

Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary

ON

UNIFORM BIBLE LESSONS

FOR THE

CHURCHES OF CHRIST

1953

This commentary is based on the Uniform Bible Lessons for the Churches of Christ.

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P R E F A C E

This is the eighth volume of TEACHER'S ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY on the Bible School Lessons for churches of Christ published by the Gospel Advocate Company. It is also the thirty-second annual volume on the Sunday school lessons published by this company for use in churches of Christ.

Three quarters of this volume deal with vital themes of the Scriptures which aid us in living the Christian life. The other quarter of the book is devoted to the study of the history of the period of Joshua and the Judges. It is necessary that we devote some time each year to the study of Old Testament in order that we may better understand the teachings of the New Testament.

Special attention is directed to some of the features of this volume. First, as usual, the work is intended primarily as a commentary on the lesson text. However, we have about equally divided the amount of space used on the lesson text and the balance of the lesson. The Golden Texts have been treated in such way as to be of assistance to young preachers and men who make talks before various groups of people. Another feature which will be helpful is general information on the subjects treated in the first twenty-six lessons of this volume. We believe this division to be worthy of the attention and special study of all who wish to go further into the study of the subject.

No one can study these great vital themes without being made better for that study and meditation. We commend these to the teachers and groups who use this book and ask that they be given kind and sympathetic consideration and that the material in this book be used as widely as possible, so *that* the greatest possible amount of good may be accomplished. If the lives of the teachers and their students are blessed through this work, the author will feel rewarded for his services.

THE AUTHOR.

LESSONS FOR 1953

FIRST QUARTER Vital Themes of the Scriptures

The Providence of God	Lesson 1—January 4	Matt. 6: 24-34
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bruits of the Christian Life	Lesson XIII—June 28	John 15: 1-8; Gal. 5: 22-26

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BIBLE DICTIONARY OF PROPER NAMES

Compiled by Roy H. Lanier

A

- Aar-on (enlightened), Heb. 7: 11. Brother of Moses, and first high priest of the Levitical order.
- A-bi-a-thar (The great one is Father), Mark 2: 26. High priest in the time of David, and the eleventh from Aaron.
- A-bib (sprouting), Ex. 13: 4. First month of the sacred year and seventh month of the civil year of the Hebrew calendar, corresponding with our April.
- A-bra-ham (father of a multitude), Gen. 18: 6. Founder of the Hebrew people, and the father of the faithful.
- A-haz (possessor), Isa. 7: 10. Eleventh king of Judah.
- A-him-e-lech (brother of the king), 1 Sam. 21: 1. The son of Ahitub, and high priest at Nob in the days of Saul and David. He gave David the shewbread to eat, and gave him the sword of Goliath.
- Al-phae-us (exchange), 1. The father of Levi, or Matthew, Mark 2: 14. 2. Father of James (the less), one of the apostles. Mark 3: 18.
- Andrew (manly), Matt. 10: 2. Son of Zebedee, who brought his brother, Peter, to the Lord.
- An-nas (merciful), John 18: 3. Jewish high priest before whom Jesus was first tried.
- A-pol-los (belonging to Apollo), Acts 18: 24. An eloquent preacher who knew only the baptism of John until taught more accurately by Aquila and Priscilla.
- Aq-ui-la (an eagle), Acts 18: 26. A tent maker who left Rome on account of persecution; a collaborer with Paul, and a teacher of Apollos.
- Ar-che-la-us (ruler of the people), Matt. 22: 22. Son of Herod the Great who ruled over Judea and Samaria when Joseph took Jesus to Galilee on his return from Egypt.
- As-syr-i-a, 2 Kings 17: 24. A powerful nation in the region of the Tigris River, with Nineveh as capital, that took the kingdom of Israel into captivity.

B

- Bab-y-lon (confusion), 2 Kings 24: 1. Capital of Chaldea; place of captivity of the kingdom of Judah for seventy years.
- Bar-thol-o-mew (son of Talmi), Matt. 10: 3. One of the twelve apostles, and probably the same as Nathanael.
- Be-el-ze-bub (lord of the dwelling), Matt. 12: 24. A heathen deity to whom the Jews ascribed the sovereignty of the evil spirits, and by whom they charged that Jesus cast out demons.
- Beth-a-ny (house of dates), Mark 14: 3. Home of Lazarus and his sisters, about two miles east of Jerusalem.
- Beth-le-hem (house of bread), Matt. 2: 5. The birthplace of Jesus, a village a few miles south of Jerusalem.
- Beth-pa-ge (house of unripe figs), Luke 19: 29. A village on the eastern slope of Mount of Olives, and near Bethany.
- Beth-sa-i-da (house of fish), John 1: 44. Home of Andrew, Peter, and Philip in Galilee.

C

- Caes-a-re-a Phi-lip-pi, Matt. 16: 13. One of the northernmost points of the travels of Jesus, and the place where Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ, the son of God.
- Ca-ia-phas (depression), John 18: 13. The son-in-law of Annas, and the high priest who condemned Jesus.
- Ca-na (reed), John 2:1. A town in Galilee, where Jesus performed his first miracle.
- Ca-naan (low flat), Gen. 10: 6. Home of the Jews after their deliverance from bondage in Egypt.
- Ca-per-na-um (town of Nahum), Matt. 17: 24. A city on the western shore of Sea of Galilee, and center of activities of Jesus in Galilee.
- Cle-o-pas, Luke 24: 18. One of the two disciples to whom Jesus appeared on the way to Emmaus.
- Clo-pas, John 19: 25. Same as Alphaeus, and father of James the less, one of the apostles.
- Cor-inth, 1 Cor. 1: 2. A city of Greece, where Paul established a church.

D

- Da-vid (beloved), Matt. 1: 6. Youngest son of Jesse; second king of Israel; and prominent ancestor of Jesus.
- Deb-o-rah, (bee, wasp), Judges 4: 4. A prominent woman in time of the judges, who led a successful military expedition.
- De-cap-o-lis (the ten cities), Mark 7: 31. A section of country to the south and east of the Sea of Galilee in which were located ten cities.
- Did-y-mus (the twin), John 21: 2. A surname of the apostle Thomas.
- Dis-per-sion (scattered). A term applied to the Jews who did not return from the captivity.

E

- Egypt, Ex. 12: 41. The northeastern part of Africa, and the place where Jesus was taken for safety from Herod.
- E-li-jah (Jehovah is my God), Mark 9: 4. A prophet in the time of Ahab, and one who was with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration.
- E-lis-a-beth (God is an oath), Luke 1: 5. Mother of John the Baptist.
- E-li-sha (God is salvation), 2 Kings 5: 8. Successor to Elijah, and the prophet who cured the leprosy of Naaman.
- Em-ma-us (warm spring), Luke 24: 13. A village northwest of Jerusalem, where Jesus appeared to two disciples after his resurrection.
- Eph-e-sus, Acts 19: 1. Capital of Asia, and a city where Paul established the church.
- E-phra-im (double fruitfulness), John 11: 54. A city sixteen miles northeast of Jerusalem where Jesus went into retirement.
- Eph-rath (fruitful), Gen. 35: 19; Micah 5: 2. Another name for Bethlehem, and the birthplace of Jesus.

F

- First-born, Ex. 13: 13. The first son born to

a family, who succeeded the father as head of the family, and received a double portion of the father's property.

First-fruits, 1 Cor. 15: 20. The first ripe fruits offered to Jehovah as a token that the whole will be devoted to him. Christ the first-fruits of the dead, and his resurrection a proof that all will be raised.

G

Gad-a-ra. Not mentioned in the Bible, but often used by writers to refer to the country of the Gadarenes.

Gad-a-renes, Matt. 8: 28. People of Gadara, known also as Gerasenes.

Gal-i-lee (circuit), Luke 4: 14. The northern division of Palestine west of Jordan River.

Gen-nes-a-ret (princess' garden), Mark 6: 53. Another name for the Sea of Galilee. Also the name of a section of country on the western shore of the lake.

Gen-tiles (nations, foreigners), Matt. 10: 5. A Hebrew word including all except Jews, and used to the exclusion of Jews and Samaritans in some texts.

Ger-a-sa. The land of the Gerasenes; also known as Gadara.

Ger-a-senes, Mark 5: 1. The people of Gerasa; the Gadarenes.

Ger-i-zim (waste places), Deut. 11: 29. The mountain where Samaritans worshiped.

Geth-sem-a-ne (oil press), Matt. 26: 36. A place, or garden, on the western slope of Mount of Olives, across Kidron from Jerusalem.

Go-mor-rah (submersion), Matt. 10: 14. One of the cities of the plain destroyed by fire and brimstone in the days of Abraham.

H

Ha-des (not to be seen), Luke 16: 23. Unseen abode of departed spirits between death and the resurrection.

He-brew (belonging to Eber), Jer. 34: 9. A name given to Abraham and his descendants.

Her-od. The name of an Idumaeen family given the rule over Palestine by the Caesars. 1. Herod the Great, Matt. 2: 3. The king who attempted to kill Jesus. 2. Herod Antipas, Matt. 14: 1. The king who beheaded John the Baptist. 3. Herod Agrippa I, Acts 12: 1. The king who killed James. 4. Herod Agrippa II, Acts 26: 13. The king before whom Paul was tried.

Hil-l-el (rich in praise). A great teacher in Israel who differed from Shammai on the question of divorce.

I

Im-man-u-el (God with us), Matt. 1: 23. A name Isaiah said would be given Jesus, the son of the virgin.

I-saac (laughter), Gen. 26: 1. The son of Abraham by Sarah.

I-sa-iah (Jehovah is salvation), Isa. 1: 1. The first of the major prophets.

Is-ra-el (he who striveth with God), Gen. 32: 28. A name given to Jacob and his posterity.

J

Ja-cob (supplanter), John 4: 12. Son of Isaac, and father of the twelve tribes.

James (same as Jacob), 1. Son of Zebedee, and an apostle. Matt. 10: 2. 2. Son of Alphaeus, and one of the apostles. 3. The brother of Jesus. Matt. 13: 55.

Je-ho-vah (the self-existent). Psalm 23: 1. A name for God, the meaning and derivation of which is very uncertain.

Jer-e-miah (whom Jehovah exalts), Jer. 1: 1. The second of the major prophets.

Jer-i-cho (place of fragrance), Matt. 20: 29. A city between Jerusalem and the Jordan River, the home of Zacchaeus the publican.

Je-ru-sa-lem (foundation of peace), Matt. 21: 1. Religious and political center of the Jews.

Jo-an-na (God-given), Luke 8: 3. The wife of Chuzas, Herod's steward.

John (whom Jehovah has graciously given). 1. Son of Zebedee, and brother of James. Matt. 10: 2. 2. John Mark, companion of Paul, and writer of the gospel by Mark. Acts 12: 3. The father of Peter, also called Jonas. John 1: 42. 4. John the Baptist. The forerunner of Jesus. Matt. 3: 1.

Jor-dan (descender), Mark 1: 5. The principal river of Palestine, where Jesus was baptized.

Jo-seph (increaser), Matt. 2: 19. 1. The husband of Mary, and foster-father of Jesus. 2. Joseph of Ar-i-ma-thae-a, John 19: 28. A secret disciple of Jesus.

Ju-das Is-car-i-ot (Judas means "praise," and Is-car-i-ot means "man of Kerioth"), Matt. 10: 4. One of the twelve apostles, and the betrayer of Jesus.

K

Kid-ron. A torrent, or valley, between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. It is also called the "Valley of Jehoshaphat."

L

Lawyer, Luke 11: 45. A term used of those scribes who were well versed in the law, and capable of teaching it.

Laz-a-rus (God has helped). 1. A beggar at the rich man's gate. Luke 16: 20. 2. Brother of Mary and Martha, of Bethany. John 11: 1.

Leb-a-non (white). Two ranges of mountains about ninety miles long with a valley of five to eight miles wide between. The western range is the "Libanus," or Lebanon, where Solomon got his timber; the eastern range is called "Anti-Libanus," or Lebanon, toward the sun rising.

Le-vites, Luke 10: 32. The tribe from which all priests were selected, and who took care of the tabernacle and temple. They were divided into three families, the Kohathites, the Merarites, and the Gershonites, from the three sons of Levi.

M

Magi, Matt. 2: 1. "Wise men" in King James and American Standard versions. Some good, worthy to be counsellors of

kings (Dan. 2: 2, 10-13), other evil, as Simon Magus (Acts 8: 9), and Elymas (Acts 13: 8).

Mary (Greek form of Hebrew Miriam, which means their rebellion). 1. The mother of Jesus. (Matt. 1: 18.) 2. Mag-da-le-ne. Luke 8: 2. 3. Sister of Lazarus. John 11: 1. 4. Wife of Clopas. John 19: 25. 5. The mother of John Mark. Acts 12: 12.

Mat-thew (God's gift), Matt. 10: 3. Also called Levi; a publican; called to be an apostle; and the writer of one of the gospel records.

Ma-thi-as (Greek form of the Hebrew Matthew), Acts 1: 26. The one chosen to the apostleship in the place of Judas.

Mir-i-am (their rebellion), Ex. 15: 20. Sister of Moses and Aaron, and a leader among the women during the wilderness wandering.

Mel-chiz-e-dek (king of righteousness), Heb. 7: 1. King and priest of Salem (later called Jerusalem) in the days of Abraham.

Mo-ses (drawn out), Mark 9: 4. Prophet, lawgiver, and deliverer of Israel from Egyptian bondage.

Mount Hermon (prominent, lofty). A mountain on the northeast border of Palestine, at the southern end of the Anti-Libanus range; thought by some to be the mount of transfiguration.

Mount of Olives, Matt. 26: 30. A mountain one mile east of Jerusalem.

Mount Tabor (height). A mountain rising 1,000 feet above the plain of Esdraelon, and six or eight miles due east of Nazareth.

N

Na-a-man (pleasantness, grace), 2 Kings 5: 1. A Syrian general who came to Elisha to be cured of leprosy.

Na-than-a-el (gift of God), John 1: 45. An early disciple of the Lord, and thought to be the same as Bartholomew, one of the apostles.

Naz-a-rene, Matt. 2: 23. An inhabitant of Nazareth.

Naz-a-reth (branch), Luke 4: 16. A town in Galilee, where Jesus grew up.

Nic-o-de-mus (conqueror of the people), John 3: 1. A ruler of the Jews who visited Jesus at night, and who helped Joseph of Arimathea bury the body of Jesus.

O

Ol-i-vet, Luke 19: 29. Same as the Mount of Olives.

P

Pal-es-tine (land of strangers). The word occurs four times in the King James Version, but not at all in the American Standard Version, which has Philistia. It is used to mean only a part of Canaan along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. But common usage today applies it to all of Canaan, the holy land.

Par-a-dise (orchard of pleasure), Luke 23: 43. Place of rest for the departed spirits of the righteous.

Pe-kah (open-eyed), Isa. 7: 1. Eighteenth king of Israel.

Pe-rae-a. A term not found in the Bible, but used of all the land east of the Jordan River between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.

Pe-ter (stone, rock), Matt. 10: 2. One of the twelve apostles, and an outstanding leader in the early days of the church.

Phar-i-sees (separated), Matt. 23: 13. A religious sect among the Jews who believed in angels, spirits, and the resurrection.

Philip (lover of horses). 1. One of the apostles. Matt. 10: 3. 2. The deacon and evangelist. Acts 6: 5.

Phoe-ni-ci-ans. People inhabiting a narrow strip of country running one hundred miles along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, beginning at Mount Carmel. Tyre and Sidon were the principal cities.

Pi-late (armed with a javelin), Luke 23: 1. The Roman ruler before whom Jesus was tried and condemned.

Pot-i-phar (belonging to the sun), Gen. 39: 1. Pharaoh's chief officer in the time of Joseph.

Pris-cil-la (diminutive of Prisca, ancient), Acts 18: 26. The wife of Aquila from Rome, and who helped to teach Apollos the gospel.

Pub-li-can, Luke 18: 10. One who gathered taxes for the Roman government.

R

Rab-bi (master), Mark 9: 5. A title of respect given teachers.

Rab-bo-ni (my master), John 20: 16. This seems to have been a more formal title than Rabbi.

Re-zin (stable, firm), Isa. 7: 4. A Syrian king.

S

Sad-du-ces, Matt. 22: 23. A religious sect, thought to be followers of one Zadok, who denied the existence of angels and spirits, and the resurrection.

Sa-lo-me (peaceful), Mark 15: 40. The wife of Zebedee. Matt. 27: 56; Mark 15: 40.

Sa-ma-ri-a (Shemer's watch-mountain), John 4: 4. Name of a city thirty miles north of Jerusalem, and of the district of Palestine between Galilee and Judaea.

Sa-mar-i-tans, Matt. 10: 5. The people of Samaria, sometimes distinguished from Jews and Gentiles.

Sarah (princess), Gen. 21: 10. The wife of Abraham, and mother of Isaac.

Sa-tan (adversary), 2 Cor. 4: 4. The god of this world, and the accuser of the saints.

Scribes (writers), Matt. 23: 15. Public writers, transcribers; specialists at transcribing and teaching the law of Moses.

Sep-tu-a-gint. A Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament in common use in the time of Christ.

Sham-ma-i. A great teacher among the Jews who disagreed with Hillel on the subject of divorce.

Si-mon (hearer). 1. Another name for Peter. John 1: 42. 2. The leper. Mark 14: 3. 3. The Pharisee. Luke 7: 36, 40. 4. The Cananaean, the Zealot. Acts 1: 13.

So-dom (place of lime), Matt. 11: 23. The home of Lot, destroyed by the Lord.

Sol-o-mon (peaceful), Matt. 6: 29. Son of David, and third king of Israel.

Su-san-na (a lily), Luke 8: 3. One of the women who ministered to Jesus.

Sy-char (prob. drunken), John 4: 5. A town in Samaria near Mt. Gerizim.

Sy-ro-phoe-ni-cian, Mark 7: 26. A Phoenician who lived in Syria.

T

Tabernacle, Feast of, John 7: 2. An annual feast of the Jews held on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, Tisri, our October, during which feast they lived in booths in memory of their wilderness wanderings.

Thad-dae-us, Matt. 10: 3. One of the apostles, called Judas the son of James in Luke 6: 16.

Thomas (twin), Matt. 10: 3. One of the twelve apostles.

Ti-be-ri-as, Sea of, John 6: 1. Another name for the Sea of Galilee.

Tis-ri. The seventh month of the Jewish calendar, corresponding to our October.

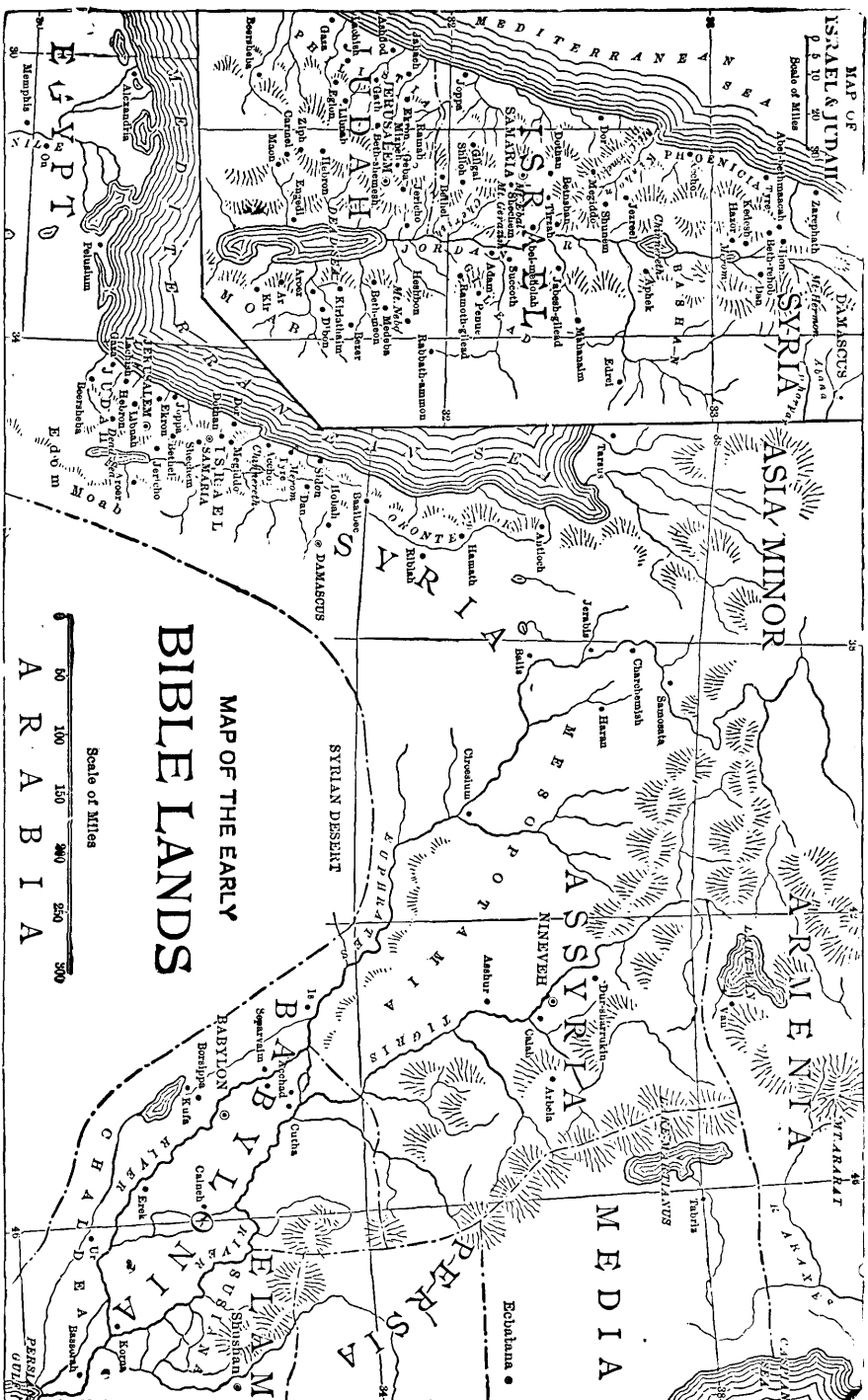
Tyre (a rock), Mark 7: 31. One of the chief cities of the Phoenicians, and the home of King Hiram.

Z

Zach-a-ri-as (Jehovah has remembered), Luke 1: 5. The father of John the Baptist.

Zar-e-phath (smelting house), 1 Kings 17: 8. A town in which Elijah lived during the drouth, and near to Tyre and Sidon.

Zeb-e-dee (Jehovah's gift), Mark 1: 19. The father of James and John, and the husband of Salome.



FIRST QUARTER

VITAL THEMES OF THE SCRIPTURES

Aim.—To acquaint the student with some of the most vital themes of the Bible, and to encourage those who have not done so to embrace them humbly, wholly and unreservedly.

Lesson I—January 4, 1953

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

The Lesson Text

Matt. 6: 24-34

24 No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?

26 Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they?

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

28 And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 Yet I say unto you, that even Sol'-o-mon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

31 Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 For after all these things do the Gen'tiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Golden Text.—*"Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you"* (1 Pet. 5:7.)

Devotional Reading.—Psalm 103: 8-14.

Daily Bible Readings

December 29. M.....	The Omnipotent Father (Isa. 40: 27-31)
December 30. T.....	The Providing Father (Matt. 6: 24-34)
December 31. W.....	The Chastening Father (Heb. 12: 5-11)
January 1. T.....	The Forgiving Father (Psalm 103: 1-13)
January 2. F.....	The Loving Father (John 3: 16-21)
January 3. S.....	The Faithful Father (1 Peter 4: 12-19)
January 4. S.....	The Blessed Father (Eph. 1: 1-3-22)

Time.—A.D. 27.

Place.—A mountain near Capernaum.

Persons.—Jesus and the multitude.

Golden Text Explained

1. Knowledge of God essential. Before we can cast our anxieties upon God, we must know that he is of

such character as will merit our faith in him to take care of us. First we would expect him to be wise

enough to understand our anxieties and to know how to relieve us of them. The apostle Paul calls him the only wise God (Rom. 16: 27) and in 1 Cor. 1: 25, he says that the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Next we would expect him to be a God of power, able to care for us in any circumstance and under all conditions. He is called the Almighty in Genesis 17: 1. He is spoken of as the Creator and Preserver of the universe. One who has that much power can be depended upon to care for us in all our needs. Next we would want to know if God is good. Paul exhorts us to behold both the goodness and severity of God. (Rom. 11:

22.) David says "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that take refuge in thee, before the sons of men!" (Psalm 31: 19.) He also says the earth is full of the loving-kindness of Jehovah. (Psalm 33: 5.) Hence, we may trust him to care for us in our anxieties. Next we learn of the omnipresence of God. Jeremiah 23: 24 says that God fills both the heavens and the earth. In Psalm

33 David says that Jehovah looks down from heaven and beholds all the sons of men and looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth. In Psalm 139: 1-12 we have a beautiful statement concerning the omnipresence of God. If God is both wise and powerful and good and if he fills the whole earth, he knows enough, is powerful enough, and is accessible enough to all his creatures to carry the burden of anxiety.

2. Casting All Anxiety. These harassing cares and anxieties are represented as a burden which is felt to be oppressively heavy and the sinking sufferer is represented as so transferring them to God as to obtain relief from their painful pressure. But are all our anxieties of whatever nature to be cast upon God? Some cares and anxieties result from cherishing false views as to what is necessary and conducive to happiness in ourselves and in others. Such are unlawful because founded in inordinate desires. These cares are not to be cast upon God. They are to be cast away from us. And there are other cares which we are not

warranted to cast upon God for another reason. God has laid them on us and he expects that we shall bear them. God would have his people without carefulness in the sense of painful useless anxiety, but he would not have them without thoughtfulness in the sense of considerate reflection. We are bound to exercise those faculties God has given us for discovering what is truth, what is falsehood, what is right, what is good, and what is evil. We are not to resign ourselves to mental inactivity and to expect that in some miraculous way, without our own agency, God is to lead us into truth and preserve us from error, show us what is duty and what is sin, give us what is fitted to make us happy and defend us from all that is fitted to injure us. He expects that we shall bear our burdens manfully and that we will hold up under our responsibilities to the extent of our abilities. It is beyond these necessary character building exercises that he promises to care for us and would have us cast our anxieties upon him. So the cares and anxieties which we are to cast upon God have reference to what properly belongs to God; that which lies beyond the range of human agency and ability. These anxieties may be connected either with our duty to God or the events connected with our lives. In reference to these duties we must (1) exercise care to discover what is our duty and (2) we are to exercise due care in the performance of our duty; but we are not to indulge in any anxiety as to whether we will be enabled, trusting in God, to perform any duty however difficult, to which God has been pleased to call us. As to the events of life, we should leave these to God trusting that he will lead us into such events of life as will properly cultivate our souls and fit them for dwelling with him. If he brings sorrow, we are to accept it humbly and willingly. If happiness comes our way, we are to accept that, praying that it may not lead us away into unlawful license and indulgence in the things of the flesh and of the world.

3. Motives to Cast Anxieties on God.

The first motive is our relation to

God. He is our Father we are his children, and as parents love their children, so our heavenly Father loves his children. This will encourage us to cast our anxieties upon him. Second, his record in the past should encourage us to cast our anxieties upon him. The Bible is full of ex-

amples of God caring for his people. And, third, his promises for the future. Again we have an abundance of evidence that God is willing to care for us in all circumstances of life and that he will do for us that which is abundantly above and beyond our power to do for ourselves.

Exposition of the Text

I. Proof of Providence (Matt. 6: 24-32)

No man 'can serve two masters. Notice Jesus does not say a man *should* not or *may* not serve two masters, but that a man cannot serve two masters. Such are the natures of God and mammon that it is impossible for man to serve both at once. The word mammon simply means material wealth in whatever form it may exist. One may possess material wealth and use it for the glory of God, but if we allow it to become our master we cease to be the servants of God.

Be not anxious for your life. With this verse Jesus begins a series of arguments calculated to induce us to trust in the providence of God. His first argument is that the life is worth more than food and the body more than raiment. God has given us life. He will therefore give us what is necessary to preserve that life. If he gives us the greater gift, Jesus encourages us to believe that he will give us the lesser gifts necessary to the sustaining of that greater gift.

Behold the birds of the heaven. A second reason Jesus gives for our trusting the providence of God is that the birds of the heaven that neither sow nor reap nor gather food into barns are cared for by our heavenly Father. He says that we are of much more value than the birds and if God so cares for the birds he will care for us who are of greater value than they. This is not to encourage us to be indolent sluggards, for we are told to consider the ant who provides her bread in the summer and gathers her food in the harvest. And Paul tells us that he that will not work shall not eat, and furthermore, that if we fail to provide for our own we have denied the faith and are worse than infidels. (Prov. 6: 6-8; 1 Tim. 5: 8; 2 Thess. 3: 10.) God

has not made it the duty of birds to gather their food in the summer to last them through the winter, but he has made it our duty to provide for ourselves under his provident care. However, Jesus here shows us that God does care for the birds who neither reap nor gather into barns and if he cares for them, certainly he will care for us provided we use the wisdom and the strength he gives to do for ourselves.

Add one cubit unto the measure of his life. The Authorized Version has the word *stature* instead of *life*. If that be right, Jesus argues that since we cannot grow a cubit taller we should not worry. This is a needless worry or anxiety and such things are to be left to God. In his providence he will give us that which is good for us. Our version seems to say that a man cannot add any years to his life, therefore, he ought not to be anxious about that over which he has no control and for which he is not responsible.

Anxious concerning raiment. Jesus is dealing with practical problems. What people eat and wear cause as much anxiety as anything else in life. Jesus points us to the lilies of the field that neither grow nor toil nor do they spin, that is, provide their own clothing, yet he says that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Solomon was known for his riches and for the splendid apparel that he wore. None could wish to wear more expensive apparel than King Solomon and yet our Lord assures us that in the providence of God we will be clothed with all that is necessary because God so clothes the lilies of the field. Again, Jesus contrasts the worth of the lily with our worth. The lily, or the grass, of the field lasts only for a day and when it is dry, it is fit for nothing but to kindle a fire to heat an oven for cooking. The children of

God are worth far more than this, hence they may expect their heavenly Father to take care of them; for if he cares for that which is of less value, surely he will care for that which is of greater value.

What shall we eat? In three short pointed questions Jesus covers the field of the anxieties of a vast majority of people. "What shall we eat? what shall we drink? wherewithal shall we be clothed?" These three inquiries engross the whole attention of those who are living without God in the world. "The belly and back of a worldling are his compound god; and these he worships in the lusts of the flesh, in the lust of the eye, and in the pride of life." (Adam Clarke.)

After all these things do the Gentiles seek. Jesus uses the word Gentile here in the commonly accepted Jewish meaning. It refers to people who are destitute of religion, unacquainted with the proper dependence on the providence of God. Jews looked upon Gentiles as dogs, wholly unworthy of the attention of God and certainly as not being the objects of the love and the care of a heavenly Father. By inference he teaches his disciples to do better than people of that class would do. The Gentiles would seek what to eat, what to drink, and what to wear. That would be their chief interest but Jesus tells his disciples they have a heavenly Father who will provide these things for them and that they are to trust him for them. If they do not trust their heavenly Father to provide these things, they are no better than the Gentiles who are represented as not having a heavenly Father to provide these things for them and must necessarily give all their time to seeking these things for themselves.

