to phrases of worshipful nature, but the heart is not in it, and God is not pleased. We should ever be on our guard that we do not fall into a mechanical, formal, heartless type of devotion to God.

Finally, worship to be acceptable, must be in truth. To be "in truth" is to be according to God's word. Jesus said, "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17.) Any act of worship, however sincere might be the worshiper, if it be not in harmony with the scriptures, is unacceptable to God. This teaches us that God will accept only that which he has specifically set forth in the scriptures for us to do. We walk by faith, and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7) ; and since faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17), we can offer in faith only that which is set forth in his word. This will exclude from our worship everything not specifically mentioned therein. By this rule we can never use instrumental music in worship, because it is nowhere commanded or even mentioned in Christian worship; hence we cannot engage in it by faith. True, David used instrumental music, but he also offered animal sacrifices and burned incense in worship. We do not take our orders from David today; Christ is our lawgiver and guide: He has nowhere authorized instrumental music, the apostles did not sanction it, no New Testament writer mentioned it in Christian worship, and no apostolic church practiced it. To engage in it is not to worship "in truth." But only to worship in truth pleases God, therefore instrumental music in worship is not pleasing to him.

The items of worship are set forth in Acts 2:42; Eph. 5:19. These are: (1) teaching, (2) singing, (3) prayer, (4) the contribution, and (5) the Lord's Supper. These items were observed on every first day of the week by the church in apostolic times. (1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 20:7.) The disciples were directed by men who were

empowered with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:42; 2:1.) We can do no less than this and be assured of pleasing God today. What pleased him then will surely please him today. All else must be rigidly excluded from service to God. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. 15:22.)

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Meaning of the Golden Text.  
 Importance of this lesson.  
 Occasion for the conversation Jesus had with the Pharisees.  
 His quotation from Isaiah and its significance.  
 Meaning of the word "vain."  
 Type of worship described.  
 How we may fall in this type of worship today.  
 Examples of unacceptable worship.  
 How we may determine that our worship is acceptable.  
 Occasion for our Lord's conversation with the Samaritan woman.  
 History of the Samaritans.  
 Difference between Jews and Samaritans on place of worship.  
 Effort of the Samaritan woman to lead Jesus into a discussion.  
 Why the Lord refused to be drawn into it.  
 The requisites of acceptable worship.  
 What each of these items mean.  
 Why is not instrumental music permissible today?  
 The items of acceptable worship.  
 How we may know these are acceptable today.

### Lesson XIII—June 30, 1946

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

John 14:1-3; 2 Cor. 5:1-10

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rev. 21:1-7.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4:4.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

June	24.	M	Hope of the Resurrection (Acts 23:6-11)
June	25.	T	Hope of Israel (Acts 28:17-22)
June	26.	W	Abound in Hope (Rom. 15:8-13)
June	27.	T	The Christian's Hope (2 Cor. 3:12-18)
June	28.	F	Hope Set on God (1 Tim. 5:1-5)
June	29.	S	Hope as an Anchor (Heb. 6:13-20)
June	30.	S	Hope in Christ (1 Cor. 15:12-19)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—For John, uncertain; Second Corinthians, about A.D. 57 or 58.

PLACE.—It is thought that John was in Ephesus when he wrote the gospel that bears his name; Second Corinthians was written from somewhere in Macedonia.

PERSONS.—John, Paul, the church of Corinth, and all children of God. everywhere.

### Lesson Text

1 Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

1 For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.

2 For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight);

8 We are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.

9 Wherefore, also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him.

10 For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Many Mansions in Our Father's House (Verses 1, 2).
- II. Jesus Promises to Come Again for His Disciples (Verse 3).
- III. An Imperishable Body Promised Us in the Resurrection (2 Cor. 5:1-9).
- IV. A Universal Judgment (Verse 10).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

In John 13:33, the chapter just preceding the one from which we take a portion of our lesson text today, Jesus said, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you." The disciples did not understand what the Lord meant by these words, and Peter asked him, "Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow afterwards" (John 13:36.) In the verses immediately following, which form a portion of our lesson text for today, Jesus explains that there is a home for the righteous when this life is over, and that he would go before for the purpose of preparing it and later come for his own. In the section from 2 Corinthians 5, Paul discusses the nature of the body to be given us in the resurrection.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Children of God fondly believe that beyond the vicissitudes of this life there is an eternal existence characterized by unending joy and happiness. The scriptures assure us that this hope is well grounded. Many passages therein treat of that land and describe it in glowing detail. It is our hope that when this life is over we shall be ushered into the bliss of the afterwhile. The nature of this hope, what it

consists of, and practical lessons growing out of it, form the basis of our study for today.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4:4.) In Eph. 4:4-6, the seven unities of the faith are set forth. These are, "one body," "one Spirit," "one hope," "one Lord," "one faith," "one baptism," "one God and Father of all." The "one body" is the church (Eph. 1:22, 23), and the "one Spirit" is the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead. The "one hope" is the common expectation and desire of all the children of God to be ultimately saved and to enjoy the bliss of heaven throughout eternity. Barnes observes that "the meaning here is that Christians have the same hope, and they should therefore be one. They are looking forward to the same heaven; they hope for the same happiness beyond the grave. It is not as on earth among the people of the world, where there is a variety of hopes—where one hopes for pleasure, and another for honor, and another for gain—but there is the prospect of the same inexhaustible joy."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

Man is influenced both by fear of punishment and by hope of reward. The Lord has seen fit to urge man onward by warning him of what will happen if he lives in disobedience, and the blessing that will be his if he lives in faithfulness and devotion. The Christian's hope is a summation of all that leads one to desire heaven and its unending bliss. This lesson should be taught so as to heighten the conception of heaven and make it more tangible and real. So many have only a vague notion of what the future holds that it all seems unreal and fantastic, and it is therefore difficult for them to lift their eyes above the material world in which they live. The teachers should help the pupils to overcome this difficulty and to see as far as is possible for us today the eternal beauty of the home of the soul.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Many Mansions in Our Father's House (Verses 1, 2)**

"Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you." This passage, so often used to console the sorrowing when they must lay their dead away, tells us of the house of many mansions. The disciples were grieved and saddened by the melancholy news that our Lord would soon leave them, and these words were uttered to cheer and comfort them and assure them that the parting would be temporary and for their own benefit. Johnson says that "the darkness of the night had settled down on Jerusalem and Christ well knew that before the morning dawned he would be in the hands of his enemies. Just before him was Gethsemane, the betrayal, the denial, the mock trial, the scourging, and the cross; but with these in full view, such are the wonders of his love that he does not think of himself. He does not ask comfort, but he gives it. His heart is

full of the sorrow of his disciples over his departure. It is the disappointment of all their hopes, for they cannot yet understand it, and the last moments of this sacred hour are devoted to cheering and instructing them."

Because they were confused and bewildered, Jesus bids them have faith in him-believe in him as they believe in God. They were to trust him even if they did not comprehend; to walk by faith and not by sight through the blinding darkness of that tragic hour. To understand the full import of these words, the confusion, the sorrow, and the despair of the disciples over the announcement of his approaching death and departure must not be forgotten.

The "Father's house" is simply the heavenly abode, the final home of the faithful. Jesus was about to return there. It was not a small, narrow place incapable of accommodating many, but it was a place of "many mansions," room enough and to spare for all. Jesus left to prepare this place, to fit it for the eternal abode of the righteous. This passage has been subjected to considerable misinterpretation. Occasionally some brother comes forth with the view that the "house" here is the church, and that this means that Jesus would go away to establish his church. It is true that the church was not established until Jesus returned to his home in heaven, but this passage was not intended to teach us anything about the church. In its simple and obvious import it is a clear promise of Jesus to make preparation for his own, and to return for them when the preparatory work has been done. It seems to follow from this passage that heaven may now be in a state of preparation.

## **II. Jesus Promises to Come Again for His Disciples (Verse 3)**

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be- also." Jesus does not here refer to his return from the grave, but to a return from heaven, the second coming of the Lord. There is a presence of the Lord with his people always, there is a call of the Lord to those who die in him to "depart and be with Christ," but there is also a personal coming of the Lord to summon all men to his presence and then, at the final judgment, every saint shall be "received to himself," when the Lord shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father." Then shall they "ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:17.) Death is simply going home to be with Christ. (Phil. 1:23.) See in this connection Acts 1:11; Col. 3:3, 4. These, together with many other passages, tell of our Lord's return. It is said that one verse in every twenty-five deals with this event.

## **III. An Imperishable Body Promised Us in the Resurrection (2 Cor. 5:1-9)**

Please turn back to the lesson text and read carefully this entire section. It is too long for us to transcribe at the head of this paragraph. "The earthly house of our tabernacle" is, of course, our earthly bodies. It can be "dissolved." The word "tabernacle" has the marginal reading, "bodily frame." The Greek word so translated means a booth, or tent, a movable dwelling. Also inherent in



the word is the idea of transitoriness. It is such a building as can be taken down in a moment, that lacks the quality of permanence. It is therefore a fitting designation of our bodies—instruments of the most transitory nature. One of the translations renders it, "If our earthly mansion wherein we now dwell be dissolved," etc. The Syriac, so Barnes observes, has it, "For we know if our house on earth, which is our body, be dissolved." The idea is a beautiful and appropriate one, that the body is a mere unfixed, movable dwelling place, liable to be taken down at any moment, and not designed, any more than a tent is, to be a permanent dwelling.

We are not, however, to despair because we live in such a flimsy structure. If this earthly house be dissolved, "we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." This "house" that awaits us is put in contrast with the "house of our tabernacle" which is "earthly" and therefore transitory in its nature. Moreover, this house is not made with human hands; it is a building of God, "eternal," and in the heavens. The future body shall never be taken down or dissolved by death. It is not only eternal, but it is to abide forever in the heavens—in the world of glory. The house in which we now live, because of the ills that ever possess it, is a constant burden; and in it we groan, not that we would be unclothed, the apostle explains; none desire simply to pass into a disembodied state, but rather that we may have our house from heaven, a house not made with hands and not subject to the ills and diseases of this state. When that happy hour shall come, mortality, death, and all that it involves will be no more, but will be swallowed up in life.

"Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God." That is, it was God's design that we should ultimately overcome death and receive a body not susceptible to the corrupting influences of the years, but one immortal in its nature. Thus assured that God will protect us through the hour of death, the apostle speaks of the confidence that we have whatever our state now may be.

"Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord." Adam Clarke calls attention to the fact that the words "absent" and "present," as used in this passage, are most emphatic, the former suggesting one who is a sojourner, the latter, one who dwells among one's own people. Heaven is the real home of every true Christian (Phil. 1:23), and he will not feel content until he reaches that happy and permanent abode. This longing is always in the hearts of the Lord's people. The Hebrew writer expresses it thus with regard to the worthy patriarchs of old who lived lives of such faithfulness and devotion as to gain for themselves imperishable places in inspiration's hall of fame: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own. And if indeed they had been mindful of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire

a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. 11:13-16.)

Here, too, is clear proof that the soul is not unconscious, nor does it sleep during the interval between death and the resurrection. Surely to "be with the Lord" is not to be in a state of insensibility. Paul, to the Philippians, said, "But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better." (Phil. 1:23.) In Paul's view, it is very far better to be in the death state than alive here on earth. Are we to understand that he is there asserting that it is better for a faithful child of God to pass into a state of unconsciousness and insensibility than to be alive and engaged in the Lord's work here on earth? Such necessarily follows if it be true that the soul sleeps between death and the resurrection. Such an idea is repulsive and unthinkable; the Bible teaches no such doctrine.

Of the nature of the resurrection body, we have little information, and must therefore await the day of fuller revelation. True, the apostle speaks of it in the great chapter on the resurrection, 1 Cor. 15, but even there many questions are left unsettled. Where so much is uncertain, it is not wise to be dogmatic. We do know that the body will be raised. The apostle said, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." (1 Cor. 15:42-45.) The same apostle also said, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption; and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15:50-54.)

Contrary to the expectation of some, there will not be two resurrections, one of the righteous, another of the wicked. Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:28; 29.) Note that the "hour" cometh, not a thousand years' period; and that "all" that are in the "graves," not just the righteous shall come forth; "they that have done good" (the righteous), and "they that have

done evil" (the wicked). This includes all humanity, and therefore clearly refutes the false assumption of premillennialism that there will be a thousand years' period between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked.

#### **IV. A Universal Judgment (Verse 10)**

"For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." In the closing verses of the last section the writer points out the utility of walking in a pleasing manner before the Lord in view of the fact that there awaits the faithful and immortal body for all those who thus do. Said he, "Wherefore also we make it our aim whether at home or absent [that is, whether alive or dead], to be well pleasing unto him" Then follows the reminder that we must all appear in judgment before the Lord and answer for our deeds in this life. Christ is to be our judge: "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:30, 31.) This appearance before the great judgment seat of Christ is universal. All the peoples of the earth in solemn array must be there to answer for the deeds done in the body. Matt. 25:31-46 sets it forth in graphic detail. There we are told that the nations of the earth will be gathered before the Lord, and he shall separate them as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. The sheep will be placed on his right hand, the goats on the left. Those on the right hand will be bidden to enter into the rest that remains for the people of God; and the wicked will be consigned to their place of eternal punishment. How vitally important it is, then, that we so order our lives that when we shall stand before him we may be placed on his right hand and not on his left.

#### **POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

- The historical background.
- The outline of the lesson.
- The context of the lesson.
- Golden Text explained.
- Occasion for John 14:1, 2.
- Meaning of words, "Father's house"
- The promise Jesus made.
- Emphasis Bible places on second coming.
- Imperishable body promised.
- The earthly body and heavenly body contrasted.

Meaning of "absent" and "at home."  
True attitude of faithful regarding the world.  
Proof that soul is not unconscious after death.  
Teaching of Bible regarding nature of the resurrection body.  
Only one general resurrection.  
One universal judgment.

**MAP LINK**

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### THIRD QUARTER MISSIONARY WORK OF THE CHURCH

*AIM.—To learn the activities of the early church in preaching the gospel under the leaders who were guided by the Holy Spirit and learn how the church should work today.*

#### Lesson I—July 7, 1946

#### PENTECOST THE BEGINNING

**Luke 24:48, 49; Acts 1: 12-14; 2: 1-4, 14-16; 11:16**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 2: 22-36.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." (Mic. 4:2b.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study

##### Daily Bible Readings

July	1.	M	The Law from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-4)
July	2.	T	The Latter Days (Mic. 4:1-4)
July	3.	W	Apostles to Wait in Jerusalem (Acts 1:1-5)
July	4.	T	Pentecost the Beginning (Acts 11:12-18)
July	5.	F	Holy Spirit Given (Acts 2:1-8)
July	6.	S	The Commission (Matt. 28:16-20)
July	7.	S	The Commission by Mark (Mark 16:14-18)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—Luke's two books, Luke and Acts, are properly two successive parts of one historical narrative; and since Acts terminates at the point where Paul had lived two years in Rome, in the year 64, it is certain that Luke was written prior to that time, and therefore sometime within the 27 years after the crucifixion of Christ. It is reasonable to suppose that Acts was written immediately after the last of the events therein described, viz., Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

PLACES.—Jerusalem, Caesarea, and the whole world.

PERSONS.—Luke, the apostles, the Lord, the early church, and all children of God.

#### Lesson Text

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.

12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is nigh unto Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey off.

13 And when they were come in, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were abiding; both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

14 These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

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.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words.

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is but the third hour of the day;

16 But this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel.

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.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. The Apostles Instructed to Wait in Jerusalem for the Promise of the Father (Verses 48, 49).
- II. The Circumstances of Their Waiting in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12-14).
- III. The Holy Spirit Comes (Acts 2:1-4).
- IV. Peter Explains the Incidents of the Day (Verses 14-16).
- V. Pentecost the Beginning of the Christian dispensation (Acts 11:16).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Just before our Lord ascended on high, he delivered to the apostles the Great Commission, so styled to distinguish it from the Limited Commission recorded in Matt. 10:5,6. Under this commission the disciples were forbidden to preach to the Samaritans or Gentile nations, but were restricted to the Jewish people. By and by, however, these restrictions were lifted and the disciples were instructed to carry the gospel to the whole world. This commission is recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. (See Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46, 47.) The preaching of the gospel under this commission was fraught with far-reaching consequences; and knowing the frailty of human nature and the possibility of error without divine guidance, Jesus forbade the disciples to go forth until they were endued with the vitalizing power of the Holy Spirit. The circumstances of its coming are set forth in Acts 2, and the reaction of the people thereto is also discussed. The allusion to the "beginning," found in Acts 11:15, is in connection with the descent of the Holy Spirit on the occasion of Peter's visit to the house of Cornelius. For further discussion of the context of this portion of the lesson, see under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

The law of Moses ended at the cross. (Col. 2:14.) Having fulfilled its purpose, Jesus took it out of the way. (Matt. 5:17.) The "new and living way" (Heb. 10:20) became operative on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ. On that day alien sinners were, for the first time, told what to do to be saved under the Great Commission. (Acts 2:38.) It is, therefore, the beginning of the new order.

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." (Mic. 4:2b.) Micah's prophecy was given in anticipation of the establishment of the kingdom on the first Pentecost

after our Lord's resurrection. It reads: "but in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and the peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." (Mic. 4:1, 2.) Note, it was to be in "the latter days"; "peoples shall flow unto it," and it should go forth "from Jerusalem." These are characteristics of the church only. Peter declared on Pentecost that the events of that day were in the last days; Jerusalem was the beginning point, and the Lord intended that his should mark the beginning of the gospel to all nations. This prophecy was, therefore, fulfilled on this day, at least in part; for the gospel did go forth from "Zion," and the "word of Jehovah from Jerusalem," on the day of Pentecost.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This is an elementary lesson of great importance to all. It deals with the beginning of the gospel dispensation, the establishment of the church, the preaching of the gospel for the first time under the Great Commission, and the first announcement of the terms of pardon applicable to our own day. All classes should be impressed with the importance of these matters and made thoroughly conversant therewith. One of the reasons why people enmeshed in denominational error have difficulty in seeing the truth is that they do not properly understand the significance of the events on Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. The teachers should, therefore, strive to set these matters forth clearly and in detail, and by constant repetition see to it that all are familiar therewith.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. The Apostles Instructed to Wait in Jerusalem for the Promise of the Father (Verses 48, 49)**

"Ye are witnesses of these things. 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." This portion of our lesson text immediately follows the Great Commission as announced by Luke. His account of it reads, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." (Luke 24:46, 47.) For the whole of the commission, see the parallel accounts of Matthew and Mark. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16.) A summary of them all reveals that the apostles were commissioned to go into all the world and preach the gospel to all nations, teaching them to believe, repent, and be baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. This work was so important that Jesus did not allow them to go forth without divine and supernatural guidance; hence, here commands them to tarry in Jerusalem until clothed with the Spirit from on high. Our Lord had said to the apostles before his death, "it is expedient for you that I go away;



for if I go not away, the Advocate will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you." (John 16:7.) This "Advocate" was the Holy Spirit. Jesus further said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." (John 16:12, 13.) The time had come when Jesus was about to leave them and they were instructed to tarry in Jerusalem for the promise here vouchsafed them. Just before his ascension, in answer to an inquiry as to whether the Lord would then restore the kingdom to Israel, Jesus said, "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. 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 Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:7, 8.) This is but the repetition of the promise made in Luke 24:48, 49.

## **II. The Circumstances of Their Waiting in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12-14)**

"Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is nigh unto Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey off" The disciples returned to Jerusalem from the place of our Savior's ascension, a point near Bethany. For the full account of the ascension, see Acts 1:10, 11. The "Sabbath day's journey" indicates the distance from Jerusalem, about seven-eighths of a mile. We learn from the last verses of the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke that the disciples returned to Jerusalem "with great joy," their sorrow, in being parted from the Lord being turned into joy at the prospect of seeing him again.

"And when they were come in, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were abiding; both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas, the son of James." It will be noted that all of the apostles are here named with the exception of Judas Iscariot, who had died by his own hand after betraying Jesus. This fresh enumeration of the eleven very appropriately finds place here, because it shows that all of those to whom the commission had been given were at their post, obediently waiting for the promise Jesus had made them just before his departure for heaven. The "upper room" was a chamber on the second floor, evidently an apartment where the disciples gathered for prayer and fellowship during the interval between the Lord's ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. The manner in which this interval was spent we learn from the next verse.

"These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." The place of this prayer and supplication was not always in the "upper chamber, where they were abiding," for we learn from Luke's former narrative, the gospel by Luke, that they were "continually in the temple, blessing God." (Luke 24:53:) Their fervor and devotion manifested itself in continual prayer; and the time spent waiting for the Spirit was a period of intense spiritual activity. Those who are evermore conscious of the Lord's presence and who feel their dependence upon him will be often and long

in prayer. One of the first evidences of cooling religious fervor and apostasy is a tendency to neglect prayer.

This is the last mention of "Mary the mother of Jesus" in New Testament history. This is unaccountable if we are to conclude that the Catholic church is right in making her a mediator between man and Christ. This is, of course, an erroneous view; her work in giving to the world the Son of God had been finished and she here drops from sacred history. The fact that she returned with the disciples to Jerusalem and remained with them instead of going back to her home in Nazareth indicates that John was faithful to the dying request of Jesus to take care of her. "The brethren of Jesus" were his brothers in the flesh, of which there were four. (Matt. 13:55.) These were unbelievers during his personal ministry, and came to accept his claims only after his resurrection from the dead. (John 7:5.) There were at least seven children in Mary's family, five boys and at least two girls. (Matt 13:55.) The doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary is nothing more than Romish error.

### **III. The Holy Spirit Comes (Acts 2:1-4)**

"And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place." "Pentecost" was a feast day in Old Testament history. For a full account of its meaning and significance, and manner of observance, consult a Bible dictionary. It came fifty days after the observance of the Passover Feast. The "they" of the statement, "they were all together in one place," is limited to the apostles. See the last verse of Acts 1. The Holy Spirit fell only on the apostles. The description of his coming is next set forth:

"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. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The place where the Spirit came was not the "upper room," but some place in the courts of the temple, a fact we learn from Luke 24:53. The firelike and forked tongues which attended the reception of the Spirit added much to the splendor of the occasion and riveted attention on the apostles, enabling them to address the people with great attention. They were likely alone when the Holy Spirit first fell, but the crowd soon gathered, attracted by the unusual phenomenon. The Spirit did not fill all the house, but the sound did, and this may also account for the rapid gathering of the crowd. Thus enabled, the apostles began to "speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The "tongues" spoken were simply the languages of the nations later mentioned in the same chapter. On this point Alford observes, "There can be no question in any unprejudiced mind that the fact which this narrative sets before us is that the disciples began to speak in various languages, viz.: the languages of the nations below enumerated and perhaps others. All attempts to evade this are connected with some forcing of the text, or some farfetched and indefensible conclusion." "Tongues," in the Bible, indicate languages other than that in which the speaker was born;

and by no stretch of the imagination can be made to include the meaningless jabbering and unintelligible jargon characteristic of some fanatics among us today. The purpose of the tongues was to enable the apostles to preach the gospel to those of nations whose tongues they did not speak. This was necessary if they would discharge the requirements of the Great Commission to preach the gospel to "all nations." The endowment further supplied them with the message to be preached. Jesus had promised them, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." (Matt. 10:20.) Henceforth, the apostles were guided in their preaching by the power here given them through the reception of the Holy Spirit. This reception of the Spirit was in his baptismal measure. This fact we learn from Peter's account of the conversion of Cornelius. In telling of the reception of the Spirit, he said, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. 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." (Acts 11:15, 16.) This was, then, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Evidence of it is the fact that those thus baptized could speak in tongues they had not known previously.

It should be remembered that the disciples were instructed not to begin the proclamation of the gospel under the Great Commission until the Spirit came. It is not surprising, therefore, that on this same occasion Peter, to whom had been given the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16:19), should preach the gospel now applicable to the whole world. Preparatory to the preaching of it, he cleared away some misapprehensions regarding the incidents of the day.

#### **IV. Peter Explains the Incidents of the Day (Verses 14-16)**

"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is but the third hour of the day; but this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel." For the prophecy of Joel, here repeated by Peter, see Acts 2:17-21. (The original prophecy is given in Joel 2:28-30.) See verses 12 and 13 of Acts 2 for the occasion of Peter's words. The sacred writer exhausts his vocabulary in setting forth the reaction of the multitude to the momentous events attending the descent of the Holy Spirit. He says they "were confounded," "they were amazed," "they marveled," they "were perplexed," and they said one to another, "What meaneth this?" They evidently recognized the miraculous nature of the phenomenon, but did not understand the significance of it. Others, irreverent and scornful, said, "They are filled with new wine." Before attempting to set forth the significance of the astounding events, Peter proceeded to clear away the misapprehensions that had arisen by denying that they were drunk and by pointing out that the things they witnessed were in fulfillment of prophetic utterance. First, he called attention to the fact that the events were in an early hour—the third hour of the day—nine o'clock according to our time. It would be unlikely that men would be drunken at such an early hour of the day. While this was not a complete refutation of their charge, for men might be intoxicated

at any hour of the day or night, yet the early hour made it improbable that they were under the influence of wine, and the rest of his reply clearly demonstrated the falsity of their charge. See Acts 2:14-40 for Peter's speech. It consisted of the following points: (1) Introduction: The miracle explained (14-21); (2) Jesus proclaimed as Christ and Lord (22-32); (a) his resurrection declared (22-24); (b) the resurrection of Christ predicted by David (25-31); (c) the resurrection of Christ attested by the twelve (32); (d) Jesus exalted to the throne of God (33-35); (e) the logical conclusion (36); (3) the people exhorted to save themselves (37-40). For the effect of the sermon and the progress of the church, see Acts 2:41-47. Following Peter's impressive presentation of the gospel for the first time in the name of the risen Lord, his hearers were cut to the heart; and, realizing their guilt and condemned condition, cried out, saying "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said to 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." (Acts 2:37, 38.) Those who thus did numbered 3,000, and the record closes with the statement that the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved. (Acts 2:47.) Here, for the first time, men were told what to do to be saved under the Great Commission; here, too, for the first time people became members of the Lord's church. Hitherto the church had existed only in purpose and prophecy and preparation; now it had come into existence and its blessings were made available to those who obeyed the gospel. One will search in vain for evidence touching its existence prior to the events of the day of Pentecost. All reliable scholarship agrees that Pentecost was the birthday of the church of our Lord. Direct scriptural evidence of that fact we are to consider in the following section.

#### **V. Pentecost the Beginning of the Christian Dispensation (Acts 11:16)**

In Acts 10 we have an account of Peter's visit to the house of Cornelius in Caesarea, and the conversion of Cornelius and his household. This was such a radical departure from Jewish practice to preach the gospel to men of another nation that Peter was called to account for his actions. Acts 11 contains his defense. After recounting the incidents that lead him to gather that God had called him go to the Gentiles in the person of Cornelius, and the evidence that convinced him, he describes the result of his work as follows: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. 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." Note that Peter refers to Pentecost as the beginning. We have learned that it was the beginning of the operation of the Spirit through the apostles; the beginning of the world-wide commission; the beginning of the plan of salvation now operative; the beginning of the church on earth and the beginning of the new covenant. Pentecost may, therefore, in the words of our Lesson Subject, be properly styled the beginning.

**POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

Relation of Luke to Acts.  
 Significance of Micah's prophecy.  
 Importance of this lesson.  
 Reason apostles were to tarry in Jerusalem.  
 Promises Jesus had made regarding Holy Spirit.  
 Place from which Jesus ascended, and attitude of disciples.  
 Where they abode in Jerusalem; persons present.  
 Mary, mother of Jesus, mentioned no more. Mary's family. Her last days. '  
 Conduct of disciples during waiting period.  
 Meaning of word Pentecost; historical significance.  
 Circumstances attending coming of Holy Spirit.  
 Meaning of "tongues."  
 Peter's explanation of events.  
 His speech outlined.  
 Results of the day.  
 Relation of Pentecost to the Christian dispensation.

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**Lesson II—July 14, 1946**

**PREACHING JESUS IN JERUSALEM**  
**Acts 3:11-26**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 3:1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19.)

**Helps for Lesson Study****Daily Bible Readings**

July	8.	M	Peter Preaches on Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40)
July	9.	T	Effect of This Preaching (Acts 2:37-42)
July	10.	W	People Added to the Church (Acts 2:43-47)
July	11.	T	Peter and John Preaching (Acts 3:1-10)
July	12.	F	The Resurrection Preached (Acts 4:1-4)
July	13.	S	Peter and John Report (Acts 4:23-31)
July	14.	S	Stephen Preaching (Acts 7:1-8)

**Historical Background**

TIME.—A.D. 63 or 64.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The apostles Peter and John and the multitude.

**Lesson Text**

11 And as he held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel why marvel ye at this man? or why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him to walk?

13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him.

- 14 But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you,  
15 And killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.  
16 And by faith in his name hath his name made this man strong, whom ye behold and know: yea, the faith which is through him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.  
17 And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.  
18 But the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled.  
19 Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord;  
20 And that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus:  
21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old.  
22 Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you.  
23 And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.  
24 Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days.  
25 Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.  
26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Peter's Second Sermon: Introduction (Verses 11-16).
- II. Forgiveness of Sins Offered Through Christ (Verses 17-21).
- III. These Things Matters of Prediction and Promise (Verses 22-26).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The entire second chapter of Acts should be carefully read in order to get the background for the present lesson. In our lesson for last Sunday we noted the outstanding events of Pentecost and saw that the church was established on that day; the gospel first began to be preached; and the apostles went forth for the first time laboring under the Great Commission. The second recorded instance of preaching under that commission is to claim our attention today. See Acts 3:1-10 for an account of the miracle that furnished Peter with an opportunity to preach the sermon we are to study today. This miracle is one of the many signs and wonders mentioned before in Acts 2:43 as being wrought from day to day by the apostles, and it is selected for particular mention because of the consequences that followed it. The man on whom the miracle was performed was so well known, his infirmity was so pronounced, that his healing produced a tremendous impression on the people. When he, a hopeless cripple, ran well and whole through the temple, leaping and shouting and praising God, crowds gathered and followed him in amazement.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

The apostles began their work under the Great Commission on the first Pentecost following our Lord's resurrection. Thereafter they labored continuously in this work when not in the toils of the law or lodged in prison. The burden of their preaching was Christ and

the resurrection; more attention was given to the resurrection than any other phase of the matter. The reason for this is obvious: if this could be established, all other claims made for our Lord were reasonable. An example of the manner and method of their teaching is our lesson for today.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

Our Golden Text for today is a part of our lesson text. For its exposition, see under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

These are historical matters of great interest and importance. It is highly important that all of the classes learn the historical sequence of these events, as well as the motives that prompted the apostles to preach in the face of intense opposition. Thus far the apostles had been able to preach with uninterrupted and astonishing success. This is the first of a long series of conflicts. The temple is the place of meeting, and it now becomes the place of conflict.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Peter's Second Sermon: Introduction (Verses 11-16)**

"And as he held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering." The circumstances attending the healing of the lame man were such as to attract unusual attention. The Beautiful Gate was doubtless the favorite passageway into the temple; and inasmuch as the subject of this healing was laid there every day, he became well known to all who entered by that gate into the temple each day. Moreover, the natural curiosity that all feel for the afflictions of those to whom they minister had led to the general knowledge that this man had been a cripple from his mother's womb. Furthermore, the healing was effected just as a multitude of pious people were entering the temple for the evening prayer, and they could not fail to be attracted by the leaping and shouting of the healed man. As they witnessed his joy and the fervor with which he clung to Peter and John, they could have had no doubt that he was healed by the apostles, and they gathered around in amazement, seeking more information of the miracle that had been wrought in their city.

The portion of the temple here called a "porch" was a colonnade constructed along the inner face of the enclosing wall of the outer court. Josephus tells us that it consisted of rows of stone columns twenty-seven feet high, with a roof of cedar resting on them and on the wall, thus constituting a covered portion, with its inner side open toward the temple. This cloister served as a protection from the sun in the summer and from the rain in the winter, and provided a place for large crowds to gather. Brother McGarvey says that these cloisters contained space sufficient for a great multitude to assemble and for separate meetings of large numbers to listen to different preachers speaking at the same time. He says that the twelve apostles could all have been preaching at the same hour, each to a large audience, and yet be far enough apart to avoid confusion of sound. For an example of such preaching in unison, see Acts 5:20-25.

Please read carefully verses 12-18, inclusive, to get Peter's explanation of the miracle that caused such amazement among the people. Note that the apostles disclaim all personal credit for the healing of the lame man—they charge the people not to look upon them as "though by our own power or godliness" they had made this man to walk. It was by "faith in his name" that the miracle had been effected, and not through any merit or worthiness on the part of Peter and John. It should be noted that Peter makes about the same announcement regarding Jesus in this speech as he made in the speech on Pentecost. "The antithetical style adopted on this occasion gave his announcement a force even greater than before, if we consider it with reference to the effect on the consciences of the hearers. The fact that the God of their fathers had glorified Jesus is contrasted with the fact that they had delivered him up to die; their refusal to let him be released, with Pilate's desire to let him go; their rejection of one who was holy and just, with the demand that a murderer should be released unto them; and the fact that they killed him, with the fact that he was the author of life. These four points of contrast form the steps of a climax. He whom the God of your fathers glorified, ye have delivered up to die. Your criminality in this is heightened by the consideration that when the heathen ruler of your nation pronounced him innocent and proposed to release him, ye cried out against it. Even this does not express the enormity of your guilt, for ye yourselves knew him to be a man holy and just, and ye preferred the release of one whom ye knew to be a murderer. Finally, in murdering him ye put to death the very author of life itself, your own life, and the life of all men; and although ye put him to death, he has arisen from the dead. A grander climax, or a happier combination of climax and antithesis, is not found often, if at all, in literature." (McGarvey.) This speech evidently had an overwhelming effect on the multitude. The facts set forth in this speech were undeniable except for the resurrection; and of this Peter and John were eyewitnesses.

The "faith in his name," by which the lame man was healed, was not faith on the part of the cripple; for it is evident from the account of the miracle in verses 4-8 that previous to the healing the man had no faith at all. When he approached Peter and John he was interested solely in alms. When Peter addressed him, he did not know to whom he was speaking, and was still expecting to receive something from them. Even when Peter told him in the name of Jesus Christ to walk, he made no attempt to move until Peter took him by the hand and lifted him up. He showed no faith in the healing power of Jesus or the apostles until he found himself able to stand up and walk. The faith, then, was that of Peter; and this is in harmony with what is taught throughout the New Testament that the working of miracles depended on the faith of those who had the spiritual gifts. Peter was able to walk on the water till his faith failed him (Matt. 14:31), and the nine apostles who failed to cast out a demon did so because of their little faith (Matt. 17:20). It was the "prayer of faith" that saved the sick in New Testament times (James 5:15), faith on the part of those praying and not the sick.

Those who lay claim to miraculous healing "explain" their failure



today by imputing to those desirous of healing a lack of faith. From the foregoing, it will be seen that faith was not uniformly required of those to be healed in apostolic times. If there is any analogy at all, it is in the fact that those who affect to be able to pray the "prayer of faith" today do not have sufficient faith themselves. "It may be well to observe here that while faith was necessary on the part of one to whom miraculous powers had been imparted in order to work any particular miracle, no faith ever enabled one to work a miracle to whom such powers had not been imparted. The notion, therefore, which has existed in some minds from time to time ever since the apostolic period, that if our faith were strong enough we also could work miracles, has as little foundation in scripture as it has in experience." (McGarvey, on Acts.)

## **II. Forgiveness of Sins Offered Through Christ (Verses 17-21)**

The miracle of healing having provided the audience, and the explanation thereof the opportunity to direct attention to Christ, Peter next shows that their only hope in escaping their guilt is to accept the proffer of mercy offered through Christ. He said, "And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled." At this point in Peter's speech there is a noticeable change in his manner and tone. He has made a fearful charge against them and exposed their guilt in no uncertain terms; now he softens his tone and offers some slight extenuation of their guilt, viz., that they had acted in ignorance. This was no palliation of their deed. Nor did the fact that his death was foreshadowed by the prophets and expressly anticipated by the Lord himself render them any the less guilty. There was but one hope of escape for them. They must accept the terms of pardon graciously extended to even his murderers by the Lord. These terms the apostle next sets forth.

"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old." Here, as in Acts 2:38, the apostle makes no mention of faith; but here, as there, there was no need for this, since they had listened with attention, and it was presumed that if they acted upon the suggestion made, this would be sufficient evidence that they believed. They were thus commanded to do two things: (1) repent; (2) turn, and were thereupon promised that their sins would be blotted out. There is an interesting and instructive parallel to be drawn between the statement here made upon which salvation depends and that found in Acts 2:38. The following comparison will indicate that the passages are identical in the conditions upon which salvation depends: Acts 2:38: Repent; be baptized; unto remission; receive the gift of the Spirit. Acts 3:19: Repent; turn; sins blotted out; seasons of refreshing. "Repent" in Acts 2 equals "repent" in Acts 3. "Unto the remission of your sins" in Acts 2 is the same as "sins may be blotted

out" in Acts 3. "Gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2 is the same as "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" in Acts 3; therefore, "be baptized" in Acts 2 is the same as the command to "turn" in Acts 3. Faith is not the turning act in salvation, for in Acts 11:21 it is said that "the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord." The turning, then, followed faith. Nor is it repentance, for in this passage Acts 3:19, the turning follows repentance. The parallel above set forth leads conclusively to the view that the turning act of salvation is in baptism—a baptism in water for remission of sins.

The latter part of this passage involving the statement, "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old," is difficult and obscure in meaning. It is difficult to determine the exact meaning of the word "restoration" in this passage; but it is evidently limited by the expression "all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets," and consequently consists in the fulfillment of the Old Testament predictions. Albert Barnes says that it "means that the heavens must receive the Lord Jesus until all things spoken by the prophets in relation to his work, his reign, the spread of the gospel, the triumph of religion, etc., shall be fulfilled," and Johnson thinks it embraces the period during which the work predicted by the prophets is to be accomplished.

### **III. These Things Matters of Prediction and Promise (Verses 22-26)**

Peter was well aware of the fact that it was idle to speak to a Jewish audience about matters of religious significance without showing first that all such was involved in Old Testament prophecy. Because of this, and to warn his hearers against rejecting what he has just said, the apostle proceeds to show that the great lawgiver Moses had prophesied of Christ and foretold his day: "Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." The prophecy of Moses here alluded to is found recorded in Deut. 18:18, 19. Those who accepted what Peter had already said about Christ could readily see that this prophecy could refer only to Christ, for he alone had the right to enforce his words and demand unquestioning obedience thereto. Like Moses, he was a lawgiver, a mightier lawgiver than Moses, for he proposed a far greater deliverance than Moses and indeed set the law of Moses aside. This proved that he alone was the prophet predicted by Moses, and it showed the people that in accepting Christ they were obeying Moses, and that in rejecting Christ they were rejecting Moses. Not content with bringing to bear the testimony of Moses in support of his claim for the deity of Jesus, Peter proceeds to show that other prophets had likewise seen the Lord's day and identified him as the promised Messiah: "Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days." (Acts 3:24.)

Having completed his argument, Peter next made an appeal to

his hearers based upon their veneration for the fathers of their nation and for the covenant they had inherited. "Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities." This was a tender and impressive appeal, made more effective by the information that the blessing offered them in Christ was the very blessing contemplated in the well-known promise to Abraham, and that to them first, because of their relation to the prophets and to Abraham, God had sent his Son to bless them before visiting the rest of mankind.

Incidentally, here is an inspired and authoritative interpretation of God's promise to Abraham. Peter teaches us that it is fulfilled in turning men away from their iniquities. Those only who thus turn are the recipients of the promised blessing, and we have seen earlier in this lesson that men turn to God only in obedience to his commands to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The contextual background.  
 Significance of the subject.  
 Importance of the matters involved in this lesson.  
 The story of the healing of the lame man.  
 The results following the miracle.  
 Description of Solomon's porch.  
 Meaning of "faith in his name."  
 Manner in which this miracle differs from so-called miracles today.  
 Occasion the miracle provided for Peter.  
 Conditions set forth by Peter by which they could escape their guilt.  
 This statement compared with Acts 2:38.  
 Meaning of "turn" in this sentence.  
 Proof that "turn" is not faith or repentance.  
 Significance of "times of restoration of all things."  
 Things predicted and promised by prophets.

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Boldness of Peter and John.  
 Antagonism of civil authorities in Bible times.  
 Manner in which Abraham's promise is received today.

**Lesson III—July 21, 1946**

### **EARLY MISSIONARIES PERSECUTED** **Acts 4:1-13; 5:17-20**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 4:14-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."  
 (2 Tim. 3:12.)

### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

July	15.	M	Boldness of Peter and John (Acts 4:13-22)
July	16.	T	Blessings for the Persecuted (Matt. 5:1-12)
July	17.	W	Jesus Persecuted (John 15:14-21)
July	18.	T	Saul Persecutes the Church (Gal. 1:11-17)
July	19.	F	Preachers Persecuted (1 Cor. 4:6-13)
July	20.	S	Jerusalem Church Persecuted (Acts 8:1-8)
July	21.	S	All Suffer Persecution (2 Tim. 3:9-12)

### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 33 or 34. Acts was written A.D. 63 or 64.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Peter and John, the Jewish council, and the early church.

### Lesson Text

1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them,

2 Being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it was now eventide.

4 But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

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 Al-ex-\$n-der, 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.