Our heavenly Father knoweth that you have need, of all these things. This is given as another reason why we should depend upon God to provide these things. He knows our need of them and, loving us as only a heavenly Father can love his children, he will provide that which we need. We are therefore to trust his providence for the things we eat and drink and wear because he knows our need of them and he has the ability to provide them for us. Further on in this sermon Jesus says,

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matt. 7: 11.)

II. Proper Course to Pursue (Matt.

6: 33, 34)

Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness. Here is a contrast. Jesus has just said that the Gentiles spend their time seeking what they shall eat and drink and wear. The disciples of the Lord are to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

All these things shall be added unto you. He who seeks material things only should not expect the spiritual things to be supplied, but he who seeks the spiritual values of life may expect the necessary material things to be granted to him. God knows that in our temporal environment here we stand in need of food and drink and raiment and these he will supply according to our needs provided we will make the heavenly things of supreme importance in our lives; but if we make these earthly things of supreme importance, we place ourselves in a position and maintain an attitude of mind which would make it impossible for us to enjoy the heavenly things. Hence, the heavenly things are not added to those who seek primarily for material riches. Some have taught that this passage applies only to the apostles who were to give all 'their time to preaching of the gospel, that since they were to do that they would be supplied with the necessities of life. They have further argued that we are commanded to work for that which we shall eat and wear; but this is simply God's manner of giving that which we need, or the condition upon which God will supply us with the things we need. If a man will not work, neither shall he eat, says Paul. (2 Thess. 3: 10.) Hence, we are to do what we can, trusting in the providence of God to bless our efforts with success.

Be therefore not anxious for the morrow. We are to live our lives a day at a time. We are not to borrow troubles from yesterday by nursing them and repeating them and sorrowing over them. We are not to

borrow troubles from tomorrow by anticipating them and being anxious about them. Jesus says, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," that is, each day has sufficient duties and responsibilities to take all our strength and wisdom. Were it not for the goodness of God and the strength which he supplies, we would not be able to take care of ourselves today much less to bring along the troubles of yesterday and to borrow the troubles of tomorrow. Summing up the teachings of Jesus on the

provident care of God, we may say first that he knows our needs, second he is able to fill our needs, and third he loves us enough to assure us that he will fill our needs. It is then our duty, first, to seek God and his righteousness, second, to trust God for the things that we need in a material way, and third, that we shall not borrow from the troubles of yesterday and tomorrow to increase the burden of today, but that we shall depend upon God to do that which he is able and willing to do for us.

General Information on the Providence of God

For those who wish to pursue the study of this interesting subject beyond the limits of our lesson text the following outline is provided.

1. God created all things. (Gen. 1: 1; Heb. 1: 2.) If God created all things for good and wise purposes, we would naturally expect him to exercise his providence in the continuance of these things.

2. God preserves all things. (Psalm 147: 1-9; Acts 14: 15-17; 17: 24-28.) Since God has put into creation the wisdom and power required, we would naturally suppose that he would be interested in preserving his creation in harmony with his desires and his will.

3. God rules in the affairs of nations. (Job 12: 13-25; Jer. 18: 5-10; Dan. 4: 25, 34-37.) God is interested in all people. People are gathered into nations, hence he is interested in the affairs of nations, to raise them up, to destroy them when they are wicked, to protect and care for them when they are righteous.

4. God rules in the affairs of families. (Psalm 107: 36-41; Jer. 10: 25; 31: 1.)

5. God rules in the affairs of individuals. A. Wicked. (Rom. 9: 14-18.) B. Righteous. (Gen. 45: 7, 8.) The individual is not so insignificant that God overlooks him. God was interested in Joseph when he was

sold into Egypt. He blessed him on account of his righteousness, protected him because of his purity and loyalty to God, raised him up in the nation of Egypt that he might preserve life for the family which God had chosen. We must not make the mistake of thinking that God did things for Joseph simply because he was a descendant of Abraham, or solely because he was in the family that was to bless the world by bringing in the Messiah. Though this is true of Joseph, yet God's care over him is certainly an example to teach us God's care over us.

6. Nothing too small to escape his rule. (Luke 12: 6, 7; Matt. 12: 36, 37.) In these passages we are told that even the hairs of our head are numbered. If God takes notice of so insignificant a thing as the number of hairs on our head, surely nothing is too small to escape his notice.

7. Prayer implies providence of God. (Matt. 7: 7-11; Rom. 15: 30-32; James 1: 5-8.) It would be needless to pray if we did not expect God to do something for us in answer to our prayers which he would not do for us if we did not pray. This certainly implies the providence of God in our lives.

8. His providence is (1) sovereign, (2) wise, (3) good, (4) sometimes beyond our comprehension.

Questions for the Class

What is the general topic for the lessons of this quarter?

State and discuss the aim of the lessons for this quarter.

What is the topic for today's lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What must we know about God before we can cast our anxieties upon him?

In this connection, what is said of the wisdom of God?

What is said of the power of God?

What is said of the goodness of God?

What is said of the omnipresence of God?
 What is meant by casting our anxieties upon God?
 What type of anxieties should not be cast upon God?
 What necessary burdens does God expect us to bear?
 How are we to exercise trust in God in these matters?
 Name and discuss three motives which cause us to cast our anxieties upon God.

Proof of Providence

What is the meaning of the word mammon?
 When does material wealth become detrimental to us?
 What is the fundamental reason why man cannot serve two masters?
 What is the first argument of Jesus in proof of the providence of God?
 How did Jesus use the birds to prove the providence of God?
 Show why the providence of God does not take the place of hard work?

How does Jesus teach how we ought to be anxious about that over which we have no control?
 How did Jesus use Solomon to teach the providence of God?
 Over what three things does the majority of the people worry?
 How did Jesus use the word "Gentiles" in this connection?
 Contrast the attitudes or the Gentiles and those who trust in God's providence?
 What does Jesus say God's knowledge of our needs are?

Proper Course to Pursue

What should be our first interest in life?
 What is the reward or those who have the proper interest?
 What prevents God's care of his people?
 What did Jesus mean by "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"?
 What three statements sum up the teaching of Jesus on providence?
 What is there of interest to you in the division of General Information?

Lesson II—January 11, 1953

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

The Lesson Text

Matt. 20: 27, 28; Rom. 8: 31-39

27 And whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ Je'-sus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God,

who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 Even as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Je'-sus our Lord.

Golden Text.—"Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. 1: 15.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 2: 5-11.

Daily Bible Readings

January	5. M.....	The Suffering Christ (Isa. 53: 1-9)
January	6. T.....	The Humble Christ (Phil. 2: 5-11)
January	7. W.....	The Justifying Christ (Rom. 5: 6-10)
January	8. T.....	The Saving Christ (John 3: 14-21)

January 9. F..... The Seeking Christ (Luke 15: 1-7)
 January 10. S..... The Reigning Christ (Isa. 35: 1-10)
 January 11. S..... The Exalted Christ (Heb. 1: 1-9)

Time.—For Matthew, A.D. 29; for Romans, A.D. 58.

Place.—For Matthew, near Jericho; for Romans, the city of Rome.

Persons.—Jesus, Paul, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. Faithful Is the Saying. Our

text is a joyous overflow of a heart filled with gratitude for the salvation which God had so graciously given the apostle Paul. The word *faithful* in our text means something that is worthy of trust, something that can be relied upon. For this reason Paul adds that this saying is worthy of all acceptance. It is not unusual for commentators to use the word *all* as meaning that the saying is worthy to be accepted by all. This, of course, is true, but is not taught in this verse. All acceptance simply means the statement is worthy of our full acceptance or our full confidence, (a) This saying is worthy of all acceptance because Jesus said it. He said he came to give his life a ransom for many. (Matt. 20: 28.) Again Jesus said he came to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke 19: 10.) (b) This statement is worthy of our full acceptance because the Father acknowledged Jesus on his mission of saving the lost. When Jesus was baptized, the Father acknowledged him as his Son in whom he was well pleased. (Matt. 3: 17.) And at the time of the transfiguration the Father spoke from heaven saying this is my beloved Son, hear ye him. (Matt. 17: 5.)

(c) This statement is worthy of our full acceptance because the apostles inspired of God affirmed it and God confirmed their message with miracles. (Mark 16: 20; Heb. 2: 3, 4.)

2. Christ Jesus Came. (a) Our text implies a prior existence for Jesus. The statement that he came implies that he had something to do with determining to come into the world. It is said that he came to his own and his own received him not. (John 1:11.) They were his own at the time of his coming, hence, he came from some prior existence into this world and that for a definite purpose. He said he came to seek and to save the lost. (Luke 19: 10.)

There is another statement that says he came to give his life a ransom. (Matt. 20: 28.) And Paul says he was rich but he became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich. (2 Cor. 8: 9.) (b) Our text emphasizes the fact that Jesus came into the world to save sinners. It was necessary that he leave his heavenly residence to come to this world. This implies a *condescension* beyond our power of comprehension. Paul implies the same when he said that though Jesus was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor. He was rich in heaven; he was poor on earth. He lived as a pauper lives. He never owned property; he didn't work to make money to lay up a bank account or to accumulate property of any kind, (c) This is not only a demonstration of his lowliness, but of a love beyond our powers to appreciate fully. We are told that God loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4: 9, 10.)

3. To Save Sinners. Since Jesus came into the world to save sinners and since all have sinned (Rom. 3: 23), we conclude that Christ came into the world to save all people. Over and over in the Bible he is said to be the Saviour of the world. (John 4: 42; 1 John 2:2.) He is the Saviour of the whole world because he is able to save unto the uttermost them that draw near to God through him. (Heb. 7: 25.) He is willing to save, for Paul tells us that he would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2: 4); and last he is the Saviour of the whole world because he provided for the salvation of all. In the great commission Jesus said go preach the gospel to every creature and go teach all nations. Hence he has provided for the salvation of all, is willing to save all, and is able to save all. The only reason all are not going to be saved is that some

are not willing to be submissive and obedient to the commands of our Lord.

4. Example to All Who Believe.

Paul considered his conversion a pattern for all who believe on the Lord "unto life eternal." This simply means that our conversion must agree with his in its essential elements. By studying the record of his conversion in Acts 9: 1-9 and 22: 6-16, we learn that he believed in Jesus as the Son of God; that he repented, or turned from the evil of which he was

guilty; and that he was baptized to wash away his sins. From his letter to the church at Rome we learn that he taught the necessity of making a confession of his faith in Jesus as the Son of God. (Rom. 10: 9, 10.) So we conclude that if we follow the pattern, or example, set by Paul, we must do these same things in order to be saved. We learn that Christ came to save sinners and that these are the conditions upon which he promises to save us.

Exposition of the Text

I. The Love of Christ Ransoms (Matt. 20: 27, 28)

Whosoever would be first among you. Here we have a contrast between the principles in the kingdoms of this world and the kingdom of Christ and it is one of the fundamental principles of Christianity. In political kingdoms those who are in high offices rule over, exercise authority over, those who are under them, but Jesus said it shall not be so in the kingdom. In the political kingdoms those who are great are served by many, but in the kingdom of Christ those are great who serve many.

The Son of man came not to be ministered unto. Jesus gives himself as an example of this important principle. Though he was worthy not only of their service but even of their worship, yet he took the role among them of a servant. He said he came to serve rather than be served. Here again we see him using the term "Son of man," a term of humiliation. He was the Son of God and the Son of man. The term Son of man denotes his humanity while the term Son of God denotes his divinity. He was both human and divine, but when he wished to emphasize his lowliness he used the term Son of man. On this verse Barnes gives this interesting comment: "He came not with pomp and glory but as a man in humble life; and since he came he had not required them to minister to him. He labored for them. He strove to do them good. He provided for their wants; fared as poorly as they did; went before them in dangers and

sufferings; practiced self-denial on their account, and for them was about to lay down his life."

To *give his life a ransom for many.* Here again Jesus emphasizes the fact that he came to give not to get. People who go through life with the intention of getting, but never giving, are as much unlike Jesus as it is possible for people to become. They should remember the two seas in Palestine; the Sea of Galilee, a lovely place because it gives all it gets, and the Dead Sea that keeps all it gets and is a most unlovely and unsightly place. The word ransom in our text means "the price for redeeming." In the time of Christ it was not uncommon for wealthy people to buy a slave and set him free. The price which was paid for a slave with the intention of setting him free is called ransom price. All who have sinned are the slaves of sin. Jesus said he came to ransom these from the power of sin. He gave his life as the ransom price to free them from their sins. How we ought to love Jesus for what he has done for us! Can you conceive of a slave enjoying his freedom because someone paid the ransom price, but yet the slave had no appreciation? And so today those who refuse to accept Christ, serve him, publish the fact that they have no appreciation for the goodness and kindness of Jesus in giving his life as the ransom price for their freedom. By giving his life as the ransom price Jesus proved his love for those who are slaves of sin. We should love him because he first loved us. And if we show our love as he showed his, we will give our life in humble service to him.

II. The Love of Christ Intercedes

(Rom. 8: 31-34)

What shall we say to these things? These things to which Paul refers are found in the preceding verses. Paul had just said that God foreknows and had foreordained his children to be in the image of the Son of God, and that he had called them through the preaching of the gospel, and when they had responded he had justified them from their sins. And, in his plan, those whom he justified he had also glorified. Paul views the work of God in his eternal purpose and so he carries it from the foreknowledge of God right on through the glorification of the children of God. Now, he says, what shall we say to these things. His answer is, if God is for us, there is none that can stand against us. And God has shown that he is for us in that he has made these plans and provisions for us.

He that spared not his own Son. Here the apostle brings evidence of the love of God for us. This reminds us of the golden text of the Bible, "for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." (John 3: 16.) And then again John says, "this is the love of God, not that we loved him, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." From all of this the apostle Paul concludes that if God would not withhold his Son, the greatest gift it was possible for him to make, he surely will not refuse to give us the small blessings of life.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Paul develops his argument by a series of questions. He first asks how anyone can think that God will not give us freely all things that we need since he has given us the greatest gift in his Son. He then asks, who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? This word elect refers to those who are Christians. They are the elect of God, not because God from eternity elected some to salvation and others to damnation, but that God elected those whom he knew, or could foresee, would obey him. Paul says that God chose us unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth whereunto he called us through his gospel to the obtaining of the

glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thess. 2: 13, 14.)

It is God that Justifieth. Paul is here arguing the security of the believer, or God's elect. Since it is God that justifies, it matters not who is the accuser. God will not entertain a false accusation against one of his elect and if one of his children has sinned there is a provision made whereby he may obtain forgiveness, hence there is nothing for God's elect to worry about. However, this argument of Paul's has been used by some to prove that a child of God cannot possibly be lost. This argument proves that no enemy can destroy a child of God so long as that child wishes to be saved, but if he loses his desire to be saved, if he himself becomes unfaithful he will be destroyed, not by his enemy but simply by his own lack of love or concern.

Who is he that condemneth. Paul answers this question by saying that it is Christ that condemns. We are told in a number of places that Christ is to be our judge. (Acts 17: 31 and 2 Tim. 4: 1.)

It is Christ Jesus that died. Here again Paul reasons that if Christ was willing to die for us, he certainly will not allow us to be condemned. This again proves the security of the obedient believer, the elect of God.

Who also maketh intercession for us. Here Paul represents Jesus as making intercession for us. Surely he who makes intercession for us will not condemn us. Again we are to understand that Christ intercedes for those who want to be saved and for those who are making a great effort to be saved. Christ does not intercede for those who have made shipwreck of the faith, for those who have denied the faith and become worse than infidels, for those who, though they once had a knowledge of Christ, have gone back into the world and have crucified afresh the Son of God and put him to an open shame. He does not intercede for these. But for those who wish to be saved and are making every effort to be faithful, Christ intercedes for them, consequently is not going to condemn them. The love of Christ shows itself in making intercession, not in condemning those that are

faithful, hence the security of the obedient believer.

III. The Love of Christ Endures

(Rom. 8: 35-39)

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? The term *love of Christ* may be understood to mean the love which Christ has for us or the love which we have for him, but most scholars are agreed in taking it to mean the love which Christ has for us. Paul here asserts that there is nothing in earth below, or in heaven above that can separate us from the love which Christ has for us. There is nothing that can keep Christ from loving us, though the Christian may be inclined to doubt the love of Christ when he endures the things here mentioned such as anguish, tribulation, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword. "These sufferings are the proof rather of God's presence than of his absence. They are his hand of chastening, separating the dross from the gold, and so fitting the latter for the heavenly use. Neither in this life nor in the next shall these sufferings separate us from the love of Christ. They only render the realization more sure."

Even as it is written. Paul here quotes from the Psalms to show that it has ever been the lot of God's elect to suffer on account of their relationship with God. Hence, we should not think that our suffering is any indication of God's love for us being weakened, or any sign that Christ no longer loves us. Jesus warned his disciples that the world would hate them and persecute them. He said, "If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. ... If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also." (John 15: 18-20.)

We *are more* than conquerors. Paul says these things not only for

to prove that God and Christ have ceased to love us, but that through these things we are more than conquerors. We not only conquer in spite of these things but that they actually helping us to be conquerors.

For *I am persuaded*. By this Paul means that he is certain, or sure, that none of the conditions following shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. He mentions death and by this means the fear of death, of being put to death on account of being a Christian. Then he mentions life and by this it is thought that the hope of life or the love of life might cause an individual to renounce his faith in Christ in times of persecution in order that he might continue to enjoy life. It was not uncommon for persecutors to offer Christians the hope of life to obtain a renunciation of Christ on their part and Paul expresses the assurance that not even this would separate people from the love of Christ. By angels mentioned in this verse, surely evil angels are meant. The word *principalities* is used elsewhere in Paul's writings to refer to spiritual powers and that probably is its meaning here. Paul said, "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." (Eph. 6: 12.) Since our fighting is not against "flesh and blood," but is against principalities, we must conclude that the principalities are not flesh and blood. Paul despairs of mentioning all that might be calculated to separate us from the love of Christ. He includes everything in one sweeping statement and affirms that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. The expression, "love of God in Christ Jesus" is equal to the "love of Christ" from which Paul raised a question about our being separated. So we know the expression does not mean our love for him, but his love for us.

General Information on the Love of Christ

1. His love caused him to leave heaven. (2 Cor. 8: 9; Phil. 2: 3-8.)

2. He loves as the Father loves. (John 15: 9, 10.)

3. He loves to the uttermost. (John 13: 1.)

4. His love for us is a pattern for our love of each other. (John 13: 34; 15: 12.)

5. Greatest display of his love was in his death for us. (John 15: 14; Eph. 5: 2.)

6. He shows his love by loosing, or washing us from our sins. (Rev. 1: 5.)

7. The church is the object of his special love. (Eph. 5: 24-27.)

a. Died for it.—(Verse 25.)

b. Washes it.—(Verse 26.)

c. Sanctifies it.—(Verse 26.)

d. Rules as head over it.—(Verse 22.)

e. Will present it in glorious condition.—(Verse 27.)

f. Saves it.—(Verse 22.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What is the meaning of the word faithful in our text?

What is the meaning of the word all?

Give and discuss three reasons why our text is worthy of full acceptance.

Discuss the idea of a prior existence of Jesus as suggested by our text.

For what purpose did Jesus come into this world?

How does our purpose in life compare with that of Jesus?

In what three ways may Jesus be said to be the Saviour of the whole world?

What did Paul mean by saying his conversion is an example for others?

Can you give the essential elements in his conversion which must be in the conversion of all who follow his example?

The Love of Christ Ransoms

What is one outstanding difference between the kingdoms of the world and the kingdom of Christ?

How did Jesus exemplify this principle in his life?

Discuss the meaning of the terms "Son of God" and "Son of man."

What attitude makes us most unlike Jesus?

What bodies of water illustrate this principle?

What is the meaning of the word ransom?

What should be our attitude toward the one who ransoms us?

The Love of Christ Intercedes

What are "these things" of which Paul speaks in our text?

What is Paul's answer to his question?

What proof do we have that God will bless us with the small blessings of life?

Who are God's elect?

On what condition does God elect us to eternal salvation?

How are we called to the obtaining of the glory of Christ?

How does the fact that God justifies serve to encourage the elect?

How does the fact that Christ is the one that condemns encourage the elect?

For whom does Christ intercede? and for whom does he not intercede?

The Love of Christ Endures

What is the meaning of the phrase "the love of Christ"?

Name some of the things Paul says the love of Christ endures.

What does Paul's quotation from Psalms prove?

How does this agree with what Jesus told his disciples?

What is meant by the statement "more than conquerors"?

As time permits discuss the things Paul said cannot separate us from the love of God.

What is there of interest to you in the division of General Information?

Lesson III—January 18, 1953

MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Lesson Text

John 16: 7-15; Acts 2: 1-4

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth:

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.

8 And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more;

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged.

12 I have yet many things to say

unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, *these* shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare *it* unto you.

15 All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he taketh of mine, and shall declare *it* unto you.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you"* (John 14: 26.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 14: 6-20.

Daily Bible Readings

January	12.	M.....	Promise of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2: 28-32)
January	13.	T.....	Coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 1-6)
January	14.	W.....	Holy Spirit a Helper (John 16: 7-15)
January	15.	T.....	Intercession of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8: 26-30)
January	16.	F.....	Gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12: 1-11)
January	17.	S.....	The Holy Spirit a Comforter (John 14: 25-31)
January	18.	S.....	The Spirit a Leader (Rom. 8: 12-17)

TIME.—A.D. 29.

PLACE.—Jerusalem on way to Gethsemane.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his apostles.

Golden Text Explained

1. *The Comforter.* The word comforter in our text is the translation of a Greek word which occurs in four other verses, John 14: 16; 15: 26; 16: 7; 1 John 2: 1. The Greek word means, "one who is called to the side of another for assistance, so one who pleads another's cause before a judge; that is, an advocate." It is used in this sense in 1 John 2: 1, where we are told that Christ is our advocate with the Father. "In the widest sense, a helper, succorer, assistant; so of the Holy Spirit this time to take the place of Christ with the apostles after his ascension to the Father, to lead them to a deeper knowledge of gospel truth, and to give them the divine strength needed to enable them to undergo trials and persecutions on behalf of the divine kingdom." (Thayer.)

The Comforter mentioned in our text is called by a number of different names. Our text identifies the Comforter as the Holy Spirit. He is

1 And when the day of Pen'-te-cost 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.

also spoken of as the Spirit of God. This term denotes that the Spirit is sent from God to do the work of God. Paul tells us that as only the spirit of man can know the inner things of man, so the things of God none knoweth but the Spirit of God. (1 Cor. 2: 11.) This same Spirit being is referred to again as the Spirit of Christ. Peter says the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets, enabling them to testify aforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them. (1 Pet. 1: 11.) Again, Peter says it was the Holy Spirit which moved holy men of old to speak. (2 Pet. 1: 21.) Hence, we conclude that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets enabling them to foretell the sufferings of Christ. Jesus refers again to the Comforter as the Spirit of truth. (John 15: 26.) This term suggests that the Holy Spirit bears a peculiar relationship to the truth, and it is suggested that this relationship is

that he is the possessor, the bearer, an administrator of the divine truth. It was the business of the Holy Spirit to reveal and record and preserve, for succeeding generations, the word which is able to make us wise unto salvation.

2. *Relation of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son.* Our text says that Jesus said, "The Father will send the Holy Spirit," so we conclude that the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and from the Father to do the Father's will. But we are also told that Jesus was to send him. In our lesson text, John 16: 7, Jesus says, "I will send him unto you"; so he is sent by Jesus Christ, as well as by the Father. Nowhere are we told that the Holy Spirit sends either the Father or the Son anywhere to do anything, but both the Father and the Son are said to send the Holy Spirit. Again, Jesus said the Spirit would be sent in his name. Scholars differ as to the meaning of this phrase "in my name." Some say it means "in my stead"; others say as "my representative." Another says, "at my intercession"; another, "so the Father sends the paraclete in the same name, in the full recognition of Christ as the sphere of all his gracious work." Since the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and in the name of the Son, we conclude that there is some significance to the order of their names in Matt. 28: 19, where Jesus gave them in this order, "the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Another expression denoting the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Son is found in John 14: 16, where Jesus promised "another Comforter". The Greek has two words for another; one meaning another of a same kind, the other

meaning another of a different kind. The word here used means another of the same kind. So the Holy Spirit was to be another Comforter like Jesus; one who would be of the same nature, of the same mind, capable of doing the same work. Being one of the godhead, the Holy Spirit would be another Comforter like Jesus, capable of doing the work he wished done.

3. *Work of the Holy Spirit.* Our text says that the Holy Spirit was to do two things; (1) he shall teach you all things; that is, he will teach the apostles all they need to know to do the work which they are expected to do; (2) bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. Jesus was not willing that the apostles should be left to their memory unaided by any special powers to remember all that he had taught them during the three and a half years that he was with them. It would have been humanly impossible for them to remember all that he taught. They needed much of the material brought to their mind, and especially in times of persecution and when they were on trial to remember the things they needed to know to answer as that answer would be made. And when they were preaching the gospel and the salvation of souls depended upon their correctness, they needed guidance to remember the things that needed to be said. They also needed to be taught new revelations which they were not able at the time Jesus was with them to receive. The Holy Spirit was to teach them all the things that they needed to know which had not been taught and to bring to their remembrance all the things that Jesus said to them which they were to use in their preaching.

Exposition of the Text

I. The Work of the Holy Spirit (John 16: 7-11)

It is expedient for you. Jesus said it was expedient that he go away for unless he went away the Holy Spirit would not come. Why it was expedient for the Holy Spirit to come may be seen in that (1) as long as Jesus was in the flesh and on earth, the disciples would expect him to be a temporal ruler and throw off the yoke of Rome, but when he died,

ascended to heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit, they were enabled to get a better conception of the nature of the kingdom, to realize that it was a spiritual kingdom and not a temporal kingdom. (2) While Jesus was on earth in the flesh it was impossible for him to be omnipresent. He could be in but one place at a time, but the Holy Spirit, not being in the flesh, could be omnipresent and so be with the disciples at every place in

the world at the same time. (3) As long as Jesus was in the flesh, he could be dealt with by the rulers as a human being. He could be persecuted, imprisoned, and so hindered from doing his work, but the Holy Spirit was invisible, could not be imprisoned, so could be with the apostles wherever they were, even during times of imprisonment.

For if I go not away. By this we understand that the Holy Spirit was not to be sent until after Jesus had gone away. His going away referred to the ascension. Hence, the Holy Spirit was not to come until after he ascended to the Father. Though the Holy Spirit was in the prophets, enabling them to foretell events, and though the Holy Spirit was, in some measure, with the apostles in their work under the limited commission, yet the Holy Spirit came upon them in a measure and for a purpose after the ascension of Jesus, in which he had never visited the sons of men. If this were not true, the promise of Jesus could mean nothing.

I will send him unto you. In this promise the apostles only are included. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles. When the promise was fulfilled, the Holy Spirit came to the apostles. (Acts 2:1-4.)

Will convict the world in respect to sin. Keep in mind the fact that Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles, and keep in mind the fact that he said the Holy Spirit would come to convict the world of sin. So, we conclude that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles to convict the world of sin. Many make the mistake of thinking that the Lord sends the Holy Spirit to the world to convict the world of sin, but Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles to convict the world of sin.

Because they believed not on me. We would miss the point if we apply this scripture to that generation which condemned Jesus and to that generation only. The world is to be convicted of the sin of unbelief, whether in that generation which crucified Jesus, or in the generation today that denies his divinity and refuses to believe in the atoning efficacy of his death. The one outstand-

ing sin of humanity is unbelief, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin because of its lack of faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

And of righteousness. The world has always had its standard of righteousness, but that standard has always been different from the standard which God has. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict the world of righteousness, to bring the world to a realization of its own lack of righteousness, and of its inability to be righteous, in its own strength in the sight of God, and to bring the world to realize its need of depending upon God for its standard of righteousness.

Because I go to the Father. The fact that Jesus went back to the Father is a demonstration that God accepted him. The world accused him of sin, but God reversed that decision and accepted him as righteous. Since God accepted him, we take this as an endorsement, by the Father, of all that Jesus taught with reference to righteousness. Hence, the world is to be made to realize that its own standards of righteousness are wrong and to accept the standards taught by Jesus.

And of judgment because the prince of this world had been judged. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict the world of judgment, to make the world realize that it must answer to God for its deeds. By overcoming Satan in the resurrection, Jesus demonstrated power to punish and the world is to be made to see, in this demonstration, its own doom unless it realizes its sin and turns to God in righteousness.

II. How the Holy Spirit Works

(John 16: 12-15)

He shall guide you into all the truth. In spite of the fact that these apostles had been with Jesus constantly for more than three years, they still needed guidance in preaching the truth. If they needed special guidance to bring the message of salvation, surely men today who have never had any personal contact with Jesus need guidance in directing men to God. Notice that the Holy Spirit was to guide them into all truth, not just a part of the truth, but all

truth. He was to give them all the truth on the matter of salvation. He gave them all the truth that man needs in order to be saved. Hence, there is no room for modern day revelation. Those who think the Holy Spirit gave the apostles only that which was needed for the first generation, but would not do for later generations, must deny the statement Jesus made that the Holy Spirit would bring to them all the truth.

He shall not speak from himself. First, let us emphasize the fact that the Holy Spirit was to speak. Jesus said, he shall speak whatsoever things he hears, and he shall declare unto the things that are to come. So, the Holy Spirit was to come speaking. Put this together with the promise that he was to come to the apostles, and we see that the Holy Spirit was (a) to come to the apostles, (b) to convict the world of sin, (c) he was to come speaking. When we put these together, we conclude that the Holy Spirit was to come to the apostles and speak through them in order that he might convict the world of sin. This is how the Holy Spirit does his work of convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. A part of the religious world holds to the idea that there must be an impact of Holy Spirit upon human spirit in order for the Holy Spirit to convict a sinner, but Jesus teaches here that there was to be no impact of Holy Spirit upon human spirit, but that the Holy Spirit was to come to the preacher of the gospel, and not to the one to be converted.

He shall glorify me. As Jesus glorified the Father by doing the work the Father sent him to do, so the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus by doing the work which the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit to do. Jesus says he will glorify me, for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you.

All things whatsoever. In this verse, Jesus declares his unity with the Father by saying that all things the Father hath are mine. It was this unity and identity with the Father that enabled him to say that the Holy Spirit would glorify him by taking his words, and declaring them to the apostles, for his words

were the Father's words, and so to take his words would be to take the Father's words.

III. The Promise Fulfilled (Acts 2: 1-4)

When the day of Pentecost was now come. Before Jesus ascended, he promised the apostles again that they would receive the Holy Spirit. He instructed them to tarry in Jerusalem until they received that promise. (Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 4.) The day of Pentecost was about fifty days after the Sabbath of the pass-over week. (Lev. 23: 15, 16.) In the first chapter of Acts we learn that the apostles tarried in Jerusalem and that there were about one hundred twenty disciples with them.

There appeared unto them tongues parting asunder. At about 9 o'clock in the morning on the day of Pentecost, there came from heaven a sound like a rushing mighty wind and the sound filled all the house where the apostles were, and not only the house, but Jerusalem, for we are told when the sound was heard, a multitude came together. (Acts 2: 6.) Accompanying this sound were tongues parting asunder like fire. These are not said to be tongues of fire, but tongues like fire, and that these tongues sat upon each one of the apostles. This was a manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit so that the apostle Peter could say that they both saw and heard the fulfillment of the promise. (Acts 2: 33.)

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. The word *they* in this paragraph refers to the apostles. So far as we know, the Holy Spirit, on this occasion, and in this manner, fell upon no one but the apostles. Those upon whom the Holy Spirit fell spoke, but we learn that only Galileans spoke upon that occasion. (Acts 2: 7.)

Began to speak as the Spirit gave utterance. Notice first, the apostles began speaking when the Spirit came to them. Jesus promised to send the Spirit to the apostles. He promised to send the Spirit to convict the world; he promised the Spirit would come speaking. Now in the fulfillment, we find the Holy Spirit speaking through the apostles. The purpose of the speaking was to convict

the world, and on this day three thousand people were convicted of their sins and asked what to do to be saved. Peter told them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins. When they did this, they were saved and the Lord added them to the church. (Acts 2: 41, 47.) Thus, the Holy Spirit had convicted and converted three thousand souls. Thus, the Holy Spirit convicts and converts today by furnishing the message for the preacher and by guid-

ing the preacher through the revealed word to preach that which brings conviction of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Notice next that these apostles spake with other tongues; that is, other languages. The multitude was amazed because the apostles who were Galileans spoke in the languages wherein the multitudes were born. They did not utter a series of unintelligible jargon, but they spoke languages which were spoken and understood by the people whom they addressed.

General Information on the Holy Spirit

1. Holy Spirit is a person. (a) Personal pronoun used. (John 14: 16, 26.) (b) He speaks. (John 16: 13; 1 Tim. 4: 1; Rev. 2: 29.) (c) He can be grieved. (Isa. 63: 10; Eph. 4: 30.)

2. Holy Spirit is a divine person, (a) Wears the name of Father and Son. (Matt. 28: 19.) (b) Had a part in creation. (Gen. 1: 2; Job 26: 13; 33: 4; Psalm 104: 30.) (c) He is called God. (Acts 5: 3, 4.) (d) We render an act of worshipful obedience to the Holy Spirit when we are baptized into his name. (Matt. 28: 19.)

3. Holy Spirit operates in three

realms, (a) Conversion. See Exposition of the Lesson Text. (b) Sanctification—a process by which the Holy Spirit makes us holy. (1) His instrument is the word of God. (John 17: 17; 2 Thess. 2: 13, 14.) (2) He bears fruit in our lives. (Gal. 5: 22-24.) (3) He leads us in Christian living. (Gal. 5: 13, 14; Rom. 8: 12-14.) (c) Providence. (1) This is the realm in which God through his Holy Spirit, who dwells in us, makes all things work for our good. (Rom. 8: 28; Phil. 1: 19.) (2) He helps our infirmity. (Rom. 8: 26.) (3) He gives us wisdom in answer to our prayers. (James 1: 5.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of our lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What is the meaning of the word Comforter?

To whom does the word apply in our lesson?

What does Paul say of the knowledge of the Spirit?

What is meant by the term "Spirit of Christ"?

What term is used to suggest the Spirit's relation to the truth?

What is the Spirit's relation to the truth? By whom was the Spirit sent to the apostles?

Is the Spirit ever said to send the Father or the Son anywhere?

What does this suggest as to their order on the Godhead?

What is the meaning of the phrase "another Comforter"?

What two things was the Holy Spirit to do for the apostles?

The Work of the Holy Spirit

What was necessary for Jesus to do before the Holy Spirit could come?

Give and discuss three reasons why it was expedient that the Holy Spirit be sent.

To whom was the promise of the Holy Spirit made at this time?

When was this promise fulfilled?

What is the first work of the Holy Spirit mentioned in our text?

What is the one great sin of which the world is to be convicted?

What is the second thing of which the Holy Spirit was to convict the world?

How does his going back to the Father convict the world of righteousness?

What is the third thing of which the Holy Spirit was to convict the world?

How does the judgment of Satan convict the world of judgment?

How the Holy Spirit Works

Into what was the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles?

How does this fact affect modern-day revelations?

Can you prove that the Holy Spirit convicts the world through speaking?

How does this compare with the theories of the religious world?

How was the Holy Spirit to glorify Jesus?

How did Jesus teach his unity with the Father in our text?

The Promise Fulfilled

Where did the apostles wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit?

About how long did they wait before the Spirit came?

Was the multitude present when the Holy Spirit came to the apostles?
 What visible sign was given of the presence of the Holy Spirit?
 What proof do we have that the Spirit fell on apostles only on this occasion?

Did all the apostles speak on the day of Pentecost? Whose sermon is recorded? What have you learned about "speaking with other tongues" from this lesson? What is there of interest in the division of General Information?

Lesson IV—January 25, 1953

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

The Lesson Text

Psalm 19: 7-11; 2 Tim. 3: 14-17

7 The law of Je-ho'-vah is perfect, restoring the soul:

The testimony of Je-ho'-vah is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The precepts of Je-ho'-vah are right, rejoicing the heart:

The commandment of Je-ho'-vah is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of Je-ho'-vah is clean, enduring for ever:

The ordinances of Je-ho'-vah are true, *and* righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold;

Sweeter also than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned:

In keeping them there is great reward.

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 Je'-sus.

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.

Golden Text.—*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"* (John 8: 32.)

Devotional Reading.—Deut. 6: 6-9.

Daily Bible Readings

January	19. M.....	The Inspiration of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3: 14-17)
January	20. T.....	The Worth of the Scriptures (Psalm 19: 7-14)
January	21. W.....	Jesus and the Scriptures (Matt. 4: 1-11)
January	22. T.....	Teaching the Scriptures (Neh. 8: 1-8)
January	23. F.....	The Study of the Scriptures (Acts 17: 10-15)
January	24. S.....	The Theme of the Scriptures (Heb. 1: 1-4)
January	25. S.....	Guidance of the Scriptures (Psalm 119: 105-112)

Time.—For Psalm 19, 1000 B.C.; for 2 Tim., A.D. 66.

Places.—Jerusalem and Rome.

Persons.—David and Paul.

Golden Text Explained

1. Ye Shall Know the Truth.

Knowledge may be conceived of as existing in four degrees; (1) a faint impression which gives no satisfaction to the one who holds it; (2) a satisfactory conception of the truth, but does not enable the one who holds it to explain it to others; (3) such a conception of the truth as enables one not only to enjoy it for himself, but to convey it clearly to others; (4) that degree of knowledge which

moves one to live in harmony with the truth known. Paul expressed about the same truth when he said a man might know all mysteries and all knowledge and yet not have love. (1 Cor. 13: 2.) Love is the product of this knowledge that moves one to live in harmony with the truth known.

The truth of which Jesus **spoke** was reliable because it came from the source of truth. He said, "I

the way, and the truth, and the life." (John 14: 6.) Any truth then, taught from him who is the truth, would be reliable. Next, the truth taught by Jesus is of binding authority; the truth that binds men's souls to the kind of life that Jesus advocates; that binds men to live upon the plane of spiritual purity which Jesus desires men shall live upon. Being the Son of God, and coming with a message from God, there can be no higher authority than the truth which he utters. (1) The truth which those Jews needed to know, and which we today need to know, is the truth about God. We need to know God. We need to know of the power of God, of the love of God, of the Omnipotence of God, and the omniscience of God, and that God is omnipresent, that he is everywhere, that he sees us and knows all that we do or say or think. We need to know these things about God. We need to realize that God is unchanging; that he is the same yesterday, today and forever and that the sins he punished in the long ago are the sins he will punish now, and that the moral traits of character which he approved in the long ago, he approves now. (2) The truth that Jesus wanted them to know was the truth about the relation of Jesus to God. He claimed to be the Son of God. He claimed to be sent from God to accomplish the work of God on earth. He claimed to be God himself. The world today needs to know that Jesus was not just another man, but that he was God in human form. (3) They needed to know the truth about salvation through Christ. The Jews of that day, especially, needed to know that they could have salvation from God through Christ and through him alone. If they rejected Christ, they rejected God. If they rejected Christ, they rejected the salvation that is from God, and men today need to know that salvation can be had in Christ and in him alone. They need to learn to trust Christ for salvation, instead of looking to their own schemes and their own systems of doctrine and their own systems of morality. They need to know that salvation can come only through Christ as the Son of God.

This knowledge, of which Jesus spoke, comes as a result of abiding in the word which he taught. He was speaking to Jews on that occasion. To them he said, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." From this we see that they were to know the truth if they abode in his word. So, continuing to believe his word, continuing to accept his further teaching, they would come to know the truth which would make them free. We today can enjoy the freedom here promised only by continuing in the word. Those who accept it today and become careless tomorrow and reject it soon afterwards, need not expect to enjoy the freedom here promised. Only those who continue in the word, in the study of the word, and the practice of the word, can hope to enjoy the freedom here promised.

2. Truth Shall Make You Free. The thought uppermost in every Jewish mind in the time of Jesus was freedom. So, Jesus teaches them how they can gain true freedom. It was not the freedom for which the Jews longed, for they wished to throw off the yoke of Rome, and enjoy political freedom, but Jesus valued spiritual freedom much more highly than he valued political freedom, and he tried to lead them from their desire for political freedom into the desire for spiritual freedom. (1) This freedom Jesus offered was freedom from the law and the curse of the law. (Gal. 3: 13; 4: 5.) (2) It was freedom from racial prejudice to that of a universal conception of salvation. The Jews thought that only the seed of Abraham had an opportunity to be saved. Jesus wished to free them from this limited conception of the mercy and grace of God and lead them to see that God loved all his creatures and that he was anxious to save all who were willing to be saved. (3) This freedom of which Jesus spoke was freedom from sin.

(a) It was the freedom from the power of sin. Sin is represented as exercising dominion over man, and Paul says, "for sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace." (Rom. 6: 14.) (b) This freedom was free-

dom from the *pollution* of sin. Sin is looked upon as rendering one unclean or defiled, and the blood of Christ is offered as that which cleanses us from sin. (1 John 1: 7.) (c) This freedom is freedom from the *penalty* of sin. The soul that sins shall die. The wages of sin is death. (Rom. 6: 23.) This salvation saves us from the penalty of sin. (d) This

salvation is freedom from the *presence* of sin. When our Lord comes again, he is coming for those who are his own, who have been made free from the power, clean from the pollution, and have been forgiven the penalty of sin, and he shall take them out of this world of sin into the heaven of purity, of holiness, and righteousness.

Exposition of the Text

I. David's Estimate of the Scriptures

(Psalm 19: 7-11)

The law of Jehovah is perfect.

The word *law* here, is not to be restricted merely to the commandments of God, but it refers to all revealed truth. David had just spoken of the revelation of God made through the natural world about us. With this he now contrasts the revelation of God through revealed truth. Revealed truth is adapted perfectly to the needs of man. It is an unerring guide of conduct. David illustrates the perfection of revealed truth by saying that it restores the soul. "The glory of the law, or the revealed truth of God, is, that it bears directly on the soul of man, turning him from the error of his ways, and leading him to pursue a life of holiness." It should be noticed that, though David speaks highly of the truth we gain from the natural world about us, yet, he does not ascribe to the truth gained from the natural world, the power of restoring or converting the soul. Scientific truth, truth in the field of arts, does not convert people; does not bring them to God. Only a knowledge of revealed truth, that revealed through holy men of old, has the power of converting the soul.

The testimony of Jehovah is sure. The word testimony describes that which is given by a witness. Hence, revealed truth, is that testimony which God gives as a witness. If then, God is the witness who bears this testimony, we may rely implicitly upon him. No wonder David said the testimony of Jehovah is sure, and he points out as a result of the testimony of the Lord that it makes wise the simple. The simple person is that one who is untaught and inexperienced, and as such is

easily led either in the right way, or in the wrong way. David invites this class of people to depend implicitly upon the testimony of Jehovah because it is a sure foundation upon which they may rest their hopes.

The precepts of Jehovah are right.

A precept is a statute or rule given to guide people in the right way. And the word, *right*, here suggests that which is equal or just or proper. So the statutes of the Lord are just and proper. They are not such as are given by arbitrary appointment of the Lord, but they are such as are right and are binding upon us because they are right. And, as evidence of the rightness of these precepts of Jehovah, David says they rejoice the heart. Those who live by the precepts of Jehovah are happy, there is rejoicing in their hearts because they are living by, in harmony with the precepts of Jehovah.

The commandment of Jehovah is pure. Its source is pure and its influence in our life is pure. It does not lead to any impurity, it does not encourage impurity in anyone, and it discourages all impurity. As evidence of its pure influence, David says it enlightens the eyes; that is, it opens our eyes to that which is, right and wrong and influences us to do right and to live a life of purity.

The fear of Jehovah is clean. The word *fear* usually means reverence, but here, by metonymy, it means the precepts of piety or religion.

The ordinances of Jehovah are true. The student will notice that the revealed will of God is presented to us here under six distinct epithets. They are: law, testimony, precepts, commandment, fear, and ordinances. Likewise, six things are said about

this revealed will of God. They are, that the revealed will of God restores the soul, makes wise the simple, rejoices the heart, enlightens the eyes, endures forever, and that it is true and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold. David wishes now to impress us with the worth of the Scriptures. First he says they are worth more than gold, even much fine gold. Next, he says they are sweeter than honey, and furthermore he says, the servant of God is warned by the Scriptures; warned of the dangers of sin, warned of the deceptiveness of sin, and we are warned of the brevity of life, and of the uncertainty of life. We are warned of the length of eternity and of the pleasures of heaven and the horrors of hell. So the Scriptures warn us concerning all the things about which we need to be warned. And David concludes by saying, that in living in obedience to the Scriptures, there is great reward. Yes, there is reward in this life, in the satisfaction and the peace of mind that the obedient servant of God enjoys. And there is reward in the life to come because of the happiness and the joy and the peace that we shall know throughout eternity as contrasted with the torture and the sorrows of those who are in hell.

II. Paul's Estimate of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3: 14-17)

Abide thou in the things. Here again emphasis is placed upon abiding in the Scriptures, and Paul urges Timothy to abide in the things he has been taught because of the teachers from whom he learned. The word *whom* in our text is plural, suggesting that Paul was not the only one from whom Timothy had learned these things. In the King James version, the word is singular and some have gathered that Paul exhorted Timothy to abide in the things he had learned because it was Paul who had taught him. But since Paul says that Timothy had known the sacred writings from infancy, it seems safe to conclude that others were included with Paul as the teachers of the Scriptures to Timothy.

Able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith. Old Testament

scriptures were able to make one wise unto salvation by pointing out the character of God and the prophecies concerning Christ and of the kingdom which he was to establish. New Testament Scriptures make us wise unto salvation by teaching us further about the character of God and of the kingdom established by Christ and of the conditions of salvation and the way of life which Jesus offers us. This salvation can be had through faith; a faith that works by love. (Gal. 5: 6.)

Every scripture inspired of God' is profitable. This affirms that the Old Testament, in use in Paul's day, was inspired of God. It also includes the writings of the apostles and prophets of Christ who wrote and spoke by inspiration. Their writing is said to be profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

That the man of God may be complete. The purpose of the Scriptures not only is to convert a person, but to lead that person after conversion more and more into the likeness of Christ, to make him complete. (Col. 2: 11.) The word "complete" is the translation of a word which suggests the idea "of mutual, symmetrical adjustment of all that goes to make the man: harmonious combination of different qualities and powers." (Vincent.) Notice that it is the Scripture, the word of God, which makes us complete. It is not the word plus the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, or plus the infallible interpretation of pope or priest. Each individual under God, with an open Bible in his hand, may through its teaching be complete. This completeness is in reference to (1) our faith; (2) our practice; (3) our character. There is nothing an individual needs to believe which is not revealed in the Scriptures given us by apostles and prophets. There is nothing we need to practice to please God and honor Christ that is not given us in the Bible. There is not an element of character we need to fit us to meet God in peace and enjoy the society of heaven which is not recommended in the holy Scriptures. Nor is there an ugly trait of character which would cause us to fail to meet the approval of God in the

judgment but that is condemned or discouraged by holy men of old who taught as the Spirit moved them.

Furnished completely unto every good work. Since the Scriptures given us by apostles and prophets furnish us completely unto every good work, Catholics, Mormons, and Christian Scientists must contend that the world went nearly two thousand years without all the revelation needed, or admit that their latter-day revelations (?) are not from God and not needed by humanity. If the world of Paul's generation was completely furnished unto every good work, these latter-day messages are not needed. Furthermore, the creeds, disciplines, and manuals of faith written and enforced by the

various denominations were not in existence when Paul wrote this text and so were not included in that which furnishes us completely unto every good work. Therefore, they are to be rejected as having no place in determining the faith and practice of the "man of God." This agrees with Peter's statement that he has "granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue." (2 Pet. 1: 3.) Since this knowledge is obtained through the Scriptures we conclude that we get from them all that pertains to our life and godliness. Hence, we do not need special revelations, papal interpretations, or denominational traditions.

General Information on the Holy Scriptures

1. Written by commandment of God. (Ex. 34: 27, 28: 24: 4-8; Deut. 31: 24-26.)

2. Scriptures to be read and taught. (Deut. 6: 1-9; 31: 9-13.)

3. David's estimate of the Scriptures. (Psalm 119.)

4. Attitude of pious people toward the Scriptures. (Neh. 8: 1-6, 13-18.)

5. Jesus used the Scriptures. (Matt. 4: 4, 7, 10; 15: 1-9; 22: 29, 41-45; Luke 16: 29-31.)

6. Paul used the Scriptures, (a) To prove Jesus is Christ. (Acts 17:

2, 3.) (b) To rebuke people. (Acts 28: 24-47.) (c) To comfort people. (Acts 20: 32; 1 Thess. 4: 18.) (d) By way of examples to us. (Rom. 15: 4; 1 Cor. 10: 6, 11.)

7. Peter used the Scriptures, (a) Affirmed its inspiration. (2 Pet. 1:

21.) (b) To teach and warn. (2 Pet. 2.) (c) Offered his own writings as inspired. (2 Pet. 3: 1, 2.)

(d) Spoke of Paul's writings as scripture. (2 Pet. 3: 15, 16.)

8. John spoke of his writing as the message of the Holy Spirit to the churches. (Rev. 2: 11, 29.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Name and discuss the four degrees in which knowledge may exist,

Discuss the reliability and authority of the message Jesus taught.

Name and discuss some of the truths about God we should know.

What do we need to know about the relation between Jesus and God?

What do men need to know about Christ and salvation?

On what condition may people have this saving knowledge of the truth?

For what kind of freedom were the Jews mentioned in our lesson looking?

What kind of freedom did Jesus offer them?

What is meant by freedom from the curse of the law?

Can you show why the Jews needed freedom from racial prejudice?

Discuss freedom from sin in the four Phases mentioned.

David's Estimate of the Scriptures

To what does the term law in our lesson refer?

How does David illustrate the perfection of revealed truth?

What does revealed truth do for us that truth gleaned from the natural world cannot do for us?

What is the meaning of the word testimony as used in our lesson?

What is said of the testimony of Jehovah?

What is the meaning of the word precept as used in our lesson?

What is said of the precepts of Jehovah?

What do the precepts of Jehovah do for us?

What is said of the commandment of Jehovah?

What is the evidence of its purity?

What is said of the fear of Jehovah?

With what two figures does David teach us the worth of the Scriptures?

Paul's Estimate of the Scriptures

Why was Timothy to abide in the things he had learned?

From whom had Timothy learned the Scriptures?
 Give reasons why the Old Testament is profitable to us.
 Why is the New Testament of more value to us?
 For what four things is Scripture said to be profitable?

In what three areas of life do the Scriptures make us complete?
 How does this truth affect modern-day revelations so called?
 In the light of this, how should we view creeds and confessions of faith written by modern denominational leaders?
 What is there of interest in the division of General Information?

Lesson V—February 1, 1953

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The Lesson Text

Gen. 3: 1-6; Rom. 5: 12-18

1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Je-ho'-vah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

12 Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned: —

13 For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Mó'-ses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come.

15 But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Je'-sus Christ, abound unto the many.

16 And not as through one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment *came* of one unto condemnation, but the free gift *came* of many trespasses unto justification.

17 For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one *even* Je'-sus Christ.

18 So then as through one trespass *the judgment came* unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness *the free gift came* unto all men to justification of life.

Golden Text. — *"For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Rom. 6: 23.)

Devotional Reading. — Gen. 3: 7-21.

Daily Bible Readings

January	26. M.....	The Entrance of Sin (Gen. 3: 1-8)
January	27. T.....	The Wastefulness of Sin (Luke 15: 11-24)
January	28. W.....	Sin's Universality (Rom. 3: 9-20)
January	29. T.....	The Depravity of Sin (Isa. 1: 10-17)
January	30. F.....	The Confession of Sin (Psalm 51: 1-10)
January	31. S.....	Repentance of Sin (Acts 2: 37-42)
February	1. S.....	The Forgiveness of Sin (Mark 2: 1-12)

Time.—4000 B.C. for Genesis; A.D. 58 for Romans.

Places.—Garden of Eden and Rome.

Persons.—Adam, Eve, Paul and Christians at Rome.

Golden Text Explained

1. The Wages of Sin Is Death. In

our text, sin is represented as a master paying wages to those who serve. Death is represented as the wages paid for the service of sin. What is the meaning of the word death? Does it mean mere physical death, or does it mean spiritual and eternal death? Our text presents a contrast, which, if understood correctly, will determine the meaning of the word death. There is a contrast between the word wages and the free gift. Death is represented as the wages one earns in the service of sin, but the free gift is represented as something which cannot be earned, but is given on account of our relation with Jesus Christ. In the first part of the text, we have the word death, in the second part we have eternal life. So, death is here contrasted with eternal life; hence, the word death must mean eternal death. In another place Paul says, "for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8: 13.) To live after the flesh means to sin, so Paul says if you sin you must die. But if you live by the Spirit, that is, live as the Lord wishes you to live, you shall live eternally. Hence, the death of this verse must be eternal death. Regardless of how an individual lives, that individual must die, for it is appointed unto man once to die. But Paul says here that this death is the penalty for living after the flesh. If that means only physical death, the death of the body, then the penalty is visited upon the righteous and the wicked alike, but since this death is visited as a penalty upon the wicked only, we must take it to mean eternal death. John tells us that those who live in sin shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, "which is the second death." (Rev. 21: 8.) This verse describes or identifies the death which is the penalty for our sins. It is the second death in the lake of fire and brimstone. Hence, when Paul said the wages of sin is death, he had in mind

that second death, which is the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

2. Free Gift of God Is Eternal Life.

Notice that sin pays those who serve, but God gives a free gift to all who serve him. This gift is eternal life. Eternal life is not merely living always. If to live, or be conscious always, is eternal life, then the wicked would have eternal life for they will be eternally conscious. But eternal life is a state into which the righteous go from the judgment. Jesus says we shall have eternal life in the world to come. (Mark 10: 30.) Eternal life cannot be bought with money. If the rich man gets there, it will not be because he bought his way into eternal life, but because God gave it to him. Next, eternal life cannot be earned by our good morals. One cannot expect to enjoy eternal life whose moral standard is beneath that which is required by the Lord. But, even if one should obtain perfection in morals, he still would not pay God for eternal life. Neither is eternal life paid for by good works which we perform. If one should live as long as Methuselah, and work feverishly day and night, he could not perform enough good works to pay God for eternal life, or to put God under obligation to save him. Yet, one must not expect to enjoy eternal life who is unwilling to do good works. In Matt. 25, Jesus taught that those who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick, were the ones who would have the privilege of entering into eternal life, but it was not *because such* good works paid for the life, but rather that eternal life is a gift to such as are willing to spend their lives working for the Lord.

3. **In Christ Jesus Our Lord.** This free gift of eternal life is said to be in Christ Jesus. In fact, all spiritual blessings are said to be in Christ. (Eph. 1: 3.) Again, it is said, "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full." (Col. 2: 9, 10.) So, all our blessings in this life, and in the life to come, are to be had in and

through Jesus Christ our Lord, (a) This is true because all these blessings were made possible by his death. All men had sinned, the wages of sin is death; therefore, all men condemned to eternal death, but by the death of Christ we have hope of eternal life and all the blessings that are attendant upon it. (b) These blessings may be said to be in Christ because we learn of them in the gospel of Christ. He had the good news of his death for our sins published to the whole world. And in this gospel of Christ we learn how to become Christians and how to live

the Christian life, to enjoy the hope of eternal life, and finally the realization of it. (c) We realize these blessings in union with Christ. Those who are thus united to Christ are said to be "in Christ." According to Paul we are baptized into Christ. (Rom. 6: 3; Gal. 3: 27.) *Following our baptism we must live in Christ, then we die in Christ.* (Rev. 14: 13.) *Following our death in Christ, we wait the coming of Christ, at which time, the dead in Christ shall rise, and then be taken to the Lord to spend eternity with him.* (1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.)

Exposition of the Text

I. The Beginning of Sin on Earth

(Gen 3: 1-6)

Now the serpent was more subtle. The tempter, Satan, came to Eve in the form of a serpent. Whether this serpent was our snake, or some other creature of God, has been a disputed question for a long time, but is of little importance. It is sufficient to say that Satan found a creature suitable to his use on this occasion.

Hath God said? Satan's first effort was to plant a doubt in the mind of the one he would destroy. He has had little cause to change his tactics in this day of modern evils. He still begins by causing us to doubt the word of God.

The woman said unto the serpent. From this statement of the woman, we learn that she had a clear understanding of her duty. God had made plain to her the fact that she might eat of certain trees, but that of another certain tree, she should not eat of it. So the sin on this occasion was not caused by a lack of knowledge, or the inability to understand what God said. How this was made clear to Adam and Eve, we learn from these words, "and Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2: 16, 17.) In Gen. 2: 9, we learn that the tree of life was also in the garden, and since they were forbidden to eat of

but one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we conclude that Adam and Eve had the privilege of eating of the tree of life while in the garden. But when they sinned, the Lord said, "the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever—therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." (Gen. 3: 22, 23.)

Ye shall not surely die. This is the language of Satan through the serpent, contradicting what God had told the woman. First, Satan planted a doubt in the mind of Eve, and next he squarely contradicted what God had said. Nor is that the last time that Satan ever squarely contradicted God's word. God has said, "baptism doth now save us." (1 Pet. 3: 21.) But Satan has said, baptism does not save us. God has said our eternal life is conditioned upon our obedience to him. (Heb. 5: 9.) But Satan has said that our eternal salvation is not conditioned upon our living right, that it is impossible for a child of God to be lost regardless of how he lives.

Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. First, Satan planted a doubt; second, he contradicted God; and now in the third place, he leads Eve to suspect that God is withholding something good from her. Satan said that in the day you eat of this fruit, instead of dying, your eyes shall be opened and you will be

as God, knowing good and evil. Satan led her to believe that she was being deprived of some blessing to which she had a right.

When the woman saw that the tree was good. Satan then presented three arguments why Eve should eat of the fruit. The first was, it was good for food. The idea was that God was withholding something good from her that she had a right to enjoy. Second, it was a delight to the eyes, it was pretty. It appealed to her and to her sense of the beautiful, and so she was being deprived of something that was a delight to her. Third, the tree was to be desired to make one wise; that through eating of this, she would gain a knowledge to which she was entitled. God was withholding from her some knowledge, to which she had every right, and thus he created within her a desire to do that which was contrary to the will of God. It should be noticed that Satan presented only one side of the picture. It is true that the fruit was good, that it was pretty, and that it would bring a knowledge of some things of which she did not then know. But, he did not present the ugly side of the picture, that it would bring about her destruction, that it would bring sorrow and suffering upon her and posterity forever. Satan never presents that side of the picture. He always presents the beautiful side and leaves the ugly side covered from our view.

She gave also unto her husband. Why Adam ate of the fruit we can never know. Whether Eve made these arguments which Satan made, we have no way of knowing. One thing we do know, that Adam was not beguiled. (1 Tim. 2: 14.) We also know that Adam is charged with the sin that brought death upon us; "for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15: 22.)

II. The Consequence of Sin (Rom. 5: 12-18)

Through one man sin entered into into the world. This part of our text is said to be one of the most difficult paragraphs in all the Bible, but the central lesson for us, the consequence of sin, is not difficult to learn from

this passage. This passage tells us that, through the sin of one man, Adam, death entered into the world; that is, death is the consequence of sin which passed unto all men. Paul gives as a reason why death passed unto all men, "for that all sinned." In Adam, as the federal head of the race, the entire race is looked upon as having sinned. There are two types of sin to be considered here,

(1) actual or personal; (2) representative. Those who are guilty of personal sins must suffer both guilt and consequence, but those who are guilty only of representative sin do not suffer guilt, but only the consequence of the sin. So we are not guilty of Adam's sin, but we do suffer death as the consequence of that sin. To illustrate, we learn that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek. (Heb. 7: 8-10.) Since Levi lived hundreds of years after Melchizedek, it was impossible for him to pay tithes personally, but while he was yet in the loins of his father Abraham, he paid tithes representatively to Melchizedek. So, while the human race was still in the loins of its father, Adam, it sinned, not personally, but representatively. In this sense Paul could say that all sinned.

Death reigned from Adam until Moses. This statement Paul offers as proof that death is the consequence of Adam's sin. There was no law from the time of Adam until Moses which carried the death penalty, but yet people continued to die during that time. Since people continued to die when there was no general law carrying the death penalty, it follows that their death must be attributed to some other cause. Paul attributes the death of these people, during that period, to the fact that Adam sinned, or that they representatively sinned in Adam and suffered the consequence of that sin.

But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. Paul had just said that Adam is a figure of him that was to come; that is, Christ. But lest some one should press that figure too far, he hurries to say that there is a great difference between the two. By the trespass of one, Adam, the many died. Now much more, he says, did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Je-

sus Christ, abound unto many. In this term, "much more," there is great consolation for us. Not only do we gain what we lost in Adam, but we gain much more in Christ. If Christ could give us only what we lost in Adam, we would be restored to physical life on this earth, but beyond this restoration of life by the resurrection, we have the hope of eternal life, not upon this earth where sin and sorrow reign, but in heaven, free from all the consequences of sin.

And not as through one that sinned, so is the gift. Here is another instance in which Christ differs from Adam. Adam's one sin caused many to be condemned to death, but the many sins of Adam's posterity caused Christ to die for their justification.

Even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men. This is really a conclusion of a statement which was broken into at verse 12. To get the whole statement, we learn that as through one man, sin entered into the world, even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. This is summed up in Paul's statement to the Corinthians already referred to in this lesson, "for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." However, this statement to the Corinthians does not take into consideration the "much more" of which Paul speaks in our text, to be enjoyed through the one act of righteousness of Christ.

If our first parents could have seen clearly from the beginning to the

end of time, and could have measured all the sorrow and suffering which their one sin would bring upon their posterity, surely they would have summoned the strength to resist the temptation and would not have sinned. So, many today sin because they do not take the time to consider the consequences of that sin. It may live on in the children for many generations, to bring them sorrow and suffering. If we would give some time to think of the probable consequences of our sins surely we would not be so free to commit them.