13 Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

17 But the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy,

18 And laid hands on the apostles, and put them in public ward.

19 But an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them out, and said,

20 Go ye, and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this Life.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Peter and John Imprisoned (Verses 1-4).
- II. Peter and John Allowed to Make Their Defense (Verses 5-7).
- III. Peter's Speech Before the Council (Verses 8-13).
- IV. All of the Apostles Imprisoned (Acts 5:17-20).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Our last lesson dealt with Peter's speech before the multitude on the occasion of the healing of the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple. The publicity that attended the performance of this

notable miracle came to the ears of the authorities, and while Peter was yet speaking officers came and arrested them and put them into prison. Thus was begun a series of persecutions against the infant church. On being released, the apostles were warned not to preach any more in the name of Jesus. See Acts 4:14-22 for an account of their release from prison and the warning given them. They went out and immediately began to preach the word again. This resulted in the arrest of all the apostles, the account of which is found in Acts 5:17-20. Chapters 4 and 5 of Acts should be carefully read in connection with this lesson.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

The gathering storm of opposition under which the apostles labored throughout the whole of the apostolic age begins to gather momentum in our lesson today. One severe persecution followed another as they boldly preached the resurrection of Jesus. The difficulties under which they preached, their courageous determination to preach the word at all costs, and their faithfulness and fidelity in the face of the most formidable opponents are matters involved in the study of this lesson.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12.) A man who is faithful to God in all things will inevitably suffer persecution and opposition. The persecution may take different forms in different ages and different countries; but it has always been unpopular to stand for that which is right, and it always will be, and those who unwaveringly contend for the right may as well prepare themselves for ridicule, scorn, and intense persecution. A decided, earnest Christian life will always evoke some form of opposition from the ungodly, and particularly so if that for which one contends interferes with the ungodly lives of the opposers. The ease with which the average professor of Christianity lives today and the absence of any form of opposition from the world is clear evidence of the fact that the church is not contending for the faith with the same fervor and zeal that characterized the early apostles. If we live godly we shall suffer persecution, the apostle warns. If we are not suffering persecution, is this not evidence that we are not living godly?"

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This lesson affords the teachers an excellent opportunity to teach the principles of loyalty and devotion to a cause. The faith and fidelity of the apostles in the face of severe persecution are here set forth for our emulation, and all should be impressed with the need of such consecration and devotion today. Fainthearted professors fail when opposition arises, and tests such as these bring out the best in people. The church had its greatest growth in the midst of the most intense suffering and opposition. The compromise that obtains between the average congregation and the world today pleases only the devil, and is an effective barrier to the progress of the church of our Lord. Let this lesson be particularly emphasized:

when people contend for the truth, enemies thereof will oppose them. To please the Lord we must fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12) and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**  
**I. Peter and John Imprisoned (Verses 1-4)**

"And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it was now eventide." It will be noted that Peter and John were still speaking to the people when this arrest occurred. This incident grew out of the healing of the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple, recorded in chapter 3 of Acts. Alarmed and disturbed because of the effect the miracle and preaching were having on the people, the Jewish authorities rushed through the crowd and laid hands on the two apostles and put them in prison. The "captain of the temple," who led the party making the arrest, was the commander of the guard of Levites who stood on duty at the gates and elsewhere to keep order in the holy precincts of the temple. See 2 Chron. 26:1-19 for an account of their first appointment by David.

It is interesting to note that the Sadducees are prominently mentioned in connection with this first persecution of the apostles. Hitherto the Pharisees were ringleaders in the opposition to Jesus, and little has been said about the Sadducees; now they take the lead in opposing the apostles. The reason for this is to be found in the nature of the apostles' preaching. The Sadducees rejected the doctrine of angels and spirits and denied the resurrection from the dead. In setting forth their claims for Jesus, the chief doctrine was his resurrection. This, of course, antagonized the Sadducees and they rushed forward to join in the opposition against them. True, later, the Pharisees participated in opposing the apostles, but early in the history of the infant church the Sadducees were their bitterest opponents. See Matt. 22:23-33 for a clash Jesus had with the Sadducees. Acts 23:6-9 tells us something of the Sadducees' doctrine.

The suddenness with which the authorities descended upon Peter and John must have been startling, and in all probability the people expected to see them murdered on the spot, nevertheless their words had a decided effect on the people, for Luke says, "But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand." In harmony with Oriental custom, only the number of men is here given, the number of both sexes greatly exceeding this figure. This is an instance, since often repeated, in which persecution is seen to have a tendency to extend and establish the faith it is designed to destroy. Barnes observes that "it was supposed here that the disciples were few, that they were without power, wealth, and influence, and that it was easy to crush them at once. But God made their persecution the means of extending, in a signal manner, the truths of the gospel and the triumphs of his word. And so in all ages it has been, and so it ever will be."

## **II. Peter and John Allowed to Make Their Defense (Verses 5-7)**

"And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; 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." The men here called "rulers and elders and scribes" constituted the main body of the high court of the Jews, called the Sanhedrin. "John, and Alexander" mentioned were evidently men of high authority, as the manner in which they are mentioned clearly indicates, but nothing more is known of them. This assembly gathered for the purpose of determining what should be done with Peter and John. When the court was assembled the prisoners were brought in, and the cripple who had been healed, not willing that his benefactors should suffer without his presence and sympathy, boldly walked in and took a position close to them.

"And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power, or in what name, have ye done this?" This question was designed to determine by what authority the apostles had acted in performing the miracle of healing on the lame man. It is very probable that they expected to intimidate the apostles with this question. The Jews before whom they stood, as the civil authorities of the nation, claimed the right of regulating the affairs of the people. They wielded vast powers in this respect. They assumed that all power should originate with them, and they viewed this independent action of Peter and John with great indignation and resentment. That a humanitarian act had been performed and a miracle accomplished could not be denied; it seemed never to occur to them that the fact of the miracle was sufficient evidence that the apostles acted by divine authority. It has been usual for the enemies of religion to attempt to intimidate its friends, and when argument fails, to attempt to silence them by fears. These men cared nothing for the man so wondrously healed; all they could see in the matter was the grave danger of losing their own position before the people. Hence their great desire to silence the apostles before their fame spread further.

It should be noted that the question is rather indefinite. The reason for this lies in the fact that there was no particular thing done by Peter and John on which they could fix attention or on which they could base a charge of wrongdoing. The chief priest cunningly framed the statement in the hope that the defendants, in their confusion, would furnish a ground of accusation by speaking unguarded words. As cunningly designed as the question was, none could have served Peter better, for it left him free to select as the subject of his defense anything that he had done; and he chose, out of all that he had done, that which was most unwelcome to his judges.

## **III. Peter's Speech Before the Council (Verses 8-13)**

The apostle begins his defense by informing them that the miracle of the healing about which they were being examined was a manifestation of the power of Jesus Christ through them. He shrewdly points out that it was a "good deed done to an impotent man," a

fact they could not very well deny, since the man was present and standing before them. The council could not deny the miracle, and to deny that the power which performed it was divine would have been absurd. Peter's statement was so framed as to leave them little choice of accepting any other explanation than that offered, viz., that it was performed in the "name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." The answer vindicated itself and confounded those who had propounded the question. The apostle followed this statement with one placing the guilt for the death of Jesus at the feet of these very rulers. He had before charged the people with the crime, Acts 2:23; 3:14, 15, and now he has the opportunity of urging the charge against the rulers themselves. Little did this council imagine, when they condemned the Lord Jesus, that this charge would so soon be urged against them. They had arraigned the apostles; they demanded their authority for what they had done, and thus directly opened the way for the serious and solemn charge Peter now levels against them.

Quick to follow up the advantage thus gained, Peter pushes it still further by adding, "He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. 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." Using the words of David (Ps. 118:22), Peter put his hearers in the ridiculous attitude of builders laying the foundation of a house, but rejecting the stone cut out for the corner, without which the foundation course could not be closed up and no part of the wall built. Jesus was the "chief corner stone"; but the Jews had rejected him, hence could never erect their house. Dropping the figure, the apostle then explained that there is no salvation for any man except in the name of the very Jesus whom they had crucified. This statement is universal, and it shows that every human being that is saved at all will be saved in the name of the Lord Jesus.

There was no evasion or fear in the answer of Peter. On the contrary, their boldness impressed the council and for the time being silenced them. Luke tells us that "when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And seeing the man that was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it." (Acts 4:13, 14.) The embarrassment of the council must have been painful. The silence was broken by a proposal that the prisoners be withdrawn. The question was then raised, "What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been wrought through them, is manifest to all that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it." This statement shows that in their public capacity and public proceedings they had been utterly hypocritical and heartless. The motive which controlled them crops out as they reach their decision: "But that it spread no further among the people, let us threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name." (Acts 4:17.) This suggestion was adopted by the council, and Peter and John brought back in. "And they called them, and charged them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." For the first time, preaching of the gospel was forbidden. Had the apostles obeyed



this decree, the name of Jesus would never more have been heard.

If the apostles had been solicitous about their own welfare, they might now have retired from the council in safety and would not have been again molested. "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." The first part of this reply was an address to the consciences of the judges and the second was a frank admission that they intended to disregard the order. Had they remained silent, this might have implied that they would bow to the behests of the council, and Peter and John were too candid to leave without indicating their purpose of continuing to preach the word. Finally, "when they had further threatened them, let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done."

The apostles retired in triumph from the assembly and went to their own company, and reported what the chief priest and elders had said to them. God's name was praised, and his assistance invoked in enabling them to continue to preach the word in all boldness and without fear. They did not ask him to deliver them from the dangers confronting them—they only asked that they might continue to discharge their duties as they ought. They prayed, "And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, while thou stretchest forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of thy holy Servant Jesus." (Acts 4:29, 30.) Numerous miracles followed in short order; and much attention was directed to the apostles. The historian records that "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." (Acts 5:14.) The excitement which prevailed again drew the attention of the Jewish authorities, and this led to the second imprisonment this time not only Peter and John, but all of the apostles.

#### **IV. All of the Apostles Imprisoned (Acts 5:17-20)**

"But the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy, and laid hands on the apostles, and put them in public ward" These were the same Sadducees who had participated in the arrest of Peter and John. Made furious by the apostles' refusal to abide by their decree to speak no more in the name of Jesus, they seized not only the two whom they had formerly arrested, but all of their companions, being determined to execute on a large scale the threats they had uttered. This must have been an exceedingly gloomy night for the apostles, and still gloomier for the thousands of brethren on the outside who could have expected nothing less than death for their courageous leaders. But God interfered in a strange fashion: "But an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them out, and said, Go ye, and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this Life. And when they heard this, they entered into the temple about daybreak, and taught." The surprise and consternation of the authorities on finding the prison empty and their prisoners fled knew no bounds. For the full account thereof, see Acts 5:21-42. One of the most

thrilling recitals in all sacred history is to be found in this record of persecution of the early church. After being severely beaten and threatened with death if any further preaching was done in the name of Jesus, we are told that "they therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name." This is truly one of the grandest exhibitions of faith to be found in apostolic history. The apostles were so ready to suffer for the name of Christ that they rejoiced to be considered representative of his cause and the objects of hate when men desired to vent their fury against it.

Instead of accomplishing their design of stamping out Christianity through persecution, the Jews merely attracted attention to some of the most attractive features of it. When the people saw the apostles go away from the whipping post rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer thus for the name of their master, they were amazed; for the like of this was never seen on earth before. And when they saw that the preaching continued without interruption in spite of threats to the contrary, the hearts of all the nobler men and women were irresistibly drawn toward the Christ whose love thus ennobled his followers.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Context of the lesson.

History of the church from Pentecost to time of lesson.

Meaning of Golden Text.

Occasion for imprisonment of Peter and John.

Why Sadducees are prominently mentioned; their chief tenets.

Effect of apostles' imprisonment on people.

Nature of inquiry members of council make.

Why the question was so vague; how it turned out to Peter's advantage.

Cause of resentment on part of Jews. Peter's speech before council.

Manner in which Peter took advantage of the occasion.

Effect of Peter's speech on the council.

Manner in which council disposed of the case. Answer of Peter and John.

Action of Peter and John following their release.

Effect of all this on the people. Imprisonment of all the apostles.

Incidents following the first release of apostles.

Manner in which second release was effected.

Results of all this.

### Lesson IV—July 28, 1946

#### THE CHURCH MEETING AN EMERGENCY

Acts 4:32-37; 6:1-6

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 5:1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. "He that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality." (Rom. 12:8a.)

### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

July	22.	M	Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
July	23.	T	Many Wonders Done (Acts 5:12-16.)
July	24.	W	Sending Relief (Acts 11:27-30)
July	25.	T	Paul Taking Relief (Acts 24:10-21)
July	26.	F	Collection for the Saints (1 Cor. 16:1-9)
July	27.	S	Church at Philippi Helps Paul (Phil. 4:10-20)
July	28.	S	Example of Churches of Macedonia (2 Cor. 8:1-9)

### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 33 or 34.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The early church.

### Lesson Text

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.

36 And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite a man of Cyprus by race,

37 Having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

1 Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

2 And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch;

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands' upon them.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Unity and Liberality of the Church (Verses 32-37) .
- II. Appointment of the Seven (Acts 6:1-6).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Inasmuch as our study thus far in this quarter has been in the first chapters of Acts, we have covered in a general way the outstanding events of the first few weeks following the establishment of the church on the first Pentecost after our Lord's resurrection. The context of the lesson is therefore the events we have been studying from week to week. We cannot urge too strongly a close examination of all that Luke records from Acts 1 down to the present lesson. The material should be thoroughly mastered by every stu-

dent. We shall note under "Subject of the Lesson Explained" reasons for the events we are to study today.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

On the day of Pentecost, Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven, were in Jerusalem. (Acts 2:5.) Many of these became Christians under Peter's preaching on that day; and having abandoned Judaism, the burden of feeding them fell on the infant church. The brethren generously and unselfishly rose to meet their responsibility and freely shared with their brethren what they had, none claiming that what he possessed was his own. The manner in which the church met this emergency is our lesson for today.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"He that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality." (Rom. 12:8a.) The portion of this passage having to do with our lesson today is, "He that giveth, let him do it with liberality." The word translated "liberality" is elsewhere rendered "singleness of heart." (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22.) The meaning evidently is: openness of heart, manifesting itself by liberality and benefactions, free from pretense and self-seeking. Giving, if it be acceptable, must be from the heart and cheerfully done. Brother McGarvey once said "that he thought the brethren should make it an invariable rule that if a brother gave and grumbled about it, what he had given should be returned to him."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This lesson affords an excellent opportunity to teach liberality and generosity in giving. It illustrates the extent to which children of God should go in using their means for the benefit of their brethren and the cause of Christ. The giving characteristic of this lesson was not because of adherence to rules prescribed and made obligatory upon the brethren, but the spontaneous expression of the love of God and man, and a willingness to go all the way in the Lord's service.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Unity and Liberality of the Church (Verses 32-37)**

"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." The historian turns from a consideration of the persecutions coming upon the infant church for a brief consideration of internal conditions. We are now to be given a glimpse of the religious life of the members. Considering the large number of persons in the congregation, and the variety of social relations from which they had been suddenly drawn together, it is truly remarkable that they were of "one heart and soul." The unity for which our Savior prayed in the shadows of Gethsemane (John 17:11, 20, 21) was now a reality, and in it the disciples found peace and joy. The number of believers at this time was large and continually increasing. Such an exhibition before the world was an added attraction, and an inducement

to others to identify themselves with those who adhered so tenaciously to principles that made for peace among them. Moreover, they had all things "common." There - was no selfish interest on the part of some to deprive others of what was rightfully theirs. All had a common Lord, a common hope, and common share in the things necessary for the subsistence of life.

It is not surprising that in such a community the apostles were able with great power to give their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, or that "great grace was upon them all." The manner in which provision was made for the needs of the people was that "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, and laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need." Among the heathen nations of antiquity, systematic provision for the wants of the poor was unknown; and even among the Jews, whose law made ample provisions for this unfortunate class, voluntary benevolence was greatly neglected. It was therefore a novel thing to see many persons in a large community willingly selling their houses and lands in order to supply the needs of the poor among them. It should be carefully noted that there was nothing compulsory about this practice; the disciples gladly and voluntarily sold their possessions when they witnessed the needs of their less fortunate brethren. This is an example for all other congregations to follow for all time to come. It shows that true benevolence requires that we shall not let our brethren suffer for food or the other necessities of life, even if those of us who have houses and lands must sell them in order to have money with which to obtain for them what they need. This teaches us that it is our duty to share what we have with our brethren if they are in need, even down to the last crust. The church in Antioch followed the worthy example of the Jerusalem church in this matter. (Acts 11:27-30.)

We are not to assume that a socialistic arrangement or communistic affair obtained in the church in Jerusalem. This is sometimes claimed, but an examination of what really occurred will reveal that there was nothing done there which follows the pattern of such practices today. (1) There was no uniform distribution of property as is insisted upon by socialists today. The record reveals that "distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need." The basis upon which property was received was not communistic; i.e., that all should have the same amount, but according to the need of the individual. If one were so fortunate as not to need the necessities of life, no distribution was made to him. Only the poor shared in the distribution of property, and this was limited to the necessities of life. (2) Neither was the property held and administered by the apostles as a business committee. The sole basis of distribution was the need of the individual. It was, therefore, (1) not a community of goods, but a benevolence; (2) the goods were not in a common fund, but each had goods that he possessed; (3) he did not say that his goods were his own; (4) but they used all as if it belonged to all; (5) there was none that lacked.

An individual instance of liberality is brought forward to indicate

the manner in which the thing was done and to introduce an individual later to become very prominent in the affairs of the church: "And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet." Barnabas evidently was very proficient in the art of exhorting; the expression "Son of exhortation" is a characteristic Hebrew statement for one noted as an exhorter. This name was given him no doubt because of his reputation for excellence in this work. The power of exhortation is a valuable one, and has been permitted to fall into disuse in recent years. It was not uncommon, in the formative years of the restoration movement, for preachers to go in pairs, one to preach the sermon and the other to "exhort" for an equal length of time afterwards. This characteristic of Barnabas had much to do in the shaping of the subsequent career of this man.

"Inasmuch as the law of Moses made no appropriation of lands for the tribe of Levi, but provided that it should be supported by the tithes from the other tribes, some surprise has been expressed that this Levite was the owner of real estate. But it should be remembered that the original allotment of certain lands to certain tribes and certain cities to the Levites had been completely broken up by the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, and had never been fully restored, for it was only remnants of some of the tribes which returned from captivity, and even they did not again settle within the old tribal limits. This state of things left the Levites to shift for themselves to a great extent, and there was no law, nor had there ever been, to prevent them from acquiring individual landed possessions. It is highly probable too, though it is not asserted in the text, that Joseph's land was in Cyprus, which was his native country. In the expression, 'a man of Cyprus by race,' the term 'race' is used, as it is in some other passages (Mark 7:26; Acts 18:2, 24), for the place of his ancestry."

## **II. Appointment of the Seven (Acts 6:1-6)**

"Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." The "daily ministration" was a distribution made daily from the fund contributed by the benevolent members to take care of the needy in their midst. That this distribution was made daily, and that it was for those in need, confirms our observation made earlier in this lesson that this was not a universal disbursement, but only for those who were actually in need. The "Grecian Jews" were Jews who had been born away from Palestine, and had imbibed the culture of the Hellenes, or Greeks. The great multiplication of the disciples, together with the many duties of the apostles, rendered it impossible for them personally to supervise the daily distribution, and it was natural that those who were strangers in the city would be first overlooked. When information of such neglect reached the ears of the apostles, they immediately set about to remedy the situation.

"And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them,

and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word." If the apostles had attempted to give personal attention to the matter, they would have been forced to abandon their work of preaching of the gospel. This was unthinkable. Hence, the only possible solution of the question was put forward; and, as we shall soon see, met with the wholehearted approval of all.

It is interesting to note the manner of appointment. The apostles told the multitude to "look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." The multitude of disciples selected from among their number men to perform the task before them, and the apostles formally appointed them. Three qualifications are mentioned, (1) of good report, (2) full of the Spirit, and (3) of wisdom. The first has reference to their reputation both within and without the church; the second refers to men whose life exhibited the fruits of the Spirit, and the third to the practical good wisdom necessary to perform the task at hand.

The wisdom of this suggestion was obvious to all, and little time was lost in carrying it to completion. Luke informs us that "the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them." All of these names are Greek, and it is a manifestation of the generosity of the early church that the brethren selected from among the group that complained the brethren to see to it that no further discrimination was practiced. This is not in harmony with our practice these days. If a difficulty occurs between parties today, we are anxious to see to it that our side is properly represented. Here, however, all were so anxious to do the right thing that no question was raised regarding the propriety of appointing all Grecians on the committee. "So generous a trust could not be betrayed except by the basest of men: it was a continuation of the unity which had existed before, and which the murmuring had not been allowed to interrupt." (McGarvey.)

There seems little reason to doubt that these were the first deacons. True, they are not called deacons in the English translation; but the word is in the Greek, and this seems sufficient reason to conclude that these men were deacons. The work they did was in providing for the daily "ministration." The word ministration is the Greek *diakonian*, from which comes our English word deacon. It is the same word translated deacon in 1 Tim. 3, where the qualifications of deacons are set forth. The word "*diakonein*" means to serve; the chief duty for which the seven were appointed was to serve tables, hence they were deacons whether in an official sense or not. But seeing they were selected by the disciples and formally set to the work by the apostles themselves, what reason exists for not concluding that they were in reality deacons in the full sense

of the term? The word "appoint," in connection with the selection of these men, means to "constitute or set over," and this was done by prayer and the imposition of hands. Barnes observes that "though they were selected by the church, yet the power of ordaining them, or setting them apart, was retained by the apostles. Thus the rights of both were preserved—the right of the church to designate who should serve them in the office of deacon, and the right of the apostles to organize and establish the church with its appropriate officers."

We conclude, therefore, that this is the first instance of deacons being appointed, and that the case constitutes a precedent for us to follow today. Many erroneous views obtain regarding a work of deacons. Some have concluded, because their work in this instance was the supervision of the tables of the poor, that the work of deacons is in the material realm, whereas elders, being the overseers of the flock, are the supervisors in the spiritual realm. This is sheer nonsense. Elders have the oversight of the flock in all things, both temporal and spiritual. Deacons are servants of the church, servants in all matters pertaining to the work of the church. As Brother McGarvey observes, "Because these officers were charged with the business affairs of the church, it by no means follows that they were shut off from usefulness in any other way for which they had capacity and opportunity. God exacts the employment of every talent which he has committed to us, and he has appointed no work to be done which is too holy for the humblest disciple. We therefore find one of the seven soon after standing in the front rank of the defenders of the faith in the very city where the apostles themselves were laboring; while another was the first to plan a church among the Samaritans."

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

A review of events since Pentecost to this lesson.  
Significance of present lesson.  
Meaning of Golden Text.  
Change in treatment of subject by historian.  
Condition of the church at this time.  
Effect of conditions on preaching of apostles.  
What disciples did with their property.  
Reason for this practice.  
Effect of this on people round about.  
Proof this was not communistic or socialistic.  
An individual instance of liberality.  
Meaning of expression, "Son of exhortation."  
Why Barnabas, a Levite, would be owning property.  
Slight disturbance in Jerusalem church.  
Who the Grecian Jews were.  
How the matter was remedied.  
Manner of appointment; qualifications.  
Of what is this a precedent today?  
Effect of suggestion on multitude.  
What indicated by the names of men selected?  
Proof that these men were the first deacons.  
Refutation of erroneous views regarding work of deacons.



**Lesson V—August 4, 1946****CHURCH SPREAD BY PERSECUTION**  
**Acts 7:54-60; 8:1-4**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Pet. 4:12-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word."  
(Acts 8:4.)**Helps for Lesson Study**  
**Daily Bible Readings**

July	29.	M	Persecution Predicted (Matt. 10:16-23)
July	30.	T	Extent of Persecution (Matt. 23:29-39)
July	31.	W	John the Baptist Persecuted. (Matt. 14:1-12)
August	1.	T	Paul Persecuted (Acts 22:22-29)
August	2.	F	Persecution Predicted Again (John 16:1-10)
August	3.	S	Paul Recounts His Persecution (2 Cor. 11:21-28)
August	4.	S	Suffering as Christians (1 Pet. 4:12-19)

**Historical Background**

TIME.—Between A.D. 34 and 37.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The Jewish council, Stephen, Paul, and the early Christians.

**Lesson Text**

54 Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord

58 And they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

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.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. The Stoning and Death of Stephen (Verses 54-60).
- II. Saul Participates in Stephen's Death (Acts 7:58; 8:1).
- III. The Jerusalem Church Dispersed Because of Persecution (Verses 2-4).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

Stephen was one of the seven deacons selected to care for the poor widows who were being neglected in the daily ministration. (Acts 6:1-7.) In addition to this work, he also preached the word with great power and effect. Such preaching soon involved him in

difficulty with the authorities, who had forbidden further preaching in the name of the Lord. For an account of his arrest and imprisonment, see Acts 6:8-15. He was charged with speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God, and with stirring up the people. He was brought before the council and allowed to defend himself before that August body. His discourse embraces Acts 7:1-53, and is one of the most remarkable statements to be found in all the scriptures. An outline of it follows: (1) The introduction, 1-8; (2) the case of Joseph, 9-16; (3) the case of Moses in Egypt, 17-37; (4) the case of Moses in the wilderness, 38-41; (5) God's final rejection of Israel, 42, 43; (6) the tabernacle and the temple, 44-50; (7) the application, 51-53. Stephen's course must not have been at first apparent to his accusers as he discussed the salient points of Old Testament history. But before he reached the end his analogy was obvious to all. As the prophets had suffered because of the rebellious attitude of the people, as they had been stoned and killed by a wicked and unbelieving people, so now these Jews, descendants of the fathers, were manifesting the same ungodly attitude. The pent-up fires which had burned in the breast of Stephen now burst into flame as he brought home to his listeners their own guilt: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them that showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers; ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not." (Acts 7:51-53.) Once before they had been unable to resist the wisdom with which Stephen spoke (Acts 6:10), and now their efforts to convict him of crime recoiled on their own heads. But one other course remained to stop his mouth. They were not slow to take it. This we shall consider under (1) The Stoning and Death of Stephen, under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

The subject of our lesson today is simple and self-explanatory. We are to note how the church was driven forth by persecution, and how this operated to contribute to its growth rather than to its destruction. It has been said that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," and it is a fact that the cause of Christ has always flourished in the face of great opposition and difficulty. Thus are the designs of evil men frustrated and their evil attempts made to contribute to the advancement of that which they would destroy.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

See under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The teachers will see to it that the historical sequence of these early chapters of Acts is learned, and that the students are acquiring a good understanding of the outstanding events of the infant church. It is suggested that the teachers use, if possible, the various commentaries on Acts to be able to present the background of these vital

and important events. Commentaries on Acts by McGarvey, Lipscomb, and Boles will be found especially helpful in teaching all of these lessons in this series. The courage and faithfulness manifested by these godly men ought to inspire us to a greater determination in all matters pertaining to the Christian life. Their faith and heroism are well worthy of our emulation today.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

#### 1. The Stoning and Death of Stephen (Verses 54-60)

For a brief review of the events leading up to the stoning and death of Stephen, see under the "Context of the Lesson" and more at large in the commentaries cited above. The fury of the Jewish council knew no bounds when Stephen's discourse came to an end; and it was all the more intense because the condemnation he had hurled at them was not a mere burst of passion, but a deliberate and cool announcement of a righteous judgment, supported by an array of analogies from the very scriptures these men professed to be loyal to. What their reaction was, we are now to consider.

"Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." The words, "cut to the heart," are, literally, "sawn asunder in the heart." These men, on hearing Stephen's sharp words of denunciation, felt as if their hearts had been cut through with the rough teeth of a saw. The literal gnashing of their teeth upon him was a natural consequence of the fury and indignation that filled their hearts. It may be difficult for us to conceive of so August a body completely losing its dignity and rushing pell-mell upon an accused man, but we need only to reflect that the whole course of Stephen's speech was such as to arouse their fury and excite their anger, and his remarks were so true and unanswerable that they could restrain themselves no longer. And so, leaving their seats, this body of grave rabbis, seventy in number, rushed forward like wild beasts, and amid hideous outcries prepared to execute a man uncondemned and untried. Stephen's conduct throughout the whole affair was exemplary, and he faced death calmly and with dignity. "But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." It is not likely that the heavens were literally opened so that Stephen, with his physical eyes, looked into the presence of the Lord. It was probably a vision such as that vouchsafed John on the Isle of Patmos, and it was given him for his own encouragement in the hour of death and for the good of his friends round about. His words, "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God," were an echo in the ears of the chief priests of those uttered by the Lord when he stood before them on trial. (Matt. 26:64.)

. It is not without significance that Jesus is here referred to as "standing" on the right hand of God. Ordinarily the scriptures represent him as "sitting" at God's right hand. (Heb. 1:3; Acts 2:34, etc.) Here, however, the Lord was "standing." Was it in deference to the death that his faithful servant Stephen was about to die?

Did our Lord in heaven rise from his seat at God's right hand to honor the death of this courageous character? It may well be, and does no violence to the case to assume that this is the explanation of this matter.

There was at least one in the audience upon whom, we have reason to believe, the impression made by these events was deep and lasting. Who he was we are soon to see: "But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul." We will search in vain for a greater miscarriage of justice than that which characterized the death of this faithful martyr Stephen. Notwithstanding the fact that this was the highest court of the Jews, and charged with the solemn responsibility of guarding jealously the rights and privileges of the people, it actually stopped its ears rather than to hear anything further from the accused man in their midst. It was nothing more than a frenzied mob, bent on the destruction of Stephen regardless of the consequences. Stephen was stoned to death. For a description of death by stoning, see any reliable Bible dictionary. Stoning was the manner of execution of those charged with blasphemy. (Lev. 24:16.)

## **II Saul Participates in Stephen's Death (Acts 7:58; 8:1)**

A young man by the name of Saul was present and stood guard over the garments of the men who participated in the execution of Stephen. Thus is introduced to us for the first time this man so prominent in later apostolic history. Here, among the enemies of Jesus and a participant in their crimes, he later was bound by the cords of the gospel he sought to destroy; and from being Saul the persecutor, became Paul the persecuted the rest of his days. He lived to recall, sadly, this event and made mention of it many years later as follows: "And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him." (Acts 22:19, 20.) It is probable that from him, an eyewitness, Luke obtained the information concerning it for the purposes of his narrative, as well as his report of Stephen's speech before the council. The calmness that characterized Stephen's death is described next: "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 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. And Saul was consenting unto his death." Stephen placed himself in the attitude of prayer, choosing to die in that fashion. His prayer is reminiscent of that prayed by the Lord on the cross: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.) The young man Saul heard these words, and they sank deeply into his heart; for many years later, bowed under the weight of advancing years, and himself about ready to die, also prayed, "At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account." (2 Tim. 4:16.) Having so prayed, Stephen "fell asleep." This beautiful mode of indicating death is common throughout the

scriptures. (See John 11:11, 21; I Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:14; 5:10; Matt. 9:24.) This expression indicates (1) the peacefulness of death; (2) the hope of a resurrection as one who retires at night hopes to see the light of the new day refreshed and ready for new experiences.

### **III. The Jerusalem Church Dispersed Because of Persecution (Verses 2-4)**

"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. And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him." The church was torn with grief over the death of Stephen, and made "great lamentation" over him. People always feel intense pain at the passing of a good man such as was he, and this feeling is intensified when the death is brought about through injustice and violence. In spite of the sorrow his passing occasioned, it possessed a great value to them from another point of view. Thus far, amid many tears, some stripes, and much affliction, the disciples had not wavered, but before this it was not known whether their new faith would sustain them in death. Now one of their number had tried the dread reality. He had died praying for his murderers and committing his spirit into the hands of the Lord Jesus. It is impossible to estimate the strength and consolation that must have come to these saints on witnessing a death so triumphant. They could now go forward with calm indifference to anything that might happen to them. They needed this assurance greatly; for even now forces were shaping up that would drive them from their homes and out over the land like hunted criminals for no other reason than that they professed to be followers of the lowly Nazarene. There was a dispersion of the whole church, except the apostles. Supposing that the time Jesus had limited them to the city of Jerusalem had not expired, they held their ground regardless of the consequences. Why the authorities allowed them to stay unmolested may be accounted for on the ground that they believed with their brethren and supporters dispersed the apostles could do little more. It is likely, too, that with the church gone, the authorities thought it would be impossible for the apostles to gather an audience, and they would be powerless to further propagate their views. This is the first recorded persecution against the rank and file members of the church. First against Peter and John, and then against the twelve apostles the authorities had vented their fury; now the whole church is made to feel the heavy hand of persecution and is driven out from the city and over the provinces of Judaea and Samaria, and as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. (See Acts 11:19.) The hearts of the saints must have been filled with sadness as they contemplated what must have seemed to them the end of the cause of Christ; but God, who always brings good to his saints out of evil, used it as a means of furthering the gospel and extending it to regions hitherto without it. Good thus came out of evil, and this persecution resulted, as all others have done, in advancing the cause which was intended to be destroyed.

"But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women, committed them to prison. They there

fore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" The death of Stephen, instead of satisfying the persecutors of the church, only served to whet their appetite for more blood; and Saul, the ringleader in the movement, began to work in earnest in arresting men and women and putting them into prison. The words, "Saul laid waste the church," indicate the zeal that characterized his efforts to eliminate completely what to him was a hated heresy. The words "laid waste" are from the Greek word, *elumaineto*, and is commonly applied to wild beasts, to lions, wolves, etc., and denotes the devastations they commit. Saul raged against the church like a wild beast. Search was made from house to house, and any one suspected of being of the hated Christian sect was at once arrested and thrown into prison. The council had no authority to put one to death (the deaths of Christ and Stephen were the result of mob action), but they could imprison, and they were determined to exercise this power to the utmost. Paul frequently alluded to these persecutions in later years after surrendering to the gospel he at first so bitterly hated. (See Acts 26:10, 11; Gal. 1:13.) Barnes says that "it may be remarked here that there never was a persecution commenced with a more flattering prospect to the persecutors. Saul, the principal agent, was young, zealous, learned, and clothed with power. He showed afterwards that he had talents fitted for any station, and zeal that tired with no exertion and that was appalled by no obstacle. With this talent and this zeal, he entered on his work. The Christians were few and feeble. They were scattered and unarmed. They were unprotected by any civil power and exposed, therefore, to the full blaze and rage of persecution. That the church was not destroyed was owing to the protection of God—a protection which not only secured its existence, but which extended its influence and power by means of this very persecution far abroad on the earth."

Yet the disciples "went about preaching the word." Men and women engaged in this work of spreading the gospel; not, of course, always from the pulpit, but whenever and wherever opportunity offered. The word rendered preaching in this passage is not the usual word for such work; it is the word from which comes our English word evangelizing. This word means primarily to announce or proclaim the good news of salvation, and this the disciples did as they went forth before the face of their persecutors. Their hearts were full of the good news of salvation, and it would be unaccountable if they had been content to keep to themselves the good news they had learned. We learn from this that, (1) persecution tends to promote the very thing it would destroy; (2) one of the best means to make Christians active and zealous is to persecute them; (3) it is right for all Christians including men and women, to make known the truths of the gospel (certainly the Holy Spirit did not lead these people to do that which he forbids in 1 Cor. 14:34, 35); (4) it should be the design and desire of all Christians to make the good news of salvation known to all, and especially should this be done when traveling.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Salient events since Pentecost.

Stephen's speech outlined.  
 Various efforts to stop Stephen's mouth.  
 Reason Stephen's speech infuriated Jews.  
 Manner in which they indicated their fury.  
 Meaning of words "cut to the heart."  
 Conduct of the council, and reasons therefor.  
 Manner in which Stephen conducted himself.  
 Significance of Jesus "standing" in heaven.  
 The young man who watched the stoning of Stephen.  
 Allusions to this by him in later years.  
 Manner in which Stephen died.  
 His words of prayer; other instances of such a prayer.  
 Effect of the persecution on the church.  
 Leader in such persecution.  
 Benefits derived from death of Stephen.  
 Manner in which Saul persecuted the church.  
 How the persecutors were defeated.  
 Lessons learned from this study.

### Lesson VI—August 11, 1946

#### GOSPEL PREACHED IN SAMARIA Acts 8:5-16

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 8:18-25.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans." (Acts 8:25.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

August	5.	M	Samaria Built (1 Kings 16:21-28)
August	6.	T	Samaria Condemned (Isa. 7:3-9)
August	7.	W	Jesus Visited Samaria (Luke 17:11-19)
August	8.	T	Samaritans Believed (John 4:39-42)
August	9.	F	A Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
August	10.	S	Jesus Passes Through Samaria (John 4:1-8)
August	11.	S	Inhospitable Samaritans (Luke 9:51-56)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—Between A.D. 36 and 39.

PLACE.—Samaria.

PERSONS.—Philip the evangelist, Simon the sorcerer, and the people of Samaria.

#### Lesson Text

5 And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ.

6 And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did.

7 For from many of those that had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice: and many that were palsied, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was much joy in that city.

9 But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who beforetime in-

city used sorcery, and amazed the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is that power of God which is called Great.

11 And they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed them with his sorceries.

12 But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 And Simon also himself believed: and being baptized, he continued with Philip and beholding signs and great miracles wrought, he was amazed.

14 Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit:

16 For as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. The Labors of Philip (Verse 5).
- II. Results of Philip's Preaching (Verses 6-8).
- III. Simon the Sorcerer (Verses 9-11).
- IV. Mission of Peter and John (Verses 12-16).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

In our last lesson we learned of the dispersion of the Jerusalem church and the resultant preaching of the gospel wherever the disciples went. (Acts 8:4.) Among the many who went forth preaching was Philip. He was not the apostle by this name, seeing that all the apostles are said to have remained in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1), but was one of the seven men selected to supervise the daily ministration for the poor in the early days of the Jerusalem church. His work as a deacon had terminated with the dispersion of the church, and now he went forth as an evangelist preaching the gospel. He is called an evangelist in Acts 21:8. He evidently became an evangelist, not by being formally set apart to that work, but by the force of circumstances. The city to which he went was once the capital of the twelve tribes. Herod changed its name to Sebaste, the Greek for Augusta. For a description of its present ruins, see *Lands of the Bible*, by McGarvey, page 294.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

See above under the "Context of the Lesson."

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans." (Acts 8:25.) Inasmuch as this verse is closely connected with an incident discussed at length in our text today, we defer exposition of it to the last paragraph under "Comments on the Lesson Text," which please see.

### HELPS FOR TEACHERS

Acts 8:4 speaks of a general dispersion of the Jerusalem church, but beginning with our lesson text for today the historian particularizes and reveals to us some of the work done by one of the dis-



ciples, Philip, by name. Much is to be learned of the proper methods of evangelistic work by a careful study of the methods and motives that influenced the disciples of the early church. These historical matters are fundamental and vital in nature, and any study of the New Testament should be preceded by a thorough understanding of them. Many incidental lessons may be drawn from these lessons, and the initiative of the teacher is thus given full reign. It is not to be assumed that these helps exhaust the possibilities of the case. The teachers should be as resourceful as possible and bring to the study of the lesson all the information accessible.

## **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

### **I. The Labors of Philip (Verse 5)**

"And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ." The city of Samaria was located in that province by the same name immediately north of Judaea and south of Galilee. Jesus made occasional visits to that section of country during his personal ministry, and on one occasion engaged a woman in conversation at the well of Samaria, near the city of Sychar. (John 4:1-42.) Brother McGarvey says that Herod changed its name to Sebaste, the Greek for Augusta, in honor of Augustus Caesar; and it still retains this name in the Arabic form, Sebustiyeh. For a description of its present ruins, see *Lands of the Bible*, by McGarvey, page 294. Note that Philip proclaimed unto them "the Christ." To preach Christ is to preach the things "concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ," a fact we learn from Acts 8:12. It is significant that Philip did not waste his time indulging the people in the recitation of personal experiences or emotional tales. Early evangelists "preached the word." (2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Cor. 9:16.)

### **II. Results of Philip's Preaching (Verses 6-8)**

At the time Philip visited Samaria the people of that city were completely under the influence of a famous magician, Simon, by name. The fact that they turned readily to Philip's preaching is to be accounted for by the vast difference between the miracles he performed and the tricks of Simon. The people, even though deluded, could easily see, when the miracles and tricks were compared, that the former were divine, the latter, human. The miracles were performed for the purpose of attracting attention, and to accredit the word. (See Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:4.) It is not surprising that the people "gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did." These signs were the driving out of unclean spirits, the healing of many that were palsied and lame. It is not to be wondered at that "there was much joy in that city." In addition to receiving the gospel of Christ, the sick were made well, and the lame healed. It was enough to cause rejoicing.

### **III. Simon the Sorcerer (Verses 9-11)**

"But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who before time in the city used sorcery, and amazed the people of Samaria, giving

out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is that power of God which is called Great. And they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed them with his sorceries." The practice of sorcery was common at that time; and this man Simon had attained too much reputation as a sorcerer, deceiving the whole city of Samaria and leading them to believe that he was the great power of God. The people were amazed at his feats, believing that only one from God could perform such things. Simon had capitalized on this superstition, allowing the people to believe that he possessed miraculous powers; in fact, had encouraged them in this belief, "giving out that himself was some great one." So soon, however, as they witnessed the miracles of Philip they could readily see the difference between them and Simon's tricks, and they did not hesitate to accept the gospel. We are told that "when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." This is a brief case of conversion, but it reveals many interesting particulars. We learn (1) the nature of Philip's preaching: "The kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ"; (2) the results that followed apostolic preaching: "they were baptized"; (3) who were baptized: "both men and women." When the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ are preached, men and women desire baptism; for Jesus commanded it, saying, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) Moreover, "men and women" were baptized, not irresponsible and innocent babes. The course of Philip's work in Samaria followed this pattern: (1) Philip's preaching; (2) miracles attending the preaching; (3) influence of Simon eliminated; (4) the people believed and were baptized. These passages, therefore, state in the clearest fashion the apostolic order of converting men: (1) Philip preached; (2) he preached the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ; (3) the people believed his preaching, for faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17); (4) those who believed were baptized. In this way must all evangelization be done today if the results of the apostolic age are to be attained.

The most signal triumph of all, however, was the conversion of Simon himself. "And Simon also himself believed: and being baptized, he continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great miracles wrought, he was amazed." His amazement is to be explained by the fact that he, as the people had already done, was able to see the difference between miracles wrought by the hand of Philip and his own feats of magic. He could, of course, understand the manner in which his own tricks were worked, but he knew that no man could do the things Philip had done without miraculous aid. Contrary to the views of some, Simon's later fall, when he attempted to purchase the gift of God with money (Acts 8:18-24), is not to be taken as an indication that his conversion was not sincere and genuine. The record plainly says that "Simon also himself believed: and being baptized." Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) Simon complied with the conditions of salvation, and was therefore saved. That he later made a wicked proposal to purchase the gift of God with money only

shows that he allowed his former manner of life to influence him to attempt to do that which was wrong. In other words, Simon simply fell from grace. Johnson (The People's New Testament with Notes) makes the following observation: "There has been much needless discussion whether Simon was sincere. It would never have been doubted had he not been told that later he fell into sin. It is best to take the scripture in its manifest sense. He became a believer like the rest; he was baptized like the rest, then, like many others, at a later period, under temptation, he fell into sin. It is impossible to believe that a man of his power and influence in Samaria would have yielded outwardly and shown the deference he manifested to Philip unless he was at that time sincere. But he was of the class described by the Savior when the seed of the sower fell among thorns."

#### **IV. Mission of Peter and John (Verses 12-16)**

"Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: for as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." It will be recalled that when the persecution that followed the martyrdom of Stephen drove the disciples away from Jerusalem, the apostles remained there. When news of the work of Philip in the Samaritan city reached the ears of the apostles, they determined to send Peter and John, two of their number, down there. Subsequent events indicate that the chief purpose of their visit was to impart to the Samaritans the Holy Spirit by the laying on of their hands. Several facts follow from this interesting statement: (1) Here is clear evidence that Peter did not occupy the position of a pope in the early church. That Peter and John were "sent" by the other apostles conflicts with the Roman Catholic theory of the primacy of Peter by showing -that instead of being at the head of the college of apostles, he was willing to be subject to them. (2) It is also clear from this that the reception of the Holy Spirit does not follow obedience to the gospel. The Samaritans believed and were baptized (Acts 8:12); they were therefore saved (Mark 16:16), yet on them the Holy Spirit had not fallen, "only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." (3) The Holy Spirit, in its miraculous form, had not fallen upon the Samaritans. (4) It was necessary for the apostles to go there in order that by the laying on of their hands the Spirit might be given. (5) In spite of the fact that Philip was miraculously endowed with the ability to perform miracles, he could not impart the Holy Spirit to others. We learn from this, then, that impartation of the Spirit was only through the hands of the apostles. It follows, therefore, that when the apostles died, the power to impart the Spirit miraculously ceased.

This incident forevermore settles the question of the reception of the Holy Spirit today. It was imparted only through imposition of the apostles' hands. There are no apostles today. There can be, then, no impartation of the Holy Spirit today. Brother McGarvey observes: "Whatever other purposes may have prompted the mis-

sion of the two apostles, such as confirming the faith of the disciples, or assisting Philip in his labors, it is quite certain that the chief purpose was the impartation of the Holy Spirit. What they did on their arrival was certainly that for which they went, but the chief thing which they did was to confer the Holy Spirit, therefore this was the chief purpose of their visit. If, however, Philip could have conferred this gift, the mission would have been useless so far as its chief purpose was concerned. This affords strong evidence that the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit was bestowed through no human hands, but those of the apostles; and this conclusion is confirmed by the consideration that in the only other instance of the kind recorded in Acts, that of the twelve at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7), the gift was bestowed by the hands of an apostle. The case of Saul is not an exception; neither is that of Timothy."

These facts cannot be too strongly emphasized: (1) Obedience to the gospel does not carry with it the promise of the Holy Spirit; (2) even in apostolic times, the Holy Spirit was received after salvation, and only through imposition of the hands of an apostle. We stand in exactly the same relationship that characterized the Samaritans before Peter and John arrived. They heard the gospel, believed it, and were baptized; those who thus do are saved. We, likewise, have done this and are saved. But in the case of the Samaritans the apostles came down and laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. There are no apostles to lay hands on us today. Therefore, we cannot receive the Holy Spirit today. These facts are conclusive of the point in issue. To assume that it is possible to receive the Holy Spirit today, two things must be contended: (1) Either the Spirit can be received in some manner other than through the laying on of apostles' hands; or, (2) there are still in the world today divinely accredited apostles. The second is absurd; the first is shown to be wrong by this passage. Miraculous reception of the Holy Spirit is, therefore, not possible today.

The fact that the Samaritans enjoyed pardon of sins and membership in the church before receiving the Spirit proves that this gift has no connection with the enjoyment of either of these blessings. It came in addition to, and by means of other conditions, than those necessary to obtain salvation. These gifts were of a temporary nature and were given to supply needs no longer in existence. When the church grew out of its infancy, and when the writing of the New Testament was completed, thus furnishing us "unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:17), these gifts were no longer needed. If the Holy Spirit in some manner influences us today, it is not in the sense the Samaritans were influenced following the visit of Peter and John. The New Testament is the Holy Spirit's message to us today. To be influenced by it is to be influenced by the Spirit. In no other way does the Holy Spirit wield an influence in the world now. The Holy Spirit does not exercise an influence independent of and apart from the world today.

The Golden Text of our present lesson is so closely associated with the foregoing incident that we deferred exposition of it until we had studied matters just preceding it. Following a discussion of the work of Peter and John in Samaria, the historian tells us that "they therefore [Peter and John] when they had testified and

`spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans." The first part of this verse refers to their work of preaching and teaching the word of the Lord in Samaria, and the latter part of it to their work along the way of their return trip to Jerusalem. The route of travel from Samaria to Jerusalem led them through Shechem, so often mentioned in the Old Testament, and through Sychar, near Jacob's well, where Jesus talked with the woman of Samaria. (John 4:1-42.) It is entirely possible that the apostles followed a circuitous route to Jerusalem in order that they might visit in "many villages," and thus increase their opportunities of preaching the gospel to the people.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The context of the lesson.  
 Place and nature of Philip's preaching.  
 Brief history of Philip.  
 Result of Philip's preaching.  
 Description of matters in Samaria.  
 Manner in which Philip influenced the people.  
 Simon the sorcerer.  
 Nature of Philip's preaching; course his preaching followed.  
 Most signal triumph in Samaria.  
 Proof that Simon was saved.  
 Why Peter and John came to Samaria.  
 Facts following from this visit.  
 Manner in which Holy Spirit was imparted.  
 Question settled regarding Spirit today.  
 Why we cannot receive Spirit in this fashion today.  
 Exposition of Golden Text

### Lesson VII—August 18, 1946

#### SAUL CONVERTED Acts 9:1-19

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Gal. 1:11-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."  
 (Acts 26:19.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

August	12.	M	Said a Persecutor (Acts 22:1-6)
August	13.	T	Saul Made Havoc of the Church (Gal. 1:11-17)
August	14.	W	Saul Penitent (Acts 22:7-14)
August	15.	T	Saul Baptized (Acts 22:16-21)
August	16.	F	Said Honest (Acts 26:4-16)
August	17.	S	Saul Obedient (Acts 26:19-23)
August	18.	S	Saul Preached Christ (Acts 9:20-30)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 36.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, the road to Damascus, Damascus.

PERSONS.—The Lord, Saul of Tarsus and his companions, Ananias.

**Lesson Text**

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.

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth;

12 And he hath seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight.

13 But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem:

14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel:

16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake.

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.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Saul's Journey to Damascus (Verses 1-9).
- II. Saul Is Baptized (Verses 10-19).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

Between the present lesson and our last one is the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch. (Acts 8:26-40.) Following Philip's work in Samaria, he was sent to a point on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, where he contacted the eunuch, who had been to Jerusalem for the purpose of worshiping. He preached to him Jesus and led him to desire baptism. Coming to a certain water, the eunuch said, "Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 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. 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." To keep abreast of the historical sequence of events in Acts, the salient facts of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch should be mastered. With the first verse of Acts 9, we begin the study of "The conversion and early labors of Saul." Thus far Luke,

the historian, has given us a brief history of the early church and its numerous workers; now he is to particularize, and hereafter much of the book is devoted to the labors of one man, Saul of Tarsus. It will be recalled that he was introduced to us for the first time on the occasion of Stephen's death when he watched the garments of those who stoned Stephen. He was the most bitter persecutor of the early church. Long years afterward he frequently referred to these days of persecution with much sadness and regret, and considered himself the chief of sinners, because he had persecuted the church of God. (Acts 26:10; 1 Tim. 1:12-17.)

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF SAUL**

Saul was born in the famous Greek city of Tarsus, on the banks of the river Cydnus in Cilicia. (Acts 22:3.) Here he acquired in childhood a knowledge of the Greek language and the manners and customs of the Greeks which served him in good stead in later life. He was of pure Jewish extraction, "A Hebrew of Hebrews," of the tribe of Benjamin, and descended from pious ancestors. (Phil. 3:4, 5; 2 Tim. 1:3.) His parents were Pharisees (Acts 23:6; 18:3), and he adhered tenaciously to their interpretation of the law. In addition to his religious instruction, he learned the trade of tentmaker early in life. This was in compliance with the Jewish custom of learning a trade, however affluent one's family might be. The fact that Paul later acquired an extensive education proves that his father put him to the humble trade of tentmaking, not through necessity, but in compliance with the Jewish conception that some form of manual labor was an important part in the education of everybody. There is a Rabbinic saying that "he who does not teach his son a trade teaches him to steal." Apparently Saul remained in Tarsus only during his early childhood, for he was "brought up" at the feet of Gamaliel in Jerusalem. (Acts 22:3.) His progress in this Bible school is thus described by himself: "I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers." (Gal. 1:14.) Under the direction of this learned Pharisee, Saul made remarkable advancement, his knowledge of the law was enlarged, his zeal inflamed, and his own Pharisaic prejudices intensified. It is not likely that he was in Jerusalem, however, during the time of the crucifixion of Jesus or for several years previous to this time. It is unaccountable that he would have made no reference or allusion to it if he had witnessed that tragic event, or had been present on any occasion when the Lord taught or did his mighty deeds.

It is believed that at the time of Stephen's death Saul was about thirty years old. When the conflict arose between Stephen and the Jews of the foreign synagogue, Saul was likely one of the Cilicians who encountered him. (Acts 6:9.) He was, apparently, a member of the Jewish council (Acts 26:10), and actively participated in the stoning of Stephen, "consenting unto his death." (Acts 26:11.) After the death of Stephen, he was the leader in the persecution, until the church was dispersed. During this time many were put to death by his instigation, and others were scourged and made to blaspheme. When news of further activity by Christians in Damascus reached

the ears of Saul, his fury knew no bounds and he purposed to journey to that distant city and destroy all who called on the name of the Lord there. Our lesson for today opens with Saul applying to the high priest for letters of authority to accomplish his purpose in that city.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." (Acts 26:19.) Many years after the events of this lesson Paul (the Saul of this lesson) found himself before king Agrippa. He had been arrested in Jerusalem and carried to Caesarea, where he remained in prison for two years before being given a hearing. He was taken first before Festus, from whose court he appealed to Caesar in Rome. Before being carried to Rome, he was taken before Agrippa, king of Chalcis, a small district east of the Jordan. For an account of Paul's trial before Festus, see Acts 25:1-12. Festus' statement of Paul's case to Agrippa is found in Acts 25:13-22. The public statement of his case is in Acts 25:23-27. See Acts 26:1-29 for Paul's defense before Agrippa. In the course of this speech, Paul recounted his experiences on the road to Damascus-the great light and heavenly vision-and informed Agrippa that he had not been disobedient thereto. The account of Paul's conversion we are studying is Luke's report of it; Paul's own account of it is found in his speech before Agrippa. (Acts 26:1-29.)

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

With the sole exception of the Lord himself, Saul of Tarsus, later Paul the apostle, is the greatest character in sacred history. He wrote more of the New Testament, was instrumental in planting more churches, and influenced the world more than any other man, save the Lord, who ever lived. Any study of the scriptures must therefore be preceded by some knowledge of this great apostle. There are various accounts of his conversion in the scriptures (see, for example, Acts 9:22, 26), and these should all be consulted and a composite picture obtained of this man's acceptance of the gospel of Christ. Those who have access to religious libraries will find much helpful material in Farrar's "Life and Work of Paul"; Conybeare & Howson's "Life and Epistles of Paul," and Stalker's "Life of Paul." "Commentaries on Acts" by H. Leo Boles, David Lipscomb, and J. W. McGarvey may be consulted with great profit on this subject.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Saul's Journey to Damascus (Verses 1-9)**

"But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 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." That the city of Damascus contained a very considerable Jewish population is indicated by the fact that the synagogues are spoken of in the plural. Josephus says that there were not less than ten thousand slain there during the reign of Nero. The expression, "breathing threatening and slaughter," is a strong one and shows the intense feeling under which Saul labored



at this time. It pictures the action of a man violently enraged and bent on vengeance. The "letters" were issued by the high priest and gave Saul all of the power of the Jewish council-to arrest both men and women and throw them into prison if they were Christians.

It has been observed that never was a man in a more unfavorable frame of mind than was Saul as he began his trip to Damascus. It has been estimated that the journey consumed approximately a week from Jerusalem to Damascus, and there appears to have been no abatement of zeal on the part of Saul at any time. A less determined man would likely have allowed his passions to cool after a tiresome journey of seven or eight days, but not Saul. There is a most striking contrast between him and the eunuch. Saul, breathing threatening and slaughter, starts out for a foreign city to arrest people, and the eunuch pursues his peaceful journey, thoughtfully reading the scriptures; yet so wonderfully adaptable is the gospel of Christ that both were turned into the way of salvation.

"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: and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The distance from Jerusalem to Damascus is approximately one hundred and forty miles. Saul had almost reached the city of Damascus before these events occurred. Suddenly a bright light shone round about him, and a voice addressed him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" While he did not know who the speaker was, he knew it came from heaven, as the light had done; and he immediately asked for the identity of the speaker: "And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Brother McGarvey observes that "it is impossible for us who have been familiar with the glory of the risen Christ from infancy to fully realize the thoughts and feelings which flashed like lightning into the soul of Saul on hearing these words. Up to this moment he had held Jesus to be an impostor cursed of God and man, and his followers blasphemers worthy of death, but now this hated being is suddenly revealed to him in a blaze of divine glory. There he stands with the light of heaven and the glory of God around him, and he says, 'I am Jesus.' Stephen then was right, and I have shed innocent blood. 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' The die is cast. The proud spirit yields, and the current of that mighty soul is turned back in its channel, to flow forever deeply and strongly in the opposite direction."

Here another fact, not yet brought to light, is noted. Saul was not alone on the journey from Jerusalem to Damascus: "And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man." These men fell to the earth at the appearance of the dazzling light. Paul's own account of this occurrence, delivered in his defense before King Agrippa, is as follows: "Where upon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 26:12-14.)

In answer to his query, "Who art thou, Lord?" Jesus said to him, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Had it not been for these words, Saul would not have known what step to take next. "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. And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink." The words, "when his eyes were opened," are not to be taken as implying that they had been closed throughout the whole affair. Had this been the case, he could not have seen the Lord. Moreover, the light would not have blinded him. In all probability, he gazed steadfastly into the light until it blinded him, and closed his eyes only when he could bear the pain no longer. Being unable to see, it was necessary that someone take him by the hand and guide him. His abstinence from both food and drink can be accounted for only by his extreme misery while brooding over his awful crimes and waiting to be told what to do. Three days passed with Paul in this condition. Various reasons have been advanced why the Lord allowed Paul to remain so long in the throes of misery. It may have been for his own good, to allow him sufficient time to reflect upon his own condition; or it may have been for the benefit of the Jews around him. All in his immediate circle must have known of the incident, and this must have made a profound impression upon them. If in any mind the thought arose that he had been deceived by some optical or mental illusion, it was dissipated by the consideration that the blindness could not have resulted from such a cause. Thus the blindness served to cut off all escape from the conclusion that his report of the vision was true.

## **II. Saul Is Baptized (Verses 10-19)**

See Acts 9:10-12 for the Lord's communication to Ananias, a gospel preacher, who was sent to bear the tidings of salvation to Saul. This communication from the Lord imposed a most unwelcome task upon Ananias, for he said, "Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name." Ananias' fears under the circumstances were well grounded. Saul's fame as a persecutor had spread far and wide; and the disciples were evidently apprized of his intentions in Damascus, seeing they knew about the "letters of authority" he had obtained from the high priests in Jerusalem. The Lord allayed his fears by telling him of his plans and purposes for Saul. Said he, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake" In the words, "chosen vessel," Jesus compares Saul to a carefully selected casket, in which a jewel rich enough for a present to a king is to be deposited, that jewel being his own precious name. It is quite customary to keep jewels of great value in caskets of corresponding value; and so, when Jesus is about to send his name to kings and the great ones of earth, he selected the persecuting Saul as the fittest vessel in which to enclose it. Reassured, Ananias went on his way to contact the penitent Saul. "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. And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; and he took food and was strengthened."

We have observed above that there are numerous accounts of Saul's conversion in the New Testament; and if we are to get a complete picture of that event, all of them must be studied. In this statement, "and he arose and was baptized," there is an omission of the command to that effect; and this indicates to us that Luke's account of the conversion in Acts 9 is abbreviated. This omission is supplied in Paul's own account in Acts 22:14-16. On this occasion, Paul was defending himself before a mob in the city of Jerusalem. For the whole account of his conversion as delivered on that occasion, see Acts 22:1-21. He there gives an account of himself before his conversion (Acts 22:1-5), an account of the conversion (Acts 22:6-16), and his mission to the Gentiles (Acts 22:17-21). The omission above alluded to, the command to be baptized, is thus given in Paul's own words: "And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there, came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him. And he said, The God of our Fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:12-16.) Saul had already believed; this is evident from the fact that he acted upon the command of the Lord to come into the city. His repentance is also certain; for three days he had been in the throes of misery, occasioned by his repentance. Moreover, he had already confessed the Lord, saying, "What should I do?" There remained, therefore, only one other thing to do, and this Ananias, the Lord's messenger to him, commands. The words, "Why tarriest thou?" were suggested by the usual delay of baptism after believing a delay of which Ananias did not then know the cause. In the expression, "wash away thy sins," there is undoubtedly a reference to the forgiveness of sins which takes place in baptism, and the metaphor in the term "wash away" was suggested by the washing of the body which takes place in baptism. He was to wash his sins away by undergoing that washing in which God forgives them. This was to be done, "calling on his name," because it is through the name of Jesus that we now receive every blessing, and especially the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 4:12.)

We have seen that in Saul's conversion he was required to do simply and only that which any alien sinner must do to be saved. True, there were incidental affairs connected with his conversion, but these did not have anything to do with the essentials of salvation. The conditions of salvation are faith, repentance, confession, and baptism in water for the remission of sins. A minute and detailed study of Acts will reveal that in every instance salvation was enjoyed on the same conditions. (See Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46, 47; Acts 2:38; 22:16.) Paul "took food and was strengthened" following his baptism. The dejection and misery

he had undergone for three days were thrown off only after that event. Men cannot scripturally rejoice until after baptism.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The context of the lesson.  
 An outline of the lesson.  
 A brief history of the life of Saul prior to conversion.  
 Meaning and background of Golden Text.  
 Occasion for Saul's journey, and his attitude.  
 Significance of the "letters."  
 Comparison between Saul and the eunuch.  
 The Lord speaks to Saul.  
 Paul's companions, and effect on them.  
 Description of events on road to Damascus.  
 Effect on Paul; three days following.  
 Reasons for delay in visit of Ananias.  
 Lord's words to Ananias, and his reaction.  
 Meaning of chosen vessel."  
 Various accounts of Paul's conversion.  
 Conditions performed by Saul in order to be saved.  
 Ananias' words to him.  
 When men may rejoice because of sins forgiven.

### Lesson VIII—August 25, 1946

#### THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS

Acts 10:1-8, 24-27, 44-48

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 10:9-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house." (Acts 11:14.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

August	19.	M	Cornelius' Messengers (Acts 10:9-23)
August	20.	T	Peter Preaches to Cornelius (Acts 10:28-43)
August	21.	W	Peter Rehearses to the Church (Acts 11:1-10)
August	22.	T	Words to Save Cornelius (Acts 11:11-18)
August	23.	F	Gospel Preached to the Gentiles (Acts 11:20-26)
August	24.	S	Gentiles Should Hear the Gospel (Acts 15:7-il)
August	25.	S	All One in Christ (Gal. 5:23-29)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 41.

PLACES.—Joppa and Caesarea.

PERSONS.—Cornelius and his household, the angel, Peter, and six Jewish brethren.

#### Lesson Text

1 Now there was a certain man in Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.

3 He saw in a vision openly, as it were about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him, Cornelius.

4 And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being affrighted, said, What

is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God.

5 And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter:

6 He lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea side.

7 And when the angel that spake unto him was departed, he called two of his household-servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

8 And having rehearsed all things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

24 And on the morrow they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his kinsmen and his near friends.

25 And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him

26 But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and findeth many come together.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Cornelius, a Gentile, Directed to Send for Peter (Verses 1-8).
- II. Peter Arrives in Caesarea (Verses 24-27).
- III. Cornelius and His Household Receive the Holy Spirit and Are Baptized (Verses 44-48).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Our last lesson closed with the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. Immediately following this, he began to devote all of his energies to the building up of that which he had sought to tear down. Acts 9:19-25 tells us of his efforts in this respect and of the enmity of his erstwhile brethren because of his new activity. Shortly thereafter, he was forced to flee the city, and returned to Jerusalem, later going to Tarsus. (Acts 9:26-30.) At this point Luke interrupts the narrative to insert some historical notes regarding the activities of Peter. From Acts 9:31 to 11:18, we have an account of Peter preaching in Judaea, and of his visit to the uncircumcised. An outline of Acts from 9:31 to our present lesson is as follows: (1) The church enjoys peace and prosperity (Acts 9:31); (2) Peter, evangelizing, comes to Lydda (Acts 9:32-35); (3) Peter is called to Joppa (Acts 9:36-43). It is highly important that the student continue his study of the historical narrative of Acts.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Cornelius and his household were the first Gentile converts of the early church. His conversion is, therefore, highly significant, and the circumstances leading up to it interesting and important. Yet, the conditions upon which he received salvation were precisely those performed by Saul of Tarsus and all others. Incidental circumstances differ in individual cases, but the conditions of pardon are always the same under the Christian dispensation.

## THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"Who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house." (Acts 11:14.) Since the gospel had not been preached to Gentiles before this, Peter was led to go to Caesarea with no little difficulty. It was necessary for the Lord to show him in a vision that the Gentiles were no longer to be regarded as unclean; and even then he had the prudence to carry with him six Jewish brethren to witness with him the proceedings. On his return he was called to account for his going in "to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them," and Acts 11 contains Peter's defense. The words of our Golden Text for today were uttered by the angel who instructed Cornelius to send "to Joppa, and fetch Simon. . . who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house." The historical connection will be discussed more at length under "Comments on the Lesson Text."

## HELPS FOR TEACHERS

This lesson marks the beginning of the gospel among the Gentiles. Thus far, the gospel had been preached only to the Jewish nation. Mistaking the nature of the Christian dispensation, and assuming that it was merely an . outgrowth of Judaism, the apostles had preached only to the Jews. However, the gospel was for "every creature," in "all the world"; and the Lord had determined to make of the "two one new man" (the church) (Eph. 2:15), and the time had come to bring the Gentiles into the one fold. The Jews felt an unreasoning prejudice against the Gentiles; and this will explain their reticence in taking the gospel to them. For many years, objections, serious and varied, arose against admitting the Gentiles to Christian fellowship. This attitude on the part of the Jews caused much difficulty in the early church. It is necessary to understand this to be able to appreciate the various conflicts that arose during the first few years of the gospel dispensation. The teachers should explain in detail these facts.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

### 1. Cornelius, a Gentile, Directed to Send for Peter (Verses 1-8)

"Now there was a certain man in Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." (See footnote at bottom of page 197,; in McGarvey's Commentary on Acts, or any good Bible dictionary, for a description of the city of Caesarea, and a discussion of its importance.) Cornelius was an Italian, and by occupation an officer in the Roman army. He was at the head of a Roman cohort, believed to contain about six hundred men. He is one of three centurions favorably mentioned in the New Testament. (Acts 27:1-3; Luke 7:2; Mark 15:39.) It may at first glance seem strange that a man who possessed such a fine character should need conversion. He was (1) a devout man; (2) one who feared God with all his house; (3) a man who gave liberally of his means to the poor and unfortunate; and (4) who prayed to God always.' There are

many who fall far short of his attainments who nevertheless expect to receive salvation on the basis of their moral character. In spite of all that can be said for Cornelius, he still had to hear words whereby he might be saved. Despite his moral attainments, he had to obey the gospel. It follows, therefore, that self-righteous men deceive themselves in thinking that they can be saved without obedience to the gospel. Man sustains a threefold duty. He owes an obligation to (1) himself; (2) to those about him; and (3) to God. Men forget that while they are discharging in a credible manner their obligations to themselves and those about them, they are neglecting the much higher obligation to God. The most inexcusable of all sins is a refusal to render to God the homage and service that is rightfully his. Cornelius was, therefore, a remarkable man; but he had to come to Christ. The circumstances in which this was done follows.

"He saw in a vision openly, as it were about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him, Cornelius. And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being affrighted, said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side." This vision did not appear in a dream or a trance, but while Cornelius was wide awake. It was at the "ninth hour," one of the Jewish hours of prayer (Acts 3:1), three o'clock in the afternoon. The circumstances were so unusual that the appearance of the angel frightened him, and prompted him to make inquiry as to what it was all about. The angel told him his prayers and alms had come up for a "memorial" before God. That is, his prayers reminded the Lord of something—served to recall to him matters within his memory. This doubtless was the Lord's intention to bring within the sphere of promised blessing all the families of the earth. It will be recalled that God made promise to Abraham to this end, saying, "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:2, 3.) Notwithstanding the fact that the gospel was to be preached in all the world and to all nations, because of their narrow conceptions, the Jews withheld the gospel from the Gentile people for some years following the establishment of the church on Pentecost. God did not intend to allow them to thwart his purposes; and Cornelius' prayer was a reminder of his intention to make of Jew and Gentile one "new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Eph. 2:15, 16; see also Col. 2:14.) Hence, instructions were issued to Cornelius by which he might be brought in contact with one who would declare to him the conditions upon which he could enter the church and be saved.

It is not without significance that the angel did not himself deliver the conditions. The reader may wonder why, if Cornelius stood in need of salvation, the angel did not announce to him the terms upon which he might receive it. This would have eliminated the necessity of sending away for a man to make a long trip for this purpose. But in each instance where miraculous intervention

was necessary, a preacher was always required to offer the terms of pardon. There are three outstanding examples of this in the New Testament. These are the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, Saul of Tarsus, and Cornelius and his household. The reason for this is obvious. The gospel has been committed to earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7); it was delivered to men and is to be preached by them (Mark 16:15, 16; 2 Tim. 2:2); and the Lord will not disarrange his plan or suspend this arrangement. From Pentecost to the present no angel or other heavenly messenger has ever announced to any man the condition upon which he can be saved.

Cornelius was not slow to comply with the behest of the angel. "And when the angel that spake unto him was departed, he called two of his household-servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; and having rehearsed all things unto them, he sent them to Joppa" It will be recalled that the visit of the angel was at the "ninth hour" of the day, three o'clock in the afternoon. In spite of the late hour, Cornelius did not hesitate to start three messengers on the journey. Devout men are anxious to do their duty always, and will make none of the petty excuses that characterize the halfhearted and indifferent. Cornelius recognized his obligation to God, and he was unwilling to delay a matter fraught with such momentous consequences.

To maintain the historical sequence of this story, and to have all the facts connected therewith, read carefully verses 9-23. This tells of the journey of the three messengers, their arrival in Joppa, and a most remarkable experience Peter had in which the Lord convinced him that the Gentiles were no longer to be regarded as common or unclean, and were therefore to be admitted to full fellowship in the gospel. These facts must be ascertained before the following portion of our lesson is considered.

## **II. Peter Arrives in Caesarea (Verses 24-27)**

"And on the morrow they [Peter, the six Jewish brethren, and Cornelius' messengers] entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his kinsmen and his near friends." With the promptness that characterizes the military minded, Cornelius had prepared for Peter's arrival, and had invited his friends and kinsmen to be present. He felt that important events were in the making, and that blessings of the highest type were in store. Hence, he was interested in having as many of his friends and relatives as possible be present and participate therein. Cornelius' conduct affords an excellent example in this respect today. Peter's arrival and introduction to Cornelius were as follows: "And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. And as he talked with him, he went in, and findeth many come together: and he said unto them, Ye yourselves know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come unto one of another nation; and yet unto me hath God showed that I should not call any man common or unclean: wherefore also I came without gainsaying, when I was sent for. I ask therefore with what intent ye sent for me."

Peter's visit to the house of Cornelius was epochal and history making; and he must have approached the door with mingled emo-



tions. There was in him the innate unwillingness that all Jews felt toward associating with Gentiles; and yet there was the overpowering conviction that it was the will of God for him to do so. Cornelius was also powerfully moved by events; and when Peter approached he fell to his knees before him. Peter promptly told him to "Stand up." This is a far cry from the conduct of Peter's pretended successors of today who require men to bow in their presence. This incident shows that Peter was not the first pope, and did not possess the attitude that characterizes these ecclesiastical pretenders today.

Peter reminded Cornelius and those assembled of the laws that had hitherto obtained regarding the association of Jews with men of another nation; and then briefly alluded to the vision he had experienced in Joppa in which the Lord had convinced him that this restriction had been removed. He then asked for a statement of the purpose for which he had been asked to come. Peter already knew in a general way of the purpose of the visit, but he desired a more particular statement of it from the lips of Cornelius himself. This statement is recorded in Acts 10:30-33. Recounting the visit of the angel, and the journey of the messengers for Peter, Cornelius concludes, "Forthwith therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord." This last statement is truly remarkable, and indicates to us the attitude that characterized this solemn company. Note, they were assembled; they were assembled in the sight of God; they were assembled to hear things commanded of God. As Brother McGarvey remarks, "When such an audience is assembled to hear such a preacher, the results most to be desired are sure to follow." We are next to study what those results were.

Peter's sermon next follows in verses 34-43. This is not a portion of our lesson text for today, but should be studied to maintain the historical connection.

### **III. Cornelius and His Household Receive the Holy Spirit and Are Baptized (Verses 44-48)**

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word. And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God." The precise time when the Holy Spirit came is not clear from this statement, the words, "While Peter yet spake," indicating merely that the Holy Spirit came in connection with Peter's speaking. But in Peter's rehearsal of the events delivered on the occasion of his return to Jerusalem, he tells us (Acts 11:15), "And- as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning." The Holy Spirit came therefore just as Peter began to speak. This is highly significant, and is a clear refutation of the denominational view that the Holy Spirit comes to save. The angel had informed Cornelius that he would hear words whereby "thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house." Cornelius could not have been saved until the words which would save him were uttered. But the Holy Spirit

came before the utterance of these words, therefore he could not have been saved when the Holy Spirit came.

"They of the circumcision" were the six Jewish brethren who accompanied Peter to Caesarea, and their amazement grew out of the fact that the Gentiles would receive the Holy Spirit in exactly the same fashion as the apostles did on Pentecost. The object of the outpouring was to convince Peter and his brethren that the Gentiles were to be accepted into covenant relationship and made full partakers of the blessings of the gospel in Christ. The vision Peter had in Caesarea was for the same purpose, and this additional evidence was for the benefit of all Jews, including the brethren with Peter. This incident removed all doubt from Peter's mind; for he himself said, in recounting the incident, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. 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. 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?" (Acts 11:15-17.) That the reception of the Spirit on this occasion was identical with that on the day of Pentecost Peter had no doubt, the evidence being that those who received the Spirit spoke with tongues and magnified God.

All doubt being removed, Peter's course was now open and clear. "Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days." Here, then, is clearly indicated the purpose of the baptism of the Spirit at the house of Cornelius. It having occurred, Peter demands to know who would dare deny to such the right to the conditions upon which salvation is based. Baptism being the only condition not yet performed by Cornelius and his household, Peter commands them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Cornelius and his household believed (Acts 15:7); they repented (Acts 11:18); they were baptized (Acts 10:47). They thus complied with the conditions of salvation as set forth in the Great Commission (Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46, 47). There were numerous incidental details associated with this case of conversion not common to other cases to be found in Acts, but in essential details it coincides exactly with all others found therein. We cannot better close this lesson than by transcribing the following paragraph from McGarvey's Commentary on Acts, page 218: "We should be glad to know more of Cornelius, so as to judge whether, even in times of peace, the profession of arms was considered by the apostles compatible with the service of the Prince of Peace. He is the only soldier of whose conversion we have an account in the New Testament, and of his subsequent career we know nothing. Not many years afterward the army in which he held a commission visited a most cruel and unjust war upon the Jews, and whether he continued in the service through that period we can never know in this life. Let it be noted, however, that this is an instance of a soldier becoming a Christian, not of a Christian becoming a soldier. It furnishes a precedent for the former, but not for the latter."

**POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

Context of the lesson.  
Meaning of Golden Text.  
Importance of this lesson.  
Description of Cornelius' character.  
Vision seen by him, and instructions of angel.  
Meaning of "memorial"  
Why angel did not name conditions.  
Cornelius' reaction.  
Historical connection of lesson.  
Peter's arrival and companions.  
What Cornelius did and Peter's words.  
Peter's speech; descent of Spirit.  
Why Spirit did not save.  
Nature of audience and purpose.  
They of circumcision and why with Peter.  
Things that convinced.  
What Peter then required.  
Conformity of this with other cases.  
McGarvey's statement.

**Lesson IX—September 1, 1946****PAUL BEGINS HIS FIRST MISSIONARY TOUR**  
**Acts 11:19-21; 13:1-12**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 13:13-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11:26b.)

**Helps for Lesson Study**  
**Daily Bible Readings**

August	26.	M	Paul Goes to Antioch (Acts 13:13-26)
August	27.	T	Paul Preaches in Antioch (Acts 13:42-52)
August	28.	W	Paul's Healing Power (Acts 14:8-18)
August	29.	T	The Open Door (Acts 14:23-28)
August	30.	F	A Minister of Christ (2 Cor. 11:23-31)
August	31.	S	For the Gospel's Sake (1 Cor. 9:19-28)
September	1.	S	A Faithful Preacher (1 Thess. 2:1-9)

**Historical Background**

TIME.—About A.D. 44.

PLACE.—Antioch, in Syria, three hundred miles north of Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The church in Antioch, Barnabas and Paul, John Mark.

**Lesson Text**

19 They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, 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 villainy, 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.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. The Church Planted in Antioch (Verses 19-21) .
- II. Barnabas and Paul Set Apart for the Work (Acts 13:1-3).
- III. Labors in the Island of Cyprus (Verses 4-12).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

Following the conversion of Cornelius in Caesarea, Peter and the brethren who accompanied him returned to Jerusalem. Charges were lodged against him for going in "to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them." (Acts 11:2.) Peter's defense is recorded in Acts 11:1-18. Beginning with Acts 11:19, the founding of the church in Antioch is described. Acts 11:22-24 tells of the journey of Barnabas to Antioch; and verses 25, 26 inform us that Barnabas sought out Saul, and persuaded him to accompany him to Antioch. About a year later, Barnabas and Saul are sent to Judea with an offering for the poor saints there (Acts 11:27-30), delivering it to the elders of the church. Acts 12:1-11 records the beheading of James and the imprisonment of Peter; and verses 12-16ff., Peter's release and retirement from the city. The death of Herod and return of Barnabas and Saul is mentioned in Acts 12:20-25, and with this passage Luke concludes his account of the general spread of the gospel. From this point his narrative is confined to certain prominent events in the life of the apostle Paul, the first of which we are to consider in this lesson.

**SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

Three prominent tours of Paul are mentioned in Acts, the first of which we are to consider today. On these missionary journeys, churches were established and brethren confirmed in the faith. These journeys form the historical background for the epistles; and a thorough examination of these tours should precede any study of Paul's epistles. These tours were largely among the Gentiles, although Paul never allowed an opportunity to preach to his own people to pass. We are to study particularly today the circumstances attending the beginning of the first of the historic journeys.

**THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11:26.) The church in Antioch was the center of activity among the Gentile peoples. The church was established some years earlier in the city of Jerusalem; but little preaching was done in outlying sections until the persecution instigated by Saul and his collaborators drove -the disciples out of the city and sent them hurrying for their lives throughout the country. Some of the disciples who fled from the persecution in Jerusalem traveled as far as Antioch and planted the cause of Christ in that city. Here the name Christian was first applied to the disciples. It is significant that the name was not given until the gospel had been preached to the Gentiles. This is in keeping with the Old Testament prophecy regarding the new name. This prophecy reads: "And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be-called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name." (Isa. 62:2.) It will be observed that the new name was to be given after the Gen

tiles had seen God's righteousness. In our last lesson, we studied about the admission of the Gentiles to the blessings of the gospel. Appropriately enough, in the very next chapter, the new name, Christian, is given. It should be noted that the disciples were called Christians. There are many who profess to be Christians who nevertheless call themselves by some other name. These people not only claimed to be Christians, they were called by that name!

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The missionary journeys of Paul are so closely connected with the epistles that they should be thoroughly mastered before the epistles are studied. Inasmuch as the fourth quarter of this year is to be devoted to "The Church in the Epistles," these lessons will serve as an introduction to that study. Many incidental lessons are to be derived from the study of these tours. Paul and his associates manifested the true missionary spirit, and the history of these travels contains much for our emulation today. The faith and courage shown by these men in the face of much formidable opposition should stimulate us to greater activity today.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. The Church Planted in Antioch (Verses 19-21)**

The historian of the early church, the beloved physician Luke, after a general survey of the establishment of the church on Pentecost, and an account of the persecution which there arose, chose to select from among the many efforts to carry the gospel into distant places the work of Paul and his associates. The latter portion of the book of Acts is, therefore, largely an account of his activities. Preparatory to a particular account thereof, he gives a brief history of the church in Antioch, inasmuch as it was to be the basis of Paul's activity among the Gentile churches. In pursuance with this plan, he turns back once more -to the dispersion of the Jerusalem church, and surveys rapidly another section of the wide field before him:

"They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen, traveled as far as Phoenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews. 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. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord." This passage carries us back to the time of the death of Stephen and the persecution and dispersion of the church that attended and followed that event. Thus, while Philip was preaching in Samaria, and Saul in Damascus and Arabia, and Peter, a little later, in Joppa, Caesarea, and other sections of Palestine, other brethren were evangelizing as far north as Antioch, in Syria, about three hundred miles from Jerusalem. In preaching "to none save only to Jews," they were following the course of the brethren in Jerusalem, before they learned that the door had been opened to the Gentiles. Later, however, others went into that section, and the gospel was preached also to the Greeks. While Peter's preaching of the gospel in Caesarea preceded this preaching in time, yet the work in Antioch was the first vigorous invasion of Gentile territory. The preaching was

eminently successful; for "a great number that believed turned unto the Lord." We learn from that statement that "turning to the Lord" follows belief. In Acts 3:19, it will be seen that "turning to the Lord" also follows repentance. The "turning" point in salvation is, therefore, neither faith nor repentance, but something that follows each of these conditions. It is certain that baptism is the turning point. An equivalent expression, used elsewhere, would be, a great number believed "and were baptized." (Acts 18:8.)

When news of the success of the gospel in Antioch reached the ears of the apostles in Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas, later to be a close companion and associate of Paul, to work among the brethren there. Soon feeling the need of more help, Barnabas went out in search of Paul, and having found him, brought him to Antioch, where for more than a year they preached the gospel. See under "The Context of the Lesson" for a connected account of their labors from this time until the beginning of the first missionary journey.

## **II. Barnabas and Paul Set Apart for the Work (Acts 13:1-3)**

"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." It is difficult to know the exact difference between "prophets" and "teachers," since the distinction between them is not clearly drawn in the New Testament. The prophets spoke by inspiration; the teachers sometimes did, and sometimes did not. It is likely that these names are in the order of prominence of the individuals thus named. Barnabas, having first come to Antioch to be associated with the brethren, is named first. Saul, later known as Paul, not being very well known at this time, is mentioned last. It will not be long until he is the best known disciple in the early church.

"And as they [the men mentioned above] ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." The words, "whereunto I have called them," implies that they had been called to this work before this time. Paul was called to it at the time of his conversion, a fact we learn from his own lips: "And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me." (Acts 26:15-18.) When Barnabas was called, we have no means of knowing. It should be noted that the thought of separating the brethren, Barnabas and Saul, to this work did not originate with these men, but with the Holy Spirit. The fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands were items associated with the formal "separating" of the disciples to the work God through the Holy Spirit had commissioned them to do. Thus ordained through appointment of the Spirit, and formally commis-

sioned by the brethren, the disciples immediately make plans and begin their journey. "The journeys now entered upon by Saul are among the most momentous ever undertaken, whether by one man or many. They are worthy therefore of the space allotted to them by our author; and of the most careful study by everyone interested in human progress." (McGarvey.)