It remains to be said that the death of this passage is physical death and no more. (1) Paul argues that all who lived between the time of Adam and Moses died on account of this sin. If the death was any more than physical death, we would have to conclude that some people suffer eternal death on account of the sin of Adam; such the Bible does not teach. (2) Still children die. If this is not the death mentioned, we have no reason for the death of children. They do not die on account of their own sin. They must die on account of Adam's sin. Hence, we must conclude that the death, which is spoken of here as a consequence of sin, is simply physical death. This, which comes upon us, through no fault of our own, Jesus restores to us in the resurrection. But, more than this, he gives us provided we love and serve him while we live in this life. He gives us what we lost in Adam unconditionally. He gives us much more on condition that we love and serve him.

General Information on Sin and Its Consequences

1. Definition of Sin. (a) Lawlessness. (1 John 3: 4.) (b) Unrighteousness. (1 John 5: 17.) (c) Failing to do good. (Jas. 4: 17.) (d) Whatever is not of faith. (Rom. 14: 23.)

2. Classification of Sin. (a) Ignorance. (Lev. 5: 17-19; Acts 3: 17; 1 Tim. 1: 13.) (b) Weakness. (Gal. 6: 1; Matt. 26: 69-75.) (c) Rebellion. (1 Sam. 15: 17-23; Heb. 10: 26-31.)

3. Why people sin. (a) Love of material wealth. (1 Tim. 6: 6-10.) (b) Lack of love for God. (John 14:

15; 1 John 5: 3.) (c) Lack of fear. (Rom. 3: 10-18; Luke 23: 40.) (d) Sin not speedily punished. (Eccles. 8: 11.)

4. Consequences of sin. (a) In the individual. (Josh. 7: 21, 25; Num. 20: 10-13.) (b) In the nation. (2 Chron. 36: 14-21; 1 Thess. 2: 14-16.) (c) Final consequence. (2 Thess. 1: 7-10; Rev. 20: 11-15; 21:8.)

5. Salvation from sin. (a) Become a Christian—(1) Believe in Christ. (John 3: 16.) (2) Repent, turn to God. (Acts 3: 19.) (3) Confess faith in Christ. (Rom. 10: 9, 10.)

(4) Be baptized for remission. (Acts 2: 38.) — (b) Live faithful Christian life—(1) Worship in Spirit and truth.

(John 4: 24.) (2) Serve God faithfully. (1 Cor. 4: 1.) (3) Keep unspotted from the world. (Jas. 1: 27.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

In what figure does our text represent sin?

What is the meaning of death in our text?

State your reason for your answer.

What does Paul say of those who live after the flesh?

What does John say of those who commit sin?

Contrast wages and a free gift and show how this applies to our text.

What is the meaning of eternal life as used in our text?

When does Jesus say we will come into possession of eternal life?

Name and discuss some ways in which we cannot gain eternal life?

Where are all spiritual blessings said to be?

Why are all blessings said to be in Christ?

How do we get Into Christ?

The Beginning of Sin on Earth

In what form did Satan approach Eve?

Did Eve have a clear understanding of her duty?

How did Adam and Eve get their understanding of their duty?

What other tree is mentioned? and did they have a right to eat of it?

What was the first step in Satan's approach to Eve?

Can you show that he approaches people in the same way today?

What was the second step in Satan's approach to Eve?

What three arguments did Satan make relative to the fruit?

What side of the picture did Satan fail to present to Eve?

Do you know what caused Adam to eat of the forbidden fruit?

The Consequence of Sin

What does Paul teach us of the origin of sin?

What two types of sin are mentioned in our comments?

Can you distinguish between "actual" and "representative" sin?

How does Paul prove that physical death is a consequence of Adam's sin?

Of whom was Adam a figure?

What is included in the "much more." which we gain in Christ?

What was the one act of righteousness through which we have the free gift?

What effect would a consideration of the consequences of sin have upon us if we could see them clearly before we sin?

Can you prove that the death of this passage is physical death?

What is there of interest in the division of General Information?

Lesson VI—February 8, 1953

THE GRACE OF GOD

The Lesson Text

Eph. 2: 1-9; 2 Cor. 12: 9; Titus 2: 11-14

1 And you *did he make alive*, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins.

2 Wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience;

3 Among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest: —

4 But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved),

6 And raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly *places*, in Christ Je'-sus:

7 That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Je'-sus:

8 For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God*;

9 Not of works, that no man should glory.

9 And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for *my* power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

11 For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

12 Instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world;

13 Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the

great God and our Saviour Je'-sus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works.

Golden Text.—*"But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they."* (Acts 15: 11.)

Devotional Reading.—Psalm 32: 1-11.

Daily Bible Readings

February 2. M	Th3 Riches of His Grace (Eph. 1: 1-7)
February 3. T	Grace of God Available to All (Tit. 2: 11-15)
February 4. W	Christian Under Grace (Rom. 6: 1-15)
February 5. T	Grace and Truth by Jesus Christ (John 1: 14-17)
February 6. F	Growth in Grace Required (2 Pet. 3: 1-18)
February 7. S	Strength in Grace (2 Tim. 2: 1-15)
February 8. S	Partakers of Grace (Phil. 1: 1-7)

Time.—A.D. 63 for Ephesians; A.D. 57 for 2 Corinthians; A.D. 65 for Titus.

Places.—Ephesus, Corinth, Rome.

Persons.—Paul and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. *Salvation through grace.* By grace is meant unmerited favor. God did not save us because he had so much invested in us that he could not afford to lose us. He did not save us because we were worth saving. He did not save us because we were too good to be lost. Many times we hear people say, especially at funerals, that God would not condemn a man who is honest, upright, good to the orphan and the widow, and having other qualities that would commend him to God. But God is not obligated to save any person because of any number of good qualities or traits in that person. No one is capable of living such a good life as to put God under obligation to save him. The reason God saves us upon any condition is to be found in God himself. "God's own mercy, spontaneous, undeserved, condescending, moved him. God is his own motive. His love is not drawn out by our loveliness, but wells up, like an artesian spring, from the depths of his nature." Salvation by grace is in contrast with (1) our own goodness and wisdom; that is, our own righteousness; (2) it is in contrast to salvation by the works of the law of Moses, which we are told could not bring salvation. (3) It is to be contrasted with perfect obedi-

ence on our part. If perfect obedience is a condition of salvation, none of us would be saved. We are saved by the grace of God in spite of our imperfections.

2. *Jews and Gentiles saved in like manner.* There is a popular doctrine in the religious world today that the Jews were saved by one plan, in one age of the church, and that the Gentiles are saved by another plan in another age of the church. According to this theory, it is granted that Peter told the Jews on Pentecost, who believed in Christ, that they must repent and be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins, but that when Peter went to the house of Cornelius, he taught Cornelius that salvation is by faith only. In our text, Peter denies that he taught a different plan of salvation to Cornelius to that which he taught to the Jews on Pentecost. For he says both Jews and Gentiles are saved by grace *in like manner*. It is obvious that Peter was talking to believers when he told them to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Hence, we conclude that Peter taught on Pentecost that people must believe, repent, and be baptized for remission of sins in order to be saved. At the house of Cornelius we find these same three conditions. Cot-

nelius believed. (Acts 15: 7) Next Cornelius repented. (Acts 11: 18.) And finally, Cornelius was baptized. (Acts 10: 48.) The fact that the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius before he was baptized, and the fact that the Holy Spirit did not fall in this measure upon the people on the day of Pentecost, but only on the apostles, has caused a number of people to fail to understand that Cornelius was saved like the people on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius for two obvious purposes. (1) The Holy Spirit came on Cornelius to prove to the Jews that the Gentiles were gospel subjects, that they were acceptable to the Lord, and that the Jews should no longer deny them the privileges of salvation. (Acts 10: 47; 11: 15-17.) (2) The Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Gentiles in order that the Gentiles might know that their ac-

ceptance into the fellowship of the church was not the work of an ultra-liberal group of Jews, but that it was of God himself. (Acts 15: 7-9.)

3. *Grace does not forbid obedience.* Many people have the idea that if salvation is by grace, it cannot be conditioned upon obedience. Since the obedience required has no merit in itself, we do not look to the obedience for salvation, but look to God to save us on the condition that we render this obedience. Since God has demanded obedience on our part, and *since he declares* we are saved by grace, we must conclude that our salvation is through grace upon the condition we obey the Lord. Furthermore, since the disobedient are said to be lost because they do not obey the truth, we must conclude that obedience is a condition of salvation by grace. (1 Pet. 4: 17; 2 Thess. 1: 9, 10.)

Exposition of the Text

I. Salvation by Grace (Eph. 2: 1-9)

And you did he make alive. The first part of our text is used by Paul to describe the life lived by these Ephesians before they became Christians so that they might the more appreciate this salvation by grace of which he writes. First, he tells them they were dead through their trespasses and sins. The religious world largely holds that people are dead in sin because of their relation to Adam; that on account of Adam's sin we are born in sin. But Paul here attributes our death in sin to our own trespasses. The Old Testament teaches the same doctrine. (Isa. 59: 1, 2.)

Wherein ye once walked. (1) Paul describes this former walk of theirs as being according to the course of this world. They had allowed the world to determine the plane on which they lived. Many today walk according to the world who are members of the church. They allow the world to determine their standard of life, the way they transact business, the type of pleasures in which they engage. (2) Their life was according to the prince of the powers of _ the air, and Paul describes this prince as the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience. Thus, we see that Satan, the prince of the

powers of the air, controls those who walk according to the course of the world.

All once lived in the lusts of our flesh. The Ephesian Christians were not different from other human beings. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Paul here speaks of this universal sin as living in the lusts of our flesh. (1) He describes this life after the lusts of the flesh as doing the desires of the flesh or of the mind. By the desires of the flesh is meant those gross sensual sins which gratify the lusts of the flesh; and by the desires of the mind is meant those wicked thoughts and purposes which may be entertained in the mind, especially, of the unconverted. Such sins as envy, pride, ambition, covetousness, and all secret desires of lust and immorality which are entertained in the minds are included in this catalog. The prodigal son may be used to illustrate those who have the desires of the flesh, and the elder brother may illustrate those who have the lusts of the mind. (2) Following this, Paul characterizes all such children of wrath and that they are such by nature. The word *nature* here does not mean by birth. People are not born the children of wrath, but they are by use and habit in sin the chil-

dren of wrath. Thayer defines the Greek word here translated *nature* as follows: "A mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature."

But God, being rich in mercy. Paul described man's former condition in order that he might magnify the riches of the mercy of God. Painting the picture of man at his worst helps him to set forth God at his best. Showing that man was in a lost condition would help us to see that God's salvation was on account of his mercy and grace rather than upon what man deserved.

Made us alive together with Christ. Verses 1 through 3 tell us of our lost and ruined condition, but verses 4 and 5 tell us of the great love and mercy of God that changed the situation for us; even when we were dead through our trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ. Paul seems to suggest, in this language, that there is such a close connection between the Christian and Christ, that in the resurrection of Christ, the Christian was made anew, was raised to live a new life. It is by the power that raised Christ from the dead that we are made alive and it is by virtue of his death and resurrection that we are made to live a new life. Hence, it can be said that we are raised together with him.

He might show the exceeding riches of his grace. According to Paul, this is the purpose for which the Father raised us up together with Christ and made us to live a new life, that he might, in the ages to come, show the exceeding riches of his grace and kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace have ye been saved through faith. In this short paragraph Paul attributes our salvation to the mercy, love, kindness, and grace of God. At no time does Paul intimate that our salvation was on account of our goodness. In fact, he pictured the world as lost and ruined by sin, as being under the prince of the power of the air, as walking according to the course of this world, as living in the lusts of our flesh and of our mind, in order that he might emphasize the love and the kindness, the mercy and the grace of God.

That not of yourselves. The word *that* does not refer to faith. Some

have taught that Paul says here that faith is not of ourselves, that it is not something which we do, but that which God gives us. But the word *that* refers to the salvation. It is by grace that we have this salvation. It, salvation, is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.

Not of works. Paul hastens to assert that our salvation is of grace and not of works. It is a gift of God, given on account of his great love and on account of the riches of his mercy, and not on account of any good in us or any good works that we have done. Our salvation is of grace and not of works. But since our salvation is conditioned upon obedience to gospel commandments, we must conclude that such obedience is not included in the term works. In fact, Peter says, that we must work righteousness to be acceptable to God. (Acts 10: 34.) And Paul says that we are justified by a faith that works through love. (Gal. 5: 6.)

II. Grace for the Sufferer (2 Cor. 12:

9)

My grace is sufficient for thee. This is the language of the Lord to the apostle Paul when Paul had prayed three times that the Lord would remove the thorn in his flesh. This thorn was called a messenger of Satan, given Paul to buffet him lest he should be exalted over much, on account of the visions and revelations of the Lord which had been given him. This suggests that our prayers are not always answered in just the way we wish they would be answered. Paul prayed for the removal of the thorn in his flesh, but instead was given grace to suffer that thorn. Many a bedridden Christian has been given the same grace to suffer the thorn in the flesh; the thorn of pain, the thorn of sorrow, or the thorn of disappointment. In many such cases, the grace of God has not only been sufficient to enable them to endure the suffering, but in addition, to cultivate a sweet disposition far beyond that which they might have cultivated in ordinary conditions of life.

My power is made perfect in weakness. If Gideon had taken his more than thirty thousand men into battle, man might have gloried in his

victory; but when he won the victory with only three hundred men, God was given the glory. If Jesus had established his kingdom through the power of force, by gathering unnumbered soldiers and driving them to victory, man could have gloried in it. But since he used weak, frail forces, through which to establish that kingdom, God is glorified. Paul said he preached the gospel in Corinth, not in persuasive words of wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and power that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2: 4, 5.) In these and many others, may be illustrated the truth of this statement, that God's power is shown in weakness. The grace of God is not only sufficient to enable a person to bear the thorns of the flesh, but even able to cause that individual to glory in his weakness in order that the power of God may be seen and appreciated in his life.

III. Grace Teaches How to Live (Titus 2: 11-14)

The grace of God hath appeared. Men have argued whether the word grace here is to be interpreted to mean Christ or the gospel. Probably Paul had neither in mind. He seems to say that the grace of God, formerly not clearly revealed, is now fully revealed in the gift of his Son and in the revelation of that Son through the gospel. It is through the gospel that we see the grace of God in Christ Jesus. It is through the gospel that we learn of this salvation which has been brought through the grace of God, but to say that the gospel is the grace of God, is to use the word grace in a very limited sense. Both Christ and the gospel are manifestations of the grace of God here mentioned.

Bringing salvation to all men. Paul believed that salvation from sin was for all men. He believed that Jesus is the Savior of the whole world. He believed that provision had been made for the salvation of all the World; that God was able and willing to save all the world, and he preached a gospel which was adapted to all men and able to save all men. The only reason all men are not going to be saved is that not all men are

willing to be submissive to gospel teaching and obey its precepts.

Instructing as. This instruction is both negative and positive. (1) The negative instruction is that we must deny ourselves ungodliness and worldly lusts. The person who is not willing to count the cost and to give up his ungodliness and the enjoyment of worldly lusts should stay out of the church until he is ready to pay the price. (2) The positive teaching of this grace of God is that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. "We have here, then, an epitome of all that religion requires: (1) our duty to ourselves—included in the word soberly and requiring a suitable control over all our evil propensities and passions; (2) our duty to our fellow men in all the relations we sustain in life; and (3) our duty to God—evinced in what will be properly regarded as a pious life. He that does these things, meets all the responsibilities of his conditions and relations; and the Christian system, requiring the faithful performance of these duties, shows how admirably it is adapted to man." (Albert Barnes.)

Looking for the blessed hope. Paul speaks of the second coming of Jesus Christ as something blessed. He speaks of it as a hope which every Christian should entertain in his heart. He speaks of it as something which we should earnestly desire. Only the Christian can earnestly desire the coming of the Lord, for at the time of his coming all ungodliness will be punished and the wicked will be destroyed. Hence, the Christian is the only one in a condition to honestly long for and expect the coming of the day of the Lord.

Who gave himself for us. It seemed a difficult thing for Paul to make mention of Christ without making some reference to the fact that he died for the whole world, good for us to give attention, to meditate often on the fact that Jesus died for us. He died in our place. We should have suffered for our sins, but he suffered in our place that we might not have to suffer the penalty for our sins. The penalty for our sins is eternal destruction. The suffering of Christ relieves us of the necessity of suf-

fering eternally for our sins. We ought, with Paul, to be eternally grateful to the Lord that he has suffered in our place.

That he might redeem us from all iniquity. The verb here translated redeem is the verb form of the same word, which in Matt. 20: 28, is translated ransom. The death of Jesus Christ was the ransom price. It was for the purpose of redeeming us from sin.

Purify unto himself a people. Not only did Jesus redeem us from sin but he seeks to purify us in order

that he may present us, the church, to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that we should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5: 26, 27.) This purified people is said to be the Lord's own possession. They are his because he redeemed or bought them and we learn that he bought the church with his own blood. (Acts 20: 28.) Hence, this redeemed and purified possession, or people, is the church which Jesus purchased with his blood.

General Information on the Grace of God

1. Use of the Word in New Testament. (a) God's favor in forgiving us. (Eph. 2: 8.) (b) The gospel versus the law. (John 1: 17; Rom. 6: 14.) (c) Gifts of God enabling men to do God's work. (Rom. 15: 15; 1 Cor. 15: 10.) (d) The Christlike disposition to help those in need. (2 Cor. 8: 9, 6.) (e) Favor of God in the judgment. (1 Pet. 1: 13.) (f) The opposite of debt. (Rom. 4: 4, 5.)

2. Our Connection with Grace.

(a) Enter it by faith. (Rom. 5: 2.) (b) We should continue in it. (Acts 13: 43.) (c) We should grow in it. (2 Pet. 3: 18.) (d) We should abound in it. (2 Cor. 8: 7.) (e) We must stand fast in it. (1 Pet. 5: 12.) (f) We may receive it in vain. (2 Cor. 6: 1.) (g) We may fall from it. (Heb. 12: 15; Gal. 5: 4.) (h) We should thank God for this unspeakable gift as the basis of our hope of eternal life. (2 Cor. 9: 15.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of our lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Discuss some reasons which did not move God to save us.

What is the primary reason for God's offer of salvation to us?

Contrast the doctrine of salvation by grace with the doctrine of salvation by (1) our own goodness; (2) works of the law; (3) perfect obedience on our part.

What popular religious doctrine is contradicted by the words of our text?

What plan of salvation was revealed to the Jews on Pentecost?

Can you show that Cornelius was saved in like manner with the Jews?

Discuss two reasons why the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius before he was baptized.

Can you reconcile the idea of salvation by grace with obedience as a condition?

Salvation by Grace

Why is the unsaved person dead in sin?

Contrast the expressions "dead in sin" and "dead to sin."

What powers determine the plane on which the "dead in sin" live?

What is meant by the lusts of the flesh? and of the mind?

Can you show how the prodigal son and the elder brother illustrate these?

What is meant by our being children of wrath by nature?

How does Paul use man's lost condition to magnify the mercy of God?

What does Paul mean by saying we are made alive "together with Christ"?

For what purpose did God make us alive with Christ?

To what four things does Paul attribute our salvation?

To what does Paul not attribute our salvation?

Can you harmonize this with the fact that our salvation is conditioned upon obedience?

Grace for the Sufferer

Why was the statement of our text made to Paul?

How was Paul's prayer for relief answered?

Name some "thorns" we are given the grace to bear.

Can you illustrate how God's power is made perfect in weakness?

Grace Teaches Us How to Live

What is the meaning of the word "grace" in this part of our text?

What was Paul's conception of the universality of salvation?

Can you give (1) the negative, and (2) the positive teaching of the grace of God?

How did Paul view the second coming of Jesus?

What is meant by Christ giving himself up for us?

For what two reasons did Jesus give himself up for us?

Can you show that the church is the redeemed and purified possession of the Lord?

What is there of interest in the division on General Information?

Lesson VII—February 15, 1953

OBEDIENCE

The Lesson Text

Gen. 12: 1-4; Matt. 7: 21-27

1 Now Je-ho'-vah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing:

3 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.

4 So Abram went, as Je-ho'-vah had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Ha'-ran.

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not proph-

esy by thy name, and by thy *name* cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock.

26 And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments"*(John 14: 15.)

Devotional Reading.—Heb. 5: 7-9.

Daily Bible Readings

February 9. M.....	Obedience of Faith (Rom. 16: 25-27)
February 10. T.....	Obedience to Faith (Rom. 1: 1-5)
February 11. W.....	Christ an Example of Obedience (Heb. 5: 1-9)
February 12. T.....	God Remembers the Obedient (2 Cor. 7: 12-16)
February 13. F.....	Wisdom of the Obedient (Matt. 7: 13-28.)
February 14. S.....	Promise of Blessing to Obedient (Isa. 1: 16-20)
February 15. S.....	Disobedient Lost (Rev. 22: 1-21)

Time.—For Genesis, 1921 B.C.; for Matthew A.D. 27.

Places.—Haran and somewhere in Galilee.

Persons.—Abraham, Jesus and his disciples.

Golden Text Explained

1. *Relation of love to obedience.*

(a) Love is the ground out of which the highest type of obedience springs. Paul speaks of our being rooted in love. (Eph. 3: 17.) In this figure, love is the soil out of which the plant of obedience to God grows. In this use of the word, love is the

necessary attitude or disposition of heart to render the highest type of obedience. Some obey God because they are afraid of the tortures of hell. Obedience springing from fear may be acceptable, but it is not as high a type of obedience as that which grows out of love, (b) Love

inspires or motivates us to render obedience. There is something inspiring and impelling in our love even for our friends. Love inspires us to think of their welfare and to act to accomplish their welfare. So, love for God inspires us to think upon his will, to desire to know more of his will, and to desire to do the things that please him. It is, therefore, the motivating power that moves people to do the will of the one whom they love. (c) Love conditions one for obedience. It makes us see the need of obeying God. And love helps us to see the reasonableness of obedience. When people neglect or refuse to obey God because they think his demands are unreasonable, that is proof of the fact that they do not love God. Love inclines us to the same viewpoint that God has. To the extent that we love, our viewpoint will be the same as that of God. That is true with reference to our love for our fellow men and for our families. The more deeply we love them, the more united we are in our purposes and our efforts to accomplish those purposes, (d) Love obligates us to obey the one whom we love. There is something about love that binds us to the object of our love. It makes us realize our obligations to others, and it makes us willing to assume those obligations. So, if we love the Lord, we will realize our obligations to the Lord. And it will make us willing to assume these obligations and to discharge our duties to the best of our ability.

2. *Keeping his commandments*, (a) Keeping the commandments of the Lord is proof of our love for him. The primary thought of our text is that love is shown by keeping his commandments. The individual who neglects or refuses to obey the commandments of the Lord does not love the Lord. Paul speaks of giving money for the poor in obedience to his teaching on that point as the proof of the love of the giver. (2 Cor. 8: 24.) (b) Keeping his commandments is proof of complete surrender to the Lord. No one has surrendered himself to the Lord until he is willing to keep any and all

the commandments the Lord has given. People who divide the commandments into essential and non-essential and who are willing to do that which they conceive to be essential, and unwilling to do that which they conceive to be non-essential, have not completely surrendered themselves to the Lord, and thus make evident their lack of love for the Lord. Whenever an individual refuses to keep any one commandment that the Lord has given, regardless of how insignificant he may think that commandment is, he advertises that fact that he has not yet surrendered to the Lord, and that he does not love the Lord. People argue whether they have to do this or that in order to get to heaven. All such arguing is simply advertisement of the fact that the individual does not wish to do something the Lord wants him to do, and therefore gives evidence of his failure to love the Lord. Occasional failure to obey one of the commandments through weakness or ignorance is not proof of a lack of love. It may be an indication of a divided love or of falling away from one's first love; but on account of human weakness we all fail in many points, and yet we can say truly that we love the Lord. But a willingness to do these commandments and keeping them to the best of our ability, is essential before we can lay claim to the fact that we love the Lord sincerely. (c) Keeping the traditions of men is no proof of our love for the Lord. Some people have the idea that as long as they are actively engaged in doing something, whether the Lord has commanded it or not, they are giving evidence of their love for God. But we evidence our love for God only when we do what God has commanded. When we obey human traditions, we are giving evidence of our respect for human authority, manifesting our love for our human leaders, and not for God. The religious world needs to be able to make this distinction between the commandments of God and the traditions of men; reject the latter and reconsecrate themselves to obedience to the former.

Exposition of the Text

I. Example of Obedience (Gen. 12:

1-4)

Get thee out of thy country. From Stephen we learn that Abraham had received a call previous to this one in our text. (Acts 7: 2, 3.) In Gen. 11: 31, we learn that Terah took his family out from Ur to go into the land of Canaan. It is not to be thought that Terah and Abraham knew the land to which they were to go was Canaan. (Heb. 11: 8.) The writer, writing hundreds of years later, knowing that they went to Canaan, simply said that they left the Ur of Chaldees to go to Canaan. And, from this earlier account, we might get the idea that Terah was in the lead instead of Abraham. According to usage, the Father was given the prominence, but Terah died in Haran and Stephen says that after Terah's death, God removed Abraham from Haran.

From thy kindred, and from thy Father's house. The command to Abraham consists of four things. (1) He was to leave his country; that is, he was to leave all the familiar surroundings with which he had been accustomed. The civilization of his day was the highest known to the world. We usually think of Abraham leaving a country with very low state of civilization to go to one of a similar degree of civilization, but archaeologists have uncovered ruins of cities of the time of Abraham, and have found buildings of two to six stories in height, and covering as much as a city block. So, Abraham was called upon to leave that portion of the country which enjoyed the highest degree of civilization in his day, to go to an unnamed country. (2) He was to leave his kindred. It is no easy task for a person attached to his relatives to get up and go into a distant country with little or no opportunity to return for visits. (3) He was to leave his Father's house; that is, he was to leave his nearest relatives. Though Terah and Haran went with him on the first leg of the journey, he later separated himself from them to go into Canaan. This is an increased trial of Abraham's faith and his obedience to the commandment of God.

People can leave their distant relatives fairly easily, but when they leave their own father and mother, their brothers and sisters, to go into a strange country, probably never to return, it is a trial of one's submission to God. (4) He was commanded to go into a country unnamed. No doubt Abraham knew something of the land lying west of his native country. We are told by historians that migration from the east to the west was rather common in that day. But he was told to go to a country which was not named in order that his obedience to God might be tested.

I will make of thee a great nation.

Along with God's commandments, there are always promises to inspire obedience. The promise of becoming a great nation was made to Abraham to inspire him to obey God's commandment. The greatness of this nation springing out of Abraham was to be (1) in that it was great numerically; (2) it was to be great in its influence upon the world. The Hebrew nation, springing from Abraham, has influenced the world in the realms of law, and of literature, and of religion, more than any other nation of the earth. (3) Its greatness was to consist also in spiritual blessings. The Lord was to bless Abraham and his posterity spiritually in more ways than Abraham was able to conceive at that time.

In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. The blessings promised Abraham to inspire his obedience to God's commandment, may be summed up in two divisions. (1) The temporal or physical blessings. He was promised a great name, a great posterity, and a land in which to live. (2) The spiritual blessings. Paul tells us that the seed in which God was to bless the world was not the posterity, generally, of Abraham, but a singular word meaning, Christ. (Gal. 3: 16.)

So Abraham went as Jehovah had spoken. This assures us of Abraham's obedience to God. There was no hesitation on his part. God commanded and he went. That spirit should characterize all of us today. We should be able to do what God

tells us to do and to learn to love to do that which we are commanded.

II. Warning Against Disobedience (Matt. 7: 21-23)

Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord. Jesus here warns us that it is not enough for people merely to be religious or prayerful. It is possible for men to pray much and yet not be obedient unto God. Those who spend much time in prayer, but do not cultivate the spirit of submission to God's will, need not expect to be received into the everlasting kingdom.

But he that doeth the will of my Father. Three things need to be emphasized here, and we take them in reverse order. (1) The Father. Jesus speaks of God as his Father, as the Father that sent him into the world, and sent him with a message to mankind. To reject that message is to reject Jesus and to reject Jesus is to reject the Father that sent him. (Luke 10: 16.) (2) The will. The Father in heaven has a will which relates to mankind. There are commandments in that will as well as promises. Many hope to enjoy the promises, but do not wish to obey the commandments. They hope to reap the rewards of the will of God, but refuse to be obedient to its demands. Jesus says, that the will of God, his Father, must be respected. (3) He that doeth. Jesus emphasizes the necessity of doing the will of the Father. He does not imply that we can do the will of the Father to such a degree of perfection that God will be obligated to save us. He does not imply that we can do the will of the Father so that we will earn salvation or atone for our sins, but he does emphatically teach that doing the will of the Father is a condition upon which we may hope to enjoy the promise of the Father.

Many will say to me in that day. In this warning against disobedience, Jesus reveals the fact that many, in the day of judgment, will expect to be received in peace by the Lord. They will expect to be received because they have lived up to their own requirements. They have measured up to their own standards of righteousness. People are inclined to set up their own standards of right and

wrong, and to determine in their own selves what one must do in order to go to heaven. Jesus, in this passage, teaches us that it is God who determines what a person must do or not do in order to be acceptable in the day of judgment. It is God's part to determine what man shall do, and it is man's part to do, to the best of his ability, that which God has determined shall be done. That person who is willing to be submissive to the will of the Lord will be acceptable in that day, but the individual who is unwilling to do what God says should be done is not fit for heaven.

I never knew you: depart from me. This is what Jesus will say, in the judgment, to people who have worshiped and served God according to their own standards. He says that many will claim, in that day, that they have cast out demons, and they have done many mighty things in the name of Christ. But he will say that he never knew them, that he never approved them. He will not deny that they were busy doing things. He will simply say that he did not approve of what they did. Jesus will approve of our obedience to the will of God, but he will not approve of our obedience to our own standards or the traditions of men.

III. Consequences Contrasted (Matt. 7: 24-27)

Everyone that heareth and doeth. In order to make a striking application of the principles just taught, our Lord draws a contrast between the obedient and the disobedient hearers of the Father's will. To impress this lesson, Jesus likens men unto houses built either on the rock, or upon the sand. The obedient person is like the house that is built upon the solid rock. When the rains, the floods, and the winds beat upon that house, it will not fall because of its secure foundation. So, the man who obeys the will of the Lord, will stand the trials of life, and the judgment.

Everyone that heareth and doeth them not. The disobedient person is like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. When the rains and the floods and the winds came and beat upon that house, it

fell. It fell because it was built upon a faulty foundation. So, disobedience to God is a faulty foundation upon which to build our lives. Obedience is the foundation that is solid, that will stand the test. Disobedience is the foundation of sand, of shifting sand, that will not enable us to stand either in life or in the judgment.

Great was the fall thereof. Our Lord considers the fall of even one person great. It is great (1) because God has lost a soul, his own offspring, worth more than all the world; (2) it is great because a life has been lost, a life lost to Satan, to sin, and disobedience; a life that could have been spent in a worth-while manner, accomplishing much good, that life

has been wasted and lost. (3) It's a great loss because it is lost for all eternity. The individual that lives in disobedience during life stands in the judgment unprepared to meet God, and the Lord says to him, depart ye that work iniquity. That individual then must go away into everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25: 41.) If the fall of one is great, what of the fall of an entire family, an entire community, or a nation? If we realized the greatness of the fall of one soul, we would be horror struck at the contemplation of the loss of the millions of souls that make up the nations of this earth. Surely, this consideration would drive us to do more, to give more, and to pray more for the salvation of the lost.