### **III. Labors in the Island of Cyprus (Verses 4-12)**

"So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. 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." "Seleucia" was the seaport of Antioch, sixteen miles distant. It was at the mouth of the river Orontes, which ran through or near by Antioch, but was not navigable by large vessels. From Seleucia, they sailed to the island of Cyprus, touching first at Salamis, the principal city and seaport of the island, and situated on the southeast part of the island. Cyprus, the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, was near the coast of Syria, and on the direct route to Asia Minor. As was their practice ever afterward when opportunity offered, they entered the synagogue and spoke to the Jews who resorted thither. The "John" mentioned as the attendant of Barnabas and Saul is the "John whose surname was Mark," mentioned in Acts 12:25. Nothing is said about his being "separated" for the work, and the implication is that he voluntarily offered to go as an attendant. He later turned back and "went not with them to the work," a circumstance highly displeasing to Paul, and the occasion of a sharp dissension between Paul and Barnabas later. (Acts 15:37-39.) Nothing is said about the success of the work in Salamis. From here they traveled westward for approximately a hundred miles to the town of Paphos, at which place matters of a stirring nature occurred, recorded by Luke as follows: "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; 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." It may come as a bit of surprise that Luke would describe Sergius Paulus as a "man of understanding," when he had associated with him a sorcerer; but it was common in those days for generals and statesmen to keep about them someone who was credited with interpreting signs of approaching good and evil. To say the least of it, Sergius Paulus was sensible enough to select a Jew, as some of the Jews were true prophets, and could therefore speak with supernatural direction. Unfortunately, however, this Jew was a false prophet. Seeing that the success of Barnabas in influencing the proconsul to accept the gospel of Christ would put an end to his influence over him, Bar-Jesus put forth his utmost efforts to defeat them. "But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith" We are not informed of the mode of argument or tactics followed by the sorcerer in seeking to defeat the purpose of Paul and Barnabas. Whatever it was, it convinced Paul that Bar-Jesus was a villain of the deepest dye. We turn aside from the exposition of the passage for a moment to point out that a situation similar to this exists throughout



the land. There are gospel preachers, like Barnabas and Paul, who are anxious to preach the truth. There are others, like Sergius Paulus, who are interested and would, if left alone, accept it. And there are others, like the sorcerer, who have dedicated their lives to the infamous purpose of keeping people out of the kingdom of God-teaching them that they do not have to do what Jesus says must be done in order to be saved. All too often, gospel preachers do not deal with false teachers as Paul did on this occasion. Not infrequently, men professing to be gospel preachers fraternize with denominational preachers, associate with them and enjoy their fellowship, join their ministerial alliances and cooperate with them, call on them to lead in prayer and join with them in their services. Saul handled the case with the severity it deserved. "But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him, and said, O full of all guile and all villainy, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 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. Then the proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord." It is entirely likely that, in some congregations of today, this language would be considered a bit strong; and were Paul here and attempted to speak in such fashion, he would be charged with being a "hard preacher." False teachers are deserving of no mercy and should be exposed and refuted. They are the world's greatest threat. Men who have deliberately set out to keep people from obeying the gospel ought to be thus stigmatized. In this instance, it had the desired effect on the proconsul, for he was led to believe.

This is the only miracle recorded where injury was done to another person in the New Testament. It bears resemblance to the miracles of Moses in Egypt, who found it necessary to afflict the magicians of Pharaoh, in order to destroy Pharaoh's confidence in them. Saul saw that the easiest and most direct way to convince the proconsul Sergius Paulus that the sorcerer was a base impostor was to denounce him in his true character, and then prove the sentence true and just by blinding him.

With the clause, "Saul, who is also called Paul," the apostle ceases to be called Saul, and -is ever thereafter called Paul. Thus far, he has occupied a subordinate position; but henceforth Barnabas recedes into the background and Paul occupies the forefront of every scene in which he figures. Some think that Saul changed his name to Paul on this occasion because of his association and contact with Sergius Paulus. This appears to this writer as exceedingly farfetched and unlikely. Just why Paul would be thus influenced by a heathen proconsul to the extent of accepting a form of his name, does not appear. Here, we leave Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:13-15 records their journey from Paphos to Antioch; Acts 13:16-41, Paul's sermon in Antioch; Acts 13:42, 43, the immediate effect of the sermon, and the results the next Sabbath, and final results in Antioch are recorded in Acts 13:44-52. Events in Iconium are set forth in Acts 14:1-7; labors and results in Lystra, in Acts 14:8-20; their success in Derbe and return to Antioch, in Acts 14:21-28. The student should learn the towns and provinces of the

journey in their proper order, and be able to recite them easily from memory.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The context of the lesson.  
 Subject of the lesson explained.  
 Meaning of Golden Text.  
 Significance of name Christian, and circumstances connected with its bestowal.  
 History of the church in Antioch.  
 Success of this venture, and significance of the word "turned."  
 Occasion for Barnabas' visit to Antioch; Paul's visit there.  
 How Paul and Barnabas were set apart for the work; origin of call.  
 When they were called; calling of John Mark.  
 First point on their travels.  
 John identified; his later history; Paul's reaction.  
 Visit to Paphos; various individuals there contacted.  
 Miracle on Bar-Jesus and occasion for it; results.  
 Paul's attitude compared with some preachers of today.  
 Lessons to be derived from this regarding attitude toward false teachers.  
 Comparison of miracle here performed with miracles of Moses.  
 Saul's name changed to Paul.  
 Points touched on trip.

### Lesson X—September 8, 1946

#### PAUL BEGINS HIS SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-10

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 16:11-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:19.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

September	2.	M	Lydia Converted (Acts 16:11-15)
September	3.	T	Paul Put in Prison in Philippi (Acts 16:19-24)
September	4.	W	Jailer Converted (Acts 16:25-34)
September	5.	T	Paul Released from Prison (Acts 16:35-40)
September	6.	F	Paul at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9)
September	7.	S	Paul at Berea (Acts 17:10-15)
September	8.	S	Paul at Athens (Acts 17:16-31)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—Paul began his second tour about A.D. 50. This journey covered a period of approximately three years.

PLACES.—Antioch and various cities in Asia Minor.

PERSONS.—Paul and Silas, Timothy, and various other brethren.

#### Lesson Text

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 Cicilia, confirming the churches.

1 And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess that believed; but his father was a Greek.

2 The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

4 And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem.

So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

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.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Paul's Proposal to Visit Churches Established on the First Tour (Verse 36).
- II. Dissension Between Paul and Barnabas Over John Mark and Consequent Change of Companions (Verses 37-41).
- III. Labors in Derbe and Lystra and Circumcision of Timothy (Acts 16:1-4).
- IV. Preaching in Other Parts of Asia Minor and the Call to Macedonia (Verses 5-10).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch at the end of their first tour, they "gathered the church together, they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and that he had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles." Following this statement, Luke adds that "they tarried no little time with the disciples." It is likely that it was a year or more before they again left the city. The conference in Jerusalem to determine whether the Gentiles should be required to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses was the occasion for their next trip away from the city. See the entire fifteenth chapter of Acts for a full discussion of the matter and the decision reached. An outline of the historical material in Acts between our last lesson and the present one follows: General subject, "A Controversy Over Circumcision." The beginning of the controversy, 1-5; a speech by Peter, 6-11; speeches by Barnabas and Paul, 12; a speech by James, 13-21; the decision by the apostles and elders, 22-29; peace restored at Antioch, 30-35.

**SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

There are three prominent missionary tours mentioned in Acts as having been made by Paul and various companions. Circumstances attending the beginning of each of these journeys form the basis of our study, and today we are to consider some matters connected with the second of these tours.

**THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19.) The "Great Commission," so styled to distinguish it from the "Limited Commission," is recorded in Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46, 47. Under the limited commission Jesus bade the disciples, "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5.) Many hundreds of years before Micah and also Isaiah had predicted the time when "all -nations" would participate in the blessings of the gospel covenant (Isa. 2:2-4; Mic. 4:1ff.); and following the death of Christ on the cross, at which time the barriers between Jew and Gentile were destroyed (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:14), Jesus announced the Great Commission. It became operative on the first Pentecost after the resurrection. (Luke 24:49.) The commission, as recorded by Matthew yields itself to the following analysis: (1) Go; (2) go make disciples; (3) make disciples of all the nations; (4) baptize the disciples into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

For an excellent outline of the second missionary journey, consult McGarvey's Commentary on Acts. Much rich material on the life and travels of Paul will be found in Boles, on Acts; Stalker, Life of Paul; or Conybeare and Howson's Life and Epistles of Paul. These lessons are not intended to cover in detail these journeys. The teachers, however, should study them carefully and be able to trace the journeys on a map. Many of the churches about which we read in the New Testament were founded on the second tour.

**COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT****I. Paul's Proposal to Visit Church Established on the First Tour (Verse 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." For an account of the labors of Paul and Barnabas between the first and second journeys, see the entire fifteenth chapter of Acts. Following their return from the conference on circumcision in Jerusalem, they "tarried in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also." (Acts 15:35.) As Paul thought of the brethren in distant places who had been taught the gospel of Christ on their first journey, he felt keenly the need of going among them once more and seeing how they fared. While the tour thus proposed extended far beyond the remotest church established, this indicates to us the

primary purpose of the trip as first formulated in Paul's mind, and his solicitude for the congregations which he had planted. At this point a new and unforeseen difficulty arose:

## **II. Dissension Between Paul and Barnabas Over John Mark and Consequent Change of Companions (Verses 37-41)**

"And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark. But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. 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." On the first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas were accompanied by John Mark, who went along as their "attendant." (Acts 13:5.) However, when they got to Perga in Pamphylia, "John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem." (Acts 13:13.) This incident evidently led Paul to believe that John was not sufficiently stable, and did not possess the courage and self-sacrifice which ought to characterize a gospel preacher, and he therefore objected to allowing John Mark to go along. Barnabas was related to John, and insisted on allowing him to accompany them. (Col. 4:10.) It may be that this relationship warped his judgment and prompted him to insist more than otherwise he would have done. At any rate, the contention was so sharp that he and Paul parted company. Which of the two acted more wisely on this occasion, we have no means of knowing. It is a fact that Mark was afterward restored to Paul's confidence; but we have reason to believe that it was because of his conduct following this incident, and not before it. Paul later expressed himself in a most favorable manner with reference to both Barnabas and John Mark (1 Cor. 9:6; Col. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:11.) Says Brother McGarvey: "Notwithstanding their separation and disagreement, they did not allow the good cause to suffer, nor did they fail to accomplish separately that which Paul proposed that they should accomplish together; for Barnabas, in revisiting Cyprus, saw a portion of the brethren to whom he and Paul had preached, while Paul, by a different route, visited the others. The separation of Barnabas from Paul is our separation from Barnabas; for his name is not again mentioned by Luke. But as we bid him a final farewell, the sails are spread which are to bear him over the sea, that he may make the islands glad with the knowledge of salvation; and the later incidents of his noble life will be made known to us when we sit down with him in the everlasting kingdom."

## **III. Labors in Derbe and Lystra and Circumcision of Timothy (Acts 16:1-4)**

"But Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches." By referring to Acts 15:22, it will be seen that Silas was one of the "chief men among the brethren" in Jerusalem, and had been selected by the elders and apostles there to represent them in settling the controversy over circumcision at Antioch. He now joins himself with Paul to go forth among the Gentiles in the presentation of the gospel of Christ. In addition to

his prominence among the brethren, he was also a prophet (Acts 15:32), and this added to his fitness as Paul's fellow laborer.

During the period of time between his departure for Tarsus (Acts 9:30) and his arrival in Antioch, Paul had preached the gospel in Syria and Cilicia (Gal. 1:21) ; and now with Silas he revisits this section of country and contacts the brethren who were baptized on that occasion. His work at this particular time consisted in "confirming the churches." This is not to be confused with the sectarian and unscriptural practice of "confirmation" practiced by many today, but consisted solely in instructing and edifying the disciples in the Christian faith. It had been some years since Paul was among them, and they must have welcomed his visit and work with joyous appreciation.

The historian does not give us a detailed picture of their work in Syria and Cilicia, but hurries us forward to their labors in Derbe and Lystra, the scenes respectively of the most painful and the most consoling incidents of the former tour. "And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess that believed but his father was a Greek. The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium." Thus is introduced to us one of the most famous of Paul's associates and companions, Timothy. Many years later, Paul addressed two letters to this disciple which have been preserved. Of all who assisted him, Paul felt nearer to Timothy than to any others. His estimate of Timothy we have in his own words, addressed to the church in Philippi: "But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a child serveth a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the gospel." (Phil. 2:19-22.) Timothy's grandmother, as well as his mother, were faithful Christians' and from childhood had taught Timothy the sacred scriptures. (2 Tim. 3:14, 15.) He was baptized during Paul's first visit to Lystra. Paul saw in him such traits of character as he believed would fit him for his own companion and assistant, and he secured him for this work. "Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all knew that his father was a Greek."

This passage raises a most interesting question regarding circumcision. Paul had but recently gone to Jerusalem to defend his position that the Gentiles were not to be required to be circumcised before admitting them to full fellowship in the blessings of the gospel; and even carried Titus along, to make a test case. Yet, when he comes to Derbe and Lystra and finds Timothy, he does not hesitate to have him circumcised. Moreover, he taught that circumcision was no longer binding, saying, for example, in Gal. 5:2-4: "If ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." Was Paul's practice on this occasion inconsistent with his teaching in Antioch and in his epistles, of which the above is an example? The answer is, No. It is clear that Paul fought circumcision as a binding token of adherence to the law; and whenever required as a part of

the law, he steadfastly refused it. The Jews, however, among whom they were to go in preaching the gospel from time to time, would not associate with, or give attention to, a man of Jewish blood who was uncircumcised. Thus in Timothy's case it bore no religious significance whatsoever, and removed a barrier which otherwise would have greatly hindered their work among the Jews. It is, therefore, a measure not binding in itself, but done as an act of expediency and for the sake of peace.

#### **IV. Preaching in Other Parts of Asia Minor and the Call to Macedonia (Verses 5-10)**

"And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily" For an account of the "decrees," and what they contained, see Acts 15:23-29. The church enjoyed a period of wonderful growth, congregations being established daily. Peace and harmony had been restored that had been temporarily interrupted over the question of Gentile circumcision; and this having been settled by the decision of the conference in Jerusalem, the brethren were once more enabled to devote their whole energies to the building up of the church, and as a natural consequence the congregations increased daily.

"And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not; and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas." In rapid succession, Luke traces the travels of Paul and his companions, many months doubtless having been consumed in these journeys through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia. The class should by all means consult a map of Paul's journeys and trace them thereon. If a map is not available, they may be found in the back of most Bibles. It is interesting to note that the apostle was frequently overruled on this trip by the Holy Spirit. First he assayed to preach the word in Asia, and having been forbidden to do so, sought to go into Bithynia, but again the Holy Spirit intervened, and sent them forward on their way. This must at first have been very puzzling to Paul, but soon the reason therefor appeared.

On reaching Troas, the mystery was solved, at least in part. "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. 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." Macedonia was that country immediately across the Aegean Sea from Asia Minor. God's purpose in moving them along through Asia Minor now was clear; it was his desire that they go on to the soil of Europe and there preach the gospel. They were not slow to act upon the decision, once it had been reached. It was not every day that a ship could be had for the trip across the sea, and that one was there ready to sail must have added to their realization that God was favoring them on the journey. "Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis;

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." At this point, Luke indicates that he became a part of Paul's company by changing the pronouns from the third person to the first person. Thus far, he had referred to Paul and his associates, as "they"; now, he speaks of "we," thus indicating that at Troas he joined the company.

Here we must leave the company as they touch for the first time European soil. It was a momentous occasion. The tread of mighty armies was often heard on the soil of Europe, but never was there a company who made such history as did this band of disciples when for the first time they preached the gospel in Europe. The student will do well to follow them on to Thessalonica and Berea, to Athens and Corinth. Success and failure alternated in their efforts; and persecution frequently laid its painful hand upon them. But the gospel was preached and churches were planted and the name of God honored among the heathen. Never was a more significant journey made than Paul's second tour.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Paul's rehearsal of things done on first tour. His labors following the first journey.

Meaning of Golden Text.

Purpose expressed by Paul regarding second tour.

Dissension between Paul and Barnabas and cause of it.

Results of dissension.

Paul's later attitude toward Mark and Barnabas.

Paul's companion; facts concerning him.

Churches of Syria and Cilicia.

Events at Derbe and Lystra; Timothy; occasion for his circumcision.

Work of Paul in the "cities" and nature of decrees delivered.

Intervention of Spirit with the company.

Vision at Troas and its significance.

Indication that Luke joined the company here.

### Lesson XI—September 15, 1946

#### CONVERSION OF THE JAILER

Acts 16:19-34

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 16:16-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." (Acts 16:31.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

September	9.	M	A Demon Cast Out (Acts 16:16-24)
September	10.	T	Peter in Prison (Acts 12:1-12)
September	11.	W	Paul's Citizenship (Acts 22:22-29)
September	12.	T	Paul's Love for the Philippians (Phil. 1:1-11)
September	13.	F	Progress of the Gospel (Phil. 1:12-21)
September	14.	S	Philippian Church Helps Paul (Phil. 4:10-20)
September	15.	S	Paul Persecuted at Philippi (1 Thess. 2:1-12)



### Historical Background

TIME.—About A.D. 51.

PLACE.—Philippi.

PERSONS.—Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke, the Philippian jailer and his family, and the Roman authorities.

### Lesson Text

19 But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers,

20 And when they had brought them unto the magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

21 And set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them;

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the jailor, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.

32 And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately.

34 And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Paul and Silas Scourged and Imprisoned (Verses 19-24).
- II. An Earthquake Opens the Prison Doors (Verses 25, 26).
- III. The Conversion of the Jailer and His Household (Verses 27-34).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

At the close of our last lesson, entitled "Paul Begins His Second Missionary Journey," we left him just as he was about to begin his work on the soil of Europe, in response to the "Macedonian call." Leaving Troas, Paul and his company sailed across the Aegean Sea to Neapolis, and from there they went to Philippi, "a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony." (Acts 16:12.) On entering this city, they found no Jewish colony, and were doubtless no little perplexed as to how they should introduce the gospel to the people of that city. However, the problem was solved in a strange and unusual fashion. "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. 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. 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." (Acts 16:13-15.) Thus was the gospel first preached by Paul and his associates on European soil. Lydia and her household formed the nucleus of the church in Philippi. The work begun so auspiciously was soon hindered by persecution. Luke relates it as follows: "And it came to pass, as we were going to the place of prayer, that a certain maid having a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. The same following after Paul and us cried out, saying, These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation. And this she did for many days. But Paul, being sore troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour. But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers." (Acts 16:16-20.) Our lesson begins with Paul and Silas in prison in Philippi.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

The Golden Text for today is a part of our lesson text, and comments thereon will be found immediately following it in "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The conversion of the jailer is frequently cited by those who teach the doctrine of salvation by faith only. It is, therefore, highly important that the text be carefully examined and the class sufficiently prepared to refute this false assumption. A rich source of material on this question will be found in McGarvey's Commentary on Acts. Churches which teach infant sprinkling also cite this incident as an example of "household" baptism, assuming that there were infants, and that these infants were sprinkled. Those who would be well prepared on the differences between the church of Christ and denominationalism will need to study carefully this lesson.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Paul and Silas Scourged and Imprisoned (Verses 16-24)**

See under "Context of the Lesson" for an account of the circumstances which led to the imprisonment of Paul and Silas. The miracle of healing on the maid possessed with a spirit of divination is recorded in Acts 16:16-18. When the masters of the afflicted girl saw that they could no longer exhibit her, they stirred up the people against Paul and Silas and had them arrested. Luke's account of it is as follows: "But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers, and when they had brought them unto the magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans." It will be observed that the real cause of complaint was suppressed, and a

false one offered, because, in the first place, to have told the truth in the case would have reflected credit on Paul and Silas in the eyes of the magistrates; and in the second place, it was easy in a heathen city like Philippi to get up an outcry against Jews on almost any pretense. The former exhibitors of the girl accomplished their purpose, and had the effect intended on the magistrates. "And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." The orderly processes of law were suspended; for the magistrates gave the prisoners no opportunity to defend themselves, or to answer the charges lodged against them. The rods with which Paul and Silas were beaten were those borne in a bundle by the lictors, who always attended Roman praetors and in order that the beating might be effectively applied, the victims were strapped to a whipping post. The Jews were by law, forbidden to inflict more than forty stripes, and usually, to be on the safe side, inflicted only thirty-nine. (2 Cor. 11:24.) But there was no such law among the Romans. Being thus unrestricted in regard to the number of lashes, it is probable that they inflicted many more. Perhaps this is what Paul refers to when he said, "in stripes above measure" (2 Cor. 11:23), that is, beyond the usual measure among the Jews, and thus beyond moderation. The jailer entered fully into the spirit of the mob, and carried out the order to "keep them safely" with the utmost vigor. Not only were they imprisoned; they were placed in the "inner prison," into the most retired and secure part of the prison; and as if this was not enough, the jailer added torture by putting them in stocks. With their feet locked in wood clamps, they could neither lie down nor sit up without pain. The pain grew more intense continually, and no one who has never experienced it can imagine how intense it was.

## **II An Earthquake Opens the Prison Doors (Verses 25, 26)**

The condition of the prisoners grew worse each hour. Besides the physical pain occasioned from sitting in a dark dungeon with their legs held fast in stocks, their backs were lacerated and bleeding from the scourge. Under such conditions, sleep was impossible. "But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them; and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prisonhouse were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed." That these men were able to pray and sing praises unto God is evidence that they harbored no malice or resentment against the men who had beaten them so mercilessly, and so cruelly imprisoned them. Men do not pray when they are enraged, or sing when in deep distress. The cheerfulness thus manifested is in keeping with which Paul afterward taught the disciples in this same city: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."

(Phil. 4:6, 7.) It is not without significance that the other prisoners

were listening attentively to this strange sound of men bound in stocks and with bleeding backs, singing praises to God. When the earthquake came, the doors of the prison were jarred open, and the bands which held them all were loosed; yet so paralyzing was the effect that no prisoner made any effort to escape, associating the earthquake in some way with the prisoners who had just been singing and praying.

### **III. The Conversion of the Jailer and His Household (Verses 27-34)**

The jailer did not hear the singing, being aroused from sleep only when the earthquake caused the building to sway and tremble. "And the jailor, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." Knowing that death was the penalty for allowing prisoners to escape, the jailer was about to act on the code of Roman honor which required a man to die by his own hand when encompassed by dangers from which he could not escape. Only the loud voice of Paul, calling him back from his rash act in the very nick of time, kept him from being plunged at once into eternity. As soon as he could collect his thoughts, he began to perceive that the earthquake, the opening of the prison doors and the unlocking of the fetters were miraculous manifestations of God working through Paul and Silas; and remembering that they had been preaching salvation in the name of the God of Israel, his own salvation, rather than the security of his prisoners, first claimed his attention; and he at once proceeded to ascertain his duty. "And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" We cannot fail to note the differences that characterize the jailer's actions now, and at sunset when he locked the prisoners in for the night. Then, he cared nothing for them; he was not interested in what they preached, for he enjoyed good health and all went well with him; now, however, he has just been snatched back from the brink of eternity; he recognizes the hand of God in the earthquake, and fearful and trembling, asks to know what he must do to be saved. Barnes finely observes that "in this narrative we see the contrast which exists in periods of distress and alarm between Christians and sinners. The guilty jailer was all agitation, fear, distress, and terror; the apostles all calmness, peace, and joy. The one was filled with thoughts of self-murder; the others, intent on saving life and doing good. This difference is to be traced to religion. It was the confidence in God that gave peace to them; it was the want of that which led to the distress and agitation in him. It is so still."

It should be noted that Luke informs us that the jailer "brought them out" before asking them what to do to be saved. They were thus brought out of the inner prison and into the apartment of the jailer and his family. In reply to his query, Paul and Silas answered and said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house .... And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. And he brought them up into his house, and set food be

fore them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God." From the apartment in which the question was -submitted the jailer took the prisoners and washed the blood from their lacerated backs, and submitted to baptism, he and all his house. The order, therefore, was as follows: (1) prisoners brought up out of the inner prison into his house (verse 30); (2) Paul and Silas preach to the jailer and his household the word of the Lord (verse 32); (3) they are taken from the house and have their stripes washed, and the jailer and his family are baptized (verse 33); (4) after the baptism, they are "brought up into his house" (verse 34). It is certain, therefore, that the baptism did not occur either in the prison or in the jailer's house, but at the place where "he took them" to wash their stripes and baptize them. The contention of those who insist that the jailer must have been sprinkled because he was not taken out of the house for baptism is thus clearly shown to be wrong.

It is also contended by pedobaptist writers (men who advocate infant baptism) that there is evidence here that infants must have been baptized, because the jailer's household was baptized, and since babies frequently are found in families, they assume that such was the case here, and thus cite this in proof thereof. The argument is purely an assumption. How do they know that there were babies in the jailer's family? There are many families today in which there are no babies; to infer that just because a family is mentioned it must have included babies is absurd. The argument rests on several assumptions: (1) It is assumed that the jailer had children; (2) that these children were infants; (3) that these infants were sprinkled. All of these assumptions are necessary to infer infant sprinkling from this passage; and each is impossible to prove. Moreover, that is conclusive evidence that there were no infants in the jailer's family. (1) Paul and Silas "spake the word of the Lord unto him [the jailer], with all that were in his house" Infants cannot listen to the preaching of the word of the Lord. (2) The whole family rejoiced following their baptism; infants cannot rejoice. (3) .His whole house believed in God (verse 34). Infants cannot believe; therefore, it is certain that there were no infants in the jailer's house; and the argument made in support of infant baptism from the "household baptisms" of the New Testament is thus shown to be utterly unfounded.

Others argue that Paul's answer to the jailer, in response to his query, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" viz., "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house," is clear and conclusive evidence that the only essential requirement in order to salvation is faith; and they hence infer the doctrine of salvation by faith only from this passage. They ignore the fact that if Paul had stopped with the utterance of these words, it would have been impossible for the jailer to have been saved, or even so much as believed. It was necessary for Paul and Silas to preach to him "the word of the Lord"; for "belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17.) Without this preaching, the jailer could not have believed. The first part of Paul's answer would have been in vain without the remainder. For this reason, then, Paul and Silas "spake the word of the Lord unto him." To speak unto him "the word of the Lord" was to express to him "the very title of Christ; the acts and words that showed that Jesus was the Christ; his life and death and resurrection; the truths of for-

givenness of sins and communion with him, and the outward signs which he had appointed as witnesses of these truths—all this must have been included in the word of the Lord which was preached to that congregation so strangely assembled between the hours of midnight and dawn." As Brother McGarvey remarks, "All this was included in the answer to the question, 'What must I do to be saved'; and the words, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house,' are but the beginning of it. Those therefore who catch at the words of Paul, and draw the conclusion that salvation is by faith alone, leave the jail too soon. They should remain till they hear all-till they hear Paul tell the man to repent and be baptized; till the design of baptism is explained to him; till he is baptized; till he is found rejoicing greatly immediately after his baptism. It would not require a long delay; for it was all done 'the same hour of the night'"

A comparison of the case of the jailer with the other cases of conversion in Acts will reveal that insofar as the essentials are concerned, they are identical, differing only in incidental circumstances. If, for example, Paul's answer to the jailer is compared with what Ananias told him when he propounded a similar query, it will be seen that each was required to do the same thing. Saul of Tarsus was a believer before Ananias approached him; hence, needed only to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22:16.) The jailer, however, had not so much as heard of Jesus Christ, and therefore had to have the word of the Lord preached to him so that he might exercise faith. That baptism was required of him is seen from the fact that it was viewed with such importance that they did not so much as postpone it until the following day, he being baptized "the same hour of the night."

The student will wish to pursue the story further to see what effects attended the miraculous intervention. When Paul and Silas were imprisoned, indications were that they would be brought to trial, and held to account for the charge of disturbing the peace. However, the officers evidently came to the conclusion that it would be best to drop the matter, and "when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. And the jailor reported the words to Paul, saying, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore come forth, and go in peace" To be thus released from prison, as though they had merely suffered punishment which they deserved, would be injurious to the apostles, and they refused to accept this mode of release. Said Paul, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? nay, verily; but let them come themselves and bring us out. And the serjeants reported these words unto the magistrates: and they feared when they heard that they were Romans; and they came and besought them; and when they had brought them out, they asked them to go away from the city." And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed." For an account of the remainder of the second missionary tour, see Acts 17:1 to 18:32. It should be traced on a map, and places learned by memory. Most Bibles contain a map of Paul's journeys.

**POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

The context of the lesson.  
 Why this lesson is especially important.,  
 Circumstances leading to imprisonment of Paul and Silas.  
 Nature of their imprisonment.  
 Earthquake and doors opened and prisoners loosed.  
 Why prisoners did not attempt to escape.  
 Why jailer sought to kill himself.  
 Query of jailer; Paul's answer.  
 Events following jailer's query.  
 Order of events during the whole affair.  
 Proof that the baptism was not in the house or jail.  
 Proof that infants were not baptized on this occasion.  
 Proof that the jailer was not saved immediately following Paul's answer.  
 Why Paul preached the word of the Lord; what involved in such preaching.  
 This case compared with other cases in Acts.  
 Events the next day.

**Lesson XII—September 22, 1946****PAUL BEGINS HIS THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY****Acts 18:23; 19:8-10; 21:7-16**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 20:17-27.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men" (Acts 20:26.)

**Helps for Lesson Study**  
**Daily Bible Readings**

September	16.	M	Paul's First Visit to Corinth (Acts 18:1-11)
September	17.	T	Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7)
September	18.	W	Paul Works Miracles (Acts 19:11-20)
September	19.	T	Demetrius the Silversmith (Acts 19:23-36)
September	20.	F	Paul at Macedonia (Acts 20:1-6)
September	21.	S	Paul Preaches at Troas (Acts 20:7-12)
September	22.	S	Paul at Miletus (Acts 20:13-35)

**Historical Background**

TIME.—Paul's third tour was A.D. 53-58.

PLACES.—The journey was begun from Antioch in Syria; Paul preached extensively on this trip in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece.

PERSONS.—Paul, his associates, and numerous churches of Christ.

**Lesson Text**

23 And having spent some time there, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, in order, establishing all the disciples.

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.

7 And when we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we saluted the brethren, and abode with them one clay.

8 And on the morrow we departed, and came unto Caesarea: and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we abode with him.

9 Now this man had four virgin daughters, who prophesied.

10 And as we tarried there some days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

11 And coming to us, and taking Paul's girdle, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him, into the hands of the Gentiles.

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.

14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

15 And after these days we took up our baggage and went up to Jerusalem.

16 And there went with us also certain of the disciples from Caesarea, bringing with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we should lodge.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

1. Paul Preaches in Galatia and Phrygia (Verse 23). II. Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:8-10). III. Paul in Caesarea in the House of Philip (Acts 21:7-16).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

We do not attempt a detailed study of the third missionary tour because lack of space forbids. Selections from Luke's historical account are studied to note various incidents which occurred on this journey. The student should, however, carefully read through the entire account thereof, found in Acts 18:23 to 21:17. This journey, like the others, was undertaken for the purpose of strengthening the disciples, and to establish congregations in sections where the gospel had not been preached. Paul's third tour, 53-58, including two years and three months in Ephesus, ended in Jerusalem. On this journey he wrote First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans. At the close of the second tour, as was his usual custom, he returned to Antioch, and reported to the church there the success of his venture. On the way to Antioch, he had stopped briefly in Ephesus, and the disciples had urged him to remain with them for a time, but he was anxious to return to Antioch, and promised that he would return to Ephesus soon. Luke passes over his return to Antioch with the simple statement that when he had landed at Caesarea and gone up and saluted the church he went down to Antioch. (Acts 18:22.)

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men." (Acts 20:26.) Leaving Antioch, Paul made his way through the regions of Galatia and Phrygia, and from there went to Ephesus. He preached for more than two years in this city and its vicinity. Following this, he went into Macedonia and Greece, spending three months in this latter country. Leaving Greece, Paul



returned to Asia, by way of Philippi. He came to Troas and remained there for a week in order to worship with the saints on the Lord's day. From Troas, Paul went to Miletus, from which point he called for the elders of the church in Ephesus, and his interview with them is recorded in Acts 20:17-38. In the course of his conversation with them, he reminded them of his labors among them, saying, "Ye yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after what manner I was with you all the time, serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews; how I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house. . . And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God." (Acts 20:18-27.) The statement is simply a reminder of Paul's fidelity in preaching the truth while in their midst. If some among them were ultimately lost, it would not be because Paul had shirked his duty. He was pure from the blood of all men.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The suggestions made under this heading in the lessons "Paul Begins His First Missionary Journey" and "Paul Begins His Second Missionary Journey" apply to this lesson also.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **1. Paul Preaches in Galatia and Phrygia (Verse 23)**

"And having spent some time there, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, in order, establishing all the disciples." To reach Galatia and Phrygia, Paul must have passed through Syria into Cilicia, and on through the provinces of Lycaonia and Pisidia, past Derbe and Lystra, Iconium and the Pisidian Antioch. This was his third visit to these communities, and his passage through Galatia and Phrygia was his second visit in those parts. This journey must have occupied several months, for it covered five or six hundred miles. It is not likely that Paul remained in any of these communities long at the time, because of the distance traveled; and while it is said that his work consisted in "establishing all the disciples," this doubtless means no more than that he strengthened them by exhortation and counsel. It was evidently Luke's design to record Paul's labors in Ephesus more at length than any other work done on this trip, and he hurries us forward on Paul's journey to his arrival in that city.

#### **II. Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:8-10)**

An outline of Luke's account of Paul's labors and incidents connected therewith in Ephesus follows: Paul reaches Ephesus, and rebaptizes a dozen men (Acts 19:1-7); preaching in the synagogue, and in the school of Tyrannus, 8-12; exorcists exposed, and books of magic burned, 13-20; Paul forms a plan for future journeys, 21, 22; the mob of the silversmiths, 23-41. On Paul's arrival in Ephesus, he found a group of men who had submitted to John's baptism, following the day of Pentecost, and therefore after this baptism

ceased to be valid. These he rebaptized. (Acts 19:1-7.) Having corrected what he found to be wrong among the disciples, he then proceeded to grapple with the unbelieving Jews. "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. 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." Here, as always, Paul followed his usual pattern of trying to get the Jews to accept the gospel of Christ. We see his earnest argument and persuasion on the same theme, the same increasing obstinacy and evilspeaking on the part of the Jews, and the final separation of Paul and the brethren from the synagogue. Being forced to leave the usual meeting place of the Jews, he went then into a school, the school of Tyrannus, and there continued his work of preaching the gospel.

Luke gives us some definite information regarding the extent and success of these labors, saying: "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. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: insomuch 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." Three months of Paul's stay in Ephesus were spent in the synagogue; add to that the two years here mentioned, and this makes Paul's work in Ephesus the longest recorded. To confirm the word and accredit Paul's commission, the Lord enabled him to perform "special" miracles, so called no doubt, because of their extraordinary character. These served to attract much attention to Paul and his work, and it is not surprising that all "Asia," by which is meant all of the Roman province by that name, heard the word. It may well be the reason why we read of the "seven churches" in Asia later.

We would be glad to know more about the "school of Tyrannus." Who this man Tyrannus was, we have no means of knowing. It is probable that he was a Jew, and it is certain that he was either a Christian, or else favorably disposed toward Christians, else he would not have allowed Paul to use his facilities for the preaching of the gospel. This was a great favor to Paul. The disciples in those days had no church buildings and were therefore obliged to assemble in any place they could find available. That Paul taught in a school seems to indicate that it is not wrong to do so today. Here, too, by implication, at least, is authority for what is commonly called Bible school. Paul was not averse to going into an institution where other courses were being taught and teach the Bible. It may be urged that this school did not have other classes in progress at the same time Paul was teaching. Who knows whether they did or not? A school is an arrangement where individuals are arranged into groups and taught. Paul taught in the school of Tyrannus. Does it not follow that Paul taught where individuals were arranged into different classes? He who denies this will have a most difficult time establishing his negation!

### **III. Paul in Caesarea in the House of Philip (Acts 21:7-16)**

For an account of the events which followed the last portion of

our lesson and this one, see Acts 19:11 to 21:6. The historical sections may be outlined as follows: (1) Exorcists exposed, and books of magic burned, Acts 19:13-20; (2) a plan for future journeys, 21, 22; (3) the mob of silversmiths, 23-41; (4) Paul's second visit to Macedonia and Greece, Acts 20:1-6; (5) a Lord's day meeting in Troas, 712; (6) the voyage from Troas to Miletus, 13-16; (7) an interview with the elders of the church in Ephesus, 17-38; (8) the journey from Miletus to Caesarea, Acts 21:1-9. Paul's interview with the elders of the church in Ephesus at Miletus should be read just here. It was a farewell utterance, and he took leave of them and the brethren, under circumstances that led to the shedding of in any tears. Leaving there, Luke describes their further travels as follows: "And when it came to pass that we were parted from them and had set sail, we came with a straight course unto Cos, and the next day unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara: and, having found a ship crossing over unto Phoenicia, we went aboard, and set sail. And when we had come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left hand, we sailed unto Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden." The time spent in unloading the ship, and taking on a new cargo, gave the travelers opportunity to visit with brethren several days. "And having found the disciples, we tarried there seven days: and these said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not set foot in Jerusalem." (Acts 21:1-4.) The Holy Spirit did not encourage the entreaties of the Tyrean brethren to plead with Paul not to go to Jerusalem; for then it would have been Paul's duty to heed; but having been informed by the Spirit that Paul would suffer there, love for him prompted them to plead with him not to go. But Paul was determined, and when time came for the ship to sail, his leave-taking, described as follows by Luke, was most painful: "And when it came to pass that we had accomplished the days, we departed and went on our journey; and they all, with wives and children, brought us on our way till we were out of the city: and kneeling down on the beach, we prayed, and bade each other farewell; and we went on board the ship, but they returned home again." (Acts 21:5, 6.) This parting scene was even more tender than that at Miletus; for here the sobs of women and children were mingled with those of the men. All, however, were consoled by the fervent prayers, and Paul and his company went on their way, and the disciples returned sadly to their homes. The rest of the journey was soon completed.

"And when we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day. And on the morrow we departed, and came unto Caesarea: and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we abode with him. Now this man had four virgin daughters, who prophesied." "From Ptolemais," Brother McGarvey remarks, "the road leads around the bay of Acre, almost in a semicircle, along a smooth beach, to the end of the sea end of Mount Carmel, whence it leads in a straight line almost due south along the Mediterranean shore to Caesarea. The distance is about thirty-five miles, and it must have occupied about two days." "Philip," the evangelist, mentioned here, is to be identified with the "Philip" who went to Samaria and preached the gospel, and who also converted the Ethiopian eunuch. (Acts 8:39, 40.) At the close of that account he is said to have preached in all the cities from Azotus to

Caesarea. At the time of Paul's third tour, he was residing in the city of Caesarea. It will be noted that he is styled an "evangelist." An evangelist is simply a preacher of the gospel, one who declares the glad tidings of salvation.

This Philip had four daughters, so Luke informs us, who did prophesy. To prophesy was to speak for or on behalf of another; for so the word signifies, according to the lexicons. This power was conferred by the Holy Spirit. The fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians deals largely with this gift. There Paul informs us that "he that prophesieth, speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation and consolation . . . he that prophesieth edifieth the church." (1 Cor. 14:34.) To prophesy is to edify; but to edify is to teach. Women, we learn from this incident, prophesied in New Testament times; therefore women taught. To urge, therefore, that 1 Cor. 14:34, 35 forbids women teaching today, is to misinterpret this passage.

Forebodings of danger for Paul were felt by brethren in Miletus and Tyre, as we have already noted earlier in this lesson. During the time he spent with the family of Philip in Caesarea, another such warning was given him: "And as we tarried there some days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And coming to us, and taking Paul's girdle, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind te man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles" It is possible that the Agabus here mentioned is the same as that prophet by the same name who predicted in Antioch the famine which led to the first mission of Paul and Barnabas from Antioch to Jerusalem. (Acts 11:27-29.) The dramatic manner in which the prophet delivered his prediction made it all the more impressive, and recalls similar Old Testament incidents. (Jer. 27:1-11; 28:1-17; Zech. 11:7-14.) On this occasion, Paul's own traveling companions joined in the plea that he avoid the city of Jerusalem. "And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. 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. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done." When Paul's own beloved associates added their own pleading to the entreaties of Tim. brethren, the effect was crushing on his heart. He could not but be touched by their love for him, and the concern they felt for his welfare. They had no doubt of the correctness of the prophet's prediction and they knew that to go to Jerusalem was to plunge himself into the hands of his enemies. But while he was greatly moved by their solicitations, he never wavered in his steadfastness. Whatever he might suffer would be for the name of Christ and the good of his cause, and for this, Paul was willing not only to suffer, but also to die, if need be. All personal considerations were submerged in his desire to serve the Christ. It should be said to the credit of Paul's companions that they were willing to acquiesce in Paul's decision to go to Jerusalem whatever the consequences might be. Men of less faith in divine providence might have reproached him for his self-will; but these men saw in the very determination of the fearless apostle the guiding hand of God, and they could only exclaim, "The will of the Lord be done." This was

the expression of a wish that whatever God might judge to be necessary for the advancement of his cause might take place, though it should be attended with great trials. And having so determined, the brethren took up their "baggage and went up to Jerusalem." (Acts 21:15.)

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Context of the lesson.  
 Golden Text explained.  
 Paul preaches in Galatia and Phrygia.  
 Paul's labors in Ephesus.  
 Paul's methods.  
 Nature of Paul's work in Ephesus.  
 The school of Tyrannus.  
 Lessons to be drawn from this activity of Paul.  
 Paul in Caesarea and in the house of Philip.  
 The trip by sea.  
 The farewells of this lesson.  
 Philip and his family.  
 Activity of his daughters.  
 Implications from this.  
 Prophets of this lesson.  
 Effect of the prophecy on Paul's companions; on Paul.  
 Their decision.

### Lesson XIII—September 29, 1946

#### PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME

Acts 27:1-8; 28:11-14, 30, 31

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 28:16-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved." (Acts 28:24.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

September	23.	M	A Prisoner in Caesarea (Acts 24:22-27)
September	24.	T	The Appeal to Caesar (Acts 25:1-12)
September	25.	W	A Storm at Sea (Acts 27:14-27)
September	26.	T	Paul at Melita (Acts 28: 1-10)
September	27.	F	Paul Goes to Rome (Acts 28:11-14)
September	28.	S	Salvation Through Faith (Rom. 10:5-15)
September	29.	S	Paul Entertains the Jews (Acts 28:23-31)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—The fall of A.D. 60 and spring of A.D. 61.

PLACES.—Caesarea and Rome.

PERSONS.—Paul and others.

#### Lesson Text

1 And when it was determined that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, of the Augustan band.

2 And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail unto the places on the coast of Asia, we put to sea, Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.

3 And the next day we touched at Sidon: and Julius treated Paul kindly, and gave him leave to go unto his friends and refresh himself.

4 And putting to sea from thence, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.

5 And when we had sailed across the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia.

6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy; and he put us therein.

7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and were come with difficulty over against Cnidus, the wind not further suffering us, we sailed under the lee of Crete, over against Salmone;

8 And with difficulty coasting along it we came unto a certain place called Fair Havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

11 And after three months we set sail in a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the Island, whose sign was The Twin Brothers.

12 And touching at Syracuse, we tarried there three days.

13 And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at Rhegium: and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli;

14 Where we found brethren, and were entreated to tarry with them seven days: and so we came to Rome.

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.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. From Caesarea to Fair Havens (Verses 1-8).
- II. The Journey Completed (Acts 28:11-14).
- III. Duration of Paul's Imprisonment and Labors in Rome (Verses 30, 31).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

For an account of the incidents in Paul's life from the time of our last lesson to this one, see chapters 22-27 of Acts. During this period, Paul returned to Jerusalem, was arrested, carried to Caesarea, accused before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, and kept in prison for two years. In each of the trials, Paul was allowed to defend himself, and numerous thrilling speeches in defense of Christianity will be found in these chapters. Finally despairing of justice in these courts, he appealed to Caesar, in Rome. Incidents on this voyage are to be studied in the lesson today.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

For the reason for Paul's journey to Rome, see under the "Context of the Lesson," and much more at length the various commentaries on Acts. Boles, on Acts, and McGarvey's Commentary on Acts will be found especially helpful in this study. It will be remembered that Rome was the capital of the Roman Empire and the seat of the emperors; and cases appealed to Rome were carried there for final adjudication.

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved." (Acts 28:24.) Paul had long desired to visit in the city of Rome and preach the gospel there. (Rom. 1:11-17.) His visit there was far different, however, from what he had hoped for and expected. Instead of coming as a free man, to appear in the synagogues in the name of Jesus, he entered the city under guard, as a

prisoner sent up for trial. If the picture is disheartening to us, it evidently was not to Paul, for he did not hesitate to begin his work in spite of difficulties and obstacles. His first move was to call the principal unbelieving Jews of the city for a conference. While Paul was a prisoner he was allowed to live under guard in his own hired house. (Acts 28:16, 30.) Calling the Jews to his place of abode, he said to them, "I, brethren, though I had done' nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans: who, when they had examined me, desired to set' me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had aught whereof to accuse my nation. For this cause therefore did I entreat you to see and to speak with me: for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." The answer of the Jews was fair and candid: "And they said unto him, We neither received letters from Judaea concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee. 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." Before taking leave of Paul, they made an appointment with him to hear more of his teaching. "And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him in 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." Then follows our Golden Text, "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved." For the results of this interview, see Acts 28:25-28.

### HELPS FOR TEACHERS

Aside from the value of a historical study, of these events, the practical value to be derived from seeing the courage and fidelity of Paul to the cause of Christ as manifested in the face of the most formidable opposition is great. One cannot study the life of Paul without wondering how it was possible for a man to endure so much opposition and yet never waver in his determination to serve the Lord and live for him. The consideration of these matters should strengthen the fainthearted among us today and lead us all to put forth redoubled efforts in the Christian life.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

#### I. From Caesarea to Fair Havens (Verses 1-8)

For Paul's appeal to Caesar, see Acts 25:10-12. Soon after his speech before Agrippa, he was sent to Rome. The answer to his prayer to see Rome (Rom. 15:30-32) was about to be realized, and the promise made to him by the Lord in prison was about to be fulfilled. This was not done in any miraculous manner, but by a providential combination- of circumstances. "The machinations of the Jews, the avarice of Felix, the indecision of Festus, the prudence of Paul, and the Roman statute for the protection of citizens had very strangely, yet very naturally, combined to fulfill the promise of. God made in answer to prayer." (McGarvey.) Once more we are enabled to see that Luke was a member of the company from the fact that he uses the pronoun "we" in this section. He had

come with Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 21:17, 18), and it is probable that he had been close to him during his imprisonment in Caesarea, Aristarchus was with them also; and as Paul later styles him his "fellow-prisoner" (Col. 4:10), it is likely that he, too, had been arrested in Judea and was being sent to Rome on an appeal to Caesar. There were other prisoners in the group; and all were in charge of a centurion by the name of Julius, Johnson remarks that "all we learn of this Roman officer is favorable. It is remarkable how uniformly Paul commanded the respect of the Roman officials with whom he came in contact. Sergius Paulus, Gallia, Felix, Festus, and Julius are examples of this. The band or cohort commanded by Julius was called the Augustan, in honor of the emperor. See the text for the places touched on the voyage from Caesarea to Fair Havens. Their place of embarkation was Adramyttium, a city on the western coast of Asia. The following day they reached Sidon, where Paul was allowed to go ashore and rest for a time with his friends, in all probability the saints who resided there. For a time, after leaving there, the ship sailed along the coast, passing near the island of Cyprus. Their next stopping point was Myra, a city of Lycia. There the company changed ships, boarding a ship from Alexandria, bound for Rome. The ship was a large one, carrying two hundred seventy-six people and a full cargo of wheat (verses 37, 38). The wind was contrary, and the ship moved slowly, and after "many days" had made but little progress in their journey to Rome. "And when we had sailed slowly many days, and were come with difficulty over against Cnidus, the wind not further suffering us, we sailed under the lee of Crete, over against Salmone; and with difficulty coasting along it we came unto a certain place called Fair Havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea." (Acts 27:7, 8.)

At this point, the question of continuing the voyage arose, Paul urging that they remain in Fair Havens for the winter, and warning that disaster would overtake them if they continued; but the centurion listened to the master of the ship more than to Paul, and because the port was a small one and not "commodious to winter in," they decided to try to reach Phoenix (westward of Fair Havens thirty-four miles) and spend the rest of the winter there. "And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close in shore." (Acts 27:13.) This was not for long, for soon a tempestuous wind arose, and the ship was caught in the midst of it. For an account of the storm and shipwreck, see Acts 27:14-44. At length, Paul and his companions reached the island of Melita, where numerous incidents occurred of great interest. (Acts 28:1-10.) Paul was there three months.

## **II. The Journey Completed (Acts 28:11-14)**

"And after three months we set sail in a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the island, whose sign was The Twin Brothers. And touching at Syracuse, we tarried there three days. And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at Rhegium: and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli; where we found brethren, and were entreated to tarry with them seven days: and so we came to Rome." It is probable that this ship



was loaded with wheat for the Italian market. The "Twin Brothers" were wooden signs at the bow or stern of the ship, indicating its name. It is interesting to note that there were Christians in Puteoli. This indicates the extent to which the gospel had been preached in Italy. That Julius allowed Paul to stop with the brethren for seven days indicates the respect and esteem he must have felt for the apostle. The seven days included one Lord's day; and thus Paul was privileged to break the loaf with the disciples he found there.

The journey from Puteoli was over a paved road, which was a branch of the famous Appian Way. His arrival in the city is described as follows: "And from thence the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius, and The Three Taverns; whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him." The Market of Appius was forty-three miles from Rome. That Paul thanked God and took courage when he met the brethren out there, implies that he had until then felt some uncertainty regarding the reception he would have from the brethren in Rome. As he was coming into the proud city in chains, a prisoner, they might have felt that the reputation of the cause in Rome would forbid them showing recognition of him. They, however, dismissed all timeserving considerations from their minds, if they ever entertained any, and went gladly out to meet him. When Paul saw this, all doubts left him, and hope took their place. Among the brethren were doubtless many with whom he had been associated in the work in Asia and Macedonia and Greece, and the islands of the sea; and it must have been a happy and thrilling occasion. He had many things to tell them of his trials in Palestine and his perilous journey, and how the hand of God had wrought deliverance and brought them all safely on their way.

### **III. Duration of Paul's Imprisonment and Labors in Rome (Verses 30, 31)**

Under "Context of the Lesson," we noted Paul's conference with the Jews in Rome shortly after his arrival there. As a result of his declaration to them, some believed, others disbelieved. Those who disbelieved must have done so with such outward expressions of rejection as to lead him to believe that they would never accept the truth, for after their departure he gave expression to the following words: "Well spake the Holy Spirit through Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers, saying, Go thou unto this people, and say, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles: they will also hear." The passage referred to by Paul is from Isa. 6:9, 10. It occurs frequently in the New Testament, viz.: six times in the books of the gospel, here in Acts, and once in the Roman letter. No other Old Testament passage is so often quoted in the New Testament, and

it is always applied to the unbelief of the Jews. The terrible prediction of the unbelief of the nation of Israel was fulfilled in Isaiah's time, in the time of Christ, in the time of the apostles, and eighteen centuries of Jewish history illustrate the same fact in our own time. These are the one final word of Paul to the Jews before turning to the Gentiles.

Here the narrative of Acts is brought to an abrupt close with these words, "And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him." The hired dwelling is the same as that alluded to by Paul in verse 16. The soldier there referred to was chained to him night and day. Soldiers doing this guard duty were changed every three hours unless at night, and thus not less than five or six different soldiers were with Paul daily. As this continued for two whole years, it is not surprising that Paul should later write to the Philippians: "My bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole praetorian guard, and to all the rest." (Phil. 1:12-14.) The praetorian guard was a body of soldiers kept at Rome for the purpose of guarding the emperor and keeping prisoners awaiting trial in the imperial court. Paul evidently had many visitors, the words, he "received all that went in unto him," indicating this. Much preaching and teaching were therefore done by the apostle during this period. Preaching and teaching are here distinguished, as they are throughout the book of Acts, the former being addressed to the unbelievers, and the latter to the believers. Thus we learn that Paul taught Christians and preached the gospel to aliens during this time. These meetings were held in his own hired house; and on such a small scale where not forbidden, the authorities feeling doubtless that no disturbance could be occasioned by meetings no larger than these. Paul was, therefore, enabled to carry on his work unmolested. During this period he wrote four of his epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon. From notices in his epistles we learn that Luke, Timothy, Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, and Tychicus were with him at least a part of the time.

The book of Acts comes to an end just here, and it was almost certainly written shortly after the last of the events it describes. That Luke did not inform us of the results of Paul's appeal to Caesar is to be accounted for on the reasonable supposition that the book was finished before that was determined. Johnson says, "Why it paused here is unknown. We cannot repress a regret that it was not continued to the end of its great missionary hero. His subsequent life and work can only be learned from incidental allusions in his later epistles and from tradition. The testimony of the primitive church affirms that he was acquitted when his appeal, after long delay, came to trial, probably in A.D. 63; that for several years he labored earnestly in other lands, visiting the old scene of his labors in Asia Minor once more. Prior to this visit he is supposed to have gone into Spain, and crossed from thence into North Africa, then one of the most flourishing parts of the empire. Somewhere about A.D. 65-67 he visited once more the Greek and Asiatic churches he had founded, and from Macedonia wrote the first epistle to Timothy, then at Ephesus, and also to Titus, in Crete. The incidental allusions in these epistles confirm the view that he had been acquitted,

and was at work for Christ. At Nicopolis, in Epirus, he was again arrested and taken to Rome. (See Titus 3:12.) While in prison awaiting trial, he wrote Second Timothy, his last words, solemn with the shadow of death. From hence he was sent to the scaffold by Nero in A.D. 67 or 68, and entered his eternal rest. While we cannot be certain of the facts of this *Postactian* outline, they are so probable that they may be reasonably accepted as the outline of the last years of the greatest hero of the faith that ever fought the good fight and won the crown."

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The context of the lesson.  
Reason for Paul's journey to Rome.  
Meaning of Golden Text and historical setting.  
Practical lessons from this study.  
Reason for Paul's appeal to Caesar.  
Events which led to it.  
Paul's companion on trip.  
The journey from Caesarea to Fair Havens.  
Paul's advice regarding continuing the journey; decision reached.  
The storm and shipwreck.  
Paul's sojourn in Melita.  
Completion of the journey.  
Attitude of brethren toward him.  
The two years in Rome and events.  
Paul's condemnation of the Jews.  
Isaiah's statement and its significance.  
Paul's efforts in Rome; teaching and preaching; significance of this.  
Books written during this period; Paul's later history.  
Why. Acts ends just here.

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## FOURTH QUARTER THE CHURCH IN THE EPISTLES

Aim—To get a view of the church in its local or congregational sense as presented by the Holy Spirit in the epistles of the New Testament, and to learn how God wants his churches to work and worship today.

**Lesson I—October 6, 1946**

### THE CHURCH AT ROME Acts 18:1-4; 28:11-16; Rom. 1:8-15

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 12:1-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." (Rom. 12:9.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

September	30.	M	A Dangerous Voyage(Acts 27:14-27)
October	1.	T	Paul's Arrival in Rome(Acts 28:11-16)
October	2.	W	Paul Before the Chief Jews(Acts 28:17-22)
October	3.	T	Paul Writes to the Church at Rome (Rom. 1:1-7)
October	4.	F	Faith of the Church at Rome (Rom. 1:8-15)
October	5.	S	Paul Asks Their Prayers (Rom. 15:30-33)
October	6.	S	Salutations Unto the Church (Rom. 16:3-16)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—For Acts, A.D. 62; for Romans, A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Rome and Corinth.

PERSONS.—Paul, various associates, and the church at Rome.

#### Lesson Text

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.

11 And after three months we set sail in a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the island, whose sign was The Twin Brothers.

12 And touching at Syracuse, we tarried there three days.

13 And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at Rhegium: and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli;

14 Where we found brethren, and were entreated to tarry with them seven days: and so we came to Rome.

15 And from thence the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius and The Three Taverns; whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

16 And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I may be prospered by the will of God to come unto you.

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end that ye may be established:

12 That is, that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

13 And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (and was hindered hitherto), that I might have some fruit in you also, even as in the rest of the Gentiles.

14 I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Aquila and Priscilla, Companions of Paul, from Rome (Verses 1-4).
- II. Paul's Arrival in Rome (Acts 28:11-16).
- III. Paul Expresses a Desire to Visit in Rome (Rom. 1:8-15).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The portions of scripture forming the lesson text for today are Acts 18: i-4; 28:11-16; Rom. 1:8-15. The events described in Acts 18:4 occurred on Paul's second missionary journey, considered in the third quarter of this series. For a discussion of the context of Acts 28:11-16, see under Paul's voyage to Rome, the last lesson in the preceding quarter. The epistle to the Romans is by many considered the most profound portion of the New Testament. Luther says, "It is the chief part of the New Testament." Meyer, "that it is the grandest, boldest, most complete composition of Paul." Godet terms it "the cathedral of the Christian faith." And Johnson observes that "it should be what Coleridge says, 'the most profound work in existence,' is not wonderful when we bear in mind that it was written by the greatest of the apostles, in the full vigor of his manhood, at the height of his activity, and addressed to the church of the great imperial city which was the center of influence and power for the whole world."

The letter was written by the apostle while at Corinth, on the third missionary tour, and sent to Rome by the hands of Phoebe, a "servant of the church," in Cenchrae. (Rom. 16:1.) It is one of the few churches of which we read in the New Testament not planted by Paul. It is certain that there were saints in Rome long before the visit of the apostle to that city; or indeed, the visit of any apostle there. It is possible that the "sojourners from Rome," who heard Peter preach on the memorable Pentecost day following the resurrection of our Lord, carried the gospel of Christ to the imperial city, and there planted the banner of Christianity. Paul felt a great desire to visit the city, and often gave expression thereto. (Rom. 1:11; Acts 19:21.) The theme of the epistle is set forth in Rom. 1:16, "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." This great theme is elaborately discussed with many illustrations through chapters one to eleven, and chapters twelve to fourteen contain practical applications and exhortations. The last chapter is devoted to personal salutations. A brief outline of it would be: (1) Salutation and plan, 1:1-15; (2) theme announced, 1:

16, 17; (3) righteousness based on faith and not on the works of the law, 1:18 to 8:39; (4) Israel's rejection of God's righteousness; 9 to 11; (5) hortatory applications, 12 to 15:13; (6) personal notes, 15:14 to 16.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." (Rom. 12:9.) Love that is "without hypocrisy" is genuine, not deceitful. Not like that of Judas to Christ, or Joab to Abner: a kiss and a stab. Love is to be sincere and unfeigned. It is not to consist in words or professions only, but is to be manifested in acts of kindness and deeds of charity. (1 John 3:18; 1 Pet. 1:22.) The word "abhor" means to hate, to turn from, to avoid. Christians are, therefore, to turn from, avoid, and hate that which is evil, and cleave (cling tenaciously to) that which is good. The word "cleave" means literally the act of gluing, or uniting firmly with glue. Love must then hate evil, and glue itself to that which is good. "There are," says Lard, "many Christians, and among them many preachers, who oppose evil, it is true, but they do it so faintly as virtually to countenance it. They will not publicly endorse evil; but they will rather go quietly home, or get out of its way, and leave it to riot unrebuked. They do not abhor it . . . These men are not obeying Paul."

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

It is suggested that the teachers impress upon the classes the historical background of the epistle to the Roman church. A wealth of material is available for extra reading along this line. Excellent introductions to the epistle will be found in the commentaries by Lipscomb, Lard, Grubbs, Barnes, Clarke, and additional matters will be found in the various commentaries on Acts in the portions relating to the saints in Rome, and Paul's journey there. Teachers who do their work well will not be satisfied to limit their reading to the comments on the lesson text, but will wish, to read more extensively in the background of the lesson.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Aquila and Priscilla, Companions of Paul, from Rome (Verses 1-4)**

"After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. 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; and because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tentmakers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks." For the "things" referred to in verse 1, see the preceding chapter. These events occurred on the second tour, considered in a lesson in the third quarter of this series. On reaching Corinth, Paul found two faithful Christian people, Aquila and Priscilla, by name, who had lately been forced to flee from Rome because of a decree issued by the reigning emperor that all Jews must immediately leave the city. The Roman historian, Suetonius, who lived about fifty years later, alludes to this decree, and states that

the Jews made disturbances at the instigation of one *Chrestus*, and were expelled for this reason. Many of the ancient writers used the form *Chrestus* in referring to Christ; and it is thought that the activities of Christians, many of whom were Jews, led to the expulsion from the city. We have no account of the conversion of these two faithful disciples; it is possible that they were converted at Corinth on this occasion. Other notices of them in the New Testament are Acts 18:18, 26; Rom. 16:3, 4; 2 Tim. 4:19, and other passages in the epistles. Following the custom of the Jews, Paul's father had taught him the trade of tentmaking; and finding it necessary to support himself in this fashion on his arrival in Corinth, Paul was thrown in contact with Aquila and Priscilla, who also labored at the same trade. Notwithstanding the fact that Paul was toiling six days each week in earning his livelihood, he entered the synagogue, the Jewish place of worship, and reasoned every Sabbath.

Sabbatarians point to this and similar instances in Paul's life, as evidence that he observed the Sabbath. This, of course, is clearly erroneous. Paul entered the synagogue on such occasions, only because the Jews, in harmony with the law, were assembled on this day. The occasion afforded him an excellent opportunity to preach to large numbers of people, assembled for religious purposes. He had no other reason for it.

## **II. Paul's Arrival in Rome (Acts 28:11-16)**

Read carefully the text, and see the lesson for last Lord's day for a full discussion of Paul's arrival in Rome. The Lord had told Paul three times that he would see Rome. He had longed greatly to visit the saints in that city and have some fruit among them as among the other Gentiles. (Rom. 1:13.) He had announced a purpose to see Rome about the time he left Ephesus in the year 57. (Acts 19:21.) Many times he was hindered from carrying out his desires. (Rom. 15:23.) And how different was his eventual entrance to the city from what he had planned. But he who makes the wrath of man to praise him brought good out of evil, and men were saved and the cause of Christ glorified by the fact that he did enter the city a prisoner. (Phil. 1:12.) The things that happened to him, instead of being allowed to block the progress of the gospel, fell out to its furtherance. (Phil. 1:12.) Happy indeed is that individual who uses the trials of life as steppingstones to greater usefulness, instead of allowing them to hinder and impede and discourage and defeat.

## **III. Paul Expresses a Desire to Visit in Rome (Rom. 1:8-15)**

The letter to the Roman church was written in A.D. 57. Paul finally arrived in the city for the first time in A.D. 61. He had, therefore, never been in Rome at the time he penned the letter. This accounts for numerous statements in the epistle indicating Paul's great desire to visit with them and have a part in the preaching of the gospel in those parts. After the usual Pauline salutation and introduction, he expresses thanks for their faithfulness and fidelity known throughout the world: "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world." First (that is, before going on to the discussion



of other matters), he, through the mediation of Christ, thanks God for their faith. This is truly an ideal toward which every congregation should aspire. When Paul thought of these saints, he thanked God for them. Rome was the center of culture and influence; and from it visitors from every part of the world would return to their homes bearing news of the faith and soundness of the church there. The apostle was well aware of the incalculable good that would result from a practical demonstration of Christianity in so important a center as Rome.

"For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers making request, if by any means now at length I may be prospered by the will of God to come unto you." Paul continually remembered the Romans in his petitions, and since he could call no other to witness to the substance of his secret prayers, he calls upon God. This statement, frequent in Paul's writings (Eph. 1:15; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2), indicates the deep solicitude Paul felt for the saints. We should pray one for another today. It does us good to know that people are interested in us, and approach the throne of God in our behalf. The song, "I Need the Prayers of Those I Love," expresses the sentiment deeply felt in the heart of the faithful child of God. Paul had traveled widely and constantly; his failure therefore to visit Rome might by some be attributed to indifference or lack of interest in their welfare; he assures them that he had prayed to God that he might be prospered to go on the journey nearest his heart, and that he had not visited them simply because it had not been the Lord's will. One reason, at least, for his great desire to visit in the city of seven hills is next given. "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine." "Spiritual gifts" were miraculous gifts received by imposition of an apostle's hands. A discussion of the manner in which these gifts were received will be found in Lesson VI, "Gospel Preached in Samaria," " third quarter. Paul was anxious to visit in Rome in order that he might through laying on of his hands, impart to them some spiritual gift. This indicates to us that no apostle had ever visited in the city of Rome. If any of the brethren in Rome enjoyed spiritual gifts, as Rom. 12:6 seems to imply, they had received them elsewhere and before coming to Rome. For further information touching spiritual gifts, see 1 Cor. 12:1-11. These spiritual gifts were received only through the imposition of an apostle's hands. There is no recorded instance of any one working a miracle who was not an apostle or had not received miraculous power through an apostle's hands. It follows, therefore, that when the apostles died, the ability to impart the Spirit ceased to exist; and when the last man died on whom an apostle had laid his hands, there were no more miracles wrought.

It will be recalled that at this time the New Testament had not been completed, and the brethren were dependent on such miraculous aids for the maintenance of the work. To receive these gifts would, therefore, tend to establish them, and Paul was desirous of coming unto them that he might thus impart the Spirit and have some part in the edification of the church in that city. And if they were established, it would contribute to his own comfort and satis-

faction. In further confirmation of his earnest desire to visit among them, he also says, "And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (and was hindered hitherto), that I might have some fruit in you also, even as in the rest of the Gentiles." Paul had labored extensively in Asia and Europe, and much fruit existed to his account; he was, however, not satisfied with this, he wanted to visit Rome and have some fruit among them also. (See John 15:8, 16.) It is interesting to note what hindered Paul. At first thought we may have assumed that it was the interference of the devil; and if not this, the direction of the Holy Spirit in sending him to other places, as in the case of the second missionary tour when they assayed to go into Bithynia, and were forbidden to do so by the Holy Spirit. However, it was neither the devil nor the Holy Spirit that hindered him in coming to Rome. The hindering cause we learn from Rom. 15:22, "Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come unto you .... (for I hope to see you in my journey)." Already in those regions, Paul did not wish to leave until the work was done, despite his great desire to see Rome. His desire to preach there and everywhere grew out of the following reasons: "I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome." The Greeks called all others, besides themselves, "Barbarians." These did not speak the Greek language, nor had they imbibed Greek culture. The wise and the foolish divides people according to knowledge, instead of race, as above. This is merely Paul's way of acknowledging indebtedness to all, irrespective of race or condition in life. His knowledge of the good news of salvation, and his apostleship in it, laid upon him the sacred obligation to tell it to all who had never heard it. (1 Cor. 9:16-19.) It may be asked why Paul felt an obligation to people who had never done anything for him. He was so keenly conscious of the great blessings he had received from the Lord that he felt he could only discharge the obligation he owed to Christ by preaching the gospel to all. We sustain the same obligation, and for the same reason. Paul's apostleship, while primarily to the Gentiles, was nevertheless good also among the Jews, and whenever opportunity offered, he preached among them also. But his labors were, for the most part, among the Gentiles; and this sent him to both Greeks and barbarians, the two classes into which the Gentiles were divided at this time. Moved by a desire to pay the debt he felt, he was ready to visit Rome and preach the gospel there.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The context of the lesson.

Brief introduction to Romans.

Golden Text explained.

Aquila and Priscilla and their work in the gospel; numerous references to them.

Proof that Paul did not keep the Sabbath in Corinth.

Paul's arrival in Rome; his great desire to visit there and reasons therefor.

Lesson derived from this regarding impartation of the Holy Spirit.

Why was Paul hindered from visiting Rome.

Why he felt an obligation to preach the gospel in Rome.

**Lesson II—October 13, 1946****THE CHURCH AT CORINTH**  
**1 Cor. 3:1-9; 2 Cor. 13:5-10**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 13:1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Cor. 5:7.)

**Helps for Lesson Study**  
**Daily Bible Readings**

October	7.	M	Paul at Athens (Acts 17:22-32)
October	8.	T	Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:1-11)
October	9.	W	Paul Before Gallio (Acts 18:12-17)
October	10.	T	Paul Writes to the Church (1 Cor. 1:1-9)
October	11.	F	Division in the Church (1 Cor. 3:1-11)
October	12.	S	Paul's Second Letter to the Church (2 Cor. 1:1-11)
October	13.	S	Paul Defends Himself (2 Cor. 10:1-10)

**Historical Background**

TIME.—First Corinthians, written from Ephesus in the spring of A.D. 57 (1 Cor. 16:8) ; Second Corinthians, from Macedonia in the fall of the same year.

PLACE.—Corinth.

PERSONS.—Paul and the Corinthian church.

**Lesson Text**

- 1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ.  
 2 I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it: nay, not even now are ye able;  
 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men?  
 4 For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men?  
 5 What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him.  
 6 I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.  
 7 So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.  
 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.  
 9 For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building.  
 5 Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate.  
 6 But I hope that ye shall know that we are not reprobate.  
 7 Now we pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we may appear approved, but that ye may do that which is honorable, though we be as reprobate.  
 8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.  
 9 For we rejoice, when we are weak, and ye are strong: this we also pray for, even your perfecting.  
 10 For this cause I write these things while absent, that I may not when present deal sharply, according to the authority which the Lord gave me for building up, and not for casting down.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Division in the Church in Corinth (Verses 1-4).
- II. Proper Function of Ministers (Verses 5-9).
- III. Paul Severely Rebukes the Corinthian Church (2 Cor. 13:5-10).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

It is said that "three cities rivaled in the grandeur that was Greece"—Athens, the intellectual brain; Sparta, the military body; and Corinth, the commercial arms and limbs. Commercial centers are likely to be centers of pleasure and indulgence. "In Corinth, men worshiped 'the almighty dollar,' drank deep at the fountain of pleasure, rocked in the chair of luxury, wallowed in the mire of vice, and lived for the things seen and temporal. The worship of Aphrodite (Venus), to whose licentious exercises a thousand priestesses were dedicated, made Corinth a cesspool of impurity and 'Corinthian' a synonym for pollution." On his second missionary tour, Paul left Athens, sick with discouragement because of the failure that had attended his efforts there, and came to Corinth. He associated himself with two faithful Christians, lately expelled from Italy, Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-4), and worked at the trade of tentmaking, to sustain himself, and preached in the synagogues each Sabbath. Singlehanded and alone, he labored with straitened spirit, but the coming of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia strengthened him, and becoming more fervent, preached to the Jews that "Jesus was the Christ." (Acts 18:1-6.) There were two main points in his preaching: (1) The Jewish Messiah would be a suffering Messiah; (2) Jesus was that Messiah. The usual result followed the Jews opposed him with abusive language, and he was forced to abandon them to their doom, saying, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." (Acts 18:6.)

Titus Justus, a devout Greek, owned a house hard by the synagogue. Into it Paul entered and continued his preaching. Crispus, the "ruler of the synagogue," believed in the Lord "with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts 18:8.) The Lord appeared to Paul in a vision, assuring him, and saying, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city." (Acts 18:9, 10.) Obeying this behest, Paul continued his work in Corinth for a year and six months, "teaching the word of God among them."

In the spring of 57, while in Ephesus, Paul wrote the epistle we style First Corinthians. It is in reality Second Corinthians, and our Second Corinthians is at least Third Corinthians; for it is certain that Paul wrote an epistle to the church in Corinth, now lost, earlier than the first epistle we have. In 1 Cor. 5:9, Paul alludes to a former letter addressed to them. In such an atmosphere, it is not surprising that the church lapsed into indifference and downright worldliness; and the general object of Paul's first letter was to deal with these matters and set them right. First Corinthians deals with more matters of particular interest today than any other of Paul's epistles. Conditions had deteriorated in that congregation until gross ungodliness was tolerated, condoned, and even defended. It is not likely that we would claim as a church of Christ a congregation in such a condition among us today. They were divided over preachers; they winked at gross immorality; they went to law, brother with brother; they were disturbed over the question of marriage; the matter of eating meats offered to idols was a cause of controversy; some were participating in heathen feasts; they were offending the

angels by allowing women to sit in their assembly with uncovered heads; the Lord's Supper had been corrupted into a feast where some actually became drunk; brethren were envious of each other's spiritual gifts, while some denied the resurrection. It was truly a deplorable state. This will account for the severity of Paul's letter to them. Be it said to their credit that they accepted his rebuke and repented. Some months later, Paul received word of their improved state, and the second epistle expresses at length his joy over the happy turn of affairs. The first letter was written in the spring of 57, the second in the fall of the same year.

The chief points of First Corinthians are: (1) Salutation and thanksgiving, 1:1-9; (2) rebukes, 1 to 6; (3) answers to questions, 7 to 11; (4) spiritual gifts, 12, 13; (5) the resurrection, 15; (6) personal matters, 16.

The chief points of Second Corinthians are: (1) Introduction, 1:1-11; (2) thankfulness in retrospect, 1:12 to 7; (3) the collection for the poor at Jerusalem, 8, 9; (4) opponents at Corinth condemned, 10 to 13.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7) "To walk," in the scriptures, often means to live, to act, to conduct one's self in a certain way. (See Rom. 4:12; 6:4.) It has reference to the fact that life is a journey, a pilgrimage, and that the child of God is traveling to another country. This walk, the apostle points out, is by faith. This means that our journey is influenced by things we cannot see but confidently believe to exist; things beyond the narrow scope of our physical senses. Christians cannot see heaven, it is true; but they believe that it awaits them; and this belief is the motivating factor in their lives. It is idle for people to object to Christianity on the ground that it is purely a system of faith. Remove faith from our daily lives, and it would be impossible to maintain an existence in the world. There is no realm or sphere in which we move in which faith is not exercised. Why, then, should we object to it in the realm of religion?

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

Inasmuch as the general subject of the present quarter is the church in the epistles, the suggestions to teachers for one lesson will apply to all. There is a rich store of highly suggestive material available in the various commentaries on the epistles for those who have the industry and perseverance to dig it out. These lessons afford the teachers an excellent opportunity to give their students a bird's-eye view of the epistles of Paul and the churches he addressed. It is a highly practical course of study and will yield rich dividends to those sufficiently interested to acquire the lessons therein contained.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Division in the Church in Corinth (Verses 1-4)**

"And I brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ." The simplicity of Paul's instruction to the brethren in Corinth had given occasion to his enemies to criticize him as a shallow teacher. (See 2 Cor. 10:10; 11:12-15.) Paul answers this charge by pointing out that it was

their own immature condition that required him to follow the course he had pursued—that they were incapable of more mature instruction. They had not developed as they should and were still babes, hence unable to be addressed as full-grown men. "I fed you with milk, not with meat," he points out, "for ye were not yet able to bear it: nay, not even now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal: . . . and do ye not walk after the manner of men?" His instruction had been of matters of the most elementary nature, because their immature state forbade the presentation of the weightier matters of the kingdom. And, though considerable time had elapsed since their conversion, sufficient time indeed, to assume that they were ready for the more advanced portions of the gospel, they were still in the same infantile state that had characterized them from the beginning. (See Heb. 5:11 to 6:2; 1 Pet. 2:2; Mark 4:33; John 16:12.) "Milk" and "meat" are here respectively used to indicate the elementary and profound portions of revelation. Evidence of their carnality was to be seen in the fact that these brethren were influenced by jealousy and strife and an undue attraction for men. This is an important point and should be carefully noted. We learn here that partyism is a token of carnality. Ordinarily, we ascribe carnality only to those who are guilty of the grosser practices of the flesh; but Paul here clearly indicates that to be factious and influenced by the party spirit is to be carnal. Observe, too, that Paul charges them of walking "after the manner of men." One of the modern speech translations renders this passage, "Ye behave like ordinary men." Christians are not ordinary men; they are supposed to live and move in a realm above ordinary people—people influenced only by the world, the flesh, and the devil—and to descend to strife and division is to evince an attitude of carnality, and lower one's self to the plane of men uninfluenced by the ennobling and elevating truths of the gospel. For further information touching the division and strife that obtained in Corinth, see 1 Cor. 1:1-13; Gal. 5:25. Those who are "spiritual" are influenced by the teaching of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16); the "carnal," by the flesh (Gal. 5:17).

## II. Proper Function of Ministers (Verses 5-9)

"For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men?" By referring to 1 Cor. 1:10-13, it will be seen that the brethren in Corinth had divided, in spirit at least, over various preachers who had labored among them. Paul wrote as follows: "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" These brethren were carnal minded (1 Cor. 1:10), and the mark of their carnality was that they were divided over the men who had labored among them. Paul then proceeds to show the folly of such partyism, by indicating the sphere in which ministers of God labor.

"What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him." Brother

McGarvey observes that the "what" of this passage is the "neuter of disparagement." Paul and Apollos were nothing more than ministers, i.e., servitors, laborers in the service of God and by no means heads of parties in the church. They had labored according to the measure of their ability bestowed upon them by the Lord; but this did not place them in a position of leadership so as to deserve such recognition as was being bestowed upon them in Corinth. In fact, Paul adds, "I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." One of the modern speech translations renders this, "It was I who planted, it was Apollos who watered, but it is God who makes the seed grow." Paul planted by first preaching the gospel in Corinth; Apollos watered by coming along and exhorting the saints and edifying them in the Christian life; but after all, it was God who alone can give life, who was the one indispensable factor in their lives. They were, therefore, wholly out of order in attributing to Paul and Apollos places of leadership among them. To indicate how unjustifiable was their conduct, he continues, "So then neither is he that planteth anything [that is, of himself without the help of the Lord, who makes the seed grow (2 Cor. 12:12; John 5:4, 5, 16)], neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." To God alone belonged the honor, for to him alone were they dependent for life. Others might have preached the gospel to them, but only he could have given the increase. "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one [i.e., with respect to their purposes and designs, or the end to which they labor] but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor." Since it is God who gives the increase, the reward will be proportioned according to the faithfulness and fidelity manifested, rather than to the results. "For we are God's fellowworkers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building." The King James rendering of this passage is, "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." From this translation, some have concluded that it was the apostle's design to show that we are engaged in a joint work with God-copartners in the same work. While this is true, and may be shown so from many other passages of scripture, it is not likely that this passage refers to this. It is literally, as the Revised Version indicates, that we are "fellowworkers" in his employ; as we say of servants of the same rank, they are fellow laborers of the same master, not meaning the master is engaged in working with them, but that they are fellow laborers one with another. In other words, the relationship is that which obtains between the workers under God, not workers with God. As Albert Barnes points out, "The main design and scope of this whole passage is to show that God is all, that the apostles are nothing; to represent the apostles not as joint workers with God, but as working by themselves, and God as alone giving efficiency to all that was done." The three possessives in this latter verse emphasize the supreme ownership of God.

### **III. Paul Severely Rebukes the Corinthian Church (2 Cor. 13:5-10)**

Certain false teachers had been among the Corinthian brethren and had created much opposition to Paul, and prejudiced the church, or at least a portion of it, against him. He had dealt with them mildly before, but this not sufficing, was now- prepared to come to

them again with patience about exhausted and ready to apply sterner measures. This time, if he comes, he will not spare them. Twice he has been present and foreborne, but this third time he will handle them with rigorous discipline. They had, in fact, tauntingly urged him on in the application of severer measures than he had yet applied by ascribing weakness to Christ, because he, Christ's apostle, had, according to their view, manifested weakness, mistaking, of course, Paul's patience for weakness. For Paul's full statement on this point, see 2 Cor. 13:1-4. They claimed that his tolerance was a test by which they could determine the nature of the Christ he preached. Paul tells them they would exercise a truer wisdom by putting the test to their own lives. Said he, "Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate. But I hope that ye shall know that we are not reprobate." Paul had planted the gospel in Corinth. If they would know whether Christ was in him, they would do so by asking if Christ was in them, unless, indeed, they had lost all consciousness of Christ's presence in them. The point of all this is: You are the fruit of my labor; now you have been led to question my apostleship; at least you would test me to see if I am an apostle. But if I am not an apostle, neither are you the work of God. You may, therefore, test me by testing your own selves. The word "reprobate" means not standing the test, rejected. If their test showed Paul not an apostle, it would reveal them as reprobates, i.e., rejected after being put to the test.

Paul hoped for and confidently expected better results. "Now we pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we may appear approved, but that ye may do that which is honorable, though we be as reprobate. For we can do nothing against the ruth, but for the truth." Paul prayed that they would purge themselves of all evil, and so escape the discipline in store for them if they repented not. He would not have them think that he prayed this prayer in order to vindicate his power over them, or to show himself approved by changing their course, but simply that they might be kept from evil. He would have them do that which is honorable even at the expense of his own vindication. If they would do that which is good, he would rejoice, and not seek for an opportunity to show himself approved as an apostle by demonstrating his power over them. Amplifying this statement, he continues, "For we rejoice, when we are weak, and ye are strong: this we also pray for, even your perfecting." If the Corinthians would perfect themselves and become-mighty in faith and righteousness, he would be content to be looked upon as weak by them, and thus be spared the pain of administering sharp discipline when he next visited them. In short, Paul was willing that they should look upon him as no apostle at all, provided that they could do so without injury to themselves. He cared nothing for reputation; he was interested only in their souls.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

Context of the lesson.  
Brief discussion of Corinth.  
Account of origin of church there.  
Circumstances of Paul's letters.



Chief points in the letters.  
 Meaning of the Golden Text.  
 Cause of division in Corinth.  
 Paul's designation of Corinthian church.  
 Carnal and spiritual contrasted.  
 Proper function of minister.  
 Relation of minister's work to God's work.  
 Paul's rebuke to Corinthian church and reasons.

### Lesson III—October 20, 1946

#### THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA Gal. 1:1-10; 3:1-5

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Gal. 5:16-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

October	14.	M	Paul at Galatia (Acts 16:6-10)
October	15.	T	Paul Goes Through Galatia (Acts 18:22-28)
October	16.	W	Paul Writes the Churches of Galatia (Gal. 1:1-5)
October	17.	T	Galatians Unstable (Gal. 1:6-10)
October	18.	F	"O Foolish Galatians" (Gal. 3:1-14)
October	19.	S	Galatians Receive Paul (Gal. 4:12-20)
October	20.	S	Paul's Love for the Galatians (Gal. 6:11-18)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 57.

PLACE.—The place of writing Galatians is uncertain; possibly Macedonia or Corinth.

PERSONS.—Paul and the churches of Galatia.

#### Lesson Text

1 Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead),

2 And all the brethren that are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father:

5 To whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen .

6 I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel;

7 Which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema.

9 As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

1 O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?

2 This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law. or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?

4 Did ye suffer so many things in vain? if it be indeed in vain.

5 He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Introduction to the Epistle (Verses 1-5).
- II. The Galatians On the Verge of Apostasy (Verses 6-10).
- III. Paul Questions the Galatians Severely (Gal. 3:1-5).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

Unlike many of Paul's epistles, the letter to the churches of Galatia is not addressed to a single congregation, as the epistles to the Ephesians, Corinthians, etc., but to a collection of churches in the territory named Galatia. The province of Galatia will be easily located on a map of the apostolic period in that section of country known as Asia Minor, now Turkey. It was on Paul's second great missionary tour, about A.D. 51, that he, in company with Silas and Timothy, passed through from Lycaonia into Phrygia and Galatia, and there preached the gospel, and thus planted the seeds of the Christian faith in that country. On the third tour, about A.D. 54 or 55, he went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening the disciples. (Acts 16:6; 18:23.) After this, certain Judaizers (men advocating that Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved) entered among them, impeached the testimony of Paul, questioned his apostleship, and greatly upset the peace and harmony of the Galatian churches. The Galatian epistle is, therefore, an indignant protest against and refutation of these false teachers. It contains an impassioned argument and plea against the bondage of the law they would force upon the Gentile churches, and a defense of his own independent authority as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

Its main points are: (1) Introduction, 1:1-10; (2) Paul's defense of himself, 1:11 to 2:21; (3) freedom from the law and salvation by faith, 3 to 5; (4) exhortations to the Christian life, 6.