General Information on Obedience

1. God has always required men to obey. (a) Adam. (Gen. 2: 16.) (b) Israel. (Ex. 20; Deut. 6.) (c) Church. (Rom. 6: 12-18; 8: 12, 13; Phil. 2: 12-16; 2 Thess. 3: 6, 14.)

2. God has always blessed the obedient. (a) Enoch. (Gen. 5: 24; Heb. 11: 5, 6.) (b) Israel. (Deut. 28: 1-14.) (c) Church. (Matt. 25: 21, 34-40; Mark 10: 29, 30; Heb. 5: 9; Rev. 2: 10, 11.)

3. God has always punished the disobedient. (a) World of Noah's day. (Gen. 6: 5-8.) (b) Israel. (2 Chron. 36: 13-21.) (c) Church. (Acts 5: 1-11; 1 Cor. 5: 1-5; 2 Pet. 2: 4-10.)

4. Final Consequences, (a) Obedience. (Rev. 2: 7; 3: 5, 12, 21; 1 Thess. 4: 14-17.) (b) Disobedience. (Rom. 2: 4-11; 2 Thess. 1: 6-10; Rev. 20: 15; 21: 8; 22: 15.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Discuss love as the soil out of which obedience grows.

Discuss love as the motivating power of obedience.

How does love condition one for obedience?

Discuss the power of love to obligate us to obey God.

How can one prove that he loves God?

What is proof of complete surrender to the Lord?

Is occasional failure or weakness proof of a lack of love?

Is sincere activity always a proof of love for God?

Example of Obedience

Where did Abram live when he was first called?

Did Abram know he was going to Canaan when he left Ur?

Discuss the four demands made upon Abram in leaving Ur.

Was that a greater sacrifice than our foreign missionaries make today?

In what three ways was the nation coming from Abram to be great?

In whom were all families of the earth to realize this blessing promised Abram?

What is said of Abram's obedience to God's commandment?

Warning Against Disobedience

Can one be prayerful and disobedient at the same time?

What is the relationship between Jesus and God as suggested in this text?

What is said of the will of the Father?

What connection is there between doing the will of God and entering the kingdom?

Will some people be disappointed in the judgment? Why?

What does Jesus mean by saying he never knew certain people?

Consequences Contrasted

What figures of speech does Jesus use to contrast the obedient and disobedient?

What is the primary difference between the two buildings?

What does this difference represent in the lives of people today?

Discuss three reasons why the loss of a soul is great.

What impresses you most about the loss of a soul?

How does the contemplation of the loss of a whole nation affect you?

What are we as individuals, and as churches, doing to prevent the loss of souls? and of nations?

What is there of interest in the division on General Information?

Lesson VIII—February 22, 1953

FAITH

The Lesson Text

Heb. 11: 1-10; James 2: 20-24

1 Now faith is assurance of *things* hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.

2 For therein the elders had witness borne to them.

3 By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear.

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts: and through it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith E'-noch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he hath had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God:

6 And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing *unto him*; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his

house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a *land* not his own, dwelling in tents, with I'-saac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is barren?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up I'-saac his son upon the altar?

22 Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect;

23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God.

24 Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith.

Golden Text.—*"Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith."* (Jas. 2: 24.)

Devotional Reading.—Heb. 11: 32-40.

Daily Bible Readings

February	16. M.....	The Nature of Faith (Heb. II: 1-5)
February	17. T.....	Necessity of Faith (Heb. II: 6-12)
February	18. W.....	Examples of Faithfulness (Heb. 11:32-40)
February	19. T.....	Promise to the Faithful (Psalm 27: 1-5)
February	20. F.	Relation of Faith and Works (James 2: 14-26)
February	21. S.....	Abraham an Example of Faith (Rom 4: 1-25)
February	22. S.....	Source of Faith (Rom. 10: 6-17)

Time.—For Hebrews A.D. 63; for James, A.D. 61.

Places.—Unknown.

Persons.—James, Paul and saints of old.

Golden Text Explained

1. Justified By Works. The statement of our text has led many to be-

lieve that James contradicts the teaching of Paul on the matter of

salvation by faith or works. Paul says, "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Rom. 3: 20.) Again, "now that no man is justified by the law before God, is evident." (Gal. 3: 11.) Paul denies that we are justified by the works of the law of Moses. James affirms that we are justified by works, other than the works of Moses. Herein lies the harmony in the two statements. James would agree with Paul that doing the works of the law of Moses would be useless, and Paul would agree with James on the necessity of doing works, other than the works of the law of Moses.

Next, Paul argues that we are not justified by works of merit; that is, that we do not earn our salvation. "Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness." (Rom. 4: 4, 5.) The application of this is, that Abraham did not earn justification by any works that he did, or perfect obedience, but that he was justified by faith. But this justification by faith does not exclude obedience to the commandments that God gave to Abraham. If Paul should exclude obedience to these commandments, he would then contradict the statement of James.

Peter argues that the man who fears God and works righteousness is acceptable to God. (Acts 10: 35.) Here, Peter affirms that a certain kind of work is essential to our salvation. The wise man made a similar statement when he said, "fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccles. 12: 13.) Peter says, fear God and work righteousness. Solomon says, fear God and keep his commandments. Therefore, we conclude that keeping the commandments of God, is working the righteousness of God. Such work is no part of the law of Moses, which Paul says has no part in our justification. That Paul did not mean to exclude works of every kind, is seen in this statement, "for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything,

nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love." (Gal. 5: 6.)

There are two kinds of works, (1) works of God's righteousness; (2) works of man's righteousness. Both Paul and James would agree that no man can be justified by working man's righteousness. Man is not capable of any act of righteousness which would atone for his sins or put God under obligation to save him. But both Paul and James agree that working God's righteousness, keeping God's commandments, is essential to our salvation.

2. Not Only By Faith. The only time in the Bible where faith is coupled with the word *only*, it is used to deny that man can be saved by faith only. Yet, some of the prominent creeds and confessions of faith affirm that we are justified by faith only. (a) If we are justified by faith only, it follows that repentance has no part in the plan of salvation; that one can be justified without ever repenting. None but the man with the false theory to protect would think of contending that faith and repentance are identical. Many have faith who never repent. So, if an individual is saved by faith only, he is saved before repentance and without repentance, (b) If one is saved by faith only, he is saved before and without confessing Jesus Christ. But Paul teaches that we must confess with the mouth, as well as believe in the heart, that Jesus is the Christ, and that he was raised from the dead in order to be saved. (Rom. 10: 9, 10.) (c) If one could be justified by faith only, he would be justified, saved, before and without being baptized into Christ. Paul teaches that justification is in Christ. (Rom. 8: 1.) He teaches that salvation is in Christ. (2 Tim. 2: 10.) He teaches that reconciliation is in Christ, and that we are new creatures in Christ. (2 Cor. 5: 17-19.) He teaches that redemption, through the blood of Christ, and that every spiritual blessing is to be found in Christ. (Eph. 1: 3-7.) The doctrine of salvation by faith only denies that baptism into Christ, in whom we enjoy all these blessings, is necessary.

Exposition of the Text

I. Nature and Power of Faith (Heb.

11: 1-3)

Faith is assurance of things hoped for. Some have viewed this statement as an inspired definition of faith. The word faith is defined as, belief, trust, or confidence in God. On this point, Milligan says, "he begins by giving us, not a logical definition of faith, but rather a plain statement with regard to its nature and province as an affection of the human mind, implying at the same time its great power and influence as a means and principle of enjoyment." In these words, Paul teaches us that our faith is all we need to sustain our hope. God says he will forgive us and take us home to glory. We have no conception of heaven, how it looks, or what life will be like in that city. But our acceptance of God's word sustains our hope that we will enjoy heaven with the Lord.

A conviction of things not seen. Paul first spoke of the things future for which we hope, but he now speaks of things not seen; things present, things in the past, and things to come, which we have not seen. We have been told about the creation of the earth and we have been told about the death of Christ, and we have been told about heaven in the future. We do not know these things for we've never seen them nor felt them. But we have a conviction that such things have been and will be. Our faith is this conviction as to things we have not seen. So that we may properly say that we know the earth was created, we know that Jesus died for us, and we know that there is a heaven for the righteous to enjoy.

By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed. The writer now enlarges on the thought suggested by the things not seen. He says the worlds, meaning the entire universe, were framed by the word of God. The statement of this inspired writer, that the worlds were framed by the word of God, agrees with the account given by Moses. Eleven times in the first chapter of Genesis, Moses states that, "God said."

What is seen hath not been made out of things which appear. The things seen refer to the material universe about us that we can see and feel and use. The writer affirms that these things were not made out of things which appear; that is, things which could be seen and felt. All these material things were called into existence. They were not made out of material already on hand. This verse affirms the creation of material out of that which had no existence, and this writer affirms that these things were called into existence by the word of God. Scientists have never been able to account for the presence of so much material in the universe. They tell you that the earth came from the sun, but they do not know where the sun came from. They tell you that man evolved from a one-cell creature, but they do not tell you where that one cell came from. Inspiration goes one step further and says that all matter was brought into existence by God, and our faith takes hold of that statement. It is better to rest on that statement than it is on the chance which science asks us to receive.

II. Examples of Faith (Heb. 11: 4-10)

By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice. The reader should turn to Gen. 4: 1-8, and read the story of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel. There we learn that Abel offered a lamb as God had directed, but Cain brought an offering of the field, which he obviously thought would be as acceptable as that which God had commanded. Abel's offering was an offering of faith. Cain's offering was not of faith. His was an offering of human wisdom, a substitute for that which God had commanded. Abel is called a righteous man because he did what God commanded. Cain is called an evil man because he failed to do what God commanded. Abel was accepted and his offering honored because it was offered in faith, but Cain was rejected and his offering was rejected because he did not offer it in faith, according to God's commandment. To do a thing by faith, is to do it ac-

cording to God's commandment. (Gen. 6: 22.) To walk or worship by faith makes us righteous in the sight of God and acceptable to God, but to walk by human wisdom as Cain did, makes us evil in the sight of God, and causes our work and worship to be rejected. (1 John 3: 11, 12.)

Through it he being dead yet speaketh. Though dead for many centuries, Abel is speaking to us today. His message is, that if we walk by faith, doing that which God has commanded, we will be acceptable to God and be accounted as righteous. But, that if we refuse to do what God has said, and act according to our own wishes and wisdom, we will be counted evil in the sight of God, and be rejected by him.

By faith Enoch was translated. We now turn to Gen. 5: 24 and learn that Enoch walked with God, and was not for God took him. Our text tells us that God took him because he was well pleasing to God. Here is another man who walked by faith. He is another man whose faith assured him of the things for which he hoped, another man whose faith was a conviction of things not seen.

Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing unto him. Here we are taught the necessity of faith. No one can be pleasing to God who does not have faith, who does not walk by faith. Faith is man's first step toward God. If there were anything preceding faith, it would be without faith, and therefore not pleasing to God. Those who believe in justification by faith only, or at the point of faith, must place repentance before faith or contend that we are saved without repentance. No one wishes to take the position that we can be saved without repentance, so they place repentance before faith. If repentance is before faith, it would be without faith, and therefore, according to this text, would be displeasing to God.

He that cometh to God must believe that he is. This is a self-evident truth. Certainly no one can come to God before he believes there is a God. No one can, or will, come to God until he believes that God will accept him and save him. Our text

says there are two things that we must believe. (1) In the existence of God; (2) in the ability and willingness of God to reward them that diligently seek him.

By faith Noah prepared an ark. In Gen. 6: 8, we learn that Noah found favor or grace in the sight of God. So Noah was saved by grace. But in order for him to be saved by grace, he must build an ark. This ark was to be built by faith and used by faith. So Noah's salvation was by grace through faith. Noah's faith had three distinct characteristics. (1) It was a faith that accepted God's word at full face value. Our text says that he was warned of things not seen as yet. There had never been such a flood upon the earth as he was told was coming. So difficult was it to believe that such a flood could come, that only Noah and his family believed the warning. (2) Noah had a faith which feared God to the point of submitting to God's way. Our text says that he was moved with godly fear. The religious world today needs a faith that has this characteristic. There is little fear of God in the minds of people today. (Horn. 3: 18.) (3) Noah had a faith that obeyed God in all that he commanded. Our text says it was by faith that he prepared the ark. The preparation of that ark was his obedience to the commandment of God. So a faith that accepts God's word, a faith that fears God, and a faith that does what God commands, is the kind of faith that justifies.

Through which he condemned the world. Noah's faith accomplished three things, (1) his salvation from the flood; (2) he condemned the world; (3) he became heir of righteousness which is according to faith.

By faith Abraham obeyed. The fact that Abraham obeyed, not knowing where he was going, gives us a greater appreciation of his faith; and next, the fact that he sojourned for so many years, in the land not his own, gives us a greater appreciation of his faith. Abraham's faith enabled him to look beyond the temporal blessings of the land of Canaan and view a heavenly city, which he considered the reward of his

obedience. Abraham's faith was his assurance of these things for which he hoped, his conviction of the things he could not see.

III. Relation of Faith and Works

(James 2: 20-24)

Faith apart from works is barren. James had just said that the demons believe, but certainly no one thinks that they are justified. They have faith only. But James says that faith only, faith apart from works, is barren or dead.

Abraham our father justified by works. Paul uses Abraham as an example of justification by faith apart from the works of the law of Moses. James uses Abraham as an example of justification by works, which makes faith perfect. He does not say that Abraham was justified by works without faith. The offering of Isaac upon the altar was the work connected with Abraham's justification.

Faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. Here we have the relation of faith and works. Faith wrought with works, and works made the faith perfect. Faith alone is dead. Faith plus works is living or perfect.

And Abraham believed God. James tells us that when Abraham offered his son on the altar, when he had done the works God commanded him to do, the scripture was

fulfilled which said that Abraham believed God. In this statement we see that the word believe included the works which Abraham did.

It was reckoned for righteousness. Many religious teachers interpret this verse to mean that Abraham's faith was accepted in lieu of his righteousness. The argument is that we cannot be righteous but we can believe. So God accepts our faith instead of our righteousness. By this is meant that God plays like we are righteous simply because we have faith. The passage does not so teach. To count faith for righteousness is simply to set down his faith on his account toward or in order to his righteousness or his justification. One must believe in God in order to be justified. Abraham believed in God, so his belief or faith was counted toward his justification. That is, he was given credit for his faith.

Ye see that by works a man is justified. James says that we see in Abraham an example of a man being justified by works. As before stated, these works are not works of the law of Moses, nor are they meritorious works by which he expected to atone for his sins, and put God under obligation to save him. The works which Abraham did were simple works of obedience to God's commandments, conditions which he had to meet in order to be justified.

General Information on Faith

1. Use of the word faith. (a) Belief of testimony. (Rom. 10: 13-17.) (b) Persuasion that a course of action is right. (Rom. 14: 22, 23.) (c) The gospel. (Gal. 3: 23-25; 2: 15, 16.)
2. How faith comes. (Rom. 10: 17; John 9: 35-38; 20: 30, 31.)
3. Faith may exist without: (a) Love. (1 Cor. 13: 2; John 8: 30, 42.) (b) Repentance. (John 12: 42, 43; Acts 24: 25; 26: 27-29.) (c) New birth. (John 8: 30, 44; James 2: 20; John 3: 5; 2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 3: 26, 27.)

4. Faith essential to salvation. (Mark 16: 16; Acts 16: 31; John 8: 24.)

5. Faith can be lost. (a) Believe for a while. (Luke 8: 13.) (b) Deny the faith. (1 Tim. 5: 8.) (c) Make shipwreck of faith. (1 Tim. 1: 19.)

- (d) Stray from faith. (1 Tim. 6: 10.)

6. Our relation to faith, (a) Continue in faith. (Acts 14: 22.) (b) Live by faith. (Gal. 2: 20; 3: 11.)

- (c) Stand fast in faith. I Cor. 16: 13.) (d) Walk by faith. (2 Cor. 5: 7.) (e) Add graces to faith. (2 Pet. 1: 5-11.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

By the doing of what kind of works does Paul say a man is not justified?
Does James affirm that we are justified by doing the works of the law of Moses?
Does Paul affirm that Abraham was justified by faith apart from works of any kind?
Can you distinguish between works of merit and works of obedience to God?
What does Peter teach about works and salvation?
What proof do we have that Paul does not exclude works of every kind?
Contrast works of God's righteousness and works of man's righteousness?
Give and discuss three unscriptural conclusions coming out of the doctrine of justification by faith only.

Nature and Power of Faith

What is the definition of the word faith?
What is the relationship between faith and hope?
What is the relationship between faith and the things we have not seen, whether past, present or future?
What is Paul's explanation of the origin of the worlds?
How does this agree with the account of the creation by Moses?
Can you contrast Paul's conception of the origin of the universe with that of the modern scientist?

Examples of Faith

Why was the offering of Abel accepted?
Why was the offering of Cain rejected?

What are the essential characteristics of an offering made by faith?
What is the consequence of walking by human wisdom as did Cain?
What is the message which Abel yet speaks?
How was Enoch blessed? and why?
What is said in our lesson of the necessity of faith?
Why must faith be our first act of obedience in coming to God?
Of what two things must our faith in God consist?
Name and discuss three characteristics of the faith of Noah.
Can you show what place the grace of God had in the salvation of Noah?
Can you explain how these principles work in our salvation?
What three things did Noah's faith accomplish?
What is said of Abraham's faith?

Relation of Faith and Works

What is said of faith without works?
Who is given as an example of faith without works?
Who is given as an example of faith and works?
Can you show the part played by both faith and works in the justification of Abraham?
What is meant by reckoning faith for righteousness?
By what kind of works was Abraham justified?
What is there of interest in the division of General Information?

Lesson IX—March 1, 1953

REPENTANCE

The Lesson Text

Jonah 3: 1-10; Matt. 21: 28-31

1 And the word of Je-ho'-vah came unto Jo'-nah the second time, saying,

2 Arise, go unto Nin'-e-veh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

3 So Jo'-nah arose, and went unto Nin'-e-veh, according to the word of Je-ho'-vah. Now Nin'-e-veh was an exceeding great city, of three days' journey.

4 And Jo'-nah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nin'-e-veh shall be overthrown.

5 And the people of Nin'-e-veh believed God; and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

6 And the tidings reached the king of Nin'-e-veh, and he arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him,

and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

7 And he made proclamation and published through Nin'-e-veh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, nor drink water;

8 But let them be covered with sackcloth, both man and beast, and let them cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in his hands.

9 Who knoweth whether God will not turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil which he said he would do unto them; and he did it not.

28 But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in the vineyard.

29 And he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented himself, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and

said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.

31 Which of the two did the will of his father? They say, The first. Je'-sus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

Golden Text.—*"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish."* (Luke 13: 3.)

Devotional Reading.—Luke 13: 1-5.

Daily Bible Readings

February	23.	M.....	Repentance Illustrated (Jonah 3: 1-10)
February	24.	T.....	Necessity of Repentance (Luke 13: 1-5)
February	25.	W.....	The Prodigal's Repentance (Luke 15: 11-25)
February	26.	T.....	Fruits of Repentance (Matt. 3: 7-12)
February	27.	F.....	Condemnation of the Impenitent (Ezek. 14: 12-16)
February	28.	S.....	Heavenly Joy over Repentance (Luke 15: 1-7)
March	1.	S.....	Repentance a Condition of Salvation (Acts 2: 37-42)

Time.—For Jonah, 860 B.C.; for Matthew A.D. 29.

Places.—Nineveh and Jerusalem.

Persons.—Jonah, Ninevites, Jesus and the Jews.

Golden Text Explained

1. **Meaning of repentance.** There are two Greek words in the New Testament which are translated by our English word, repent. One means to have an after care or regret and is used but five times in the New Testament. (Matt. 21: 29, 32; 27: 3; 2 Cor. 7: 8; Heb. 7: 21.) The other means a change of mind with reference to our sins. It implies an abhorrence of evil and a determination to do good. The first word is used with reference to the repentance of Judas. (Matt. 27: 3.) And some have concluded that it always has the sense of regret or remorse, which is of a worldly sort. This is not true for Paul uses it with reference to his own feelings in 2 Cor. 7: 8, and in connection with God in Heb. 7: 21. It is also used by our Lord in commending the repentance of the son in our lesson text. (Matt. 21: 29-32.) Best authorities on word studies admit that the terms are used interchangeably in the New Testament, but they insist that there is a preference for the latter term. Since the noun form of the first term is never used in the New Testament, and the verb form is used only five times, while the noun form of the second term is used twenty-four times, and the verb

form is used thirty-four times, we see why these authorities would say that New Testament writers had a preference for the term which means, a change of mind. We should not confuse repentance with godly sorrow which, Paul says, works repentance. (2 Cor. 7: 10.) Nor should we confuse repentance with reformation or the good works, which are the fruit of repentance. John demanded that people bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, and described those works as the deeds which converted men would do. (Luke 3: 8-14.)

2. **Necessity of repentance.** The necessity of repentance, as taught by Jesus in our text, may be summed up in these words: "Repent or perish." This necessity is emphasized, (1) by the nature of repentance. Since repentance means a change of mind, and abhorrence of sin and turning to the love of that which is good, we see the necessity of it. No one can be acceptable to God who loves sin and sinful things. No one can be acceptable to God who enjoys indulging in the lusts of the flesh. (2) The necessity of repentance is emphasized in the fact that God commands all men everywhere to repent. (Acts 17: 30.) And, again, when people *asked* what to do to be saved,

the inspired apostle Peter told them to repent. (Acts 2: 38.) (3) We see something of the necessity of repentance in the nature of man. Man, though created in the likeness of God, sinned and lost that likeness. His natural tendency now is downward. It is not in man that walks to direct his steps, and there is a way that seemeth right unto man but the end thereof are the ways of death. Hence, man, unaided by help from heaven goes downward, and those who continue in that course are bound for perdition. But, those who turn from that course, by the grace of God, cultivate a Christlike disposition, may be saved in heaven. Since it is the nature of man to go downward and to drift away from God, and since the scriptures tell us that all men have sinned and drifted away from God, it is necessary, therefore, that all men repent or change their mind with reference to their course, to turn back toward God.

3. *No exceptions—all must repent.* The religious leaders rejected both John the Baptist and Jesus because

of their demand that all must repent. When John saw these impenitent, self-righteous Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he called them a generation of vipers, and demanded that they bring forth, therefore, fruit worthy of repentance, and think not to say within themselves that they had Abraham to their father, for God was able of the stones to raise up children unto Abraham. (Luke 3: 7-14.) He then demanded that they, like even the publicans and the sinners, should bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. The wealthy are not excused on account of their large contributions. The political boss is not excused because of the number of people he can control. The virtuous are not excused because of their usually good record in the past, nor the socially elite because of their prominence in the community. All have sinned and therefore are unfit for communion with God unless they can change their minds about their sins, humble themselves before God, realizing their need to be cleansed from the sins of which they are guilty.

Exposition of the Text

I. Jonah Sent to Preach to Nineveh

(Jonah 3: 1-4)

Arise, go unto Nineveh. Our text says this was the second time which the word of the Lord came to Jonah, demanding that he go to Nineveh to preach. In the first chapter of this book, we learn that when Jonah received his first call to go to Nineveh, and cry against the city because of its wickedness, that he attempted to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of Jehovah. He did not succeed in his attempt to flee from Jehovah for we learn that when he took ship, a storm arose and, to save the ship, Jonah confessed his sin and asked the men aboard to throw him into the sea. When he was thrown into the sea, the great fish prepared by the Lord, received him and three days later threw him out upon the shore. There may be several reasons why Jonah did not wish to preach to Nineveh. (1) Being a Jew, and having that feeling of national superiority and exclusiveness, Jonah would consider it a dis-

gusting task to preach to the heathen.

(2) Jonah may not have wished for the salvation of the people of Nineveh. Nineveh was a rival nation and threatened the very life of Israel. Jonah may have felt that Nineveh would repent and the Lord would spare the city; whereas, if they did not repent, the Lord would destroy them and their threat to the life of Israel would be ended. (3) It is possible that Jonah did not wish to preach to Nineveh because he was jealous of his reputation as a prophet. The Lord told him to preach that Nineveh would be destroyed in forty days, yet Jonah could foresee the repentance of Nineveh and the forgiveness of Nineveh by Jehovah. And so his statement about the destruction of Nineveh, would not come true. Hence, his reputation as a prophet of destruction would be lowered.

Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city. There is little dependable information to be had on the old city of Nineveh. One writer asserts

that it was sixty miles in circumference, that it was surrounded by a wall 100 feet high, broad enough for three chariots to drive abreast upon it; defended by 1500 towers, each 200 feet in height. We read in Jonah 4: 11 that there were 120,000 persons in the city who could not discern between their right hand and their left one. This may suggest a population of well over 600,000 people. Our text says that it was a city of three day's journey. This of course, refers to the circumference and would agree well with the statement that the city was sixty miles in circumference.

Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown. Some think that this is all that Jonah said to the people of Nineveh, but likely this is simply the theme of his preaching. We learned that John the Baptist preached that people should repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, yet, we know that he preached other things, arguing why they should repent and telling them how they were to prove their repentance. He also told them to be baptized for the remission of their sins. Hence, he told them of their sins and told them to repent and be baptized that they might receive remission of their sins. So, we conclude that Jonah told the people of Nineveh of their sins and that the consequence of their sins was the destruction of the city.

II. Nineveh Repented at the Preaching of Jonah (Jonah 3: 5-10)

The people of Nineveh believed God. It is not said that they believed Jonah but that they believed God. Hence, they accepted Jonah as the prophet of God and conceived of God as speaking through Jonah. Paul commended the Thessalonians because they received his preaching as it was indeed the word of God and not the word of men. (1 Thess. 2: 13.) So, when men today, preach that word of God, people should receive it, not simply as the word of men, but indeed the word of God.

They proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth. Our text says that when the tidings reached the king of Nineveh, that he left the throne, laid his robe aside, and covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. Some

have wondered why the preaching of one unknown prophet could bring such effect upon so large a city, but it must be remembered that the people of Assyria were not wholly unacquainted with the prophets of Jehovah in Israel. By reading 2 Kings 5: 1-5 and 6: 8-13, one can see that the people of other nations were acquainted with the prophets of Israel, and that they had respect for their knowledge. According to our text, the king was not satisfied that people only should wear sackcloth, but even the beasts were covered with it.

Let them turn everyone from his evil way. In this statement we see something of the meaning of repentance. The king ordered the people to turn from their evil way, and in verse 10, it is said that God saw their works that they turned from their evil way. In commenting upon this, Jesus said, the "men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah." (Matt. 12: 41.) Jonah says they turned from their evil way. Jesus says they repented. Hence, we conclude that repentance means turning from the evil way. The turn, however, is a mental turn. They had enjoyed their evil. They had reveled in their lusts and their wickedness, but now they changed their mind with reference to these things. They turned away from them. They loathed them, they abhorred them because of the destruction which their evil was bringing upon them.

Who knoweth whether God will not turn and repent. This is the language of the king of Nineveh to his people, encouraging them to turn from their evil. He suggests that if they turn perhaps God will repent. When the word repent is used with reference to God, it obviously cannot mean exactly what it means when used with reference to man. One author says, "God's heart is grieved at man's iniquity, and in love he bestows his grace, or in justice he terminates his mercy. It indicates the aroused emotions of God which prompt him to a different course of dealing with the people." Jeremiah gives us the principle on which God worked in the case of Nineveh. "If

that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." (Jer. 18: 8.) The prophet continues by saying that if a kingdom does evil in his sight and does not obey his voice, he will repent of the good wherewith he had said he would bless them. So God is said to repent both of evil and of good. We conclude, therefore, that repent simply means a change of his course of action with reference to a person or a nation.

III. Jesus Teaches Repentance. (Matt. 21: 28-31)

A man had two sons. These two sons represented two classes of people among the Jews; one the religious leaders, and the other the common people, including the outcasts.

Son go work today in the vineyard. Jesus represents this as the command given to both sons. Both the common people and the rulers among the Jews were invited by John the Baptist, and later by Jesus himself, to repent, to turn to God, and to do works worthy of repentance. The first son said, I will not, but afterwards repented himself and went. Then the second son is said to have said to the one who commanded him to go, I will go, but he went not. The first son, representing the common people, is pictured as having no interest in doing the will of God, but upon being reminded of their relation to God, the necessity of their obeying God, are pictured as changing their mind and doing that which they had said they would not do. The second son, representing the rulers of the Jews, the religious leaders, are pictured as being, theoretically, very religious minded and when they were told by the Lord to go or to do, they immediately responded by saying that they would do or go as the Lord commanded, but they went not. They were hypocrites. They would say and do not. In spite of the preach-

ing of John the Baptist, Jesus, and his disciples, they refused to live the kind of life that God wanted them to live. So they were convicted of being hypocrites, saying, I go, but going not; saying, I will do, but doing not that which they promised to do.

Which of the two did the will of his father? When Jesus pressed them for an answer to his question, there was but one answer to give, and so they said, the first son, who said he would not, but repented and went, and did the will of the father. In this they were forced to condemn themselves because they had not done the will of the Father, even though they had professed to do so.

The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom before you. This is the conclusion of Jesus. He was speaking to these religious leaders who professed but did not practice what God taught them, and he said the outcasts go into the kingdom before you do. They are nearer the kingdom than you, they are more acceptable to God than you. Their chances of being saved are better than your chances in spite of the fact that you look down upon them. But their superior chances of being saved were due, not to any character or goodness of their own, but to the fact that they repented; and the inferior chances of the leaders were not due to the fact that they were leaders, but that they refused to repent and do the things that were right. It should be noticed that there is no reason given why these people said they would do but refused to do. Some refuse because the things commanded do not suit them. Others simply neglect to do. They intend to do good but they never seem to find time or to have the disposition which they all along intend to do. But regardless of our reason for not doing the will of God, the very failure to do his will is sufficient to bar us from the joys of heaven.

General Information on Repentance

1. Sin makes repentance necessary,
(a) All sin, therefore all must repent. (Rom. 3: 23; Acts 17: 30.) (b) Things one may do about sin: — (1) Deny—like Gehazi. (2 Kings 5: 20-26.)

(2) Cover up—like David. (2 Sam. 11, 12.) (3) Justify ourselves—like Adam. (Gen. 3: 12.) (4) Confess—like the prodigal. (Luke 15: 17-19.) (5) Repent—like Nineveh. (Jonah

3: 10.) (6) Forsake—like Manasseh. (2 Chron. 33: 10-13; like Zacchaeus —(Luke 19: 8.)

2. Repentance a privilege from God. (a) Always toward God. (Acts 20: 21; 26: 20.) (b) To gain life. (Acts 11: 18.) (c) We are given opportunity to repent. (Rev. 2: 21; 2 Pet. 3: 9, 15; Acts 5: 31; 2 Tim. 2: 25.) (d) Unused opportunities may be withdrawn. (Rev. 2: 21; Heb. 12: 17; Prov. 1: 24-33.)

3. Causes of repentance, (a) The goodness of God. (Rom. 2: 4.) (b)

Hearing God's word. (Jonah 3: 5, 6; Acts 2: 37-41.) (c) Thinking on the certainty of judgment and the severity of God. (Rom. 11: 22; Heb. 9: 27; 2 Pet. 3: 8-13.) (d) Godly sorrow for sin. (2 Cor. 7: 10.)