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2.) This passage speaks of the responsibility each Christian sustains to those about him; he is to share the burdens and cares of those around him, and in so doing, fulfill the law of Christ which requires us to love one another, and to be ever ready to sustain those in need of our help. The word "burden" in this verse is from the Greek "bara," distress, and is not the same word as that translated burden in verse 5 of this chapter where it is said, "For each man shall bear his own burden." There the Greek word is "photion," one's own individual burden or responsibility. We are, then, to share one another's distresses and cares, but each must assume his own load or burden in life.

### HELPS FOR TEACHERS

Excellent introductions to the epistle of Galatians will be found in Johnson's New Testament with Notes, volume 2, page 163; The Standard Bible Commentary, by McGarvey and Pendleton; Lipscomb on Second Corinthians and Galatians; and in Clarke, Barnes, 'etc. Many interesting problems exist regarding this epistle, and

various views will be found in the works above referred to regarding the place of writing, the exact location of the Galatian churches, etc. The threat of false teachers, the dangers of apostasy, the concern Paul felt for these churches, their fickleness and instability, and a hundred other interesting questions may be raised in the study of this great epistle. The teachers have an excellent opportunity to show the relation of the law to the gospel of Christ, and to develop the doctrine that justification is by faith and not by works of the law, in this lesson.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

#### I. Introduction to the Epistle (Verses 1-5)

"Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead), and all the brethren that are with me, unto the churches of Galatia." Without a moment's delay, Paul passes to one of the main themes of the epistle, his apostleship. We noted under the "Context of the Lesson" that the churches of Galatia were being disturbed by Judaizing teachers who were attempting to force adherence to the law of Moses on the Gentile churches. When the churches pointed out that their father in the gospel, Paul, had taught them that the law had served its purpose and been removed, these false teachers could answer only by impeaching his apostleship-by urging that Paul was not an apostle, that he did not have the right to speak for God, and that they could not depend on what he said regarding the matter. Moreover, they urged that the apostles in Jerusalem had sent them out and that Paul was without authority either from God or the other apostles. Paul therefore plunged immediately into the defense of his right to speak. He was an apostle, not from men (his apostleship was not humanly derived), nor through a man (some may have charged that Paul's only right to speak was received through Ananias who baptized him); but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father. His apostleship was therefore divine both as to agency and source. It did not come by man, its agency was not human; it did not come from man, its source was not human; it was divinely derived, and held independently of all others, even of the other apostles. (See Gal. 2:1-10.) The first verse of Gal. 1 is the text for the next two chapters, in which Paul defends his authority as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

"Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen." This is the usual Pauline salutation. The word "grace" is translated from a Greek word which, in the first century, was used as the Greek greeting; the word "peace" suggests the idea of the word used by Jews as a greeting. The apostolic church was composed of both Jews and Greeks, hence it was fitting to join the two words together, a thing Paul frequently did. Usually attending this apostolic salutation are words of thanksgiving and praise (see Phil. 1:1-5), but they are conspicuous by their absence from this epistle. "This ominous silence on the part of the apostle constitutes a most telling rebuke." (McGarvey.) It indicates that the state of affairs in the Galatian churches was so serious that Paul could find nothing

for which to be grateful on their behalf, and that they had so conducted themselves as to be wholly unworthy of any commendation from him.

## **II. The Galatians on the Verge of Apostasy (Verses 6-10)**

"I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel." This, then, was the condition that obtained among the Galatian churches so displeasing to the apostle: they were suffering themselves to be moved away from the gospel of Christ. It was a matter of wonder to Paul; he could but be surprised that they would so quickly allow themselves to abandon the gospel they had so readily accepted when he preached and worked among them. It could not have been more than two or three years since Paul was last among them; then they had manifested the tenderest regard for him, and would have even plucked out their eyes and given them to him; and now, they have apostatized from the faith, repudiated him as an apostle, and returned to the bondage of the law, all because of false teachers among them. Paul can but marvel at the suddenness and rapidity with which they had made such a radical change. Their fickleness is so pronounced as to be a matter of wonder and surprise to him. The "him that called you" was not Paul, but God. (Gal. 1:5; 5:8; Rom. 8:30; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Thess. 2:12; 5:24; 2 Tim. 1:9.) Paul was only the instrument God used in calling the Galatians to the privileges and blessings of the gospel. Thus, in abandoning Paul, they were abandoning God. Continuing, the apostle said, "Which is not another gospel [this new theory you have espoused], only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." There is not another gospel so that men may choose between them; there is but one; and if the Galatians had been led to believe that this new position they had accepted was simply another gospel equally effective to salvation, he would have them know that that which they had accepted was nothing more than a perversion of the only true gospel. "There is," says the apostle, emphatically "but one gospel," but there are some who would revolutionize you (the word "trouble" has this force) by perverting the gospel, making it an unholy, ineffectual compound of living truth and obsolete Jewish forms. One cannot help wishing that the modern church would awaken to the truth here spoken by the apostle. There is, and must ever be, but one gospel. There is not a separate gospel suited to the tastes and prejudices of each sect or denomination. There is but one gospel, and hence all church divisions result from perversions of that gospel, and all such secessions or revolutionary divisions are but the beguiling of Satan, drawing away disciples "from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3.)

Refuting their claim that they had "another gospel," equally good if not better than that preached by Paul, the apostle shows that it is impossible for another gospel to be preached. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." These perverters of the gospel claimed for their teaching the authority of the older apostles-Peter, James, John, etc. Paul,

in effect; says: "Don't tell me of John; don't tell me of James. If brie of the highest angels were to come, corrupting the truth originally preached, he must be rejected." Paul supposes an impossibility to make his statement as emphatic as possible. It is not to be supposed that an angel from heaven would come preaching another gospel; but Paul wished to put the matter in the strongest light possible, and he tells them that if an angel from heaven should come purporting to bear a message differing from the gospel Paul preached, he was to be immediately rejected. Upon all such perverters of the true gospel; Paul pronounces the anathemas of heaven. The word "anathema" means accursed, devoted to destruction, given over to the judgment of God. It is Paul's way of announcing God's impending judgment upon all who would pervert the gospel of Christ. Answering another charge, Paul says, "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ." In all probability, one of the charges brought against Paul by the Judaizing teachers was that he was a timeserver, deliberately excusing the Gentiles from adherence to the law to make their conversion easier, and thus attract larger numbers of them, thus increasing his own popularity. His questions are designed to show the utter falsity of such a charge. Is he now pleasing men by his present course? Was not his entire past life as a Christian a refutation of this charge? Had he not always disregarded flesh and blood in reaching decisions affecting his soul's welfare? Truly, a falser charge could not have been lodged against him.

### **III. Paul Questions the Galatians Severely (Gal. 3:1-5)**

"O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?" The Galatians were people of intelligence; and that they should allow themselves to be led so far away from the gospel of Christ as virtually to deny the crucifixion of Christ was inexplicable; and Paul wonders if some sort of bewitching spell had been wrought on them by the Judaizing teachers. When Paul had first preached the gospel among them, he had set forth Christ, and his crucifixion; now, to deny the gospel of salvation, and return to the deeds of the law in search of justification, was to deny the effects of Christ's death on the cross, and hence, the efficacy of the crucifixion. This, the Galatians were doing by repudiating the gospel Paul preached. To test further their present position, he asks, "This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" When I preached among you, God approved and seconded my labor by imparting the Spirit to you in the miraculous power through the laying on of my hands. Now, did you receive the Spirit, the reception of which accredited my preaching among you by keeping the law which these Jewish perverters are trying to force on you, or by hearing and believing the gospel which I preach? Only one answer was possible, and the answer clearly showed that God was with the apostle, and not with his enemies. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh? Did ye suffer so many things in vain? if it be indeed in vain." This was designed to show them that they were retrogressing instead of progressing in the gospel. At first, they had accepted the gospel, received the Spirit, and had obtained the graces, of Christianity; now,

they were on the verge of abandoning all of this, and returning to the law. Furthermore, this rendered their sufferings for the gospel of Christ, endured in the beginning of their obedience, in vain. They had suffered for espousing Christianity. Now to repudiate that for which they had suffered was to have suffered in vain. This they might have escaped entirely had they never accepted Christianity. Their course was therefore utterly indefensible. Continuing, the apostle asks, "He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" The "he" of this passage was not Paul, but God. The idea is, does God, who works miracles among you, do it as a result of your obedience to the law, or because you have heard the gospel of Christ, and obeyed it? They were well aware that God's miraculous powers were manifested among them only after Paul had preached the gospel in those parts. They, therefore, were under no illusions regarding the agency through which they had received the Spirit. To abandon the gospel Paul preached was therefore to repudiate the system of religion through which they had received the Spirit, the reception of which confirmed the divine origin of Christianity. This is a practical lesson, and one greatly needed today. We should ever be on our guard against false teachers who would lead us away from the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. We should try the spirits to see whether they are of God, for "many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1.)

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The context of the lesson.  
Main points of the Galatian epistle.  
Golden Text explained.  
Paul's introduction; proof his apostleship is divine.  
Condition of Galatian churches and cause thereof.  
Paul's discussion of another gospel.  
Paul questions the Galatians.  
Importance of present lesson.

### Lesson IV—October 27, 1946

#### THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

**Eph. 6-10-22**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Eph. 4:25-32.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22, 23.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

October	21.	M	Apollos at Ephesus (Acts 18:24-26)
October	22.	T	Paul Begins at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7)
October	23.	W	Paul Preaches at Ephesus (Acts 19:8-20)
October	24.	T	. . . . . The Ephesian Mob (Acts 19:23-34)
October	25.	F	Paul Writes the Church at Ephesus (Eph. 1:1-14)
October	26.	S	Paul's Address to the Ephesian Elders (Acts 20:17-35)
October	27.	S	Paul Fighting Wild Beasts (1 Cor. 15:29-34)

**Historical Background**

TIME.—A.D. 62.

PLACES.—Rome and Ephesus.

PERSONS.—Paul and the Ephesian church.

**Lesson Text**

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

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.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

22 Whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Paul Exhorts the Ephesians to Be Strong in the Lord (Verse 10).
- II. The Armor of the Christian Soldier Described (Verses 11-17).
- III. Paul Asks the Ephesian Brethren to Pray for Him (Verses 18-20).
- IV. Tychicus, "Beloved Brother and Faithful Minister," Sent (Verses 21, 22).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

There are three sources of information touching the church in Ephesus, viz., Acts of Apostles (Acts 18:19-21; 19; 20:18-38); the book of Ephesians (Eph. 1-6); and letters to the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 2:1-7.) About the close of Paul's second missionary tour, he paused briefly there (Acts 18:19-21), and preached in the Jewish synagogue. Leaving Priscilla and Aquila there to continue the work he had begun, he returned on his third missionary tour' (Acts 19:1), and spent about three years there (Acts 20:31), preaching the gospel with much success. The first Corinthian epistle was written during his sojourn in Ephesus. (1 Cor. 16:8, 9.) Timothy labored with the church for a time (1 Tim. 1:3), and it is believed that John the apostle spent the closing years of his life here. It is generally believed that the epistle to the Ephesians was written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome (Eph. 6:20), and therefore about A.D. 62 Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon were written about the same time. Its main points may be outlined as follows: (1) Introduction, salutation, and thanksgiving, 1; (2) the privileges and duties of the Christian life, 2; (3) how Paul obtained his knowledge

of the gospel and prayer for his readers, 3; (4) practical exhortations, 4 to 6.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

"The Church in Ephesus" has the unique distinction of having letters addressed to it by the two apostles, Paul and John. Our study today deals with Paul's letter to the church; but we should examine briefly the letter to the church in Ephesus, found in Rev. 2:1-7. While the letter to Ephesus, found in Revelation, is a portion of John's book and may be technically attributed to him, it is, in fact, a letter from the Lord. (See Rev. 1:11.)

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22, 23.) For the complete statement of the exaltation of Christ, see Eph. 1:20-23. Christ is seated at God's right hand. This speaks of the glory and dignity that are now his. He is exalted above every creature, and is far above all principality, power, and might, and dominion. (1) All things have been put under his feet; (2) he is head over all things; (3) he is head over all things to the church; (4) and the church is his body. The object of this statement is, therefore, to describe the glory and honor that now belong to Christ. These are (1) his resurrection; (2) his exaltation at God's right hand; (3) his supreme dominion; (4) his headship to the church. We have here a definition of what the church is. It is his body. All spiritual blessings are in the body of Christ, including redemption, forgiveness, salvation, etc. (Col. 1:13, 14.) But to be in his body is to be in the church. Therefore, forgiveness, redemption, in fact, all spiritual blessings may be received only in the church. This passage teaches us the essentiality of the church of our Lord.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

An excellent discussion of "The Church in Ephesus" will be found in "The New Testament Church"; in the Introduction to the Epistle of Ephesians, in Johnson's New Testament with Notes, Vol. 2, page 185; and in the numerous commentaries on this apostolic epistle. The historical background of the Ephesian church found in Acts should be carefully studied and discussed in the classes.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **1. Paul Exhorts the Ephesians to Be Strong in the Lord (Verse 10)**

"Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might." Numerous exhortations have been given touching various phases of the Christian life; the apostle now sums up by an admonition to manifest strength in all the affairs of life. For an account of the exhortations just given, see the earlier verses of Eph. 6. The verse above is the last of the series now to be given. They are engaged in a fearful warfare. The fainthearted and cowardly will despair and surrender. Hence, they must manifest strength; be ever on their guard against any indication of weakness; and equip themselves



fully for the mighty contest in which they are engaged. Note that they are to be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. No other source can provide the strength necessary to sustain in the mighty conflict of life. Those who rely on their own weak arm of flesh always fail.

## **II. The Armor of the Christian Soldier Described (Verses 11-17)**

"Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 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." At the time these words were penned, Paul was a prisoner of the Roman government, and constantly under guard of Roman soldiers. It is possible that these words were prompted by the fact that he was constantly in the presence of soldiers. The ancient soldier was not ready for battle until he had put his armor on; hence, Paul urges the Ephesians to put on the "whole armor of God," in order that they may be able successfully to withstand the "wiles" (artifices, stratagems, tricks) of the devil. Satan uses many devices (2 Cor. 2:11), and it is necessary for one to be fully armed at all times to be able to resist him. (James 4:7.) This armor was not only designed for protection, but, as we shall later see, provided for offensive efforts as well. The apostle points out that our warfare is not against flesh and blood (individuals such as we can always see), but principalities, powers, world rulers of this darkness, and spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places. These terms describe different ranks of evil spirits who, in some way, aid Satan in the seduction of the Lord's people. Seeing that our enemies are of such nature, Paul again admonishes that the "whole armor of God" be taken up and put on. The armor itself is described. "Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." The armor here described is that of the Roman soldier, a familiar figure in Paul's day. He wore a girdle, breastplate, shoes with iron nails, a helmet to protect his head, and carried a shield on his arm which was held in front of his body. His weapon was the sword. The Romans, contrary to the other nations of antiquity, used the sword instead of the spear with which to fight, and with this weapon, conquered the world. These parts of the Roman armor are successively applied to the weapons with which the Christian is to wage his warfare—a warfare in which his enemies are not visible, but invisible, principalities, and powers, and world rulers of the darkness. With such enemies to fight, the Christian's armor is not made of carnal weapons, "for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds)." (2 Cor. 10:3, 4.) The Christian is admonished to "stand therefore . . ."

It is interesting to note the number of times the apostle admonished the Ephesians to "stand." Verse 11: "Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand." Verse 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." Verse 14: "Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth." There is no provision made for retreating in the army of the Lord. Christians who retreat surrender, in so doing, to the enemy. It should be noted that each item of the Christian's armor provides for defensive and offensive warfare. There is no protection for the Christian soldier's rear! The various parts of the Christian's armor and their uses are set forth as follows: (1) The girdle of truth. The girdle helped to keep the armor in place and supported the sword. So the truth holds the Christian's armor and supports the sword of the Spirit. He is helpless who attempts to fight without truth. (2) Breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate was worn over the lungs and heart. Without the breastplate of righteousness (obedience to God's commandments), we are sure to suffer harm. (3) Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. (Isa. 52:7.) (4) The shield of faith. The Roman shield was four and a half feet long and protected the whole body. So faith, the faith that fully trusts in God, never doubts, is the best of all defenses. It will effectively quench, stop, and put out all doubts, fears, and forebodings that may arise. Satan has a quiver full of "fiery arts," which he continually hurls at the Lord's faithful. But with the shield of faith, they can always stop them and make them fall harmlessly at their feet. (5) The helmet of salvation. The Roman soldier wore over his head a metal cap to guard it from blows, called a helmet. Ours is the helmet of salvation. The consciousness that we are saved and that Satan cannot harm us enables us to maintain courage in the mighty conflict. (6) The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The armor thus far given is for defensive purposes; here, however, we are given the weapon with which the Christian is to storm the redoubts of Satan himself. It is the word of God. Its characteristics are set forth in Heb. 4:12: "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." Jesus resisted Satan on the mount of temptation with this sword (Matt. 4:1-12), and Peter, Stephen, and Paul used it with telling effect on numerous occasions. We should always be careful to carry the full armor of the Christian with us on all occasions. We will suffer defeat if we do not.

### **III. Paul Asks the Ephesian Brethren to Pray for Him (Verses 18-20)**

"With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints, 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, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." Christians are to pray at all seasons. Those who are conscious of the fact that they are locked in battle with such deadly and unscrupulous foes as those

above described will constantly feel the need of calling upon the Lord for his help. Our supplications are not only to be for ourselves, but for others, that they too may survive the mighty conflict, and come forth conquerors. Paul, especially, felt a need for the prayers of the brethren. He wanted them to pray for him that he might open his mouth boldly, declare the mystery of the gospel, and speak boldly as he ought to speak. This is truly a revealing and illuminating statement. It shows that even the great apostle to the Gentiles felt the need of the prayers of the brethren that he would never become fainthearted, but would always manifest the courage and determination of a faithful soldier of the Lord. Moreover, it shows that Paul believed in the efficacy of prayer, a thing some brethren, we are pained to say, do not, these days. Paul would not have asked the brethren to pray for him if he had felt that all things work according to immutable and unchangeable law, and that prayer cannot and will not change the mind of God. He subscribed to no such fatalistic doctrine. Paul believed in the efficacy of prayer; and so should we. See Eph. 1:9 and 3:9 for Paul's explanation of the "mystery of the gospel." Paul felt himself to be an "ambassador in chains." An ambassador is sent to a foreign court to represent the king; so Paul, though in chains, felt that he was in Rome for the purpose of representing his king, the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **IV. Tychicus, "Beloved Brother and Faithful Minister," Sent (Verses 21, 22)**

"But that ye also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our state. and that he may comfort your hearts." Paul, it will be remembered, was a prisoner in Rome at this time. He was concerned about the churches among whom he had labored, and knew that they were worried about his imprisonment. He purposed therefore to send to them Tychicus, whom he describes as a "beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord," to inform them of his state and how things are with him at present. Instead of the church writing to Paul and encouraging him, Paul writes to the church and makes provision to keep them from discouragement. We know little about this man Tychicus, other than what Paul tells us here. He is named in Acts 20:4. (See also Col. 4:7; Tit. 3:12; 2 Tim. 4:12.) In all probability, he carried the letter to the Ephesians when he went to see them to give them the report on Paul. We need no further commendation than that here given. A "faithful minister" describes his labors; "beloved brother," Paul's personal feeling for him. No higher encomium can be paid a man than that given by Paul to Tychicus. This is a far cry from the growing tendency to honor men by conferring degrees on them as is done by some today. No degree, whether earned or honorary, could confer upon one such honor as that described in these words, a "beloved brother and faithful minister."

#### **POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

Context of the lesson.

Historical background of Ephesians.

History of the planting of the church in Ephesus from Acts.  
 Brief discussion. of the letter to the church in Ephesus and Revelation.  
 Outline of Ephesians.  
 Meaning of the Golden Text.  
 Strength enjoined on the Ephesians.  
 Description of the Christian armor.  
 Why Paul wanted the prayers of the brethren.  
 Lessons derived from this.  
 Tychicus described and mission to Ephesus explained.

### Lesson V—November 3, 1946

#### THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI Phil. 1:1-10; 2:12-18

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 4:8-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

October	28.	M	First Convert at Philippi (Acts 16:11-15)
October	29.	T	Philippian Jailer Converted (Acts 16:19-35)
October	30.	W	Paul Writes to the Church in Philippi (Phil. 1:1-11)
October	31.	T	A Church Exhorted (Phil 2:12-18)
November	1.	F	Exhorted to Rejoice (Phil. 4:1-7)
November	2.	S	Program for Thinking (Phil. 4:8, 9)
November	3.	S	Church at Philippi Helps Paul (Phil. 4:10-20)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 62.

PLACES.—Rome and Philippi.

PERSONS.—Paul and the Philippian church.

#### Lesson Text

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you,

4 Always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy,

5 For your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ:

7 Even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as, both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace.

8 For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment;

10 So that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ.

12 So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

13 For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and questionings;

15 That ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world,

18 Holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain neither labor in vain.

17 Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all:

18 And in the same manner do ye also joy, and rejoice with me.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Introduction, Salutation, and Thanksgiving (Verses 1-3).
- II. Paul's Regard for the Church in Philippi (Verses 4-10).
- III. Philippians Commanded to Work Out Their Salvation (Phil. 2:12).
- IV. Exhorted to Avoid Murmurings and to Hold Forth the Word of Life (Verses 13-18).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The church at Philippi was established by Paul and his associates on the second missionary tour. For an account of Paul's work in Philippi, see Lesson X, Third Quarter, entitled, "Paul Begins His Second Missionary Journey." Crossing from Troas, where he had the vision and heard the Macedonian call, Paul and his company landed at Neapolis and went immediately inland nine miles to Philippi, a Roman colony and the chief city of those parts. There they preached to the women who had gathered near the riverside for prayer, cast the spirit of divination out of the afflicted damsel, suffered imprisonment, were miraculously released by an earthquake, converted the jailer and his family, and so planted the cause of Christ in that city. (See Acts 16:11-40.) The epistle to the Philippians was written from Rome, by Paul, in A.D. 62. That he was a prisoner, in Rome, is clear from numerous allusions in the letter, viz., the mention of his bonds (1:12); the praetorian guard (1:12); Caesar's household (4:22). See also 1:25; 2:24. The letter differs from Paul's other writings in that it contains less logical reasoning and more of the warmth of the heart. It is the only one of Paul's epistles that does not contain rebukes and reprimands. Unless there is an implied rebuke in 4:2, there is none to be found in the entire epistle. Paul loved the Philippian church. These brethren contributed at various times to his needs (4:15, 16); and when they heard of his imprisonment in Rome, they sent one of their members, Epaphroditus by name, to Rome with a gift for the apostle. (See Phil. 2:25; 4:10-18.) Epaphroditus' return to Philippi seems to have afforded the occasion for the letter. Its chief points are: (1) Salutation and thanksgiving, 1:1-12; (2) statement as to Paul's condition, 1:12-30; (3) exhortations, 2:1-18; (4) Paul's plans for the future, 2:19-30; (5) final exhortations, 4.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

It is the aim of these lessons "to get a view of the church in its local or congregational sense as presented by the Holy Spirit in the epistles of the New Testament, and to learn how God wants his churches to work and worship today," and we are studying the church in Philippi to that end today. Paul suffered much in

Philippi and felt very near to the saints in that city. It is an epistle of joy, the words "joy," "rejoice," etc., occurring often.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14.) In the preceding verses of the third chapter of Philippians, Paul had disavowed any claim to attainment of perfection in this life, saying, "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:12-14.) The image is of one so eager for what is before him that he runs with hands and body stretched forth to receive it. With his eye on the goal, he allows nothing to interfere with the race he is running. The prize for which he was striving was the resurrection from the dead (verse 11).

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The tender graces of Christianity are set forth clearly and at length in the book of Philippians. It is a letter of cheer and enthusiasm in the face of formidable difficulties. It is a demonstration of what Christianity can do for one amidst the trials and obstacles of life. There are several outstanding characteristics of the church in Philippi that should be noted and discussed (1) The prominence of women; (2) abounding joy of the epistle; (3) victory over opposition; (4) liberality of the church; (5) personal attachment that obtained between Paul and the church. Teachers interested in further research in the Philippian epistle will find ample material for such study in the introductions to the letter in the various commentaries on Philippians.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Introduction, Salutation, and Thanksgiving (Verses 1-3)**

"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Timothy was in Rome at the time Paul wrote this letter, and Paul joins him with himself in the salutation of the letter. For Paul's regard for Timothy, see Phil. 2:19-23. The letter is addressed to the "saints in Christ Jesus" Every Christian is a saint in the New Testament sense. The Catholic practice of designating only certain ones as saints finds no precedent in the scriptures. The word "saint" suggests one's relationship to the world, i.e., that he has separated himself from it, and is henceforth living a holy life. Every person in Christ is a saint. Also addressed are the "bishops and deacons." The word "bishop" means an overseer; see Acts 20:28. "Elders" and "bishops" are the same, only different names are used for the same office. The Ephesian "elders" are called bishops, thus indicating that the two terms refer to the same group of men in the church. (See Acts 20:17, 28, R. V.) Also in Tit. 1:5, 7, an elder is called

a bishop. For information touching the duties and qualifications of deacons, see 1 Tim. 3:8. See also the lesson for July 28, in this commentary, "The Church Meeting an Emergency," for an account of the appointment of the first deacons. The word "deacon" simply means a servant.

The usual Pauline apostolic salutation follows next, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." See the lesson for October 6, in this series, for a discussion of the significance of these terms.

"I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you." This indicates to us the esteem in which Paul regarded the church in Philippi. Their devotion to the cause of Christ, their faith and fidelity in the face of great difficulties, and their unwavering zeal in the Lord's work were such as to create in Paul feelings of thanksgiving whenever occasion was provided for him to think of them. This is an ideal toward which every congregation should aspire. These brethren were so faithful that Paul thanked God for them when he thought of them. We should so live today that when our friends think of us they will thank God for us.

## **II. Paul's Regard for the Church in Philippi (Verses 4-10)**

Having said that he thanked God on every remembrance of the Philippian church, the apostle continues to express his high regard for them as follows, "always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy, for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." Even amid the dark hours of imprisonment and future uncertainty, Paul felt profoundly grateful for his friends in the Philippian church. "How glorious a faith which led him always, even in the darkest hour, to see the hand of God present in blessing." (Johnson.) The church in Philippi had contributed to Paul's support from time to time ever since he was among them, and for this fellowship he was most thankful. The word "fellowship" means joint participation, partnership; and Paul sets forth the fact that the Philippians had made themselves partners of his by contributing to his needs in the spread of the gospel. Those who cannot themselves preach the gospel can participate in such preaching and receive the reward that belongs to those who actually preach it by contributing of their means and making it possible for others to preach it. This the Philippians had done "from the first day until now." (See Phil. 2:25; 4:10, 18 for illustrations of this.)

Moreover, Paul was confident that the good work which had begun in them when first the gospel was preached to them and they had obeyed it would be continued, and that the Lord would finish it unto the day of Jesus Christ. It was not out of order for him to think this, he points out, for he says, "Even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as, both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace." Their faithfulness had been so pronounced that it was deeply engraven on Paul's heart. By sympathizing with Paul, praying for him, contributing to his needs, and otherwise sustaining him, they became partakers with him of

grace. In addition to this, they also suffered persecution (1:28-30). Continuing his expression of regard for these brethren, Paul says, "For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus." The apostle, almost to the point of redundancy, expresses regard for the Philippian church. Note: (1) "I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you"; (2) "always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy"; (3) "even as it is right for me to be thus minded on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart"; (4) "God is my witness, how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus"; truly an array of imposing statements indicating how greatly the apostle esteemed the church in Philippi and how much he loved them.

### **III. Philippians Commanded to Work Out Their Salvation (Phil. 2:12)**

Exhorting them to further faithfulness, Paul reminds them that he is praying for them. "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ." Notwithstanding their present attainments, Paul wanted them to abound more and more in love, not for him, but for the Lord, in order that with increase of love and knowledge theirs would be a wiser judgment, enabling them to "approve the things that are excellent," and be sincere and without offense to any. Only by the exercise of the wisdom that is from above (James 1:5, 6; 3:17) can we acquire the ability to distinguish between the things that are right and those that are wrong. This wisdom Paul desired the Philippian brethren to possess in abundance.

### **IV. Exhorted to Avoid Murmurings and to Hold Forth the Word of Life (Verses 13-18)**

"So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." The Philippians' history was one of unwavering fidelity to the cause of Christ. They had worked, not only in Paul's presence when they would be supposed if at all to show industry, but even more so, if possible, in his absence. This is a commendation of the highest type. It is not difficult to find fair-weather workers in the Lord's vineyard. Those who are willing to work at all times and under all circumstances are fewer in number. The Philippians were of this latter class. They are admonished "to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." While only God can save us, yet to be saved we must work God's plan, hence the many passages suggestive of man's responsibility in effecting his own salvation, viz., "Save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2:40); "Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4:16); etc. Note, too, that God works in us "for his good pleasure." God works in us by setting forth incentives that lead us to obedience, and threats to warn us of disobedience.



The promise of reward and the threat of final punishment are incentives which the Lord uses to work in people for his own "good will and pleasure." Continuing his exhortation, the apostle says, "Do all things without murmurings and questionings: that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain neither labor in vain." "Murmurings" and "questionings" are practices of those who are of the world; hence, children of God, who are called out of the world into the church, must not engage in such. They are the "children of God," thus have a reputation to maintain before the world, and must not, therefore, engage in the world's practices. Moreover, they are to shine as lights, reflecting the light of Christ's glory to the world. This passage speaks of the influence children of God are to wield before their fellows. The world looks not to the New Testament to determine its estimate of Christianity; it rather reads the lives of those who profess it to see what it is like. Christians frequently allow their reflectors to become dim and discolored and thus shed only a feeble-light about them. All such are highly displeasing to the Father. (See Matt. 5:16.)

Passing from a discussion of the manner of life that should characterize the Philippians, the apostle next alludes to his future, saying, "Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all: and in the same manner do ye also joy, and rejoice with me." The meaning of this is, "If it becomes necessary for me to die because of the fact that I have preached the gospel and manifested loyalty to the Lord; I shall not regret it, because it will be a sacrifice to your faith; yea, I will even rejoice, if so be the Lord wills it. And, my confidence in you is such that I know you will entertain the same joy and rejoicing for me, for you, too, will recognize the hand of God in it, and will, with me, gladly acquiesce in his will." We can but be amazed at the tremendous faith and courage manifested in the face of the most appalling difficulties by the great apostle to the Gentiles. Of all the men who have lived on the earth, with the exception of the Lord, Paul is truly the greatest. In courage, determination, faith, and fidelity he is unequalled.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS.

Context of the lesson.  
Chief points of the letter.  
Meaning of the Golden Text.  
Outstanding characteristics of the church in Philippi.  
Introduction, salutation, and thanksgiving.  
Various statements showing Paul's regard for this church.  
Meaning of "work out your own salvation"  
Things Philippians were exhorted to avoid.  
Paul's feelings toward the future.

**Lesson VI—November 10, 1946****THE CHURCH AT COLOSSE .  
Col. 1:18-24; 3:12-17**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Col. 3:5-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth." (Col. 3:2.)

**Helps for Lesson Study  
Daily Bible Readings**

November	4.	M	Paul Writes to the Church (Col. 1:1-8)
November	5.	T	Paul Exalts Christ (Col. 1:13-23)
November	6.	W	Paul's Interest in the Church (Col. 2:1-6)
November	7.	T	Warnings Against Errors (Col. 2:8-15)
November	8.	F	Seeking Spiritual Things (Col. 3:1-4)
November	9.	S	. Praising God (Col. 3:12-17)
November	10.	S	Paul's Affairs Made Known (Col. 4:7-17)

**Historical Background**

TIME.—A.D. 62.

PLACES.—Rome and Colosse.

PERSONS.—Paul and the Colossian church.

**Lesson Text**

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

19 For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell;

20 And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.

21 And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works,

22 Yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before him:

23 If so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven whereof I Paul was made a minister.

24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for our sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.

12 Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye:

14 And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God.

17 And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

I. Christ's Relationship to the Church (Verses 18, 19).

II. Peace Through the Blood of the Cross (Verses 20-23) .

III. The Gospel Paul Preached (Verse 24).

IV. Various Exhortations to the Colossian Church (Col. 3:12-17).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The church in Colosse was not founded by Paul, and it is unlikely that he ever visited there. (Col. 2:1.) There is, therefore, a marked difference in the manner in which Paul addresses this church and that which characterizes his address to the churches with whose membership he was well acquainted. It is possible that the church was founded by some of Paul's associates or converts from Ephesus, which lay to the west of Colosse. Epaphras was a minister of the Colossian church, and it is possible that he may have established the church. It is likely that Epaphras was one of Paul's converts, and he was assuredly working under Paul's general supervision; and, feeling responsible for their welfare, Paul penned the letter we are to consider briefly today. The letter was written from Rome, A.D. 62, and carried to Colosse by Tychicus, who also carried the letter to the Ephesians. (Eph. 6:21.) Serious trouble was brewing in the Colossian church at this time. Judaizers, men seeking to force on the Gentiles the law of Moses, were busy at work in those parts; and others were attempting to mix some elements of pagan philosophy such as the worshiping of angels, the practice of asceticism, etc., with Christianity. Paul meets these errors by emphasizing the liberty we enjoy in Christ (2:16, 17; 3:10, 11), by exalting Christ to an equality with God (2:9), and showing that Christ is head of all creation, and that all things consist or hold together in him (1:1-19). In no other book of the New Testament is the person of Christ so clearly set forth and his divine rank and power more surely asserted and established.

The chief points of the epistle are: (1) Salutation and thanksgiving, 1:1-15; (2) the supremacy of Christ, 1:16-20; (3) warnings against false teachings, 2; (4) exhortations, 3, 4.

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth." (Col. 3:2.) In the first verse of the chapter, the apostle alludes to the resurrection from the baptismal grave by saying, "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God." Then follows the exhortation to "set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth." As Christ has ascended, the Christian's thoughts should likewise ascend; he should center them on the things that are high and noble, rather than on those which are low and base.

### HELPS FOR TEACHERS

The historical background, such as origin and size of the city of Colosse, its geographical background, and the clash of pagan philosophy with the gospel there, may be gleaned from the various introductions to the epistle in the commentaries thereon. Clarke, Barnes, Johnson, etc., will supply all the material needed for such a study. Teachers should form the habit of reading extensively for the purpose of having supplementary material to present to their classes. They should have access to one or more good Bible dictionaries, a concordance, preferably Young's or Strong's, though Cruden's will suffice, and several commentaries on the books of the Bible. Johnson's New Testament with Notes is an excellent brief treatment;

McGarvey's commentaries are more exhaustive, though written only of a few New Testament letters; while Barnes, Clarke, Meyer, The Expositor's Greek Testament, and many others are available for those who can read with discernment.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

### I. Christ's Relationship to the Church (Verses 18, 19)

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell." The following facts should be carefully noted: (1) Christ is the head of the body; (2) the body is the church; (3) hence, Christ is the head of the church. In him alone is vested the right of legislating for his church; this right has never been vouchsafed to any council, conclave, convention, or synod; to him alone must we look for direction and guidance in all things religious. Men have no right to meet in solemn conclave and presumptuously pass laws governing and regulating the religious activities of people. Any effort at such is a usurpation of powers, an officious intermeddling with the will and law of God. Christ is pre-eminent in the church. It is his spiritual body, and he is its sole head. The claim of the pope of Rome to be the head of the church is a blasphemous falsehood. To follow any man in matters religious will lead inevitably to the ruin of the soul. Christ's relationship to the church is a vital and fundamental matter, and should be recognized and defended by every member of his church. The first point, therefore, in Paul's declaration of Christ's relationship to the church is his headship. The second is his pre-eminence and precedence in point of time. "Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead." The new creation began with him and from him. He is the first of all in time. Moreover, he is the "firstborn from the dead," i.e., he first conquered death; and he did this not for himself alone, but for all those who sleep in him. Said Paul to the Corinthian church, "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep." (1 Cor. 15:20.) He also said, "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. 4:13, 14.) Christ was the "firstborn," and his own resurrection is a pledge and token of the resurrection of all. Christ is head of the church and the first of those from the dead to die no more, and this Paul introduces to show the pre-eminence and Lordship of Christ. It should be remembered that it was his design to set forth the person of Jesus, and show his relationship to the world, the church, and to powers and heavenly beings. Col. 1:13-15 portrays Christ as the center and source of creation. Verses 18-20 show him to be head of the spiritual creation. Verse 19 shows his completeness in all things, "In him should all the fulness dwell." This means that all power and blessing designed for men may be found only in Christ. Christ is the summation of God's goodness to man. All spiritual blessings are in him (Eph. 1:3); all the promises of God are in him (2 Cor. 1:20); in fact, children of God are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power. But to

be in Christ is to be in his body; and to be in his body is to be in the church; hence, every blessing available to man may be had only in the church.

## **II. Peace Through the Blood of the Cross (Verses 20-23)**

And "having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens." Christ came to make peace between Jew and Gentile, and this he did by abolishing the law which had long stood as a barrier between them. This is clearly shown by the apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians, "Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in -the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. (Eph. 2:11-16.) One purpose achieved, therefore, in the death of Christ was the destruction of the barrier between peoples, and the bringing together of divergent elements into one whole. This one body is the church. All of this was done, the apostle tells us, in order that by him he might reconcile all things unto himself. These blessings, we repeat, were such as to bring the Gentiles into favor with God, and make available to them the promises of the gospel. "And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before him." In a state of estrangement from God before conversion, the death of Christ made it possible for them to become reconciled by setting forth conditions acceptable to God which, when performed, made them pleasing in his sight. It should be noted that here and throughout the scripture wherever reconciliation is mentioned, it is always man who is to be reconciled to God. God is and always has been holy, hence needs no reconciliation. Man is the estranged creature, and he it is who must return to his former state. In spite of this obvious fact, the creeds of men uniformly represent God as being reconciled to man. See, for example, the Methodist Discipline. Compare 2 Cor. 5:18-20. Reconciliation works to make men "holy and without blemish and unreprouable" in God's sight by cleansing them from sin, lifting them to a higher plane, and requiring a life of godliness and holiness. Their continued favor with God is conditional. "If so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereunto I Paul was made a minister" This shows that their continued acceptance with God depends on their maintaining a life of faithfulness and fidelity. God's promises to man with reference to the future blessings are always conditional in their nature. Men err greatly in teaching the doctrine of the impossibility of apos-

tasy. David said to Solomon, his son, "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; for Jehovah searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. It thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever." (1 Chron. 28:9.)

### III. The Gospel Paul Preached (Verse 24)

". . . the hope of the gospel . . . whereof I Paul was made a minister. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church; whereof I was made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which was given me to you-ward, to fulfil the word of God." Paul was suffering for the hope of the gospel of Christ. He looked upon his suffering as in some sense at least a fellowship in the sufferings of Christ, and rejoiced to be able to suffer for this reason. We must have fellowship in the sufferings of Christ. (See 1 Pet. 4:13.) Not only do we suffer with Christ; but when his disciples suffer, he suffers with them. (Acts 9:4.) Hence, affliction suffered for Christ may be called his afflictions. And, however much we may suffer here, we are still behind the sufferings of Christ.

The apostle alludes to the "dispensation of God," which made him a minister of Jesus Christ. See Acts 22:14, 15 for Paul's call into the ministry of Christ. This call was to enable him to preach the word of God which hitherto had been a mystery, "even the mystery which hath been hid for ages and generations: but now hath it been manifested to his saints, to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." We learn here that Paul was called to preach the word of God, to preach that which had been a mystery for ages and generations. This mystery Paul explains in Eph. 3:1-6, "For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles,-if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward; how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ; which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."

In preaching this mystery, Paul followed the following pattern: He preached Christ, Christ in you, Christ in you the hope of glory, warning every man, teaching every man in all wisdom, that every man might be presented perfect in Christ Jesus, . . . which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving. according to his working, which worketh in me mightily. There is an excellent sermon outline in this which might be entitled, "The Sum and Substance of Paul's Preaching." It would run something like this: (1) Introduction: An Exposition of Col. 1:27, 28. (2) Discus-

sion: What Paul Preached—(a) Christ; (b) Christ in you (thus governing the life); (3) Christ in you, the hope of glory (the only means of salvation). (3) The Manner in Which Paul Preached: (a) Warning every man (no softness or compromise here); (b) instructing every man (importance of instruction noted). (4) Design of Paul's Preaching: (a) To present every man perfect in Christ Jesus (noting significance of the term "perfect" in the scriptures). (5) Objects of Paul's Preaching: (a) Every man (of every race). Such preaching by such a preacher as was Paul could not fail to produce tremendous results.

#### **IV. Various Exhortations to the Colossian Church (Col. 3:12-17)**

"Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." The apostle has just shown in the earlier verses of this chapter that in Christ there are no racial or fleshly distinctions; but that all are one in Christ Jesus. In view of this fact, as a chosen, holy, and elect nation of people, Christians should put on the characteristics enumerated, viz., compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, and forbearance, at the same time manifesting a forgiving spirit, forgiving others even as they have been forgiven by Christ. Above all else, love is enjoined, not because it is more important than the others, but because if it reigns in the heart, it will rule the life and produce all the other traits and characteristics of Christianity. Moreover, Christians are to "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful." Jew and Gentile, men of every race are called into one body, the church; there they are to let the peace of Christ rule in the heart and produce its fruit in the life. Children of God are peacemakers (Matt. 5:9); they have been called to peace, and must maintain it. They can follow their great leader and guide in no other way.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, - singing with grace in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." "The word of Christ" is simply the preaching of Christ, and this word Paul admonishes the Colossians to let dwell in them richly. Way's translation of this has an impressive turn: "May the word Messiah speak unto you have in your hearts in all its wealth its home." The parallel passage in Eph. 5:18, 19 reads, "And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." One passage is, therefore, a commentary on the other. To be "filled with the Spirit" in Eph. 5:18 is evidently to allow "the word of Christ" to dwell in one "richly." The kind of praise the Lord desires is here set forth. In both of these passages, Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:18, 19, it will be observed that singing is enjoined; the praise therefore is that which

is to be made with the lips. Instrumental music is thus excluded. As a matter of fact, instrumental music is without authorization in the New Testament; Jesus nowhere authorized it; no apostle sanctioned it; no New Testament writer commanded it; no apostolic church practiced it. Children of God must therefore not use it.