4. Place of repentance in the plan of salvation, (a) Preceded by faith. (Heb. 11: 6; Acts 2: 37, 38.) (b) Followed by obedience. (Acts 2: 38; 8: 37, 38; Luke 3: 7-11.) (c) Erring Christians must repent and pray. (Acts 8: 22.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What is the meaning of repentance?

Discuss New Testament usage of the word.

Can you distinguish between godly sorrow and repentance?

Can you distinguish between repentance and reformation?

Can you show that the nature of repentance emphasizes its necessity?

Why does the nature of man prove the necessity of repentance?

What did John the Baptist and Jesus teach about repentance?

What is said about exceptions to the law of repentance?

Jonah Sent to Preach to Nineveh

What was Jonah's reaction to his first call to preach to Nineveh?

Give and discuss three possible reasons why Jonah did not wish to preach to Nineveh.

What do you know of the size of Nineveh in Jonah's day?

What do you know about the message of Jonah to the people of Nineveh?

Nineveh Repented at the Preaching of Jonah

How did the people of Nineveh receive Jonah's preaching?

How did the people of Nineveh show their repentance?

From Jonah's statement and the comment of Jesus upon it, what definition do we get of repentance?

What statement of the king of Nineveh

indicates his knowledge of God?

What is the meaning of repentance when used with reference to God?

Jesus Teaches Repentance

What two classes of people are represented by the two sons of this parable?

Which son represents the Jewish leaders?

Which son represents the common people?

In what way did Jesus force these Jewish leaders to condemn themselves?

What conclusion did Jesus draw from this parable?

The superior chances of the outcasts for being saved were due to what?

Why did the religious leaders have little chance of being saved?

Can you make application of these lessons to people of the present?

What is there of interest to you in the division on General Information?

Lesson X—March 8, 1953

BAPTISM

The Lesson Text

Mark 16: 15, 16; Acts 2: 37, 38; 1 Pet. 3: 21; Rom. 6: 1-6

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.

37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?

38 And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Je'sus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

21 Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, *even* baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a

good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Je'-sus Christ.

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 Je'-sus 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.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.*" (Acts 22: 16.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 3: 13-17.

Daily Bible Readings

March	2.	M.....	Baptism Commanded (Matt. 28: 18-20)
March	3.	T.....	Baptism of the Eunuch (Acts 8: 26-39)
March	4.	W.....	Baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3: 13-17)
March	5.	T.....	Three Thousand Baptized (Acts 2: 37-42)
March	6.	F.....	Baptism of Cornelius (Acts 10: 44-48)
March	7.	S.....	Baptism of the Jailor (Acts 16: 25-34)
March	8.	S.....	Action and Purpose of Baptism (Rom. 6: 1-17)

TIME.—For Mark A.D. 30; for Acts A.D. 30; for 1 Peter A.D. 60; for Romans A.D. 58.

PLACES.—Galilee, Jerusalem, Babylon, and Rome.

PERSONS.—Jesus, Peter, and Paul.

Golden Text Explained

1. *Action in Paul's baptism.*

Whether Paul was sprinkled or immersed is a difficult question with many people. The religious world is hopelessly divided over the question. Many of these people do not care whether Paul was sprinkled or immersed. They do not care what the Bible teaches about it. Yet, there are many sincere, honest, people, who are unable to determine for themselves what the Bible teaches on the matter. If they can be convinced of the truth, as it is taught in the Bible, they will accept it. From two sources in our lesson, one in the lesson text, and one in this golden text, we have ample proof that Paul was immersed, and anyone who studies the matter carefully can be satisfied with the proof given.

(1) Paul says that he was buried in baptism and was raised to walk in the newness of life. (Rom. 6: 4.) In speaking of the baptism, which he, as well as the brethren at Rome accepted, Paul says *we* were buried.

The word *we* is plural, and includes the writer or speaker. Hence, Paul says of himself, that he was buried in baptism. This ought to be enough to settle the matter. If Paul was buried in baptism, we ought to do the same. (2) The word which Ananias used here to direct Paul to wash away his sins is proof that Paul was immersed. There are three different Greek words which are used by the Holy Spirit, and are translated by our English word, wash. The first is *plunein* and is always used with reference to the washing of inanimate things as distinguished from living objects or persons. The next is *nuptein* and is used with reference to the washing of a part of one's body, never with reference to the washing of the whole of the body. For instances of its use, read Mark 7: 3; John 13: 5; Matt. 6: 17; John 9: 7. The third word is *louein*, which is used when the idea of bathing oneself, or of washing the entire body, is under

consideration. In the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, all three of these words occur in Lev. 15: 11, and are used with these meanings which are given here. This material is gathered from Trench's book, "Synonyms of the New Testament." Thayer quotes these also in his Greek Lexicon and agrees with these statements. When Ananias told Saul of Tarsus to wash away his sins, he used this word which means to bathe the entire body. Hence, if Paul did what Ananias told him to do, he washed his body. This is in agreement with Paul's statement in Heb. 10: 22, where he said our bodies are washed with pure water, and in this verse also this Greek word, which means to bathe the entire body, is used. If Paul did not wash his entire body in immersion, he failed to do what Ananias told him to do. And people today, who refuse to wash the body in baptism, refuse to do what this passage commands.

2. *The purpose of baptism.* Ananias told Saul to arise and be baptized and wash away his sins. Of course no one thinks that the water washed away sin, either the pollution of sin or the guilt of sin. The expression, "wash away sins," is a figurative expression. That does not mean that the washing is figurative but it is a figurative expression for remission of sins. To be baptized and wash away sins is the exact equivalent of, be bap-

tized for the remission of sins, found in Acts 2: 38. Albert Hovey, a great Baptist scholar said, "a removal of sins from the soul by bathing the body is absurd. But there is such a thing as forgiveness of sins; and this may be described figuratively as washing them away, so that henceforth the soul may be cleaned from the guilt or stain of sin. Dr. Hacket remarks, 'that this clause (and wash away thy sins) states a result of the baptism in language derived from the nature of the ordinance. It answers to *unto the forgiveness of sins*, in Acts 2: 38 —i.e., submit to the rite in order to be forgiven.' In both passages, baptism is represented as having this importance or efficacy, because it is the sign of repentance and faith, which are the conditions of salvation." Another great scholar, Meyer, says, "let thyself be baptized, and thereby wash away thy sins. Here, too, baptism is that by means of which the forgiveness of the sins committed in the pre-christian life takes place."

These three great Greek scholars of our generation, and the one preceding it, understand this passage to teach that baptism is a necessary condition of salvation. True, the churches to which they belong, do not teach this doctrine, but they would not suffer their scholarship to be belittled on account of their church relationship. They taught what the text expressed.

Exposition of the Text

I. What Jesus Taught on Baptism

(Mark 16: 15, 16)

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. These words served as the marching orders for the apostles and their associates to carry the gospel into the whole world, so that Paul could say, in his day, that the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven. (Col. 1: 23.) These things we should notice about the text. (1) Go. The Lord did not say, have the people to come to you. We have not discharged our duty to a community when we go into that community and ask the people to come and listen to us preach. If they do not come to hear us preach, it is still our duty

to go to them individually, for the Lord said, go preach the gospel to every creature; not simply go and preach it in every community, but to go and preach it to every creature.

(2) Into all the world. This text demands that we go into all the world, not just a part of it, but to all the world. (3) Preach the gospel. The gospel is the power of God to save. (Rom. 1: 16.) It is not our business to preach politics, to read nice book reviews, and to give our opinions on the social and political activities of the community. It is our duty to preach the gospel; to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. (1 Cor. 2: 2.) (4) To the whole creation, or every creature, This individualizes our responsibility.

We are not simply to proclaim the gospel in a nation, but we are to reach every individual in that nation.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. There are three important points to be observed. (1) He that believes. John tells us that the unbeliever is condemned already. (John 3: 18.) And he tells us that the believer has the right to become the child of God. (John 1: 12.) If the believer has the right to become the child of God, we conclude that he is not, at that time, a child of God. One cannot become that which he already is. If one is already a child of God, by virtue of his belief, then that one, who is already a child, cannot by faith become a child. Since the believer has the right to become the child of God, we conclude that the believer is not yet a child of God but simply has the right to become one. (2) The second point to be noticed is baptism. Jesus speaks of the one that believes and is baptized. He says something about a person and that person is one who has both believed and been baptized. Let us refer back to our golden text and there learn that Saul of Tarsus, as well as all others of his day, was buried with the Lord in baptism and raised to walk in the newness of life. (Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12.) This word, baptize, is a verb of action, and such a word suggests a picture, a mental picture of an action, and cannot suggest but one primary action at a time. When Jesus spoke the word, he had a mental picture of an action. We have not obeyed our Lord until we re-enact in our lives that mental picture. The picture Jesus had was burial and a resurrection in water; therefore, we have not done what Jesus said for us to do until we have been buried in and raised from water.

(3) Shall be saved. This is what Jesus said about the one that believes and is baptized; he shall be saved. We might raise the question, who shall be saved? Jesus said, he that believeth and is baptized, he shall be saved. The religious world makes it read this way, "he that believes shall be saved and then may be baptized if he desires." To illustrate, we use this statement. He that sows and reaps shall have bread. Now, let us turn

this around. He that sows shall have bread and may reap if he so desires. Everyone knows that he would starve to death changing nature's order in that fashion. We ought to know that a man will die spiritually if he changes the spiritual order that Jesus established. That order is, first belief, second baptism, third salvation.

II. What Peter Teaches on Baptism (Acts 2: 37, 38; 1 Pet. 3: 21)

Now when they heard this. Peter had preached a sermon on the day of Pentecost. He told the people that they had crucified the Lord of glory, but God had reversed their decision, had raised him from the dead, and had set him at his right hand in heaven, and had now poured forth the promise of the Holy Spirit which the people could see and hear. The evidence was too clear. They realized that God had made that Jesus, whom they crucified, both Lord and Christ. And when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts, they were convicted of their sins. The Holy Spirit was promised to the apostles, that they, speaking as the Spirit gave them utterance, might convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. (John 16: 7-14.)

Brethren what shall we do. This was the response of the people who were pricked in their hearts. They wanted to know what to do for the remission of their sins. If they did not ask what to do for the remission of sins, Peter missed the point of their question and failed to answer it. Peter told them to do something for the remission of their sins. Hence, we know that they asked what to do for the remission of their sins.

Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ. This is Peter's response to their question. He told them two things to do. They asked what to do for remission of sins. He told them two things. Therefore, we conclude that there were two things for these people to do for the remission of their sins. (1) Let us notice that these people were believers. If they had not been believers, they would not have been pricked in their hearts, nor would they have asked Peter what to do to be saved. Hence, these be-

lievers asked what to do to be saved. Away, then, with the idea that people are saved the moment they believe. (2) These believers were told to repent. This should establish, in our minds, the order of faith and repentance. Peter told believers to repent. We, therefore, conclude that people believe before they repent.

(3) Peter told these believers, who had repented, to be baptized. Hence, we have the order of these things established. First believe, second repent, third be baptized.

Unto the remission of your sins. This passage has been a battleground for generations. A large portion of the religious world says that people are to repent and be baptized because their sins are already forgiven. But, Peter said for these people to do two things for the remission of sins. They are to repent for the remission of sins. People do not repent because sins are already forgiven. They are to be baptized for the remission of sins. Repentance and baptism bear the same relationship to the compound phrase, for the remission of sins. If, then, baptism is because sins are forgiven, we would have to say that repentance is because sins are forgiven. But, if we agree that we are to repent in order that our sins may be forgiven, we must also agree that we are to be baptized in order that our sins may be forgiven. In Thayer's Greek Lexicon, this phrase, "for the remission of sins," is translated, "to obtain the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2: 38."

Which after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism. A study of the context, in which this statement occurs, shows that Peter said that Noah and his family were saved through water, and then continues by saying that, after a true likeness, baptism does now save us. The meaning is that baptism saves us as water saved Noah and his family. Noah and his family were taken out of a world of sin and carried over into a world of righteousness by the waters of the flood. So, in baptism, we are taken out of a world of sin into a world of righteousness. We are translated from the kingdom of sin into the kingdom of Christ in baptism.

III. What Paul Taught About Baptism (Rom. 6: 1-6)

We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Paul is arguing that people who have died to sin should not live any longer in sin. As people die to this earthly realm, live no longer in it, so we, when we die to sin, should no longer practice sin.

We who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. Here Paul tells us when we died to sin. We died to sin when we were baptized into the death of Christ. For, "the death that he died, he died unto sin once." (Rom. 6: 10.) Jesus died unto sin and when we are baptized into his death, we are baptized into a death unto sin. It is at that point that we become dead to sin. Paul took it for granted that these people knew they were baptized into Christ. The additional thought he wants to impress is, that at the time they were baptized into Christ, they were also baptized into this death unto sin.

Buried therefore with him through baptism into death. In this paragraph we have indisputable proof that baptism is a burial in and a resurrection from water. Those who refuse to accept this statement for it must realize their guilt of rejecting God's word. We ought also to learn the lesson from this verse that we do not become dead to sin before our baptism. In verse 7 of this chapter, Paul says, "for he that hath died is justified from sin." If one is dead to sin before baptism, he is justified before baptism. In his whole chapter Paul has in mind the relationship between a master and a slave. Death terminates that relationship, and so when we are baptized into death, we are simply baptized into the termination of that relationship with sin. He views the resurrection as the establishment of a relationship with a new master. Hence, we are buried into the termination of the relationship with sin and we are raised into a new relation with Christ. The picture is this; buried into death, raised into life.

United with him in the likeness of his death. We become united with him in the likeness of his death when we are buried with him by baptism

into death, and we become united with him in the likeness of his resurrection when we are raised with him from the grave of baptism.

Our old man was crucified with him. The old man is simply the former manner of life. This man has been put to death, or rendered inactive, so that the sinful propensities and inclinations of the body might be overcome or be done away with; and this has been accomplished

that we might not any longer serve sin. Hence, the purpose of our baptism as taught by Paul in this passage is, that we might die unto sin so that we should not any longer serve the sinful lusts and passions of the body, but that we might be united together with Christ in this new life, to live like him, to live with him, that we might have the hope of enjoying heaven with him in the after a while.

General Information on Baptism

1. Subject of Baptism, (a) The believer. (Mark 16: 16.) (b) Men and women. (Acts 8: 12.) (c) Penitent believers. (Acts 2: 38.)

(d) Those who have confessed Christ. (Acts 8: 37, 38.) (e) Those who are determined to live no longer in sin. (Rom. 6: 3, 4.)

2. Action of Baptism, (a) Meaning of Greek verb *baptizo*—"to dip, immerse, submerge,—to cleanse by dipping." (Thayer.) (b) It is a washing of the whole body. (Acts 22: 16; Heb. 10: 22; Titus 3: 5.) The Greek word in these passages *always* means the washing of the whole body, (c) Burial and resurrection. (Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12.)

(d) Immersion requires "going down

into" and "coming up out of," but sprinkling and pouring do not. (Matt. 3: 16; Acts 8: 38, 39.)

3. Purpose of Baptism, (a) To effect union with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28: 19.)

(b) To be saved. (Mark 16: 16.)

(c) To obtain remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38.) (d) To wash away sins. (Acts 22: 16.) (e) To be born of water and Spirit. (John 3:

5.) (f) To get into Christ where we enjoy every spiritual blessing. (Gal. 3: 27; Eph. 1: 3.) (g) To become

dead to sin (to sever relationship with sin.) (Rom. 6: 3-5.) (h) To get into the one body where, and only where, we enjoy spiritual life.

(1 Cor. 12: 13.) (i) To be saved. (1 Pet. 3: 21.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What proof does Paul give that he was immersed?

What proof do we have in the statement made by Ananias that Paul's whole body was washed in his baptism?

What is the teaching of Heb. 10: 22 on this subject?

According to the statement of Ananias, why was Paul baptized?

What is the meaning of the expression "wash away sins"?

What other verse in Acts teaches the same lesson on the purpose of baptism?

Can you give the teaching of some recent scholars on this subject?

What Jesus Taught on Baptism

How did the apostles respond to the great commission in their generation?

Are we able to take the gospel to the whole world in our generation?

What is to be our message as we go into all the world?

What is the condition of the unbeliever?

What privilege does the believer in Christ have?

What argument is made for the action of baptism from the word baptize?

What promise is made to the believer who is baptized?

Is this promise made to believers who are not baptized?

What Peter Teaches on Baptism

Can you summarize Peter's sermon which convicted the people?

Can you prove that the people asked Peter what to do to be saved?

What did Peter tell these people to do to be saved?

What does our lesson teach about the order of faith and repentance?

How does the order of the conditions of salvation here compare with the order as learned from the great commission in the former division of our lesson?

According to Peter, why were people to be baptized?

How were Noah and his family saved by water?

How does Peter use this to teach us the purpose of baptism?

What Paul Taught About Baptism

What does Paul say of those who have died to sin?

What does Paul teach as to when we become dead to sin?
 What does Paul teach about the action of baptism in this text?
 How are we united with Christ in the likeness of his death?

What is the "old man" of which Paul speaks?
 According to this text, what does Paul teach about the purpose of baptism?
 What is there of interest to you in the division on General Information?

Lesson XI—March 15, 1953

AN EXAMPLE OF CONVERSION

The Lesson Text

Acts 8: 26-40

26 But an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Je-ru'-sa-lem unto Ga'-za: the same is desert.

27 And he arose and went: and behold, a man of E-thi-o'-pi-a, a eunuch of great authority under Can-da'-ce, queen of the E-thi-o'-pi-ans, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Je-ru'-sa-lem to worship;

28 And he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet i-sa'-iah.

29 And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading I-sa'-iah the prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this,

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before his

shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: his generation who shall declare? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other?

35 And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Je'-sus.

36 And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at A-zo'-tus: and passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities, till he came to Caes-a-re'-a.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"*And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus.*" (Acts 8: 35.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Acts 8: 4-25.

Daily Bible Readings

March	9. M.....	Dispersion of the Church (Acts 8: 1-4)
March	10. T.....	Philip's Work in Samaria (Acts 8: 5-12)
March	11. W.....	Philip's Experience with the Angel (Acts 8: 26)
March	12. T.....	Philip and the Eunuch (Acts 8: 27-38)
March	13. F.....	The Disappearance of Philip (Acts 8: 39, 40)
March	14. S.....	Occasion of the Eunuch's Rejoicing (Mark 16: 14-16)
March	15. S.....	All Nations to Be Included (Matt. 28: 16-20)

Time.—A.D. 32.

Place.—Highway to Gaza.

Persons.—Philip and man of Ethiopia.

Golden Text Explained

1. *Philip uses scripture.* Our text tells us that Philip used the scripture which the nobleman was reading as a basis from which to preach Jesus to him. It is interesting and enlightening to turn the pages of the New Testament to see how Jesus and his apostles used the Old Testament scriptures in their preaching. A few of the things for which they used Old Testament scriptures are as follows: (1) To prove that Jesus was the son of David. Both Matthew and Luke gave the genealogies of Jesus to prove that he was a descendant of David and of Abraham and Adam. Paul says the gospel he preached was promised afore through the prophets in the holy scriptures, and that they spake concerning the Son of God, who was born of the seed of David, according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 1: 1-4.) Again, Paul entered into the synagogue at Thessalonica, and Luke says he spent his time reasoning 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." (Acts 17: 2, 3.) Since the Jews understood that **the Christ**, the anointed, was to be the son of David, Paul was affirming that the Jesus whom he preached was that anointed and therefore the son of David. (2) They also used the scriptures to prove that Jesus is divine. In Acts 13: 34-39, we have Paul's argument that Jesus is not only the son of David, but that he was divine. He speaks of him as the one mentioned in the Psalm which said, "thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption." He then suggests that David could not have been speaking of himself for he had seen corruption, but the one of whom this passage spake saw no corruption. He then declares that it is through this man, Jesus Christ, that remission of sins is proclaimed, and that everyone that believeth is justified through him from all from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. Again, the author of Hebrews argues the divinity of Christ

when he says that the angels of God were commanded to worship him and furthermore, the Father said, "thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." If the Father, speaking to the Son, called him God, we have proof of his divinity, but this passage was taken from the Old Testament; therefore, New Testament writers are using Old Testament scriptures to prove the divinity of the Son. (3) Gospel preachers also used the Old Testament to preach the kingdom of God. When Paul set a day for the Jews in Rome to hear him concerning the matters whereof he was accused, he did two things. He testified of the kingdom of God and persuaded them concerning Jesus. And Luke says he took his material for these two things both from the law of Moses and from the prophets. For some things the Old Testament said about the kingdom, read Isaiah 2: 1-4; Daniel 2: 44, 45; Micah 4: 1-3. (4) Old Testament scriptures were used by gospel preachers to prove that the Gentiles have the privilege of church membership on equality with the Jews. At the Jerusalem conference, Jesus used Amos 9: 11, 12, to prove that the Gentiles were to be accepted when the tabernacle of David was rebuilt. In Eph. 3: 6-9, Paul says that when God made promise to Abraham, that promise included the Gentiles as fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, which is the church, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. On this point read also Rom. 15: 9-12. (5) New Testament preachers also used the Old Testament and the characters and events mentioned there as examples for us, that through patience and comfort of the scriptures, we might have hope. (Rom. 15: 4; 1 Cor. 10: 6, 11.) All through the New Testament, references are made to places and individuals of the Old Testament in such way that the writers took for granted that we would be familiar with these places and characters. So Philip's use of the Old Testament, to preach Jesus to this nobleman, was not out of the ordinary, but in line with the preaching and writing of all apostles and prophets of Christ.

2. *The place of preaching in Christianity.* Little provision was made by the law of Moses for preaching. Parents and priests were to teach the law, but public preaching of the law was not prominent. However, when Jesus began his work, he came preaching and teaching. He qualified his apostles and seventy disciples, and sent them out on preaching tours to the cities where he would later go. When he arose from the dead he commissioned his apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. (Matt. 28: 18-20; Mark 16: 15, 16.) The church was born as a result of preaching on Pentecost. The church spreads and grows as a result of the preaching of the gospel. When the church was scattered by persecution, the members went everywhere preaching the word. (Acts 8: 4.) The gospel is the seed of the kingdom and the sower is the preacher or teacher who carries the word to the hearts of people. When preaching is plentiful the church grows, but when the church ceases to preach, it languishes.

The history of the church from the age of the apostles to the present time will abundantly sustain this statement.

3. *Philip preached Jesus.* To preach Jesus, one must preach the life of Jesus. One must also preach the teaching of Jesus, tell people what Jesus taught, what Jesus requires of them in his teaching. Too many people wish to accept the social ethics of Jesus and reject the doctrine contained in his teaching. Paul preached the humiliation and the suffering of Jesus as well as his exaltation. And in this sermon Philip preached to the nobleman, we find the suffering and humiliation of Jesus as well as his exaltation. A sermon on Jesus would be incomplete if we did not include his exaltation at the right hand of God to reign on David's throne. (Acts 2: 32-36.) Inspired preachers also included the second coming of Jesus in their sermons. They told of his coming to reward the righteous and to punish the unrighteous. (2 Thess. 1: 7-10.)

Exposition of the Text

I. Preacher and Convert Brought Together (Acts 8: 26-29)

An angel of the Lord spake unto Philip. This Philip was not the apostle by that name, but the one who was chosen as one of the seven who should serve the Grecian widows in the church at Jerusalem. (Acts 6: 5.) We know he is the Philip that preached in Samaria. We also know that when Samaritans had been converted, it was necessary to send to Jerusalem for apostles to lay hands on the new converts to give them miraculous powers. (Acts 8: 14-17.) If this Philip had been Philip the apostle, there would have been no need to send for Peter and John. Next, we find this Philip, who preached to the nobleman, going to Caesarea. (Acts 8: 40.) And, in Acts 21: 8, we find mention of Philip the evangelist living in Caesarea. Hence, we conclude that Caesarea was the home of this one who preached to the nobleman of our lesson text. Our text says an angel of the Lord directed Philip to go to the place where he would contact this man to be converted. In Heb. 1: 14,

we are told that angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation. This angel was on such a mission when he directed Philip to the Ethiopian. No doubt angels still serve them who shall be heirs of salvation. But in the case of the Ethiopian nobleman, the angel performed this service, not on the one to be converted but on the one who was to preach the gospel. And in some way angels may now direct preachers and teachers of the gospel in the providence of God to go one place or another in order to preach the gospel to those who are willing and anxious to accept it.

Unto the way to Gaza: the same is desert. Philip was directed to go to a certain road which led from Jerusalem to Gaza. Gaza was about sixty miles southwest of Jerusalem. A number of roads led from Jerusalem to Gaza, but the one which Philip was to travel is said to be a desert or may have led by old, deserted Gaza. One road went through Bethlehem unto Hebron and turned west across the plain to Gaza. This

went through that part of the country where John the Baptist grew up and is referred to as the desert. (Luke 1: 80.) The word desert does not necessarily apply to a complete waterless section of country, but one unfit for habitation, or to Gaza, uninhabited and in ruins.

A man of Ethiopia. Whether this man was a Jew living in Ethiopia or a native Ethiopian, who had become a proselyte, we have no way of knowing. Since Joseph rose to such heights in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon, it is not unreasonable to think that a Jew had come to be treasurer of Ethiopia. Ethiopia was situated south of Egypt, southwest of the Red Sea, near the headwaters of the Nile River.

Candace queen of the Ethiopians. The word Candace is not the name of the queen, but a term similar to that of Pharaoh or Caesar; a title by which their queens were known.

Had come to Jerusalem to worship. This gives us an insight to the character of the man to be converted. He was a religious man. In fact, the majority of the cases of conversion recorded in the book of Acts are conversions of religious people. The fact that he had gone to Jerusalem to worship would prove that he was either a Jew or a proselyte to the Jewish religion.

Was reading the prophet Isaiah. This gives us a further insight to his character. He might have spent his time planning for business transactions upon his return to Ethiopia. He could have spent his time pleasantly, reading some of the literature of the day, writings of poets and philosophers, but he preferred to use his time reading the Scriptures. The very fact that he took his Bible on such a long trip might put to shame many church members of our day.

Spirit said unto Philip. In verse 26, we learn that an angel had something to do with this conversion, and now we find the Holy Spirit having something to do with it. However, it is interesting to note that neither the angel nor the Holy Spirit knocked the man down and made him promise to be good. They did not influence him in such manner that he did and said things, which, on ordinary occasions, he would be ashamed to say

and do. In fact, the angel and the Holy Spirit both appeared to the preacher and not to the one to be converted. They did their work getting a preacher of the gospel and the prospective convert in connection with each other. There is no intimation of any miraculous contact of Holy Spirit with human spirit in this conversion.

II. Preaching the Sermon (Acts 8: 30-35)

Understandest thou what thou readest? Philip heard the man reading from Isaiah 53. Philip knew that the man could not understand that passage unless he was a Christian or at least a believer in Jesus as the Christ. Philip did not ask this question merely for the sake of an introduction. He wanted to learn whether the man had heard of Christ and was a believer in Christ. If he understood the passage, it was safe to conclude that he believed in Christ. But, if he did not understand this chapter and could not determine whom the chapter was about, it would indicate that he was not a believer in Jesus.

How can I, except someone shall guide me? This is the nobleman's reply to Philip's question. He could not understand the passage without guidance. This ought to be a warning to those who interpret prophecy today. How can we understand the prophecy without divine guidance, unless some inspired writer has said that a certain event is the fulfillment of a certain prophecy? It is usually dangerous for us to say that any event is a fulfillment of a certain prophecy. Certainly it is best for us not to hinge any important doctrine or base any important action upon our interpretation of prophecies without the aid of inspiration.

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter. This is a prophetic description of the arrest, trial, and death of our Lord. Jesus is pictured as enduring meekly the shame and suffering he took on him at that time.

Of whom speaketh the prophet this? The ancient Jewish teachers held that this passage referred to the Messiah, but this Jew seems not to have been acquainted with their teaching on the subject. But since

the time of Jesus, Jews have changed their position and have held that Isaiah referred to some other prophet or to the Jewish nation as a whole.

m. Results of the Sermon (Acts 8: 35-40)

Beginning from this scripture. The nobleman's question was an invitation to Philip to begin preaching Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecy being read. This is a sample of the use which inspired preachers made of the scriptures in their preaching. This verse intimates that Philip rode quite a distance with the nobleman, and that as they journeyed they came to a certain water. The word, "certain," indicates that this water was of a permanent nature, such as a stream or a pool. People who try to minimize the importance of baptism have tried to prove that there is no such water between Jerusalem and Gaza. However, unprejudiced historians have refuted these charges.

What doth hinder me to be baptized? The fact that the man asked this question is positive proof, that while Philip preached Jesus, he said something about baptism. It is impossible for one to preach Jesus in his fullness without saying something of baptism. One would have to relate how Jesus himself was baptized of John and would also have to relate that Jesus, in giving the great commission, told his apostles to baptize people into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. At this place in our text, a verse given in the authorized version, is missing. According to the authorized version, Philip said, "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and

said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Later scholars think this verse is an interpolation, but it is hardly possible that they would have stopped the chariot after the man asked the question he did and have gone down into the water without saying another word. Furthermore, Paul teaches that a confession with the mouth of Jesus as the Son of God is necessary in order for one to be saved. (Rom. 10: 9, 10.) We therefore conclude that Philip must have said something of this nature to give the man an opportunity to confess his faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

They both went down into the water. While this statement does not positively prove that the nobleman was immersed, it does strongly intimate it. Surely they would not have gone down into the water if they intended to sprinkle the man. People who practice sprinkling now do not go down into the water. Why think that Philip would go down into the water unless he intended to immerse the man?

The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip. Some think that Philip was caught away miraculously as Elijah was taken up, but Greek scholars tell us that the word, "caught away," does not necessarily demand such an interpretation.

He went on his way rejoicing. The nobleman went his way rejoicing. In every case of conversion, where the rejoicing of the one converted is mentioned, the rejoicing came after their obedience in baptism and not before. This is strong proof that the remission of sins, and their union with Christ, was not effected before but rather in baptism.

General Information on Conversion

1. Meaning of the term—Conversion is that spiritual experience in which people turn from sin to righteousness, from Satan to God, undergoing a change of heart, relationship, and life. See Acts 15: 3; 1 Thess. 1: 9, 10; Acts 11: 20-24.

2. Some Cases of Conversion, (a) Pentecostians. (Acts 2.) (b) Samaritans. (Acts 8: 9-13.) (c) Cornelius. (Acts 10.) (d) Jailor. (Acts 16: 19-34.) (e) Ephesians. (Acts 19: 1-7.)

3. Some Attempts to Convert, (a)

Felix. (Acts 24: 24, 25.) (b) Agrippa. (Acts 26: 27-29.)

4. Steps in Conversion, (a) Hearing the gospel. (Rom. 10: 14; Acts 2: 14, 22, 37.) (In the sense of receiving. Acts 2: 41; 17: 11; 1 Thess. 2: 13.) (b) Belief. (Heb. 11: 6; John 8: 24; Acts 16: 31.) (c) Repentance. (Luke 13: 3; Acts 17: 30.) (d) Confession. (Matt. 10: 32; Rom. 10: 9, 10; 1 Tim. 6: 12, 13, 1 John 2: 22, 23; 4: 2, 3.) (e) Baptism. (Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 38; Acts 22: 16; Rom. 6: 3, 4; Col. 2: 12.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Can you show how Jesus and inspired preachers used the Old Testament to prove that Jesus was the son of David and the Christ?

How did they use the Old Testament to prove that Jesus is divine?

How did they use the Old Testament to preach the kingdom of God?

Can you show how they used the Old Testament to prove the rights of the Gentiles?

What use did they make of Old Testament characters, places and events?

Contrast the use of preaching under Christianity and under the law of Moses.

What was the subject of Philip's sermon on this occasion?

What doctrines were emphasized in the sermon?

Preacher and Convert Brought Together

What do you know of Philip, the preacher of our text?

How were the preacher and the man to be converted brought together?

What is taught in the Bible about such work of angels?

What do you know of the country through which Philip traveled?

What do you know of the man who was to be converted?

How was the man using his time as he rode along the highway?

What part did the Holy Spirit have in this conversion?

Did this nobleman know of the work of the angel and the Holy Spirit in his behalf?

Preaching the Sermon

Why did Philip ask the nobleman if he understood what he was reading?

What can you say of the nobleman's ability to interpret prophecy?

Does the average reader of today do any better than this man?

What assistance do we need to interpret Old Testament prophecies?

Can you show that the text the nobleman was reading was a good text from which to preach Jesus?

Results of the Sermon

How can you explain the presence of water in a desert place?

Why did the nobleman ask to be baptized?

Can you show that preaching Jesus includes a statement about baptism?

What statement of the Authorized Version is omitted from our text?

What does Paul teach on the necessity of the confession?

According to Paul, how is the confession made? and for what purpose?

Can you prove from this text that Philip immersed the nobleman?

What is suggested by the mention of the man's rejoicing after his baptism?

What is there of interest to you in the division of General Information?

Lesson XII—March 22, 1953

THE CHRISTIAN GRACES

The Lesson Text

2 Pet. 1: 1-12

1 Si'-mon Peter, a servant and apostle of Je'-sus Christ, to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and the Saviour Je'-sus Christ:

2 Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Je'-sus our Lord;

3 Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue;

4 Whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust.

5 Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in *your* virtue knowledge;

6 And in *your* knowledge self-control; and in *your* self-control patience; and in *your* patience godliness;

7 And in *your* godliness brotherly kindness; and in *your* brotherly kindness love.

8 For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Je'-sus Christ.

9 For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins.

10 Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling

and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble:

11 For thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Je'-sus Christ.

12 Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the truth which is with you.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble"* (2 Pet. 1: 10.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 4: 4-9.

Daily Bible Readings

March 16. M.....Called to Glory and Virtue (2 Peter 1: 1-5)
 March 17. T.....Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4: 1-6)
 March 18. W.....Self-Control Essential (1 Cor. 9: 24-27)
 March 19. T.....Faith Works Patience (James 1: 1-7)
 March 20. F.....Godliness Profitable (1 Tim. 4: 1-8)
 March 21. S.....Brotherly Love Commanded (1 Thess. 4: 9-12)
 March 22. S.....The Greatest Thing in the World (1 Cor. 13: 1-13)

TIME.—About A.D. 60.

PLACE.—Unknown.

PERSONS.—Peter and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. *Give the more diligence.* The word diligence means the quality of persevering in the doing of something with the most careful painstaking attention. It is the opposite of being lazy, careless, or indifferent. Peter emphasizes the need of diligence here by saying that we should give the *more* diligence. Since spiritual things are of far greater value than temporal things, we certainly should be more diligent in our study of them and our practice of them than we are with reference to the things that are temporal. But humanity seems to be more interested in, and captivated by, things that are temporal than they are the things that are spiritual. That such careful attention on our part is a condition of our eternal salvation, may be seen from the use of this word in other passages. Paul said, "give diligence to present thyself approved unto God." (2 Tim. 2: 15.) Again, "let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, that no man fall after the same example of disobedience." (Heb. 4: 11.) And Peter tells us, "give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight." (2 Pet. 3: 14.) Having this importance, we can understand why Peter, in our text, admonishes us to give the more diligence

to make our calling and election sure.

2. *Make your calling and election sure.* This passage seems to have about the same meaning, which Paul expressed in these words, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2: 12.) Two things are mentioned here in connection with our salvation, (a) Calling. Paul tells us that we are called through the gospel. (2 Thess. 2: 14.) (b) Our election or choice was brought about through the work of the Spirit, and our belief of the truth. (2 Thess. 2: 13.) One eminent authority has this to say about election, "in a word, the elect are the body of true believers; and personal election into the family of God is through personal faith. All who truly believe are elected; and all to whom the gospel is sent have, through the grace that accompanies it, the power to believe placed within their reach; and all such might, therefore, attain to the grace of personal election. The doctrine of personal election is therefore brought down to its true meaning. Actual election cannot be eternal; for from eternity the elect were not actually chosen out of the world, and from eternity they could not be sanctified unto obedience. The phrases 'eternal elec-

tion' and 'eternal decree of election' can therefore mean only 'an eternal purpose' to elect, a purpose formed in eternity to choose and sanctify in time by the Spirit and the blood of Jesus." (Theological Institutes by Watson.) The question might be raised, how can we make our calling and election sure? There are some old manuscripts, which add here, "by doing good works." While these words may not have been written by Peter, yet the sentiment is there. He exhorts them to be diligent in adding the graces mentioned in our text, that they may make their calling and election sure. There are those who depend upon words spoken by angels, or vision, or the ability to speak in tongues, or some other religious excitement to assure them of their calling and election. "It was undoubtedly by their good works in the sense of holy living, or of lives consecrated to the service of God, that they were to obtain the evidence that they were true Christians; that is, that they had been really called into the kingdom of God, for there is nothing else on which we can depend for such evidence. God has given no assurance to us by name that he intends to save us. We can rely on no voice, or vision, or new revelation, to prove that it is so. No internal feeling of itself, no raptures, no animal excitement, no confident persuasion in our own minds that we are elected, can be proof in the case; and the only certain evidence on which we can rely is that which is found in a life of sincere piety."

Exposition of the Text

I. God's Blessings on the Believer (2 Pet. 1: 1-4)

To them that have obtained a like precious faith. From 2 Pet. 3: 15, we learn that Peter is writing to people to whom Paul also has written. In 1 Pet. 1: 1, we learn that Peter addressed his first epistle to the sojourners in Galatia. In 2 Pet. 3: 1, we learn that this is the second epistle Peter had written to the people addressed; hence, the brethren in Galatia are included in those addressed in this text of our lesson. So, we conclude that Peter was writing to some of the Galatian churches, which Paul established, which he addressed

(Barnes.) That individual, then, who has heard the call of God through the gospel preached to him, and who has responded in obedience thereto, has been chosen or elected unto salvation to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord. And through a life of sincere piety, adding the necessary graces, has all the assurance that God has ever promised to give to anybody that he is elected unto eternal life.

3. *Conditions of eternal salvation.* Our text says, *if* you do these things, ye shall never stumble. Hence, we conclude that those who neglect or refuse to do these things, will stumble. Paul uses this same word, scumble, in Rom. 11, to speak of that which happened to the Jews who fell, or were broken off from the favor of God, that the Gentiles might be grafted in. He speaks of the old orthodox Jew who rejected Jesus Christ, and set up or established a righteousness of his own, thus rejecting the righteousness of God, consequently in a lost state. Hence, if we do the things that Peter mentioned, we will not stumble, we will not fall, but will finally gain eternal life. But, if we neglect or refuse to do these things, we shall stumble or fall as did the Jews who rejected Christ, and fail to gain and enjoy eternal salvation. We therefore conclude that no one is eternally elected unto salvation unconditionally, but that our election to eternal salvation is conditioned upon our belief of and obedience to the truth.

in his letter. He addresses them as people who have obtained like precious faith with him, and others. A faith, which was in the righteousness of our God, and the Saviour Jesus Christ.

Grace to you and peace be multiplied. Grace is the Greek salutation and peace is the Hebrew salutation. Peter uses them both to wish them the favor of God. He indicates that this grace and peace will be multiplied in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. By this he implies that those who were ignorant of God and of Jesus, will not enjoy the grace and peace of God. People

who refuse to have God in their knowledge are given up unto a reprobate mind to do all kinds of sin and uncleanness. (Rom. 1: 28-32.) But a knowledge of God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, whom the Father sent into the world, is eternal life. (John 17: 3.)

All things that pertain unto life and godliness. Peter says that all these things which pertain unto life and godliness have been granted unto us by the divine power. Peter says that these things have been granted to us through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue. Here, again, we learn that something comes to us through the knowledge of God. First, we are told that grace and peace will be multiplied through a knowledge of God. Now, we are told that all that pertains to life and godliness is given through the knowledge of God. How important it is then to know God and to know his will concerning us. A practical lesson is to be learned here. If God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, we need not look to the creeds, theories, or traditions of men, to guide us in our Christian life. We need not depend upon visions, visitation by angels to tell us what to do to be saved, or how to worship and serve God. We have only to turn to the book from which we gain our knowledge of God to find all things that pertain to life and godliness. Paul expressed it in these words, "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." (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.)

Ye may become partakers of the divine nature. This is another one of the precious and exceeding great promises, which God has given to those who have obtained like precious faith—that we may become partakers of the divine nature since we have escaped from the corruption there is in the world by lusts. The highest glory to which man can attain, in this life, is to partake of the divine nature. This does not mean that we partake of the essence of God's being, but that we become like

him. He is holy, we become like him when we become holy. We cannot become holy to the degree that he is. He is perfectly holy. We may be relatively holy. Through his forgiveness and the supply of spiritual strength which he gives us, we may be holy to that extent which he expects of us.

II. Graces Necessary to Fruitfulness (2 Pet. 1: 5-8)

In your faith supply virtue. The faith, here mentioned, is that mentioned in verse 1, the like precious faith in God and in Jesus Christ. It is the faith through which we become Christians. And, in this faith we supply virtue, or, as the authorized version says, to this faith we add virtue. The word, virtue, here does not mean moral excellence, or chastity, but courage. Webster gives one definition that agrees with the meaning of the Greek word; manly strength, or courage, or valor. People should add virtue to their faith because they need courage to remain faithful. They need courage to contend for the faith, that they may not make shipwreck of their faith, or deny the faith.

And in your knowledge self-control. When people become Christians, it is not a time to cease to learn. They really have only become learners of the Lord, and they are to go on unto perfection. We should not be content to go through life knowing only what we knew at the time of conversion. Peter tells us to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. (2 Pet. 3: 18.) Paul rebuked the Hebrews because they had been in the church long enough to be teachers of others. But, instead of being able to teach others, they had need that someone should teach them the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God. They were babes in need of milk and not of solid food. For, said he, solid food is for full-grown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. (Heb. 5: 12-14.) Then, along with this knowledge, they were to exercise self-control. Self is the hardest person we have to control. It means that we shall practice self-denial and sacrifice. It means that we shall

drive ourselves to do work when we would rather rest. It means that we will accept responsibilities when we would rather enjoy freedom. It means that we will deny ourselves the enjoyment of worldly fleshly pleasures, and it means that we will give ourselves to spiritual activities in order that we may honor and glorify God.

And in your patience godliness. Patience follows self-control and surely no virtue is needed more than patience when we try to control self. Patience, in the scriptures, usually carries with it the idea of steadfastness under prolonged trial. In the margin the word steadfastness is suggested instead of the word patience. So, Peter tells us that we are to exercise self-control and that we are to be steadfast in the exercise of it. It may be easy to exercise self-control for awhile, or with reference to a few things in our life, but to exercise self-control with reference to all the activities of life, and to continue that self-control throughout all our life, is a most difficult thing. Godliness is another word for Godlikeness. If, at the end of life, it can be said of us that we were like God, we will have been paid the highest compliment possible. No one can have a higher ambition than to be like God. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh. If we become Christ-like we will be like God.

In your brotherly kindness love. Brotherly kindness is to be added to our godliness. This means to be kind to your brother, whether he is in need or not, to treat him kindly on every occasion, to continue in this kindness when it is to your advantage to do so and when it is not to your advantage to do so. It is easy to exercise kindness when it is to our advantage to be kind, but when one must practice self-denial or make a sacrifice to be kind to his brother, he is then tested. Love is the capstone of all these virtues. This reminds us of Paul's statement. After he had named a number of Christian characteristics he said, "and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." (Col. 3: 14.) Love is that grace which colors and strengthens every other grace. What would virtue be without love?

What would knowledge benefit one unless he had love? (1 Cor. 13: 2.) What would self-control or patience be but doggedness, under trial, if it were not for love? And so godliness would be a mere form or sham without love. Hence, above all these other things, and to bind them all together, to give them that tone that we ought to have, we place love that makes us like God.

They make you to be not idle or unfruitful. The possession of these Christian graces makes us not idle or unfruitful. But, the lack of these things will cause us to be unfruitful.

III. Encouragement to Add the Graces

(2 Pet. 1: 9-12)

He that lacketh these things is blind. This encouragement is first negative and the next positive. On the negative side, Peter says, if we lack these Christian graces, we are like a shortsighted man, seeing only what is near; that is, we see and appreciate the things that are worldly and physical, that which is near. And, as a result of this, we forget the cleansing from our old sins. We'll act as if we had never been cleansed. It is natural for people who have never been converted from sin to enjoy sin. So, those who have forgotten they were purged from sin, will go back to the enjoyment of sin.

Entrance into the eternal kingdom. This is the positive encouragement to add these Christian graces. For if ye do these things, if you add these graces, you shall never stumble as the Jews stumbled and fell away from the favor of God through their rejection of Christ. But, there will be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ. Hence, Peter makes the cultivation of these Christian graces a condition of our entrance into the everlasting kingdom. Surely no one can read understandingly this teaching of Peter and still believe in the impossibility of apostasy. Certainly a person can become a Christian, escape from the corruption that is in the world by lusts, and then failing to exercise diligence in the cultivation of these virtues, may be as one who is blind, forgetting the cleansing from his old sins. And the one who thus lacks diligence will not make his calling and election sure, and he

will stumble and there will not be supplied unto him an entrance into

the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

General Information on the Christian Graces

1. Virtue, (a) Used to describe the things we should think about. (Phil. 4: 8.) (b) Used to express the excellent attributes of God. (1 Pet. 2: 9.) (c) God calls us by glory and virtue. (2 Pet. 1: 3.)

2. Knowledge, (a) We must grow in knowledge. (2 Pet. 3: 18.) (b) We escape defilement through knowledge. (2 Pet. 2: 20.) (c) Knowledge gives life. (John 17: 3.)

3. Self-control, (a) Essential trait of character. (Acts 24: 25.) (b) Element in fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5: 23.) (c) Qualification of a bishop. (Titus 1: 8.)

4. Patience, (a) Our need of pa-

tience. (Heb. 10: 36.) (b) Hun the race with patience. (Heb. 12: 1.) (c) Patience saves us. (Luke 21: 19.)

5. Godliness, (a) Profitable for all things. (1 Tim. 4: 7, 8.) (b) Is great gain. (1 Tim. 6: 6-10.) (c) Scriptures direct us in godliness. (2 Pet. 1: 3.)

6. Brotherly-kindness. (a) The Christian's duty. (Eph. 4: 31, 32.) (b) Toward brethren. (1 Pet. 3: 8, 9.) (c) With tenderness. (Rom. 12: 10.)

7. Love, (a) For God. (Matt. 22: 37.) (b) For brethren. (1 Pet. 1: 22.) (c) For the lost. (Rom. 9: 1-3; 10: 3.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What is the meaning of the word diligence?

Why should we be more diligent in spiritual matter than in material things?

Name some spiritual matters in which we are told to be diligent.

How is our calling affected?

How are we elected?

How can we make our calling and election sure?

What evidence do we have of our election?

Can you prove that eternal life is given to us conditionally?

What are the conditions we must meet in order to have eternal life?

God's Blessings on the Believer

To whom did Peter address this epistle?

What other apostle worked with and wrote to some of these same people?

What blessings did Peter wish upon these people?

Through what channel are these blessings multiplied unto us?

What other blessing mentioned in our text comes to us through a knowledge of God?

What light does this lesson throw on our need for creeds and confessions of faith?

What does Paul say the Scriptures will do for us?

What is meant by partaking of the divine nature?

Graces Necessary to Fruitfulness

What is the meaning of virtue as used in our text?

Why should we add virtue in our faith?

How important is it that we add knowledge?

How is self-control manifested in our lives?

What is the meaning of patience?

Can you illustrate the necessity of patience in the Christian character?

Why is godliness so desirable in the Christian character?

What is our duty concerning brotherly kindness?

How is love related to all these Christian graces?

Encouragement to Add the Graces

What is the condition of the one who lacks these graces?

What is meant by forgetting that one has been cleansed from his old sins?

What is promised to the child of God who cultivates these graces?

What is the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ?

What bearing does this lesson have on the subject of apostasy?

What is there of interest to you in the division on General Information?

Lesson XIII—March 29, 1953

THE CHRISTIAN HOPE

The Lesson Text

1 John 2: 25; 2 Cor. 5: 1-10; Rev. 21: 2

25 And this is the promise which he promised us, *even* the life eternal.

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.

2 And I saw the holy city, new Je-ru'-sa-16m, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal."* (Titus 1: 2.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Thess. 4: 13-18.

Daily Bible Readings

March	23.	M.....	The Hope of Life (1 Thess. 4: 13-18)
March	24.	T.....	The Shepherd of Life (Psalm 23: 1-6)
March	25.	W.....	The Triumph of Life (1 Cor. 15: 50-58)
March 26.		T.....	The Assurance of Life (1 Cor. 15: 12-23)
March	27.	F.....	The Empty Tomb (Matt. 28: 1-10)
March	28.	S.....	Faith Removing Doubt (John 20: 11-18)
March	29.	S.....	A Home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5: 1-10)

TIME.—For John, A.D. 85; for 2 Cor., A.D. 58; for Rev., A.D. 95.

PLACES.—Ephesus, Corinth and Isle of Patmos.

PERSONS.—John, Paul, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. *The hope we have.* Christianity is the religion of hope. In its acceptance we hope to become free from the guilt and pollution of sin; in its observance we hope to be made free from the power and practice of sin; and as its reward we hope to gain freedom from the penalty and presence of sin throughout all eternity. Hope makes it possible for us to bear our burdens, resist the temptations of life, and deny ourselves ungodliness and worldly lusts. Hope enables us to nurse our sick, bury our dead, and gather up the fragments of a shattered life and build again on the solid foundation. Through hope we reach into the future and take hold of the unseen realities to give strength and stability to the soul in its fight against things seen

and material. By hope we reach within the veil, even into heaven itself, to lay hold upon Christ that he may live in our hearts, give us strength, courage and patience; that he may be manifested in our mortal flesh, comfort us in death, and at last receive us into glory.

2. *Of what does this hope consist?* Hope has in it the elements of desire and expectation. No one can hope for that which he expects but does not desire; nor for that which he desires but does not expect. Both desire and expectation must meet in one before there can be Christian hope. Since desire is a necessary element of hope, we need to study what excites this desire within us. (a) The one consuming desire of a Christian is eternal life. In its broad

acceptation, eternal life means more than simply living forever or eternal existence. It means full and free communion with God, with Jesus Christ, in an environment where sin can never come with its blighting influence. It is said that the righteous "go away into eternal life." (Matt. 25: 46.) So, from this we see that eternal life is a state of bliss, into which people may go and that is the desire of every Christian. When we contrast this eternal life with our condition of unrest, failing health, trials, obligations, disappointments and heartaches here in this life, we see that the desire to get away from the sufferings of this life and into the joy and blessings of the next world, excite within us the desire which is the necessary element of hope, (b) God's promise of rest from all that brings unhappiness and dissatisfaction here, to share with his Son all the glories and privileges of a specially prepared place, is another thing that excites our desire which is an element of our hope. None can read the description given of heaven and compare that with what we know we have here without having a desire to go there, (c) The third thing that excites our desire for eternal life is a description which the scriptures give of the torments of hell as the just punishment to be visited upon those who die in sin. Surely none can read of the "lake that burns with fire and brimstone" without desiring a better country. None can read of the beings that will inhabit hell without desiring better associates for eternity. These are the things which excite within us the desire which is one element of hope.

2. *The grounds of our hope.* The other necessary element of hope is expectation. What right do we poor, frail, sinning creatures have to expect to live with God and with Jesus Christ? Humanity forfeited its right to live with God when in the garden our parents sinned. Each individual, since Adam's day, has repeated that fatal mistake which renders one unfit for association and communion with God. How then can we dare to expect to go to heaven without being guilty of base presumption? Can we live such pure moral lives as to give us the right to demand an entrance

into God's presence? Do we have sufficient strength to force our way into heaven, and after forcing our way into the place, maintain our place there? Is there one who has enough money to purchase a place in heaven? These are the ways of the world to get what they desire. But the very thought of these is utter foolishness when looking for something upon which to base our expectation of eternal life. (a) We have God's promise of eternal life. Paul says, in our text, that the God who cannot lie has promised us eternal life. Since God cannot lie, we are just as sure that he will give us eternal life as we are sure that he is God. If he can lie, he is not God; if he cannot lie, we may have eternal life according to his promise, (b) The next thing upon which we may base our expectation of eternal life is God's oath. He promised and then swore that he would fulfill that promise. Paul tells us that God made a promise and then, being willing to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise, the immutability of his counsel, interposed with an oath that by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us. (Heb. 6: 13-18.)

Someone has suggested that if God had sworn by the earth he might be released from his obligation when the earth is destroyed. Had he sworn by the heavens, he might be released from his obligations when the heavens pass away with a great noise. But, since he swore by himself, he is eternally obligated to keep his promise. His character is involved. His promise and his oath are just as immutable as his character is unchangeable, (c) The third ground of our hope is the person of Jesus Christ. Paul speaks of "Christ Jesus our hope," (1 Tim. 1: 1); of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1: 27). The basis of our hope with reference to Jesus is the fact that he died for our sins. Our unworthiness and our inability to live with God, result from our sins. So Jesus died that he might atone for our sins and make it possible for us to live with God. Just as sure as Jesus died for our sins, just that sure

do we have the right to expect eternal life with God. The fact that he was willing to die to atone for our sins, and that he had the power to break out of death's prison, gives us strong encouragement to believe that, when through his power we are brought out of the house of death, we will be acceptable to God and worthy to live with him forever.

3. *Promised before times eternal.* Paul tells us in this text that the promise of eternal life was made before times eternal, which simply means before the creation of the world. In Eph. 1: 4, Paul says that God chose us in him before the

foundation of the world. In Eph. 3: 11, Paul speaks of the eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, and in 2 Tim. 1: 9 Paul says that God saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, but now has been manifested by the appearing of Jesus Christ. So, our union with Jesus Christ here and in eternity is the out-working of a plan and the fulfillment of a promise made before the creation of the world.

Exposition of the Text

I. The Promise of Eternal Life (1

John 2: 25)

This is the promise which he promised us even the life eternal, (a) What is eternal life? Some have the idea that eternal life is simply living forever. There is the idea that we are given eternal life here and now. Those who believe this doctrine hold that eternal life is no more than the new life or the spiritual life given us when we become a child of God. But Jesus tells *us* that eternal life is to be had and enjoyed in the world to come. (Mark 10: 30.) Again, we read that at the close of the judgment scene, the wicked will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life. (Matt. 25: 46.) Here, Jesus speaks of eternal life as a state into which the righteous will go. The wicked will be conscious forever, and in that sense they will live forever. But, the righteous have more than mere consciousness or a conscious existence. They exist in a place of peace, of joy, and satisfaction. It takes this to constitute eternal life. Being conscious in the enjoyment of the things which God has prepared for us. We cannot have this sort of eternal life in this world. Hence, Jesus said we may have blessings to a hundred-fold in this world, but eternal life is to be had only in the world to come, (b) Where is the promise of eternal life? In John 17: 2, we read that Jesus praying to the Father, spoke of being given the authority to give eternal life to those who were his own. In John 14: 1-3, Jesus says

that there are many mansions in his Father's house and he goes to prepare a place for us that where he is there we may be also. Again, the apostle Peter tells us that if we add the Christian graces, there will be ministered unto us abundantly an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord. (2 Pet. 1: 11.) And in Rom. 2: 7, Paul tells us that God will give eternal life to all them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption. (c) We are taught that eternal life is conditioned upon our obedience. In Heb. 5: 9 we are taught that Jesus became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. While the character of God and the person and atoning death of Jesus Christ are grounds upon which we base our hope for eternal life, our obedience to gospel commandments is a necessary condition of eternal life. We can no more expect to enjoy eternal life without obeying the Lord than we can expect to have eternal life without someone to atone for our sins.

II. Encouraged in Our Hope (2 Cor.

5: 1-10)

We have a building from God. Space forbids a detailed exposition of this portion of our text, but Paul is here drawing a contrast between our present condition in this earthly perishing body and that which we shall have in eternity. This body in which we live is of the earth, weakened by sin, racked with pain, and doomed to dissolution, but the build-

ing we have from God is a body not made with hands, one that is eternal and a fit house for the spirit in a spirit world.

We that are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened. The groaning here mentioned is a fervent earnest desire to get away from the sin and sorrow and suffering of this world. Paul speaks of this as being a burden to him and he would wish to be relieved of this burden of sorrow and suffering and go on to the eternal world, where he would be free from this burden. Though willing to bear this burden as long as it was the will of the Lord for him to do so, yet there was the earnest desire to get away from it and to enjoy the blessings of heaven.

That *what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.* Paul did not wish to stress impatience and dissatisfaction with his present situation, but he does emphasize his wish for that which is spiritual, immortal, and eternal. Life is pictured here as a being that swallows mortal existence, destroys mortality by engulfing it.

He that wrought us for this is God. Scholars differ somewhat on the interpretation of this verse. Macknight says that God wrought in us the desire for eternal life and gave us the Spirit as an earnest of that which he promises us. Barnes says that Paul does not refer to the original creation of the body and soul for this end, but means that God, by his renewing and sanctifying influences, formed and adapted us for the enjoyment of the fulfillment of this desire. And Brother McGarvey thinks that Paul referred to the original creation and that God made us so as to be ready for this change from the mortal to the immortal, from the earthly to the heavenly state. There is no doubt that God knew of the fall of man before he created man. And, undoubtedly man was created in view of the knowledge that he would fall and that the plan of redemption would be formed and offered to man.

Who gave unto us the earnest of the spirit. The Greek word for *earnest* occurs only three times in the New Testament. (2 Cor. 1: 22; Eph. 1: 14; and our text.) The word refers to anything paid down in order to

assure final, complete settlement. Here Paul tells us that God gave us the Holy Spirit as the assurance that he will finally give us eternal life. The Holy Spirit is the down payment and eternal life is the full, complete, final settlement. In one sense the Christian can now say that he has eternal life. He has the down payment, the Holy Spirit, which is the assurance that he will subsequently be given eternal life. But, having this earnest or down payment, he may say that he now has eternal life.

While in the body we are absent from the Lord. This statement necessarily implies the dual nature of man. There is something in the body which is absent from the Lord. When this something leaves the body, it goes to be with the Lord. Hence, the body is one thing and that which lives in it for awhile and then leaves to be with the Lord is something else. Paul continues by saying, we are willing rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. This implies his complete divorce from the love of the world and the things of the world, and his complete attachment to the things that are heavenly. If we expect to go to heaven when we die, we must cultivate this same feeling with reference to things temporal and eternal, with reference to things material and spiritual. As long as we prefer to enjoy the world and the things of the world, rather than enjoy the things of heaven and the company of the Lord in heaven, it is a good indication that we are not ready to die and to meet the Lord in judgment.

We make it our aim to be well pleasing to him. The Christian's primary aim, whether in life or death, is to be pleasing to his Lord. The servant is not to dictate to nor direct the activities of the Lord, but the Lord is greater than the servant and is to direct his activities. It is not the business of the Lord to be pleasing to the servant, but the business of the servant to please his master. So, Paul says, whether living or dying, our primary aim is to please our Lord.

All be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ. This is a most sobering thought. All of us

must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. There we stand alone. Our friends and family cannot help us there. Our riches, our social or political popularity and prestige will do us no good in the judgment. We stand there on our record, whether it be good or bad. We are to meet Christ as if he and we were the only beings in the universe. It is that personal, that individual.

III. That for Which We Hope. (Rev. 21:2)

I saw the Holy City, new Jerusalem. The paragraph in which this text is found gives a description of the Holy City, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And it is said that in this city, God dwells with men. And they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be

with them and be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death will be no more. There will be no mourning nor crying, nor pain. It will be a place of unsurpassed beauty and glory, a place of joy and happiness. There'll be no sin to mar its beauty or to detract from the happiness of those who live there. The city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine upon it for the glory of God will lighten it and the lamp thereof is the lamb. The nations shall walk in the midst of the light thereof and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean or he that maketh an abomination and a lie. But only they that are written in the lamb's book of life shall have a part in that eternal city.

General Information on Hope

1. To make material things our hope is to deny God. (Job 31: 24-28.)

2. Our hope is in God. (Psalms 38: 15; 43: 5; 131: 3; 1 Pet. 1: 21; 3: 5; 1 Cor. 15: 19.)

3. We are saved by hope. (Rom. 8: 24; Titus 3: 7.)

4. Hope brings joy. (Rom. 5: 2; 12: 12.)

5. Hope is a gift from the grace of God. (2 Thess. 2: 16, 17; Rom. 15: 13.)

6. Christ the basis of our hope. (Col. 1: 27; 1 Thess. 1: 3; Heb. 7: 19.)

7. Hope centers in heaven. (Col. 1: 5; Heb. 6: 17-20; 1 Pet. 1: 13.)

8. Hope purifies. (1 John 3: 3.)

9. Hope gives patience. (Rom. 8: 25.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places and persons of this lesson

Golden Text

What connection does hope have with our freedom from sin?

How does hope help us through life and death?

Of what does hope consist?

How is the desire for eternal life excited within us?

How did humanity forfeit its right to live with God?

Why does God's promise serve as a basis of our expectation of eternal life?

What are we taught about God's oath in this connection?

Can you explain why the person and death of Jesus serve as a ground for our hope?

When was the promise of eternal life made?

What are we taught in this lesson about the plans and purposes of God?

The Promise of Eternal Life

What is eternal life? and when do we actually receive it?

What preparations are being made for our eternal life?

Can you prove that our enjoyment of

eternal life is conditioned upon our obedience?

Encouraged in Our Hope

Contrast this physical body with the building from God.

What is meant by groaning under the burden of this tabernacle?

What is meant by mortality being swallowed up of life?

From what source do we get our desire for eternal life?

What is meant by the "earnest of the Spirit"?

What do we learn from this lesson about the dual nature of man?

What is to be our primary aim in life?

What lessons are taught about the final judgment?