We have here an inspired statement governing acts of worship to be rendered to God, "Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord." This is a comprehensive statement: (1) In word, what we say; (2) in deed, what we do; hence, all that is said or done in matters religious is to be in the name of Christ. An act performed in the name of Christ is simply an act done by his authority; there is but one way in which one can act in the name of another, that is by being authorized to do so. We must therefore do only that which the Lord has authorized; for anything else is not in his name, and therefore not permissible. To ignore this and act without his authority is to go beyond that which is written, and John said, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God." (2 John 9.) Instrumental music is not in the teaching of Christ; to use it one must go beyond that which he has said; and to do so is to bring upon one's self the condemnation of this passage. To please the Lord, we must be governed by this passage in all that we do in worship to him. All other worship is vain. (See Matt. 15:9.)

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The outline of the lesson.  
 The context of the lesson.  
 Chief points of the Colossian epistle.  
 Meaning of the Golden Text.  
 The church Christ's body.  
 Christ head of the church and what this involves.  
 Meaning of "firstborn from the dead"  
 Peace through his blood and what this includes.  
 Conditionality of God's promises.  
 The gospel Paul preached.  
 Paul's mystery.  
 Sum and substance of Paul's preaching.  
 Various exhortations to the Colossians.  
 Meaning of "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."  
 Inspiring statement governing acts of worship and what involved.

### Lesson VII—November 17, 1946

#### THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA

Acts 17:1-3; 1 Thess. 1:1-10

DEVOTIONAL READING.—2 Thess. 2:13-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be at peace among yourselves." (1 Thess. 5:13b.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

November	11.	M
November	12.	T

Paul in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-11)  
 Oppositions in Thessalonica (Acts 17:10-15)



November	13.	W	Paul's First Letter (1 Thess. 1:1-10)
November	14.	T	Paul's Prayer for the Church (1 Thess. 3:11-13)
November	15.	F	Second Coming of Christ (1 Thess. 4:13-18)
November	16.	S	Paul's Second Letter (2 Thess. 1:1-12)
November	17.	S	Commanded to Work (2 Thess. 3:6-15)

### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 50 or 51.

PLACE.—Thessalonica.

PERSONS.—Paul and the Thessalonian church.

### Lesson Text

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 And Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures.

3 Opening and alleging that it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ.

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election,

5 How that our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; even as ye know what manner of men we showed ourselves toward you for your sake.

6 And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit;

7 So that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia.

8 For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything.

9 For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God,

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivereth us from the wrath to come.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. Paul Preaches in Thessalonica (Verses 1-3).
- II. Introduction and Salutation (1 Thess. 1:1).
- III. Paul Thanks God for the Manner in Which the Thessalonians Received the Gospel (Verses 2-10).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

The epistle, we are to study today, First Thessalonians, has the distinction of being the first of all the letters written by Paul that have been preserved. It is, indeed, the first document of inspiration, of all the books of the New Testament, if we exclude the decree which the apostles and elders sent out from Jerusalem following the conference held there to determine the question of circumcision among the Gentile churches. This letter was written only a short time after the church in Thessalonica was founded, and was called forth by the trials and needs of the young congregation. Paul felt keenly the needs of this young poorly instructed congregation; and on at least two occasions he sought to revisit them, but was hindered by Satan (2:18). Finally, he sent Timothy there from Athens

(3:1, 2); and when Timothy later reached him in Corinth, the message which he brought touching the condition of the church in Thessalonica was the occasion for the writing of the letter. As would be expected, numerous errors had crept into the church; some had not wholly forsaken the sensuality and covetousness that had characterized them in their former lives; and others had a wrong view regarding the second coming of Christ. They expected Christ to come momentarily, and only those alive at his coming were to participate in the blessings thereof. Paul wrote at length to correct these erroneous views, and the letters to the Thessalonians contain more data on the second coming of Christ than any other one source in the New Testament. The following nine passages should be consulted: 1 Thess. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:14ff.; 5:2; 5:23; 2 Thess. 1:7; 2:1; 2:8.

The chief points of the epistle are: (1) Paul's thankfulness, 1; (2) Paul's defense of himself, 2-3; (3) exhortations, 4:1-12; (4) the coming of the Lord, 4:13 to 5:11; (5) final words, 5:12-28.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

Thessalonica was the second city in Europe where Paul preached the gospel and planted a church of Christ. Leaving Philippi, he and his company came to Thessalonica and, as was his custom, entered the synagogue and preached to the Jews. We shall study the results of this effort more at length under "Comments on the Lesson Text." Here, as elsewhere, the Jews were aroused to oppose him, and it was necessary for him to leave the city and go on to other parts. Forced to leave under such circumstances, Paul was unable to complete his work there, and thus felt great concern for the new converts. We have already pointed out under "Context of the Lesson" the occasion for the first letter to the church at Thessalonica."

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Be at peace among yourselves." (1 Thess. 5:13b.) This statement occurs along with numerous other exhortations to the church in Thessalonica. Immediately preceding this, the apostle admonishes them to "know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake." Then follows the exhortation to "be at peace among yourselves." The former statement alludes to their duty to the elders or bishops of the flock, to be submissive to them and recognize their leadership. This will lead to peace. Contempt for the instruction and authority of elders is the first step toward the strife and faction which is here reprobated. A factious spirit is everywhere condemned in the scriptures, and is classed as a work of carnality. (1 Cor. 3:1-3.) This is a lesson sorely needed in the churches of Christ today. There is a growing tendency to ignore the authority of elders and to engage in riot and disturbance.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The teachers, in their supplementary reading in the background of the first epistle to the Thessalonians, will find many practical lessons to present to their classes. Among them are: (1) the value of industry. Some in the church were dreamy and speculative in their attitude and had ceased to work. These were a burden to the

struggling church. Paul ruled that those who would not work should not eat. (2) The second coming of Christ vividly and clearly taught. (3) Faithfulness and devotion; "work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope." (1-3.) (4) Concern of Paul for new converts. These and numerous other lessons will be found in this letter.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

#### I. Paul Preaches in Thessalonica (Verses 1-3)

"Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures, opening and alleging that it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ." From the time the group left Troas, and during the period of their sojourn in Philippi, the historian speaks of them in the second person. Here, however, he resumes the third person in the narrative, leaving us to conclude that Luke evidently remained in Philippi. The distance from Philippi to Thessalonica was approximately one hundred miles. The fact that they passed through two communities on their way to Thessalonica is accounted for on the ground that these cities did not have a synagogue, and Paul was anxious to preach where as many people gathered as possible. Thessalonica, on account of its commercial importance, was an excellent place to plant the cause of Christ. It has always had a large Jewish population.

That Paul entered the synagogue and preached on the Sabbath day is not to be taken as evidence that he worshiped according to the law of the Jews, or that he observed the Sabbath day in so doing. He simply took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded to preach to a large group of his own nation assembled on that day for religious purposes. Sabbatarians sometimes assert that Paul observed the Sabbath day. One might, with equal reason, charge him with observing the law of Moses. The truth is, Paul fought strenuously against an observance of Jewish law and made specific reference to the Sabbath day, saying, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's." (Col. 2:16, 17.)

Paul's preaching in Thessalonica followed the usual pattern: (1) The Messiah predicted in Old Testament prophecy was a suffering Messiah; (2) the Messiah would rise from the dead; (3) Jesus was this Messiah. The first of these points was, and still is, a stumbling block to the Jews. There are two lines of prophecy in the Old Testament—one picturing the Messiah as a suffering person, the other as a triumphant and glorious ruler. These two lines of prophecy appear so inconsistent to the Jews that they have refused to believe that they both centered in one person. Some have sought to 'solve the difficulty by assuming two Messiahs, one a suffering Christ, the other a triumphant one. Still others have come to accept the passages referring to the Messiah as highly figurative and symbolical, and thus have virtually denied that any Savior is promised in the Old Testament. These insist that an ideal state is pictured in the Old Testament, and that references to a Messiah are simply a part

of the pictorial representation thereof. Hence, it was necessary for Paul to convince the Jews to whom he preached that the prophets taught that "the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day" (Luke 24:46, 47), and that Jesus was the one thus predicted.

During the period that Paul preached there, the apostle and his associates labored day and night (1 Thess. 2:9; Phil. 4:15, 16) for their daily bread so as not to be chargeable to the people, and thus leave no suspicion that they were interested in material gain. Although they received some help from the Philippian church, it was not enough to sustain them, hence the necessity of laboring with their own hands. Such a manifestation of unselfishness, plus such preaching, could not fail to be productive of results. "And some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." The success was not for long, however, for soon opposition, in its usual form, arose. "But the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the city in an uproar." (Acts 17:5.) (See Acts 17:6-10.) Forced to flee the city, Paul and Silas left by night for Berea. Such is Luke's account of the first preaching of the gospel in Thessalonica. In spite of the difficulties that attended these efforts, a congregation was left in that city.

## **II. Introduction and Salutation (1 Thess. 1:1)**

"Paul and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace." "Silvanus" is the same as the Silas of Acts, Paul's companion and fellow helper in the preaching of the gospel at Thessalonica. Also included in the salutation is Timothy, who also was present in the work of the gospel in that city. Silas was present with Paul in Corinth When he wrote this letter, and Timothy's arrival from Thessalonica was the occasion for it. (See "Context of the Lesson.") The church is spoken of as being in God and in Christ, because in this respect it differs from all other organizations. Dwelling in fellowship with God and with Christ, we are encircled and inspired by them. What a glorious privilege and great responsibility!

"Grace" was the Greek and "peace" the Hebrew greeting in the apostolic age. Since the churches had in them both Jews and Greeks, it was especially fitting and appropriate to join the terms of salutation and use them both. It is the usual Pauline mode of greeting. Grace indicates the favor of God and the gifts that flow out of it, and peace represents the tranquility and prosperity that children of God enjoy in him.

## **III. Paul Thanks God for the Manner in Which the Thessalonians Received the Gospel (Verses 2.10)**

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father." It will be noted that almost all of Paul's letters begin with thanksgiving. He thanks God for the evidences of Christian life on the part of the Thessalonian brethren as

manifested in the remainder of this section of the epistle. In the words before us he sets forth the three cardinal Christian graces—faith, hope, and love. (See 1 Thess. 5:8; Col. 1:4, 5; 1 Cor. 13:13.) Theirs was not a dead faith (James 2:20, 26), but a live, active faith, demonstrating itself in their walk and life. Only this kind of faith avails. (Gal. 5:6.)

Continuing, the apostle speaks of the evidences he has of their acceptable state before God, "Knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election, how that our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; even as ye know what manner of men we showed ourselves toward you for your sake. And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit; so that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia." Macedonia was the great Roman province, lying north of the Aegean Sea, of which Thessalonica was the capital. Achaia was the Roman province of which Corinth was the capital. It embraced almost the whole of Greece. The evidence Paul had of the election of the Thessalonians was threefold in nature: (1) The preaching of the apostle and his helpers there had been attended by miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit, thus indicating God's approval of their work among the Thessalonians; (2) the Thessalonians had accepted the gospel courageously and in the face of much opposition; (3) they had been quick to demonstrate the fruits of Christianity in their own lives. By "election," Paul does not mean the rigid, arbitrary choice of God as taught by the Calvinists. "To elect" means simply "to choose"; and God's choice does not interfere with man's free agency. Israel was chosen (Deut. 7:6), yet later cast off because of unbelief (Matt. 8:11, 12). The effect of the gospel in Thessalonica was so striking that news of it spread rapidly throughout the whole country. Said Paul, "For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything." Thessalonica was a commercial city, and travelers from there touched at all the prominent places in Greece and Macedonia. So faithful was the church there, and so energetic its members, that soon news thereof spread through the whole country, so that wherever Paul went news of his work in Thessalonica and their faithfulness had already preceded him, and it was not necessary for him to say anything about it. "For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom ye raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come." Paul had gone from Thessalonica to Athens and from Athens to Corinth. In all probability, he had stopped in various villages and smaller centers of population on the way and preached the gospel. In all of these places, news of his work in Thessalonica had preceded him; and he found that instead of telling the people of his work there, they were already acquainted with it, and they informed him of what he had done! These people in Thessalonica had been idol worshipers for generations, and that they had turned from these idols to serve the "living God," and to "wait for his Son from heaven," was a matter of much interest to the people wherever Paul went. Note the results of Paul's preaching among them: (1)

They turned to God; (2) they turned from idols to God; (3) they turned from idols to God to serve; (4) they began thenceforth to wait for his Son from heaven. Such is the true attitude of the faithful child of God. We know not when he shall appear. We should therefore ever be watchful, lest his coming find us unprepared.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The outline of the lesson text.  
Context of the lesson.  
Chief points of the epistle.  
Subject explained. Golden Text explained.  
Suggestions to teachers.  
An account of Paul's labors in Thessalonica.  
Reason for preaching on Sabbath.  
Introduction to Thessalonians.  
Paul's attitude toward the brethren there.  
Lessons contained in 1 Thess. 1:1-10.  
Results of Paul's work in Thessalonica.  
True attitude of God's children.

### Lesson VIII—November 24, 1946

#### CHURCHES IN HOUSES

**Rom. 16:1-5; Col. 4:15, 16; Phile. 1-3.**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 12:11-19.

GOLDEN TEXT= "And salute the church that is in their house." (Rom. 16:5a.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

November	18.	M	Abraham's Home (Gen. 18:16-21)
November	19.	T	Isaac's Home (Gen. 25:19-34)
November	20.	W	Jacob's Home (Gen. 35:16-29)
November	21.	T	Teaching the Children (Dent. 6:4-9)
November	22.	F	Preaching from House to House (Acts 20:17-27)
November	23.	S	Salutation to a Church (1 Cor. 16:19-24)
November	24.	S	Aged Teaching the Young (Tit. 2:1-8)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—For Romans, A.D. 57; for Colossians and Philemon, A.D. 62.

PLACES.—Rome and Colosse.

PERSONS.—Paul, Philemon, Onesimus, the church at Rome and Colosse.

#### Lesson Text

- 1 I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchreae:
- 2 That ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.
- 3 Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus,
- 4 Who for my life laid down their own necks unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles:
- 5 And salute the church that is in their house. Salute Epaphroditus my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia, unto Christ.
- 15 Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church that is in their house.

16 And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea.

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow-worker,

2 And to Apphia our sister, and to archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house:

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

II. Phoebe, "Servant of the Church" at Cenchrea; Priscilla and Aquila, the "Church That Is in Their House"; and Others Greeted (Verses 1-5).

II. Brethren in Laodicea; Nymphas and the Church in His House Saluted (Col. 4:15, 16).

III. Paul's Salutation in Philemon (Phile. 1-3).

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

For the historical background of the letters to the Romans and Colossians, see Lessons I and VI, fourth quarter, this series. Philemon is a personal letter, written by Paul to the man whose name it bears, in behalf of a runaway slave of his, Onesimus by name, who had found refuge in Rome, and in some way had come under Paul's influence, and had obeyed the gospel. Having been converted, the principles of Christianity required him to return to his master; and Paul writes a letter to Philemon setting forth the conditions upon which Onesimus returns. He reminds Philemon that Onesimus is now a brother beloved, not only in the flesh, but in the Lord, and he urges his friend and brother Philemon to receive him as such. It is a tender appeal to - the consciousness of Philemon; and Paul urges him to accept Onesimus, not by authority of apostolic power, but of love. Philemon is a gem among Paul's epistles, and is one of the most beautiful as well as one of the most significant things in the Bible. It was written in A.D. 62, at the same time Colossians was written, and carried by the same messengers.

Its chief points are: (1) Salutation and thanksgiving, 1-7; (2) appeals to Philemon, 8-21; (3) personal matters, 21-25.

### SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED

There are numerous references to "churches in houses" in the New Testament, and it is our purpose today to note a number of them and the circumstances that prompted the brethren to meet in this fashion. The church in those days had no buildings erected for the purpose of worshiping God, and thus they were forced to meet wherever they could. Frequently groups met for worship in private homes, hence the allusion to "churches in houses."

### THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

The Golden Text will be explained fully in "Comments on the Lesson Text."

### HELPS FOR TEACHERS

This is another lesson in which the teachers will have an excellent opportunity to teach their classes the principles involved in overcoming difficulties. The church of the first century was, for the

most part, poor, despised, without influence, frequently persecuted, and always hated; without means, buildings in which to meet, or even the protection of the civil authorities, yet it grew within a few years to number its members in tens of thousands, and became the most decisive influence in the world. Commodious buildings, imposing structures, mighty cathedrals impress the world, but are not necessary to the growth and influence of the church. This is not intended to discourage brethren in building comfortable structures in which to meet; but it should teach us that whenever it is impossible to have them, the church is not helpless.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

#### **I. Phoebe, "Servant of the Church" at Cenchrea; Priscilla and Aquila, the "Church That Is in Their House," and Others Greeted (Verses 1-5)**

"I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self." The letter to the Romans was written from Corinth; and Cenchrea was its seaport on the Aegean Sea, about nine miles from the city. Phoebe was a member of the church in Cenchrea, and was about to make a trip to Rome. It is thought that she carried the letter to the church in Rome with her on this trip. Paul asks the brethren to receive her with Christian hospitality and to assist her in whatever business she had there. The term used in the Greek is a legal one; and this has led scholars to believe that her business was of some legal nature. Phoebe was "a servant of the church" in Cenchrea. The word "servant," in the Greek, is the feminine form of the word "deacon." Thus, literally, she was a "deaconess" of the church in Cenchrea. The word "deacon" means a servant. Johnson says: "We know that there were deaconesses in the church in the first century, and Paul, in giving her a recommendation, no doubt mentions her office. To say that she was a servant of the church would convey no special distinction. In the East, where women were so much secluded, deaconesses would be a necessity. 1 Tim. 5:9, 10 evidently refers to them; Ignatius, a companion of the apostles, mentions them in one of his epistles; and Pliny does also, in his famous letter to Trajan, in the second century." The word does not necessarily imply an official function. It is not out of order today for elders to designate certain women to do certain duties for which they are specially fitted. Those thus designated are "deaconesses," whether called this or not. Phoebe, in her capacity as servant of the church, had assisted many, including the apostle Paul. He next greets two other faithful companions and helpers of other days.

"Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles: and salute the church that is in their house" For a full discussion of Paul's labors in Corinth with Aquila and Priscilla, see under "Paul Begins His Third Missionary Journey," Lesson XII, for September 22, in the third quarter of this series. (Acts 18:1-18.) Priscilla and Aquila left



Corinth where they were first associated with Paul and went with him to Ephesus (Acts 18:18) where they waited for him to return from Antioch. During the interval between the time Paul left them in Ephesus and his return to labor for more than two years in that city, these faithful Christians were preparing the way for his return. It was during this period that they contacted Apollos, and corrected him regarding the validity of John's baptism. (See Acts 18:24-26.) Meanwhile, Priscilla and Aquila returned to Rome, and were living there when Paul wrote the letter to the Romans. They were very near and dear to the apostle. They had been in grave danger and had come near losing their lives for Paul. These facts were well known among the churches of the Gentiles, and the brethren felt much gratitude to this worthy couple for their devotion and service to Paul. It is interesting to note that both here and in Acts 18:2, Priscilla is mentioned before her husband, Aquila. This is unusual, and may indicate that of the two she was the most efficient. Other references to this Christian couple are 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19.

"And salute the church that is in their house." It seems clear that at the time this letter was written, A.D. 57, there were no church buildings in Rome. The brethren were therefore forced to meet wherever they could; and a favorite meeting place was in the homes of the saints. It is likely that those brethren who had large and commodious houses allowed the disciples to meet regularly with them, and hence their houses came to be known as meeting places for the church. "The church that is in their house" was likely the portion of the church in Rome that met with them regularly for worship. In large cities such as Rome there would be several such groups. One of these groups met in the home of Priscilla and Aquila. This practice was customary in the apostolic age. (Comp. 1 Cor. 16:19; Acts 12:12; 18:7; Col. 4:15; Phile. 2.)

## **II. Brethren in Laodicea; Nymphas and the Church in His House Saluted (Col. 4:15, 16)**

Near the close of the epistle to the Colossians, Paul, as was his wont, sent greetings and salutations. Among those greeted was the church in Laodicea, located just across the valley of the Lycus from Colosse. The Lord addressed a letter to the church, one of the seven churches of Asia. (Rev. 3:14-22.) It has the dubious distinction of being the only one of the seven churches thus addressed about which the Lord could find nothing complimentary to say. On the contrary, he was disgusted with them, and threatened to "spew" them out of his mouth because of their lukewarmness. "Nymphas" was evidently a resident of Laodicea, and in his house a group of disciples were accustomed to assemble. We find it hard to believe that the church in that vicinity numbered no more than those who could assemble in a private home; hence conclude that reference must be made to one of many such groups which likely assembled in private homes for worship. One such group met in the home of this faithful Christian. The King James Version has church in "his" house; the Vatican mss. have "her" house; while the Revised Version has "church that is in their house." Paul also asked the brethren to read an epistle which he had written to the church in Laodicea: "And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and

that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea." The churches were closely associated, being only a short distance from each other; and Paul desired that each read the epistle addressed to the other. It would seem from this that Paul wrote a letter to the church in Laodicea, now lost. Others think this was a circular letter designed for all the churches in Asia Minor, and that it may have been the Ephesian letter. Space will not permit a discussion of this question, and it would be of little utility anyway. Those interested will find the subject discussed at length in the longer commentaries on the Colossian epistle. Whether this epistle was one now lost to us or not, it is certain that not all of Paul's writings have been preserved. 1 Cor. 5:9 alludes to an epistle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church earlier than our First Corinthians.

### **III. Paul's Salutation in Philemon (Phile. 1-3)**

"Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow-worker, and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house: grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." "Philemon" is one of the "imprisonment epistles," so styled because Paul was a prisoner in Rome at the time it was written. Others written at or near the time of writing Philemon are Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians. For a discussion of the reasons for Paul's imprisonment, see Lesson XIII, Third Quarter, "Paul's Voyage to Rome." The letter, as we noted in the "Context of the Lesson," was written in behalf of Onesimus, a slave of Philemon, who had escaped from his owner and had fled to Rome, where he fell under Paul's influence and obeyed the gospel. Having, become a Christian, it was right that he should return to his master, and Paul writes to his friend and brother Philemon to receive Onesimus in a manner befitting brethren in Christ. Paul's allusion to his imprisonment was doubtless done to evoke the sympathy of Philemon. He mentions his chains five times in this short letter. Joined with Paul in the salutation is Timothy, his constant and faithful companion. He was evidently in Rome at this time. Saluted are Apphia and Archippus. "Apphia" has been supposed to be Philemon's wife, and the connection in which Archippus is mentioned has led to the supposition that he was Philemon's son. He was evidently a minister of the gospel. In Col. 4:17, Paul said, "And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it." Thus some service, possibly the preaching of the gospel, was required of him by the Lord. There was a church in his house. Our information is very meager touching these allusions to "churches in houses." All has been said in this lesson that we know regarding such meetings. The usual Pauline, apostolic salutation occurs here. For a discussion of its significance, see under "The Church at Rome," the first lesson in the Fourth Quarter of this series.

### **POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

Lesson text outlined.  
Context of the lesson.  
Chief points of Philemon, Romans, Colossians.  
Subject of the lesson explained.  
Practical lesson derived from this study.

Phoebe, her work, trip to Rome, Paul's estimate of her.  
 Priscilla and Aquila, their labors with Paul.  
 The church in their house, significance of this.  
 Church in Laodicea, letters to it, condition in A.D. 96.  
 Question of apostolic letters now lost.  
 Philemon, the nature of the epistle, purpose of it.  
 Individuals mentioned in salutation.

### Lesson IX—December 1, 1946

#### ELDERS AND DEACONS OF THE CHURCH 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-9

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Pet. 5:1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT: "For the bishop must be blameless, as God's steward." (Tit. 1:7a.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

November	25.	M	Seven Chosen (Acts 6:1-6)
November	26.	T	First Mention of Elders in Church (Acts 11 27-30)
November	27.	W	Admonition to Elders (Acts 20:17-33)
November	28.	T	Bishops and Deacons (Phil. 1:1, 2)
November	29.	F	How to Treat Elders (1 Tim. 5:1-7)
November	30.	S	Elders Worthy of Double Honor (1 Tim. 5:17-25)
December	1.	S	Duty of Elders (1 Pet. 5:1-4)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—About 66 or 67 A.D.

PLACE.—Possibly Macedonia.

PERSONS.—Paul, Timothy, and Titus.

#### Lesson Text

- 1 Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.
- 2 The bishop therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach;
- 3 No brawler, no striker; but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money
- 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;
- 5 (But if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)
- 6 Not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil.
- 7 Moreover he must have good testimony from them that are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.
- 8 Deacons in like manner must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;
- 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.
- 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless.
- 11 Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.
- 12 Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.
- 13 For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- 5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge;

6 If any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly.

7 For the bishop must be blameless, as God's steward; not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre;

8 But given to hospitality, a lover of good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled;

9 Holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers.

### **LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. The Office of Bishop a Good Work (Verse 1).
- II. Qualifications of Bishops or Elders (Verses 2-7; Tit. 1:5-9).
- III. Qualifications of Deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13).

### **CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

Timothy was Paul's constant and most beloved companion in the work of the Lord. Frequently Paul expressed his esteem and regard for the faithful evangelist; called him his "son in the gospel," and declared that he had no one "likeminded." (Phil. 2:19-24.) Titus was also an associate of Paul, accompanying him on one occasion to Jerusalem at the time the question of Gentile circumcision was considered. (Acts 15.) He carried Paul's first letter to Corinth and is often mentioned in the epistle. Because the letters to Timothy and Titus deal at length with church organization and development, they are frequently styled the "pastoral epistles." Johnson remarks that "nothing has ever been written which contains, in the same space, so much that is indispensable to the preacher . . . and to every church official. These classes may consider themselves especially addressed in the persons of Timothy and Titus, and they should study and reflect upon these letters until every charge, every truth, and every admonition is written upon their hearts." A Bible dictionary should be consulted for the salient facts in the lives of Timothy and Titus.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

In the early days of the New Treatment church, the Holy Spirit exercised supervision through the divinely inspired apostles. Since the apostles were to have no successors, it was necessary to work out an arrangement for the direction and oversight of the church after their death. Brethren variously designated as bishops, elders, overseers, pastors, etc., with certain well-defined qualifications that we are to consider later in the lesson, were selected for the work of directing the affairs of the church and other men designated as deacons were appointed to serve. The duties, qualifications, etc., of the elders and deacons are to be studied in this lesson.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"For the bishop must be blameless, as God's steward." (Tit. 1:7a.) This is one of the qualifications for bishops or elders, mentioned by Titus, and since this is a portion of our lesson text, the student is referred to "Comments on the Lesson Text" for an examination of this passage.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This is one of the most vital lessons in our entire series. The divine wisdom has seen fit to devise this means of directing the

affairs of the church, and it is vitally important for every Christian to understand thoroughly the proper function of the church and its officers. There is a very definite trend in the church today to ignore the elders, refuse to be in submission to them (Heb. 13:7, 17), and to rebel against them; and this lesson affords the teachers an excellent opportunity to show their classes that such rebellion is against God himself who ordained this arrangement. The qualifications should be carefully studied, and the classes impressed with the need of adhering closely to the divine pattern. The Holy Spirit did not idly suggest these characteristics of those who would thus serve, and we cannot ignore them with impunity. Preachers, teachers, and all others who would minimize the importance of these qualifications, and who seek to set them aside, should be regarded with grave suspicion.

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

### 1. The Office of Bishop a Good Work (Verse 1)

"Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." The expression, "faithful is the saying. .," was evidently a favorite one with Paul and occurs frequently in the "pastoral epistles." The reader should consult them (1 Tim. 1:5; 3:1; 4:8, 9, or 9, 10; Tit. 3:5; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12).

The word "bishop" in this passage refers to the same work as that done by those designated "elders." There are, in fact, numerous designations in the New Testament, all referring to those we usually style elders today. The reason for this is to be seen in the fact that they have various duties to perform, and each term used to designate them refers to some one of these duties. These words are not synonymous, although they refer to the same person; each one represents some particular phase of his office, work, or duty. These words are "bishop," "elder," "presbyter," "pastor," or "shepherd," "overseer," "ruler." For the benefit of those who do not have access to a Greek lexicon, we give the Greek word, the English translation, and meaning of each of these terms as used in the New Testament: (1) *Episcopos*, bishop, overseer. (Acts 20:28; Tit. 1:7; 1 Tim. 3:1; Phil. 1:1.) "An overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian, or superintendent; in the New Testament, a guardian of souls, one who watches over their welfare." (2) *Presbuteros*, presbyter, or elder. (Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 5:1, 17; Tit. 1:5; 1 Pet. 5:1.) "Those who preside over the assemblies or churches." (3) *Poimeen*, pastor, shepherd. (1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2; Eph. 4:11.) "The presiding officer, manager, director of any assembly. So of Christ (1 Pet. 2:25) ; so of overseers of Christian churches (Eph. 4:11)." (4) *Proistamenos*, to rule (Rom. 12:8), rule well (1 Tim. 5:17). "To be over, super intend; to preside over (1 Tim. 5:17)." (5) *Hegoumenoi*, to lead, to rule. (Heb. 13:7, 17 24.) "To lead, i. e., to go before; to be a leader; to rule, command; to have authority over; leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel; so of the overseers or leaders of the Christian churches."

### II. Qualifications of Bishops or Elders (Verses 2-7; Tit. 1:5-9)

The qualifications of elders, or bishops, as designated by Paul in

his first epistle to Timothy are listed in the first column, those given to Titus in the second column.

<b>Timothy</b>	<b>Titus</b>
1. Without reproach.	1. Blameless.
2. Husband of one wife.	2. Husband of one wife.
3. Temperate.	3. Having children that believe.
4. Sober-minded.	4. Not self-willed.
5. Orderly.	5. Not soon angry.
6. Given to hospitality.	6. No brawler.
7. Apt to teach.	7. No striker.
8. No brawler.	8. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
9. No striker.	9. Given to hospitality.
10. Gentle.	10. Lover of good.
11. Not contentious.	11. Sober-minded.
12. No lover of money.	12. Just.
13. Rules well his own house.	13. Holy.
14. Not a novice.	14. Self-controlled.
15. Good testimony from without.	15. Sound in the faith.

It will be noted that many of those listed in the letter to Timothy are also included in the list occurring in Titus. But there are some to be found in Titus not in Timothy. In all, there are twenty qualifications set forth in both passages touching the work of elders. We shall examine each of them briefly. It should be noted that seven of them are negative; thirteen of them positive.

First, the negative qualifications: 1. Not given to much wine. An elder must not, of course, be addicted to intoxicating liquors. 2. Not a striker. He must not be pugnacious, but always and everywhere a peacemaker. 3. Not greedy of filthy lucre. That is, he must not possess an inordinate desire for money; he must not be covetous. 4. Not a brawler. Not quarrelsome, nor a wrangler. 5. Not a novice. He must not be a new convert; he must possess wisdom and experience. 6. Not self-willed. Not obstinately minded; considerate of others' views and feelings. 7. Not soon angry. Not given to revengeful passions against one guilty of supposed or real injuries.

The positive qualifications: 1. The husband of one wife. That is, he must not have been married more than once. This statement was designed to keep out of the eldership men with more than one living wife. It was not the apostle's design to forbid a man whose first wife was dead but who had remarried from serving as an elder. Does this passage forbid a man from serving as an elder who has never married? Those who say no urge that the numeral "one" indicates only that Paul was forbidding two or more wives and did not necessarily require a man to have "a wife." However, this is doubtful reasoning, and the safest course is to take the words in their natural import; i. e., a man to serve as a bishop must have one wife. Brother McGarvey once observed that if his wife should die, he would resign as elder next Sunday. (Under (1) should also be included, "Having believing children" and "Ruling his own house well.") 2. Vigilant. Watchful, ever on guard against dangers threatening the welfare of the church. 3. Sober. Free from extremes, rational, sane, levelheaded. 4. Of good behavior. Not uncouth or boorish, but chaste, courteous, and polite. 5. Given to hospitality. A lover of strangers, one whose door is ever open to his brethren and who delights in the company of others. 6. Patient. Able to

endure provocation without murmuring or fretfulness. 7. A lover of good men. Admires goodness wherever it is found. 8. Just. Always fair in his dealings with his fellow man. 9. Holy. Whose life is wholly set apart to that which is good. 10. Blameless. Undeserving of censure; unsullied, irreproachable. 11. Temperate. Moderate in desires, habits, language, passions, etc. 12. Apt to teach. Skillful in imparting instruction, possessing the ability to guard the church against false doctrine and instruct it in the things that build it up. 13. Of good report among them without. Whose life is so exemplary that those who make no pretense to Christianity see in him a demonstration of that which he professes and respect him highly. "They may not like his religion, but they like him; they may not like his theories, but they like his practice."

Many good men, seeing the high standard thus presented for elders or bishops in the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, sometimes feel that it is impossible of attainment, and feeling their own unworthiness, hesitate to take upon themselves such grave responsibility. But this is an erroneous attitude. A careful analysis of these qualifications will reveal that with one or two exceptions these characteristics should be possessed by every Christian! Other than the requirement that one must be married and have his children under control, which of these qualifications can the Christian dispense with and still please God? Examine the list carefully and decide which of these the Lord will permit the Christian to ignore. May he be greedy of filthy lucre, a brawler, one who is soon angry, a man given to much wine, etc., etc.? These qualifications are reasonable and proper, and may not be dispensed with. When brethren start finding loopholes through which men may pass into the eldership without these qualifications, they have set aside God's arrangement for governing the church and in its stead placed one of their own. It is truly a sorry business in which they are engaged who do so.

### III. Qualifications of Deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13)

Our word "deacon" is translated from the Greek word *diakonos*, which occurs about thirty times in the New Testament. However, only about four times is it translated "deacon." Its primary significance is "servant" or "minister," and it is so rendered many times in the scriptures. It is applied to Christ (Rom. 15:8), to Paul (2 Cor. 6:4; Eph. 3:7). Because the seven selected to take care of the Grecian widows being neglected in the daily ministration are referred to by this term (in the Greek), they are usually considered the first deacons. (See Lesson IV, July 28, "The Church Meeting an Emergency," for a full discussion of their selection and work.) There is very little said in the New Testament regarding the function of deacons. As a matter of fact, we are practically shut up to 1 Tim. 3:8-13 for our information on this subject. There we learn that the deacons must possess seven qualifications: 1. They must be grave, or sober-minded. 2. Not double-tongued or two-faced. 3. Not given to much wine. 4. Not greedy of filthy lucre. 5. Holding the faith in a pure conscience. 6. The husband of one wife. 7. Ruling their own houses.

It will be observed that in the midst of the discussion of the qualifications of deacons the apostle abruptly introduces certain qualifications applicable to women. The Authorized Version says, "even

so must their wives . . ." The Revision simply says, "Women in like manner . . ." It seems strange that the apostle would list qualifications for wives of deacons and not mention any for elders' wives. The Greek reads simply "women . . .," the word being susceptible of being translated either women or wives. This has led many commentators to the view that these women thus designated were "deaconesses," such as was Phoebe. (Rom. 16:1, Revised Version, margin.)

The view widely obtains that it is the function of elders to supervise the "spiritual affairs" of the church, and the deacons to oversee the "temporal affairs." There is nothing in the scriptures that remotely supports such a view. Elders have the complete oversight of the flock, and this includes all matters pertaining to the work of the church, whatever its nature. Deacons are "servants" of the church, empowered with the responsibility of serving in whatsoever capacity that may be required. The scriptures do not authorize deacons to exercise control over the affairs of the church. The growing tendency to allow deacons to have a voice equal to that of the elders in the management of the church is definitely unscriptural. In many congregations deacons sit in on business meetings and carry as much weight in deciding the policies of the church as the elders. Such practice, though common, is wholly out of harmony with the teaching of the New Testament and should be ceased.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This lesson opens up a wide field for study in the functions and duties of the officers of the church. To those who wish to continue the matter further, we suggest the following sources: "The Scheme of Redemption," by Robert Milligan; the various commentaries on First Timothy and Titus.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The lesson text outlined.  
 The context of the lesson.  
 Subject of the lesson.  
 Importance of this lesson.  
 Paul's use of the expression. "Faithful is the saying."  
 Discussion of the word "office" in 1 Tim. 3:1.  
 Different terms applicable to elders and their meaning.  
 Qualifications as listed in Timothy and Titus.  
 Meaning of each.  
 Standard presented—whether too high.  
 Qualifications of deacons.  
 Meaning of term "deacon."  
 Question about "deaconesses."  
 Extent of deacon's authority.

### Lesson X—December 8, 1946

#### CHURCH DISCIPLINE

**Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-6, 13; 2 Cor. 2:5-8; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Gal. 6:1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the



church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15.)

### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

December	2.	M	Tell It to the Church (Matt. 18:15-20)
December	3.	T	Abraham and Lot (Gen. 13:7-13)
December	4.	W	Jacob and Laban (Gen. 31:43-52)
December	5.	T	Gideon and Ephraim (Judges 8:1-3)
December	6.	F	David Spared His Enemy (1 Sam. 26:6-12)
December	7.	S	Agree with Thine Adversary (Matt. 5:21-26)
December	8.	S	How to Treat an Enemy (Rom. 12:17-21)

### Historical Background

TIME.—For Second Thessalonians, A.D. 50 or 51; for Romans, First Corinthians, and Second Corinthians, A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Romans was written from Corinth; First Corinthians from Ephesus; Second Corinthians from some point in Macedonia; and Second Thessalonians from Corinth.

PERSONS.—Paul, the churches in Corinth, Rome, and Thessalonica.

### Lesson Text

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent.

19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I rejoice therefore over you: but I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil.

20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

1 It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife.

2 And ye are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you.

3 For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing,

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus,

5 To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

13 But them that are without God judgeth. Put away the wicked man from among yourselves.

5 But if any hath caused sorrow, he hath caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all.

6 Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many

7 So that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow.

8 Wherefore I beseech you to confirm your love toward him.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us.

14 And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man, that he have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed.

15 And yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

**LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Those Who Cause Division to Be Marked and Avoided (Verses 17-20).
- II. Paul Commands the Corinthian Church to Exercise Discipline (1 Cor. 5:1-6, 13).
- III. Result of the Exercise of Discipline in the Church in Corinth. (2 Cor. 2:5-8).
- IV. The Disorderly to Be Withdrawn From (2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15).

**CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

Inasmuch as we have already studied the epistles from which our lesson text is taken today, we refer the reader to those lessons for the context of the present lesson. We studied the Roman letter in Lesson I Fourth Quarter, October 6; The Epistles to Corinth, Lesson II, Fourth Quarter, October 13; and the Letters to the Church in Thessalonica, Lesson VII, Fourth Quarter, November 17. Please consult the lessons for a full discussion of the occasion of the letters to these churches.

**SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

The church is the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2), and as such it must be kept pure and without spot or blemish. When members thereof walk disorderly, or in such fashion as to reflect upon the body, it is highly displeasing to the Lord. He has therefore provided that such individuals be withdrawn from when it appears that they will no longer follow his teaching and conduct themselves as they should. If a congregation allows impure individuals to remain in fellowship, it becomes a partaker of their sins. Paul tells us that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. (1 Cor. 5:6.) The necessity of discipline, its purpose, the manner and spirit that should characterize its administration, we are to consider today.

**THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15. ) Neither here nor elsewhere in the sacred Writings does the "house of God" refer to the building. Paul was not addressing Timothy in this instance to indicate to him how he should act in the building set aside for religious purposes. The church is not the building where the saints meet, but the saints themselves. This admonition, therefore, was for the purpose of instructing Timothy to conduct himself properly always and everywhere, for Christians are always in the church (the house of God). The church is the "pillar and ground" (support) of the truth. When the church no longer supports (defends) the truth, it ceases to function as the New Testament church and loses its right to claim identity therewith.

**HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

"Discipline" means training, and in its broader sense, includes everything essential to the development of the Christian character. In its limited sense it involves the matter of dealing with those who walk disorderly in the church, and it is in this sense that we

consider it in this lesson. Its necessity is to be seen on every hand. If neglected at home, children grow up to be worthless and enemies of society; if neglected in business, failure results, and bankruptcy follows; if neglected in the state, anarchy obtains. Its design is threefold: (1) For the benefit of the offender; (2) for the good of the church; (3) as an example to the world. The churches are frequently remiss in their duties along this line. Greater respect for the church would obtain in the world if brethren would carefully follow the teaching of the scriptures in this matter.

### COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

#### **1. Those Who Cause Division to Be Marked and Avoided (Verses 17-20)**

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them." The apostolic church was plagued from time to time by false teachers who came in among the disciples and sought to lead them away from the truth. From among the Jews were teachers bent on forcing the law of Moses on the churches. These are styled Judaizing teachers. The books of Romans and Galatians were written for the purpose of refuting the heresies taught by them. Others, imbued with the pagan philosophy, sought to infuse it with Christianity. Colossians was written largely to refute such theories. Such theories were to be rejected and those who taught them recognized and exposed. Here the apostle admonishes the brethren to "mark them"; that is, observe them attentively, know them for what they really are, and turn away from them. This is good advice for us today. Men who come bringing some other doctrine are not to be received into our houses, neither are we to bid them Godspeed, for in so doing one becomes a partaker with them in their evil deeds. (2 John 10.) False teachers cause more trouble in the churches of Christ than anything else, and elders should be constantly on their guard against all such. Paul warned the Ephesian elders that after his departing "grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them." (Acts 20:29.) John advises us to "prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1.)

The false teachers particularly referred to by Paul are described as follows: "For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent." These teachers, however ostensibly they may perform religious devotions, do not do so for the purpose of serving the Lord; they feel no obligation to him, but are interested solely in the gratification of their own lusts, and perform lip service to the Lord only for this reason. By the use of mild, plausible speeches they deceive the simple-minded, leading them to think that they are sincere, only that they may selfishly benefit from the brethren in so doing. It is not likely that the church in Rome, at the time the epistle was written, had been beset by such teachers. But they had made their appearance in Galatia, at Antioch, and Corinth; and Paul knew that it would be only a matter of time until they went to Rome also. Hence, he warns them of such, uncovers

their real motives, and urges them to mark them, recognize them for what they are, and avoid them. The reason Paul felt it necessary to warn them in this fashion is seen from the following: "For your obedience is come, abroad unto all men. I rejoice therefore over you: but I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil." The Roman brethren, at the time Paul wrote them, had a mild, amiable disposition, and readily accepted the truth. They are commended for this, but Paul knew that this very disposition would make it easier for false teachers to mislead them, hence warns them to be wise toward the good, simple toward that which is bad. In this manner the brethren would enable God to "bruise Satan under your feet shortly." By hearkening unto Paul, Satan would be vanquished, and the Lord gain the victory.

## **II. Paul Commands the Corinthian Church to Exercise Discipline (1 Cor. 5:1-6, 13)**

Under (1) in this lesson we considered an inspired apostle's advice on how to deal with false teachers in the church. They are to be marked, turned away from and avoided. In this section we are to note his teaching regarding the manner in which to deal with one who is guilty of gross immorality. "It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife." Notwithstanding the fact that sexual sin was common during this period, the particular sin here described was of such gross nature that even the Corinthians, noted for their licentiousness, would have frowned upon it. One of the members of the church was living with his stepmother. It is probable that his father was still living. The woman was evidently not a Christian, otherwise Paul would have commanded that she, too, be excluded. Instead of the church being humiliated by such an affair among them, they actually defended the man in his conduct! Said Paul, "And ye are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you." Such gross immorality among them should have been so humiliating that the brethren would immediately take steps to exclude the offender and indicate to the people about them that they would tolerate no such conduct. They had not done this; on the contrary, they ignored it. They doubtless prided themselves on their philosophy (rebuked by Paul in an earlier section in First Corinthians) and excused the man in his conduct. Paul's treatment of the case was immediate and decisive: "For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing, in the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The full membership of the church was to be assembled, for the discipline was to be administered by the entire body. The procedure was as follows: (1) The church gathered together; (2) the authority of Christ exercised in expelling the offending member; (3) the sinful man turned over to Satan; (4) the purpose of it that his spirit might be saved; (5) the brethren commanded to refrain from any association or fellowship with him. (1 Cor. 5:9-11).

**III. Result of the Exercise of Discipline in the Church in Corinth (2 Cor. 2:5-8)**

In 1 Cor. 5:13, Paul issued a summary order to the church in Corinth to execute discipline on the incestuous offender, saying, "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves." Did the church follow the apostle's instructions in this matter, and if so, what were the results thereof? Happily, the historian reveals that the church did obey Paul in putting away from among themselves the ungodly individual, and that it resulted in his restoration to the church. "But if any hath caused sorrow, he hath caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all. Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many; so that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you to confirm your love toward him." Brother McGarvey paraphrases this statement of the apostle as follows: "As I have said, I did not write to cause you sorrow. But if the incestuous person has caused you sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but to a large part of you. I will not weigh him down with a great burden of guilt by saying to whom else he has caused sorrow. The apostle is not to be understood too literally. The sinner had added to the sorrows which he had just mentioned (verse 4). But the apostle's sorrow was so small compared with the great grief of the Corinthian church as to not be worthy of mentioning." This grief was, of course, after Paul wrote the letter of rebuke to them. They felt no grief nor embarrassment before Paul wrote them.

Paul wrote for the purpose of saving the offender. In instructing the church to "put away" from among themselves the wicked man, he was merely urging a course of procedure that would protect the church and operate to the man's own welfare by bringing him face to face with his serious predicament. It seems that the church, as a whole, had withdrawn from the man in accordance with Paul's instructions. The apostle now writes that the punishment has already proved sufficient and should not be continued; but that, on the contrary, the offender should be forgiven and received back into fellowship, lest he be swallowed up in despair and the punishment defeat its purpose. In view of this fact, the apostle admonishes the church to "confirm your love toward him." Thus the results in this case were altogether good. The church was vindicated and her lost power and prestige returned, and the man himself saved. Brought face to face with his awful sin, and cast out from the pure as unfit for their companionship, and made to realize that the only suitable habitation -for him was with Satan, like the prodigal son, "he came to himself," repented and returned to God, and was restored to his place in the church. In this section we have seen that Paul, fearful that the brethren would overdo the thing and that his punishment was sufficient, and that without forgiveness of his brethren he was in danger of being "swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow," urged them to "confirm your love toward him."

From this incident, we learn the following facts regarding the purpose, design, and practical effects of discipline in the church: (1) Sin, unrebuked in the congregation, reflects upon and contaminates the whole body; (2) offenders are to be excluded from the

fellowship, (a) for the good of the church, (b) to bring the offender to repentance; (3) those thus excluded are to be received with thankfulness when they repent; (4) action is to be taken by the whole church in excluding offenders and in receiving them penitently into the fold.

#### **IV. The Disorderly to Be Withdrawn From (2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15)**

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us." Note how this statement is reenforced: (1) We command you -apostles inspired of God, and so fully empowered to speak on our own right; (2) in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ-by the authority of the Lord himself. To "withdraw" is to cease fellowship with, no longer to receive one; and those to be thus withdrawn from are those who walk disorderly, and not after the "traditions" received from the apostles. Walking disorderly is defined by the apostle to be a manner of life not after the traditions-things taught by the apostles. Whatever one may be doing that is contrary to the teaching of the apostles is disorderly conduct, and therefore sufficient ground for withdrawal if the guilty brother will not repent. Verse 14 suggests this fact also, "And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man, that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed." That is, those who will not obey the injunctions laid down by the apostle are to be ignored and no longer associated with. The purpose of this is that the man may become ashamed of his conduct and be led to repent. Lest, however, the brethren should use improper measures they are admonished to "count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Gal. 6:1 also emphasizes the tenderness that should characterize the restoration of an erring brother: "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."

Robert Milligan: "Nothing can be more plainly taught in the scriptures than that it is the duty of the church to withdraw her fellowship from every member who persists in a disorderly course of conduct."

M. M. Davis: "An impure church can never represent the pure Christ. She is to be without 'spot or wrinkle' and free from 'blemish': She is to be 'a city set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid' (Matt. 5:14). She is to be the 'chaste virgin of Christ' (2 Cor. 11:12) ."

Alexander Campbell: "To cut off an offender is good; to cure him is better; but to prevent him falling is best of all. The Christian spirit and system alike inculcate all vigilance in preventing; all expedition in healing offenses and all firmness in removing incorrigible offenders."

#### **POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

Historical background.  
Outline of the lesson.  
Lesson context.  
Meaning of lesson subject.  
Golden Text explained.

Design of discipline.  
 What to be done with those who cause division.  
 Purpose and design of false teachers mentioned.  
 The Corinthian case of discipline.  
 Procedure commanded by Paul.  
 Results of this discipline.  
 Purpose of it.  
 Duty of church toward offender.  
 What to be done with disorderly.  
 Who are disorderly?

### Lesson XI—December 15, 1946

#### AUTONOMY OF THE CHURCH 1 Cor. 5:7-12; 2 Cor. 8:18-21; Phil. 4:15, 16

DEVOTIONAL READING.—2 John 4-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem." (Rom. 15:26.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

December	9.	M	Church in Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7)
December	10.	T	Church in Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)
December	11.	W	Church in Pergamum (Rev. 2:12-17)
December	12.	T	Church in Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29)
December	13.	F	Church in Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6)
December	14.	S	Church in Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-15)
December	15.	S	Church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 57 and 62.

PLACES -Ephesus, Macedonia, and Rome.

PERSONS.—Paul, the churches in Corinth and Philippi.

#### Lesson Text

7 Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ:

8 Wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators;

10 Not at all meaning with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world:

11 But as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat.

12 For what have I to do with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?

18 And we have sent together with him the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches;

19 And not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord, and to show our readiness:

20 Avoiding this, that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us:

21 For we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.  
15 And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only;  
16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need.

### **LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Christians Admonished to Have No Fellowship with Ungodly Brethren (Verses 7-12).
- II. Providing Things Honest in the Sight of All Men (2 Cor. 8:18,21).
- III. Generosity of the Philippian Church (Phil. 4:15, 16).

### **CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

For a discussion of the historical background for this lesson, see Lessons II and V in this quarter. Additional material on 1 Cor. 5 will also be found in the lesson for last Lord's day. Paul's labors in Corinth are discussed in the lesson for September 22, and an account of the establishment of the church in Philippi will be found in Lesson XI, Third Quarter, "Conversion of the Jailer." Other facts touching these churches will be presented in connection with the exposition of this lesson.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

The word "autonomy" means "quality or state of being autonomous, right of self-government, a self-governing state." The "autonomy" of the church is the right of the church to function as an independent body recognizing only Christ as its head. The scriptures teach the autonomy of the church and its right to function independently of any other body on earth. For this reason, churches of Christ recognize no ecclesiastical head on earth, nor do they delegate their rights to any council, synod, or conference. There is no higher organization on earth than the local church. The church, with its elders to oversee it, the deacons to serve, and the evangelists to proclaim the word is an independent entity and answerable only to Christ.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem." (Rom. 15:26.) Paul labored at length in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia. (See Lessons X and XII, Third Quarter.) When these brethren heard of the distress that was occasioned in Judaea because of a famine in those parts, they determined to send relief. There were many poor saints in Jerusalem at this time. The brethren there had undergone many persecutions and had likely been spoiled of their goods. The Gentile churches had profited by the fact that the Jews had brought the gospel to them, and they determined to repay in part this obligation by sending to their needs in a financial way. Paul explains it thus: "It hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things." (Rom. 15:



27.) Concerning this contribution, see 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8:1, and 9:2. For another such contribution for the poor in Jerusalem, see Acts 11:27-30. It should be noted that there was no elaborate organization for the discharge of these charitable functions. The contributions were sent directly to the elders by the churches who raised the offering. This is the New Testament method of functioning. We should be highly suspicious of any scheme that requires the setting up of an organization independent of the church in order to accomplish its work.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

The self-sufficiency of the church in organization, work, worship and every function required of it by the Lord should be emphasized. This lesson is much needed today. Religious secular organizations are always trying to encroach on the function of the New Testament church, interfere with its obligations, and attempt to discharge some of its functions. The church is the only organization authorized to discharge the responsibilities of the Lord's people.

When brethren form organizations independently of the church to do the work of the church, however worthy their aims and right their designs, they are engaged in that which is sinful. All ecclesiasticism is wrong. Any movement to force churches of Christ to bow to the behests of any paper, clique, or group in the church is ecclesiasticism. There is a very definite trend in this direction in the brotherhood today. In some of the larger centers groups of preachers meet and formulate an attitude and then demand that the churches support them in such attitude, and if they will not, the churches are stigmatized and accused of holding to false doctrines. Preachers have no right to exercise any such powers over the free churches of Christ. Only the church itself, through its divinely authorized elders, has the right to formulate its policies. And in so doing is answerable only to the Lord. The teachers should impress these principles upon their classes as strongly as possible.

### **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

#### **I. Christians Admonished to Have No Fellowship with Ungodly Brethren (Verses 7-12)**

Chapter 5 of Paul's first epistle to the church in Corinth deals at length with the incestuous offender. For a full discussion of this incident and the instructions delivered to the church by Paul in connection with it, see lesson for last Lord's day. In tolerating the sinful man in their fellowship, they were becoming partakers of his evil deeds. Paul reminds them of this as follows, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" Leaven has always been a type of evil, illustrating the hidden, constant way in which it spreads. To the Jew, it was a symbol of the corruption of Egypt, and he was directed, just before the observance of the Passover Feast, to search his house diligently for it and remove it. Paul uses this well-known fact to impress upon the Corinthian church the necessity of removing every semblance of evil from among them in order that they should not be contaminated. Said he, "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ: wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with

the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Our Passover is Christ. And, as the Jew was required to cast out all leaven before he could acceptably keep the feast, so we too must also cast out the leaven of sin before we can keep the festival of the Christian life. The reference here is not to the Lord's Supper. There is no article in the Greek before the word "feast." Christ is a perpetual sacrifice, an ever-present paschal lamb; the feast, therefore, is always in progress. This is a strong exhortation to purge the church of all ungodliness and corruption. The reasons why this should be done are many. (1) To keep the whole church from being contaminated; (2) for the good of the offenders; (3) that the world may see that the church will not permit sin unrebuked to remain.

The attitude toward those in the church who live lives of sin is next dealt with by the apostle: "I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators; not at all meaning with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world." The allusion to an epistle earlier than the present one leads to the conclusion that Paul evidently addressed a letter to the church in Corinth before the one we style First Corinthians. In this epistle he had directed that fornicators and backsliders in the church be treated as outcasts, and had admonished the church to have no association with such. The brethren had misunderstood what the apostle had said regarding this, assuming that he meant all such, whether in the church or out; and they had concluded that this was advice so impractical that it could be carried out only by leaving the world and going to some other, since this world is so steeped in sin. But Paul clarifies the matter in this passage by assuring them that he was not talking about those of this class in the world, but in the church: "but as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat." Of course, since the brethren were of necessity thrown in contact with evil men of the world in their daily business contacts, they could not avoid association with such characters. Paul concedes that it would indeed be necessary for them to go out of the world. He intended the restriction to apply only to brethren, "if any man that is named a brother . " he explains. This means that children of God are to have no exchange of hospitality with those of their brethren who live such lives as that described in this passage. They are not to keep company with them; no, not even to eat with them. Eat what? Some say the Lord's Supper, thus assuming "close communion." The reference here is not to the Lord's Supper, but to any meal. We have no right to say who may, and who may not, eat at the Lord's table; but we do have the right to say who may, and who may not, eat at our own, and it is to this sort of eating that the apostle alludes. This advice, when followed, lends force to discipline and indicates to the world that the church will not tolerate ungodliness in its midst. Unfortunately, it is followed all too little these days. How many congregations enforce the injunctions of this passage? How many Christians refuse to eat with backsliders today? This passage is clear and decisive of the matter and ought to be followed.

**II. Providing Things Honest in the Sight of All Men (2 Cor. 8:18-21)**

We have already referred to the collection that was taken for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. This is the contribution to which the apostle alludes in 1 Cor. 16:2. For the need of such a contribution, see under "Golden Text Explained." This collection was gathered from among the churches in Macedonia and Achaia. (Rom. 15:26.) In the first verses of 2 Cor. 8, the apostle exhorts the Corinthians to proceed with the collection and reminds them of the liberality that had characterized the Macedonian churches in raising their share of it. (See 2 Cor. 8:1-17.) Their liberality has never been excelled. To prove to the brethren his own disinterestedness in the matter and to eliminate any suspicion that might attach to his own handling of the funds, he arranged for others to go along with the money: "And we have sent together with him [Titus] the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches." (2 Cor. 8:18.) This brother is not named, and so we cannot be sure to whom the apostle alluded. Some argue quite plausibly that it was Luke. He was at Philippi about this time and was among those who accompanied Paul from Macedonia to Jerusalem (Acts 20:2-6), "and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord, and to show our readiness." Whoever this brother was he had not only Paul's commendation, but the approval of the churches, having been selected by them to travel with Titus in collecting the contribution. "He was appointed that the glory of Christ might not be tarnished by any suspicion that the money was raised for selfish purposes, and that Paul's zeal to raise the money might not be regarded with evil surmises." (McGarvey.) The purpose of this, Paul explains, was that "avoiding this, that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us: for we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." Paul was glad to have this brother and Titus to accompany him in order that no one would have occasion to attribute to him improper motives. Brethren whose duty it is to handle funds for the Lord should see to it that their actions are such as not to raise suspicion. That there was a third brother, also unknown to us, who went along, is seen from the following, "And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have many times proved earnest in many things, but now much more earnest, by reason of the great confidence which he hath in you." Whoever he was, he also had the commendation of Paul and of the church.

In line with the fact that our lesson today deals with the autonomy of the church, we point out that the contribution here alluded to was raised wholly without the high pressure organizational methods characteristic of today. There was no organization at all; the churches, in their own capacity, raised the funds, and they were gathered by brethren specially appointed for the purpose. This is the Lord's method of raising money, and it will suffice in any case. There is no place for charitable organizations in the work of the New Testament church. It is the only charitable organization that the Lord authorizes or that is needed to do the work the Lord ex-

pects his people today to do. Two practical lessons follow from this section: (1) The simple means used to raise these funds; (2) honest measures followed to avoid suspicion.

### **III. Generosity of the Philippian Church (Phil. 4:15, 16)**

See Lesson V, Fourth Quarter, for an account of the founding of the church in Philippi, and Paul's great regard for them. We have here an indication of the reason for Paul's appreciation of their faithfulness and fidelity in the Christian life: "And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need." Thus, even from the very first of their Christian life, they had nobly and generously given of their means to aid Paul in the preaching of the gospel. After leaving Philippi, Paul went to Thessalonica. (Acts 17.) While there the newly founded church in Philippi sent him contributions on at least two occasions. They also aided him later in Corinth. (2 Cor. 11:9.) At a time when no other church felt sufficient interest to assist him, the Philippian brethren were sending once and again to his needs. He speaks of the "fellowship" with him in the matter of giving and receiving. The word "fellowship" means partnership, joint participation. Paul felt that the brethren, in contributing to his needs, were partners of his in the work he was doing.

Here, to we see the simple manner in which the church in Philippi joined with Paul in the work of preaching the gospel.

There was no "missionary society" in evidence, and none was needed; the brethren simply raised the money and sent it directly to Paul. This is the way it should be done today. No organization is needed to accomplish the work the Lord has authorized the church to do. When men become dissatisfied with God's arrangement and set up one of their own, they have already crossed the threshold to apostasy. Let us be satisfied with the Lord's manner of doing things.

### **POINTS FOR EMPHASIS**

- The historical background.
- The outline of the lesson.
- The context.
- Subject of the lesson explained.
- Meaning of the Golden Text.
- Self-sufficiency of the church.
- Dangerous trends today.
- Context of 1 Cor. 5:7-12.
- Use of term "leaven."
- Paul's advice to Corinthian church.
- Former letter of Paul to Corinth, and their misunderstanding.
- What Paul really meant.
- What this requires us to do regarding erring brethren.
- What is meant by word "eat" in this passage.
- Context of 2 Cor. 8:18-21.
- Need for the contribution.
- Means by which it was raised.
- Why Paul desired others to accompany him.
- Lesson in this for us today.

How this indicates autonomy of the church.  
 Two practical lessons learned from this.  
 Paul's regard for Philippian church.  
 Reasons for this.  
 Meaning of word "fellowship."  
 Why Philippians had fellowship with Paul.  
 Why missionary societies are not needed.

### Lesson XII—December 22, 1946

#### WOMAN'S WORK IN THE CHURCH

1 Cor. 14:33-36; Phil. 4:2, 3; 1 Tim. 2:9-15; Tit. 2:3-6

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Pet. 3:1-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things." (1 Tim. 3:11.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

December	16.	M	A Memorial of a Woman (Matt. 26:6-13)
December	17.	T	Women Ministering to Jesus (Matt. 27:49-56)
December	18.	W	Work of Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43)
December	19.	T	Hospitality of Lydia (Acts 16: ii-15)
December	20.	F	Priscilla Helping Apollos (Acts 18:24-26)
December	21.	S	Caring for Widows (1 Tim. 5:1-16)
December	22.	S	Peter Received (Acts 12:12-19)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 57 for First Corinthians; A.D. 62 for Philippians; A.D. 66 or 67 for First Timothy and Titus.

PLACES.—Corinth and Philippi.

PERSONS.—Paul and all Christians everywhere.

#### Lesson Text

33 For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints,  
 34 Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law.  
 35 And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church.  
 36 What? was it from you that the word of God went forth? or came it unto you alone?  
 2 I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord.  
 3 Yea, I beseech thee also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellowworkers, whose names are in the book of life.  
 9 In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment;  
 10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works.  
 11 Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection.  
 12 But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness.  
 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve;  
 14 And Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression:

15 But she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.

3 That aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good;

4 That they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 To be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed:

6 The younger men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

### **LESSON TEXT OUTLINED**

- I. Women Commanded to Keep Silent (Verses 33-36).
- II. Certain Women Labor with Paul in the Gospel (Phil. 4:2, 3).
- III. Modest Apparel to Be Worn by Women (1 Tim. 2:9, 10).
- IV. Instructions Touching Women Teachers (Verses 11-15).
- V. Aged Women to Teach the Younger Women (Tit. 2:3-6).

### **CONTEXT OF THE LESSON**

For an account of the founding of the churches in Corinth and Philippi and the occasion for the epistles to them, see Lessons II and V for this quarter. Timothy and Titus were fellow laborers with Paul in the gospel, and both had letters written to them by him. See Phil. 2:19-23 for Paul's own statement of regard for Timothy, and 2 Cor. 8:16, 23 for a similar statement regarding Titus. The letters to Timothy and Titus are sometimes called "pastoral epistles," because they deal with problems of the church. Timothy and Titus were evangelists, and as such needed instructions regarding the organization, officers, and functions of the church. All preachers, elders, deacons, and Bible school teachers especially should study these letters.

### **SUBJECT OF THE LESSON EXPLAINED**

By "Woman's Work in the Church" is meant the extent to which woman may actively participate in the affairs of the church. It will be seen that the Holy Spirit has seen fit to restrict her activities, and the extent of those restrictions, the things permissible, and the obligations required of her are to be considered by us today.

### **THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED**

"Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things." (1 Tim. 3:11.) For the class of women likely referred to in this particular passage, see this verse expounded in the lesson for December 1, "Elders and Deacons of the Church." Those thus described are to be grave, sober-minded; possessing that poise and dignity that indicate a stable character; not slanderers, not given to gossiping or tattling; temperate, moderate in all the affairs of life; faithful in all things, manifesting fidelity in all the duties of life.

### **HELPS FOR TEACHERS**

This is an unusually important lesson. Much misunderstanding obtains in the brotherhood regarding the proper sphere for women. Extremes may be seen on every hand. Some would forbid a woman to serve in any capacity; others allow her to function in matters forbidden by the Holy Spirit. The church is rent asunder over the question of women teachers in many communities. It is therefore

vitality important to teach this lesson in such fashion that the classes will be enabled to see exactly what the Lord requires of women and what he forbids them to do. All should be anxious to do only what he wants us to do in this and all other matters.

## **COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT**

### **I. Women Commanded to Keep Silent (Verses 33-36)**

"As in all the churches of the saints, let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." The following facts appear from this passage: (1) Women are required to be silent in the church; (2) they are not to speak; (3) if they would learn anything, they are to ask their husbands at home. The word "silence," in this passage, is absolute in its nature. It forbids the utterance of any sound. Thus, in the meeting here contemplated, women were required to be absolutely silent; not so much as to utter a word. If, therefore, the passage is applicable to us today, women violate it if they so much as utter a sound in the assembly. This would forbid them to sing, confess their faith in Christ, or do anything that requires the utterance of sound. Moreover, they are required to learn only from their husbands at home. This would forbid them to ask questions of men not their husbands or to learn anything elsewhere other than in the manner designated.

It must be obvious to even the casual student that the meeting here under consideration is unlike any convened by us today. An examination of the context will lead irresistibly to this conclusion. Chapters 12, 13, and 14 of First Corinthians deal at length with the subject of spiritual gifts and their exercise. This is particularly true of the fourteenth chapter. See verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 13, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 37, 39. It will be recalled that at the time this chapter was written the New Testament had not been completed. The brethren were dependent on revelations for their information, and meetings were assembled for the purpose of receiving them. The meeting under consideration in this chapter was such a meeting. For example, a prophet is before the church receiving a revelation. His wife, in the audience, does not fully understand and is prompted to interrupt. This, Paul forbids, telling her to await a more opportune time at home. Now, however, our revelation is complete; the New Testament contains the sum of all information needed. A woman, therefore, has access to as much information as the man has. Why should a woman ask a man anything today unless it is because she recognizes that he has studied more and therefore knows more than she does?

### **II. Certain Women Labor with Paul in the Gospel (Phil. 4:2, 3)**

"I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yea, I beseech thee also, true yokefellow, help those women, for they labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life." Euodia and Syntyche were two good women in the church

in Philippi who were apparently estranged, and Paul exhorts them to eliminate their differences and be of the same mind in the Lord. Note the repetition of the word "beseech." Women were prominent in the Philippian church; the first converts were Lydia and her household. Paul evidently alludes to Euodia and Syntyche in making mention of women who labored with him in the gospel. Adam Clarke thinks that Euodia was a man, Syntyche his wife, but this is unlikely. It is a debatable question as to what is included in the words, "labored with me in the gospel." Those who oppose any participation of women in teaching insist that all they did was to keep house for Paul, launder his shirts, etc.! On this theory when one hires a negro maid to keep house for him while he preaches, the negro maid is laboring with him in the gospel. Or, when a preacher sends his shirts to the laundry, the laundry is laboring with him in the gospel! It is certain that their assistance must have been in a much more direct way than this. Any religious activity contributing directly to the spread of the gospel would be described as "laboring in the gospel-"

### **III. Modest Apparel to Be Worn by Women (1 Tim. 2:9, 10)**

"In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works." This is an admonition to women to give their attention to simple attire, to array themselves in garments of modest apparel which do not attract attention. This is to be done with "shamefastness," a shrinking from all that is brash and indelicate; and in "sobriety," the exercise of self-restraint, that keeps one from yielding to vain impulses. The braided hair referred to was a style of hair-do where strands of gold were weaved into the hair, a practice to which Gentile women in the apostolic age were much given. Such vain and idle show is inconsistent with the character of godly women. Inordinate and vain display is never in keeping with the attitude that should characterize women who profess godliness. They are to demonstrate what they are, not by such displays, but in good works. Peter wrote to the same end, "In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behavior of their wives; beholding your chaste behavior coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." (1 Pet. 3:1-4.)

### **IV. Instructions Touching Women Teachers (Verses 11-15)**

"Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness." Women in this passage are (1) to learn in quietness with all subjection; (2) they are not to teach, nor (3) have dominion over a man. It must be obvious that this passage is conditional and limited in its application. For, if it be insisted that the prohibitions here set forth are always and everywhere applicable, a woman could neither teach nor exercise control over her own



children, a thing she is commanded to do elsewhere in the scriptures. Moreover, it is certain that women did participate in teaching in the apostolic age. It is said that women would prophesy (Joel 2:28), did prophesy (Acts 21:9), and since to prophesy is to edify (1 Cor. 14:3), and to edify is to teach, women taught in the apostolic age. The difficulty cannot be got over by urging that the teaching here forbidden is public or in the church, for she is forbidden to exercise dominion in the same place she is forbidden to teach. If she may teach elsewhere other than the places above mentioned, then she may also exercise dominion (even over her husband) elsewhere other than the places mentioned! This, of course, is not right. The solution of the problem is to be found in the nature of the teaching here forbidden. The word teach, in this passage, is from the Greek word "*didasko*," and Thayer says it means to "deliver didactic discourses." This, women are forbidden to do. However, Priscilla assisted in the teaching of Apollos, a gospel preacher in error (Acts 18:24-26), and the word there translated "expounded" (Revised Version) means to explain, set forth, and is not the same Greek word as that used in this passage. Women may, therefore, "expound," explain, set forth the scriptures, as did Priscilla, when such does not involve the usurpation of authority over men, but they are forbidden to deliver didactic discourses.

The reason for this prohibition the apostle explains as follows: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety." Though Adam was first in the order of creation, the woman was the first to succumb to the seduction of the serpent; and for this reason the burden of childbearing was laid on the woman. Many explanations have been offered touching the significance of the words, "She shall be saved through her childbearing." Some of them follow: (1) Saved by bringing Christ, the Savior, into the world. (2) Saved from the dangers in childbearing. (3) Saved by raising children. (4) Saved by discharging her function, which is childbearing (5) Saved by staying in her place and discharging the duties God has assigned her. This writer subscribes to (5) as the probable meaning of the statement. The passage does not refer to any one woman, but to women in general. Certainly it is a foolish position that would deny to any woman the possibility of salvation simply because she is unable to bear children.

### **V. Aged Women to Teach the Younger Women (Tit. 2:3-6)**

Titus is instructed to teach the aged men to be "temperate, grave, sober-minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience: that aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good; that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be soberminded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." It will be noted that this passage, with reference to the activities of aged women, sets forth: (1) their qualifications, (a) reverent in demeanor; (b) not slanderers; (c) not enslaved to wine; (d) teach-

ers of that which is good. (2) Their obligations, (a) train young women; (b) see to it that the word of God is not blasphemed. This passage, beyond all doubt, provides for class teaching, in that it (1) designates those who are to do the teaching; (2) points out the subject matter to be taught; (3) and names those who are to be taught. It is impossible to set forth the procedure to follow in obeying the injunctions of this passage without describing a ladies' Bible class in so doing! Here is a fruitful field for activity on the part of aged and experienced women in the church.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

The historical background.  
 The outline of the lesson.  
 The lesson context.  
 Significance of the lesson.  
 Meaning of Golden Text.  
 Why this is an important lesson.  
 Context and meaning of 1 Cor. 14:33-36.  
 A discussion of Phil. 4:2, 3.  
 Type of apparel enjoined.  
 Instructions about women teachers.  
 Meaning of words, "Saved through her childbearing."  
 Summary of 1 Tim. 2:9-15.  
 Duties of aged women; lessons from this.

### Lesson XIII—December 29, 1946

#### CHURCH FINANCE

**1 Cor. 9:9-14; 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 9:6-11**

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 John 3:13-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7.)

#### Helps for Lesson Study Daily Bible Readings

December	23.	M	Laying Up Treasures (Matt. 6:19-24)
December	24.	T	Paul's Liberty (1 Cor. 9:15-23)
December	25.	W	Corinth Helping Paul (1 Cor. 16:5-9)
December	26.	T	Liberality of Macedonians (2 Cor. 8:1-7)
December	27.	F	Equality of Giving (2 Cor. 8:9-17)
December	28.	S	The Grace of Giving (2 Cor. 8:16-24)
December	29.	S	Ministering to the Saints (2 Cor. 9:1-5)

#### Historical Background

TIME.—A.D. 57.

PLACES.—First Corinthians was written from Ephesus; Second Corinthians from some place in Macedonia.

PERSONS.—Paul and the church in Corinth.

#### Lesson Text

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. Is it for the oxen that God careth,

10 Or saith he it assuredly for our sake? Yea, for our sake it was written: because he that ploweth ought to plow in hope, and he that thresheth, to thresh in hope of partaking.

11 If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things

12 If others partake of this right over you, do not we yet more? Nevertheless we did not use this right; but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.

13 Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar?

14 Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel.

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye.

2 Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.

3 And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem:

4 And if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me.

6 But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work:

9 As it is written, He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor; His righteousness abideth for ever.

10 And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness:

11 Ye being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God.

### LESSON TEXT OUTLINED

- I. They That Preach the Gospel to Live of the Gospel (Verses 9-14).
- II. The Collection for the Saints (1 Cor. 16:1-4) .
- III. An Abundant Harvest Promised to the Cheerful and Liberal Giver (2 Cor. 9:6-11) .

### CONTEXT OF THE LESSON

In earlier lessons in this series we have called attention to the fact that false teachers went among the churches and sought to impeach the testimony of Paul by questioning his apostleship. Various charges were lodged against him, one being that he virtually admitted not being an apostle by the fact that he did not accept support from those to whom he preached. Paul considered that he had not demanded support, but explained that it was for an entirely different reason than that alleged. Said he, "When I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel without charge, so as not to use to the full my right in the gospel." Never could his enemies accuse him of mercenary motives in preaching, since he would not accept support therefor. (1 Cor. 9:15-23.) 1 Cor. 9:9-14, is a justification of his right to accept support from the church, even though he had waived it. The great collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem is dealt with in 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 9:6-11, and the principles and methods governing the raising of the same are set forth. Other passages dealing with this same collection are Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8 and 9.

## THE GOLDEN TEXT EXPLAINED

"Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7.) Giving, to be acceptable, must therefore be (1) according to a purpose already formed in the heart; (2) not grudgingly, or of necessity; (3) and cheerfully. The first, as one hath purposed, suggests a previous determination, both with reference to one's intention to give, and the amount also. We see not how this can be done without some planning beforehand. Having reached a decision regarding the amount one is to give beforehand, is it wrong to make this purpose known to the elders? We think not; and believe, moreover, that such should be done in every congregation.

## HELPS FOR TEACHERS

Outstanding points in this lesson are: (1) The poor saints in Jerusalem; (2) the occasion for so many and so great collections in their behalf (Acts 2:44, 45; 4:32-37; 5:1-11; 6:1-4); (3) direct scriptures on the history of these collections (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. all of chapters 8 and 9, and 12:17, 18; Rom. 15:25-29; Acts 24:17) . Important considerations in this study are: (1) the extent of the territory covered; (2) the long period of time in which the campaign was prosecuted; (3) the number of churches participating; (4) the great principles underlying their cooperation; (5) the number and character of the leaders who engineered its details; (6) the wisdom of the methods employed; (7) the lessons incidentally suggested; (8) the motives to which appeals were made; (9) the great object attained, and the mighty reflex influences put in motion. Questions arising from this study are, What was the ground of the obligation on the Gentile churches to make this contribution? Who were Paul's associates in prosecuting it? What were the rules governing, and motives prompting it? What steps were taken to guard against misapprehension concerning the handling of the collection? What principles are applicable to other enterprises in the kingdom of God? What were the varied results of the campaign?

## COMMENTS ON THE LESSON TEXT

### I. They That Preach the Gospel to Live of the Gospel (Verses 9-14)

The whole of First Corinthians 9 is an answer to the insinuations of the Judaizers. 1 Cor. 9:9-14 is a justification of his right to live by the gospel while preaching it. See the "Context of the Lesson" for the reason why Paul waived this right. In order to show the principle involved, the apostle mentions several illustrations: "What soldier ever serveth at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? . . . For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." In the East, it has always been the custom to pay vinedressers and shepherds from the fruit of their labors. Work without pay would foster rascality, and it is therefore an unhealthy principle to use in church matters. Next the apostle shows that

it was in harmony with the law of Moses to allow wages for work, provision being made that the ox not be muzzled. Grain in the East has always been threshed by driving oxen over it, and the law forbade an owner to put muzzles on his animals while engaged in such work, the small amount the oxen would eat being deemed justifiable for such work. The apostle then asks, "Is it for the oxen that God careth, or saith he it assuredly for our sake? Yea, for our sake it was written: because he that ploweth ought to plow in hope, and he that thresheth, to thresh in hope of partaking." Brother McGarvey says, "Those fond of carping and caviling have attempted to use this passage to prove that Paul asserts that God does not care for animals. Such a view is abundantly contradicted by scripture (Job 38:41; Ps. 147:9; Matt. 6:26; Luke 12:24). Paul's meaning is clear. In giving the law, God's proximate design was to care for oxen, but his ultimate design was to enforce the principle that labor should not go unrewarded; that each workman might discharge his task in cheerful expectation that he would receive wages for his employment. Paul asserts that God does not legislate for oxen and forget men."

The law of exchange, the apostle next alleges, justifies the right of a preacher to receive support for his preaching: "If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we should reap your carnal things? If others partake of this right over you, do not we yet more? Nevertheless we did not use this right; but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ." Priests, officiating in service at the altar, ate of the things of the altar: "Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar?" This was a well known principle of the law of Moses. (See Num. 18:8-13; Deut. 8:1.) Finally, the apostle points out that Christ himself provided that those who preach should be supported: "Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." This alone would have been sufficient to establish his claim, since the Corinthians professed to follow Christ; but the other arguments are offered to show conclusively the principle involved. Summarizing, this section raises this question: Should preachers be supported in preaching the gospel? The following arguments are presented to show that they should be: (1) wages for service is the rule in all employment; in proof of this three instances are cited, the soldier, the vinedresser, the shepherd-(verse 7). (2) The law of Moses allowed wages for work (verses 9, 10). (3) The law of exchange demands an equivalent for value received (verse 11). (4) The concessions made in supporting others inferior to Paul stopped the Corinthians from denying the same right to him (verse 12). (5) Priests, whose office is, like the apostolic office, purely sacred, were universally maintained by sharing in the sacrifices which they offered. (6) Christ himself ordained that ministers should be supported by those they serve (verses 13, 14).

## **II. The Collection for the Saints (1 Cor. 16:1-4)**

The liberality with which the Jerusalem church supported the brethren shortly after its establishment; the persecutions that came upon it, and the financial stress of the times all tended to impoverish

the church in that city, and on several occasions, churches in Asia Minor and Europe sent to their support. (See Acts 2:44, 45; 4:37; 5:1; 8:4; 11:28-30.) To relieve this condition, and to provide a more cordial relation between the Jewish and Gentile churches, Paul set about raising an offering among Gentile churches for the poor saints in Jerusalem. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia [in Asia Minor], so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." The Greek word translated "in store" means literally, "put into the treasury." This was to be one on "the first day of the week." The apostolic church met regularly on this day (Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10; see also John 20:19-26). This passage, together with 2 Cor. 8 and 9, sets forth Paul's rules touching the contribution: (1) As to time: on the first day of the week. (2) As to amount: according as God hath prospered him (1 Cor. 16:2); "according as a man hath, not according as he hath not" (2 Cor. 8:12). (3) As to attitude: of a willing mind (2 Cor. 8:12). (4) A planned act: i.e., according to a previous purpose (2 Cor. 9:7). (5) A cheerful act: not grudgingly, or of necessity (2 Cor. 9:7). (6) Done to promote equality (2 Cor. 8:13, 14). (7) A personal act: Let each one of you (1 Cor. 16:2).

The order to give, like that to the Galatian churches, was delivered by Paul, but he did not wish to be made custodian of the offering, lest some one should attribute to him unworthy motives in the raising of it: "And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me." Thus each church was directed to name its own messenger to carry the offering to the poor saints in Jerusalem. Paul, being acquainted with the saints in Judaea, was not averse to accompanying them, but he did not wish to be made solely responsible for the journey for the reasons above cited. It is interesting to note the steps taken by Paul to insure that the matter would be prosecuted in a manner above suspicion: (1) Only the most discreet and trustworthy men were selected to gather the offering (2 Cor. 8:16-18); (2) the churches themselves appointed the messengers who should have charge of the funds collected (2 Cor. 8:19-23); (3) a brother, "whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches," was selected (2 Cor. 8:18). This was most likely Luke.

The higher motives to which Paul appealed in raising this offering are: (1) The example of the Lord (2 Cor. 8:9). (2) We shall reap as we sow (2 Cor. 9:6). (3) God's grace will care for us (2 Cor. 9:8). (4) It is a deed of righteousness (2 Cor. 9:9, 10). (5) Poor saints were not only helped, but occasion for thanksgiving to God supplied (2 Cor. 9:11, 12). (6) God is glorified because of the giver's subjection to God (2 Cor. 9:13). (7) They pray for them and long after them (2 Cor. 9:14). (8) Giving is a grace in which we are to abound (2 Cor. 8:7).

### **III. An Abundant Harvest Promised to the Cheerful and Liberal Giver (2 Cor. 9:6-11)**

Chapters 8 and 9, of Second Corinthians, deal with the motives prompting the Corinthians to give of their means to the great col-

lection being prosecuted by Paul on behalf of the poor saints in Jerusalem. They had indicated a willingness to give a year before this, and Paul now calls upon them to perform their promise, setting forth reasons why they should do so. In this particular section we are to note the reflex blessing derived from generous and unselfish giving.

"But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." The same law of sowing that obtains in the physical world operates with equal effect in the moral and spiritual realm. (Gal. 6:7, 8.) Those who are stingy and niggardly in their giving to others will receive in like measure from the Lord; while those who are generous in their giving to others are promised bountiful blessings from the Lord. Giving is, therefore, not a sacrifice, but rather a sowing. As the farmer gives his seed to the earth, and then reaps as he has sown, so does the liberal giver reap of his giving from the Lord. See this principle expressed at length in Ex. 25:2; 1 Chron. 29:14, 17; Ps. 102:9; Luke 6:38; Acts 20:35. Hence, to give acceptably, it is to be done as follows, Every man, "according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." Only those who thus give are like the Lord; for he is (1) a giving God; (2) a God who gives liberally; (3) a God who gives to all; and (4) a God who does not upbraid following his gifts. (James 1:5.) The blessings that will flow from such giving are thus described: "And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work: as it is written, He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness abideth for ever." The quotation is from Psalm 112:9. It shows that God is eminently able to bestow every blessing, whether temporal or spiritual, thus enabling him to bestow upon those who are generous every good thing needful to make them abound unto every good work.

### POINTS FOR EMPHASIS

- The historical background.
- The lesson text outlined.
- The context of the lesson.
- Golden text explained.
- Outstanding points in the lesson.
- Nature of First Corinthians 9.
- The six arguments Paul advanced why preachers should be supported.
- Occasion for the great collection.
- Paul's rules touching the collection.
- Why Paul did not desire to be custodian of the collection.
- Steps taken to insure the matter above suspicion.
- Higher motives to which Paul appealed.
- Subject matter of Second Corinthians 8 and 9.
- Paul's argument showing an abundant harvest promised the liberal giver.