That for Which We Hope

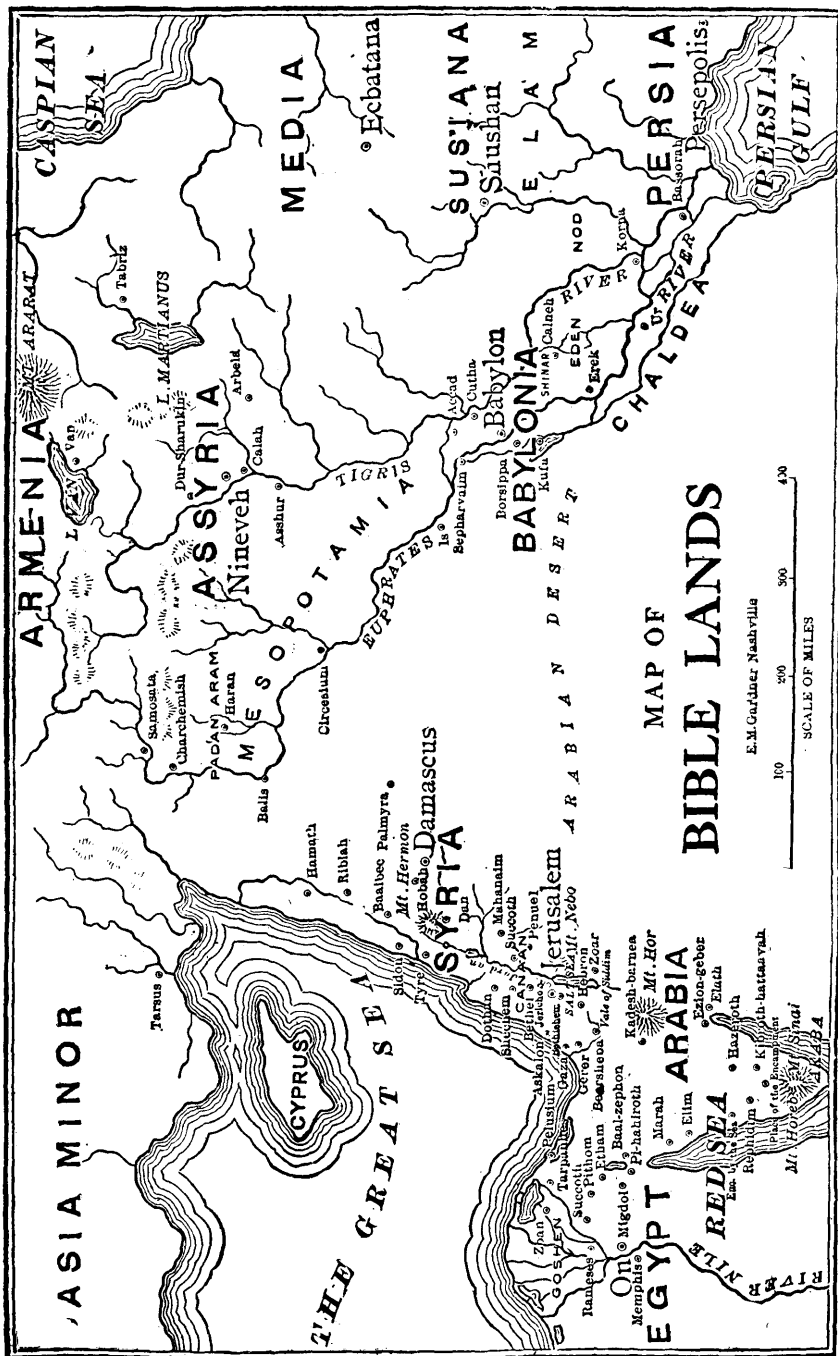
Under what figure of speech is that for which we hope pictured in this lesson?

Can you give a good general description of the heavenly city?

The absence of what one thing will contribute to the happiness of all who go there?

Where are the names of God's people said to be written?

What is there of interest to you in the division of General Information?



SECOND QUARTER

Aim.—To inform, the pupil of the inexhaustible resources available to those who live the Christian life.

Lesson I—April 5, 1953

OVERCOMING EVIL

The Lesson Text

2 Cor. 6: 17, 18; Eph. 5: 11-18; 1 John 2: 15-17

17 Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them;

12 For the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of.

13 But all things when they are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for everything that is made manifest is light.

14 Wherefore *he* saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.

15 Look therefore carefully how

ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise;

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

18 And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit.

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Golden Text. — "*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*"

(Rom. 12: 21.)

Devotional Reading. — Psalm 139: 19-24.

Daily Bible Readings

March	30. M.....	Seek Good and Not Evil (Amos 5: 6-14)
March	31. T.....	Tongue to Be Kept from Evil (Psalm 34: 1-15)
April	1. W.....	Evil Men Condemned (Psalm 24: 1-20)
April	2. T.....	Discern Between Good and Evil (Heb. 5: 8-14)
April	3. F.....	Evil Thoughts from the Heart (Matt. 15: 1-14)
April	4. S.....	Evildoers Cut Off (Psalm 37: 1-9)
April	5. S.....	Faith Gives Victory (1 John 5: 1-5)

Time. — For Second Corinthians A.D. 59; for Ephesians A.D. 63; for First John A.D. 85.

Places. — Corinth and Ephesus.

Persons. — Paul, John, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. Be Not Overcome of Evil. The warning given by Paul in our text is most timely. These are evil days in which we live, and there is temptation to evil on every hand. These

temptations come to us in every conceivable form. Satan is subtle in his approach, and many are involve" in sin before they are aware of it. One of the best ways to learn how to be

not overcome of evil is to see how Bible characters of old met their temptations. In Joseph (Gen 39) we have a good example of one who refused to be overcome of evil. You remember that Joseph was sold into slavery by his brethren. He had every reason to believe that he was not appreciated at home. Even his father seemingly was careless about trying to find him, and thus he was left to be a slave in Egypt. While there, a sinful woman tempted him to immorality. He refused time after time. Finally, when she would force the issue, he shed his coat, to which she had laid hold, left it with her, and fled from her presence. Being embarrassed, she accused him of evil intentions and had him put in prison. In the course of the temptation, Joseph gave his reasons why he could not commit this sin. His first reason was that it would betray the trust which his master had in him. Joseph told her how his master had committed the keeping of the whole house to himself, and that nothing had been kept back from him except his wife, and that if he should violate his master's confidence, it would be a great sin against his master. In the next place, Joseph said that such a thing would be a sin against God, and he could not afford thus to sin against the God that had sustained him until that time. Thus, we see that Joseph was not overcome of evil because he had a high sense of honor with reference to his fellow man a high sense of fidelity and loyalty to God on account of God's goodness toward him. If we can anchor ourselves to such high and noble standards, we will not be overcome of evil. Peter, on the other hand, is a good example of one allowing himself to be overcome of evil. Jesus said that the flock would scatter on the night of the betrayal and would forsake him. Peter said that others might forsake the Lord, but he would never do so. Not many hours had passed until Peter had denied his Lord three times, and had cursed and sworn that he did not know him. Peter was overcome of evil because he did not stay near the Lord. John stood by his Lord during the trial, but Peter, being afraid, followed afar off, and warmed himself by the fire of the

servants of the high priest. He stood among the enemies of the Lord and when accused of being a disciple of Jesus, he denied it for fear of his safety. Had he, like John, stood near the Lord, he would have had that source of strength upon which to lean. And so, we should remember that, if we expect to overcome evil, we must stay near the Lord. There is another thing to consider in keeping ourselves from being overcome with evil, and that is prayer to God to keep us from the evil one. When Jesus was teaching his disciples how to pray, he told them to pray that the Lord would bring them not into temptation, but deliver them from the evil one. (Matt. 6: 13.) And Paul reminded the brethren of Thessalonica that, "the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and guard you from the evil one." (2 Thess. 3: 3.) The Lord is able to keep us from the evil one and will do so if we pray earnestly for him to help us. Hence, in our efforts to be not overcome of evil, we must not forget to pray that the Lord will deliver us from the evil one.

2. **Overcome Evil with Good.** Paul tells us that we should render to no man evil for evil, but if our enemy is hungry, we are to feed him. If he is thirsty, we are to give him drink. If he is destitute and in need of clothing and shelter, we are to provide him with the things he needs. This we are to do for him, in spite of the fact that he may persecute us, say all manner of evil against us falsely; and by so doing, says Paul, we will heap coals of fire upon his head, (a) The best example we have of doing good in **return** for evil is in the fact that God has done good to us while we were his enemies. God, in the person of Jesus, came to man when man had grievously sinned against him. It was not God's purpose to withdraw from man and to leave him alone in his sins, but he came as close to man as it was possible for him to come, and wooed man back to reconciliation and fellowship with him. If God had treated his enemies as we often treat ours, he would have left man severely alone when man sinned against him. We will not retaliate, but we do not actively and aggressively seek to

cause our enemies to love us. In this God sets us a good example. When we had sinned against him, he not only refused to go off and leave man to his own destruction, but he came close to man, took upon himself the form of man, and died in order that he might cause man to love him and to serve him in order to be saved. (b) Paul is another good example of overcoming evil with good. When his enemies would have torn him limb from limb, if the soldiers had not rescued him, Paul asked the soldiers to allow him to speak to his enemies. Instead of rebuking them

for their lack of brotherly kindness and consideration for a fellow Jew, instead of heaping upon them all the invectives and reproachful terms it was possible for him to use, he stood on the palace steps and preached Jesus to them and pled with them to accept the Saviour and be saved. That was doing good in return for the evil they had done him. We need to learn the lesson that it is not enough for us to refuse to retaliate for the wrongs done us, but that we are to have an aggressive program of love and goodness toward them who do us evil.

Exposition of the Text

I. Proper Attitude Toward Evil (1

John 2: 15-17)

Love not the world. This is the proper attitude stated negatively. Paul states the proper attitude positively in these words, "Abhor that which is evil." (Rom. 12: 9.) It is easy for people to do the things they love and difficult for them to do the things they hate. So, we will have the problem of right living solved when we learn to love everything that is good and when we learn to hate everything that is evil.

Neither the things that are in the world. From verse 16, we learn that the things of the world referred to here are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life. John does not mean to say that it is wrong for us to admire or even to love the beauties of nature. Neither does he mean that we are to have no interest in the affairs of this world about us and in our friends, and in our kindred, but he does mean that we are not to love the things which are sought merely to pamper the appetite, to please the eye, and to promote pride in living. These are the objects sought by the people of the world. These are not the objects to be sought by Christian people.

If any man love the world. John tells us that a man cannot love the world and God at the same time. There is such a thing as a divided affection. That is, a man may feel an inclination toward God and toward the world at the same time. But, that he can love God acceptably and serve God in a pleasing fashion, and still love the world, is not true. Je-

sus said that no man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. (Matt. 6: 24.) If a man love God truly, he loves and appreciates the things that are holy. One who loves the world and the things that are in the world appreciates the things that are low and base in harmony with the nature of the world which he loves.

For all that is in the world. John does not intend to mention everything that is worldly in detail, but he gives a classification of the things of the world, and says that every worldly thing may be classified under one of the three following heads. As proof that these three things comprise all that the world has to offer, it is to be remembered that Satan approached Eve in these three ways. He showed her that the fruit of the tree was good to eat, thus appealing to the lust of her flesh. He showed her that the fruit was pretty to look upon, thus appealing to the lust of her eyes. And he showed her that by eating the fruit of the tree, she would become wise like God, knowing good from evil, thus appealing to the vainglory of life. Again, when Satan tempted Jesus, he used these same three methods of approach. He tempted him to turn the stones to bread, thus appealing to the lust of the flesh. He tempted him to fall down and worship him to get control of the nations of the earth, thus appealing to the lust of the eyes through which Jesus beheld the na-

tions which would be given him. And last, he told him to cast himself down from the temple and let the people see him float down on the supporting hand of God, thus appealing to the pride or vainglory of life. And every temptation that we have today to do something evil may be classified under one of these three heads. If we learn how to be not overcome of evil in these three ways, we will be safe.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. The word *world* here does not mean this earth, although it is said to pass away, but here the meaning seems to be all that makes up the world, all the pomp and show, all that appeals to man to draw him away from God and to overcome him and destroy him; all of these things will pass away. But the man who does the will of God abideth forever. This should encourage and bolster us in times of temptation, knowing that the things we are tempted to do are evil, that they are transient and will soon pass away, and that if we partake of them we will be destroyed with these things. But, if we remain faithful and overcome the temptation of evil, doing the will of the Lord, we shall abide forever.

II. Proper Relation Toward Evil (2

Cor. 6: 17, 18)

Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate. In this passage, Paul tells us that we are to separate ourselves from all that is evil. In the context he had just told them that they should not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. And, to enforce that, he had asked them, what fellowship could righteousness and iniquity have? or what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? In this series of questions he intended to convey the idea there could be no fellowship and no communion between the world and the church. "Then, by a series of short, terse questions he shows the utter folly, the inconsistency and incongruity of every form of alliance which entangles the children of God with the children of the devil. The world has not so improved, and Satan

has not so repented, as to in any way nullify, or even weaken, the weight and applicability of this apostolic warning." (McGarvey and Pendleton.)

And touch no unclean thing. This statement seems to get a little bit closer to the matter and in a more practical way than in telling them to come out and be separate from the world. Here, they are to touch no unclean thing; that is, to make no use of worldly things for their pleasure or benefit. Evil is all around us and it is impossible for us not to see evil and to associate with those who practice evil. Paul says if we would cut off all connections with evil men then we must needs go out of the world. (1 Cor. 5: 10.) But, while we live among evil people and are compelled to associate, to some degree, with worldly people, we are not to partake of their evil. On condition that we maintain this aloofness from the world and the things of the world, God promises to receive us.

And will be to you a Father. God promises to receive them as his children, and be a Father to all who will maintain this separation from the world. But if we become equally yoked with unbelievers in the enjoyment of the world, and the use of the things of the world, we need not expect him to receive us and be to us a Father. The unequal yoke of verse 14, of this context, is therefore some relationship with the world, or a worldly person, that makes it impossible for us to be received and treated as children of God. Whatever the unequal yoke may be, it is of such nature that God will not receive us or be our Father or allow us to be his children as long as we remain in that unequal yoke.

III. Proper Action with Reference to Evil (Eph. 5: 11-18)

Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Paul outlines our course of action with reference to evil both negatively and positively, (a) He tells us to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. This means that we are not to have fellowship with evil; we are not to partake of evil. The works of darkness here are said to be unfruitful because they do not

do any good, (b) He next states our action positively by saying rather to even reprove them. One has done only half his duty when he refuses to have fellowship with evil. The next half of the duty is to reprove and rebuke those who *engage* in evil. Many people, and some preachers, are willing to refrain from evil themselves, but they refuse to reprove and rebuke those who engage in evil because they are afraid they will lose their friendship. It is easy for preachers and teachers to reprove evil of which the congregation listening is not guilty, but it takes courage to reprove and rebuke evils which are common in the congregation to which one is speaking.

It is a shame even to speak of. Paul says that the things which are done by evil people are of such nature that Christians cannot even afford to speak of them. "The very naming of those abominations often produces improper associations in the mind; the description creating polluting images before the imagination; the exhibition of pictures, even for the purpose of condemning them, defiles the soul. There are some vices which, from the corruptions of the human heart, cannot be safely described, and it is to be feared that, under the plea of faithfulness, many have done evil by exciting improper feelings, where they should have only alluded to the crime and then spoken in thunder. Paul did not describe these vices, he denounced them; he did not dwell upon them long enough for the imagination to find employment, and to corrupt the soul." (Barnes.)

Look therefore carefully how you walk. This is further teaching with

reference to the proper action concerning evil. We are to be careful how we walk. Walk here means to live. We are to be careful how we live, how we conduct our daily affairs of life. Paul tells us that we are not to be unwise but to be wise. Such is the deceitfulness of sin and the subtlety of Satan that we must use all our diligence and powers of discernment lest we be involved in wrongdoing.

Understand what the will of the Lord is. If one is to win in this battle against temptation to sin, he must know what the will of the Lord is. No one can live right accidentally. No one can live right by following the philosophies of men. The only way we can live right and walk uprightly before God is to follow divine instruction.

Be not drunken with wine. Paul gives one example of proper walk and that is to refrain from drunkenness. One could easily make a long list of such things from which we are to refrain, such as lying, stealing, murder, adultery, gossip, and a long list of other things common to the people of the world among whom we are forced to live. But as Christians, we are to maintain the proper attitude toward evil by abhorring it and learning to love that which is good. We are to maintain the proper relationship toward evil by coming out from and being separate from evil. And we are to maintain the proper action with reference to evil by refusing to have fellowship with those who engage in evil and reproving them who are thus engaged, and by walking carefully in harmony with the will of the Lord.

General Information on Overcoming Evil

1. Evil forces in the world. (a) Satan. (John 8: 44; 1 John 3: 7, 8; 5: 19.) (b) Evil men. (2 Tim. 3: 13; 2 Pet. 2: 1-3.) (c) Evil desires. (James 1: 13-15; Rom. 7: 17-24.)

2. How to overcome evil, (a) Resist. (James 4: 7; Matt. 4: 3, 4.) (b) Flee from. (2 Tim. 2: 22; 1 Tim. 6: 11.) (c) Avoid evil companions.

(1 Cor. 15: 33.) (d) Pray. (Matt. 6: 13; 1 Cor. 10: 13.) (e) Think on holy things. (Phil. 4: 8; Mark 7: 20-23.)

3. Reward to overcomers. (a) Crown of life. (Rev. 2: 10; James 1: 12.) (b) Blessings. (Rev. 2: 17, 26; 3: 5, 12, 21.) (c) Eternal bliss. (Rev. 7: 9-17; 22: 14.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What is one of the best ways to learn how to overcome evil?

What Old Testament character is used as an example of overcoming evil?

Tell the story of this man, and show how he overcame evil.

What New Testament character is used as an example of being overcome with evil?

What privilege do we have that helps us to overcome evil?

What is meant by overcoming evil with good?

What is our best example for doing good in return for evil?

Show why the lack of retaliation for evil does not fulfill our duty to our enemies?

Show how Paul overcame evil with good.

Proper Attitude Toward Evil

In what positive and negative statements of scripture is the problem of right living solved?

What are the things in the world which we are not to love?

Can a person be divided in his affection?

Is such an attitude acceptable to God?

Locate the three things of the world in the temptation of Eve.

Locate these same three things in the temptation of Jesus.

What is the meaning of the word world?

In what sense does this world pass away?

What promise is made to those who do the will of God?

Proper Relation Toward Evil

In what way did Paul teach there can be no communion between the world and the church?

What is meant by touching no unclean thing?

On what condition does God promise to receive us?

What promise does God make to all who separate from the world?

What is the unequal yoke mentioned in the context?

Proper Action with Reference to Evil

What is meant by works of darkness?

What is to be our relation to such works?

What is our duty with reference to evil in others?

What does Paul teach us with reference to speaking of evil?

What direction does Paul give with reference to our walk?

What does Paul teach with reference to our understanding?

State briefly the proper attitude, the proper relationship and the proper action of the Christian toward evil.

What is there of interest to you in the division of general information?

Lesson II—April 12, 1953

WORKING FOR THE LORD

The Lesson Text

1 Cor. 15: 58; 2 Cor. 5: 10; 1 Thess. 1: 2, 3; James 2: 14-20

58 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.

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.

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.

14 What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but

have not works? can that faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit?

17 Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself.

18 Yea, a man will say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith apart from *thy* works, and I by my works will show thee *my* faith.

19 Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well: the demons also believe, and shudder.

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is barren?

GOLDEN TEXT. — *"We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work"* (John 9: 4.)

DEVOTIONAL READING. — James 2: 20-26.

Daily Bible Readings

April 6. M.....	Jesus Our Example in Work (John 9: 1-5)
April 7. T.....	Call for Laborers (Luke 10: 1-11)
April 8. W.....	Spirit-directed Workmen (Ex. 31: 1-11)
April 9. T.....	Work of Ministers (Acts 20: 24-35)
April 10. F.....	The Gospel of Work (John 5: 10-18)
April 11. S.....	Work Not in Vain (1 Cor. 15: 51-58)
April 12. S.....	The Master Workman (Psalm 8)

TIME. — For First Corinthians A.D. 57; for Second Corinthians A.D. 58; for First Thessalonians A.D. 52; for James A.D. 50.

PLACES. — Corinth, Thessalonica, and Jerusalem.

PERSONS. — Paul, James, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. We Must Work the Works of Him That Sent Me. (a) Our text suggests the necessity of work. Jesus realized that he must work. If it was necessary that the Son of God must work while here on earth, surely we ought to conclude that we must work also. The idea that salvation is of grace and not of works has led many to think there is no necessity for work. Yet, there are two types of work mentioned in the word of God. One is meritorious works. The other is simple obedience to gospel commandments. The Lord does not encourage our doing meritorious works, but he does demand that we do the works which are commanded of us. (b) Another thing suggested by our text is the fact that Jesus recognized a higher will than his own, and was obedient to it. Jesus said, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 5: 30.) "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the Will of him that sent me." (John 6: 38.) Since Jesus took upon him our nature, he was subject to the laws of God with reference to human beings. Consequently, it was necessary for him to recognize the Father's authority over him and be subject to him. If it was necessary for Jesus, in his human nature, to be subject to the authority of the Father, much more is it necessary for us to recognize his lordship over us and be obedient to him. When Jesus told the rich young ruler that he lacked only one thing essential to eternal life, he taught that young man, and all

of us, the necessity of complete surrender to the will of God. The rich young ruler refused to do the one thing which Jesus said he must do in order to enjoy eternal life. It is sad when people lack so little and yet must be denied the joys of eternal life because they rebel at one or two things demanded of them. Like Jesus, we must recognize the authority of God over us, and must be wholly and unreservedly submissive to his will. (c) Our text suggests that we should find joy and satisfaction in working the works of him who rules over us. When the disciples of Jesus brought bread from the near-by city to feed Jesus at the well of Samaria, he was not hungry. They inquired whether anyone had brought him something to eat, but he replied, "I have meat to eat that ye know not. . . . My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." (John 4: 32, 34.) Jesus did not do the work of the Father as one who is unwillingly driven to a task, but he did it as if it were the greatest joy of his life. The individual today who is truly converted to the Lord will find his greatest delight in doing the things the Lord wishes done. We will not have to be driven to attend worship, we will not have to be compelled to visit the sick and to care for the needy, but we will find our greatest joy and satisfaction in doing these things if we are truly like Jesus.

2. While It Is Day. In this text Jesus uses the term *day* to represent our lifetime and *night* to represent

the time after death, (a) In this text we see the value of time stressed. Jesus was an economist. He worked diligently, untiringly and unceasingly. John said that the world could not contain the books that should be written if everything Jesus said and did should be recorded. (John 21: 25.) How often we spend minutes and hours in idleness and then say that we do not have time to do work for the Lord. How often we spend hours in pleasure and in the doing of things of little importance while we say we do not have time to do the things the Lord commands us to do. (b) Our text also stresses the value of opportunities. Everyone of us should thank the Lord daily for opportunities which each day brings; opportunities for service, opportunities for meditation, opportunities for our soul growth and development, opportunities to become more and more like our Lord. Jesus realized there was so much to be done and that his life would not be long at best. Hence, he used his time wisely in order that he might accomplish all that it was possible for him to accomplish. If we would follow his example, we would use our time better and appreciate our opportunities more than the average person does.

3. The Night Cometh When No Man Can Work.

It has been surmised by many that the words of our text were spoken by Jesus as the sun was just about to sink in the west. In the time of our Lord, all work ceased when darkness came. And so, Jesus impressed his audience with the fact that human activity was limited to a certain time and that all they expected to accomplish must be done within this limited time, for beyond that nothing could be accomplished. From this we learn the practical lesson that all we ever expect to accomplish for the Lord must be done during the time the Lord grants us to live on this earth. In the language of our text, the lifetime is the day and the time following death is the night. According to the teaching of this text, no one will have a chance after death. The only chance anyone will have for accepting the Lord is in this lifetime. The only opportunity one has for doing the will of the Father is in this lifetime and not after death. Hence, those who are spending their time in worldly pleasures here, expecting a chance to repent and reform after death, will be disappointed if the language of our text teaches the truth.

Exposition of the Text

I. Encouragement to Work (1 Cor. 15: 58.)

Be ye steadfast, unmovable. This verse in our text is Paul's conclusion after arguing the resurrection from the dead. On account of the fact that we will be raised, Paul says we should be steadfast and unmovable. These terms mean about the same thing, and the repetition is for the sake of emphasis. "Be firm, strong, confident in the faith, in view of the truth that you will be raised up. Be not shaken or agitated with the stripes, the temptations, and the cares of life. Be fixed in the faith, and let not the power of sin, or the sophistry of pretended philosophy, or the arts of the enemy of the soul seduce you from the faith of the gospel." (Barnes.)

Always abounding in the work of the Lord. The word *abound* carries the idea of getting full and running

over. Hence, our lives are to be filled with good works. The word always suggests that we are not to be of the hot and cold, the off and on type, but that we are to move along with the same diligence and animation at all times. There is to be no slack time in our labors, but we are to be constantly engaged in work of the Lord, (a) This would keep us from leaving our first love. (Rev. 2: 4.) This would also keep us from being the lukewarm type like the Laodiceans. (Rev. 3: 15, 16.) (b) This would assure us that we receive not the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. 6: 1.) It would also assure our teachers, who converted us, that they had not bestowed labor upon us in vain. (Gal. 4: 11.) The term, the work of the Lord, as used in our text, does not mean a work which the Lord proposes to accomplish, but rather the work which

he has for us to do. Hence, we should not be so much concerned about doing the things which we wish to do as we are concerned about doing the things which the Lord wishes us to do. Many people spend a lot of time worrying about what they are going to do concerning this or that, what disposition they are going to make of their time, their money, their strength, their opportunities, when they should be concerned about doing the work which the Lord has mapped out for them to do and which he expects them to do, and which he will require of them in the judgment.

Ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord. Here is the encouragement in our text. Since we know that our work will not be vain in the Lord, we are encouraged to be more diligent and more steadfast and to abound more and more in our labors, (a) The Lord will not forget the work which we do for him. Though the work may be little, just the giving of a cup of cold water in his name, the Lord will not forget that work and will reward us if that is the best we can do. (b) Our work is not vain because of its effect upon us. It makes us better. It gives us a satisfaction that we cannot get from any other source. We are encouraged by the work we do and the success that we attain in it to do greater works than we have ever done before, (c) Our work is not vain because of the good it does others. When we have labored diligently to do good unto others, they are blessed by our labors. They are encouraged to follow our good example. They may be saved from despair and put on the road to heaven again by the fact that we have labored in their behalf.

II. Nature of Our Work (1 Thess. 1:

2, 3)

We give thanks to God always for you. This is the language of the apostle Paul to his children in the gospel whom he had begotten amidst many trials. He is grateful for the memory of these saints at Thessalonica and he often bears their name to the throne of grace, (a) In these words we see, Paul's habit of prayer. He not only taught others to pray

without ceasing, but he practiced that himself, (b) Next, we see the personal and the individual element in the prayers of Paul. He did not pray general prayers which covered everything but touched nothing in particular. Paul was one who prayed to God about certain individuals and certain events, and certain situations. There was not anything uncertain or indefinite about the prayers of Paul.

Your work of faith. This tells us something of the nature of the work Christians should do. Our work should be a work of faith; that is a work which springs from faith, a faith that comes by hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 17.) Paul said we walk by faith, not by sight. (2 Cor. 5: 7.) Hence, our work will be a work of faith. Feeding the hungry is a work of faith because we are commanded to do so. But taking a Sunday school class on a picnic is not a work of faith because we are not commanded to do so. Preaching the gospel to the lost is a work of faith because the Lord demands it of us. But organizing our forces to put on a pie supper or a rummage sale is not a work of faith because we are not commanded to do such.

Labor of love. Here is another element in the work which we are to perform. That element is love. The work which we do must be done in love. It must be the expression of our love for God. The individual who works through fear, fear of punishment, does not have the highest motive for work and such labor may not be acceptable to God. We may begin our work in fear of punishment, but we should grow to love that work and to work because we love him who asks that work of us.

Patience of hope. Patience suggests the idea of steadfastness under long periods of trial. This is the patience or steadfastness which hope inspires. It is our hope of eternal life with the Lord in heaven that makes us able to endure the trials of life patiently. Paul speaks of our hope being in our Lord Jesus Christ. Our hope is anchored in him and on him we base our hopes of eternal life. In this text, three outstanding graces of the Christian are brought together. They are faith, hope, and

love. Of the three, Paul says love is the greatest. (1 Cor. 13: 13.) Love is greater than faith because it will endure longer. Faith will give way to sight and knowledge. Hope will give way to glad fruition, but in heaven love will just have begun to grow.

III. Relation of Faith and Work (James 2: 14-20)

What doth it profit? In this portion of our text, James is stressing the fact that faith without works is of no value. Regardless of one's profession of great faith, if he has no works to demonstrate that faith, he has no right to expect to be saved by it. The religious world has no end of difficulties with this passage. Most of them think that James contradicts Paul's teaching in the third and fourth chapters of Romans. Their best effort to harmonize Paul and James is to the effect that Paul teaches that one is converted or justified before God by faith only, as taught by Paul, and that after his conversion he is justified before men as a child of God by his good works. One of the best statements of this doctrine is to be found in Barnes' notes. But since James says that Rahab, the harlot, was justified in the same manner in which he teaches Abraham was justified, this theory breaks down. No one would contend that James teaches that Rahab was a child of God and that the work she did demonstrated the faith of a child of God. The only scriptural way to harmonize the teaching of Paul with that of James is to say that Paul was teaching justification by faith, which included obedience to God's commandments, and that James was teaching justification by works, which manifested and grew out of the faith which was necessary to salvation. Paul harmonizes the two when he says that nothing avails anything except a faith working through love. (Gal. 5: 6.)

Faith, if it have not works, is dead. In this statement James shows the

relation between faith and works. Faith is the soil out of which works grow and work is that which perfects and keeps alive the faith.

The demons also believe, and shudder. To prove that one cannot be justified by faith only, James says that the demons believe. So deep is their faith that they are caused to shudder in view of what is in store for them. If they had not faith, they would not shudder in their contemplation of the future. Advocates of justification by faith only say that the case of the demons proves nothing, but James thought he proved that we cannot be saved by faith only because the demons believe and are not justified.

Faith apart from works is barren. Since faith apart from works is barren, or fruitless, we conclude that faith apart from works would not bring salvation.

IV. Judged By Our Works (2 Cor. 5: 10)

We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ. This is a picture of the last great day, the day of judgment. It is the day the Lord comes to reward his saints and to punish the wicked. (2 Thess. 1: 7-10.)

That each one may receive the things done in the body. This simply means that we are to be judged according to the way we have lived. If we have been submissive to the will of the Lord, and have worked while it is day, we will be rewarded, but if we have been negligent and careless, or if we have been rebellious, we will be dealt with accordingly. Here again, we are impressed with the fact that our only opportunity for pleasing the Lord is in this life. There will not be an opportunity after death. It is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment. (Heb. 9: 27.) If we waste our opportunities here, we'll find ourselves begging for a drop of water in the next world. (Luke 16: 24.)

General Information on Working for the Lord

1. God set the example of working. (John 5: 17.)
2. Work for that which endures. (John 6: 27-29.)

3. Work that which is good. (Gal. 6: 10.)
4. We are God's fellow-worker s. (1 Cor. 3: 9.)

5. Work according to the ability God gives. (Rom. 12: 4-8; 1 Pet. 4: 7-11.)

6. Keep ourselves fit to work for the Lord. (2 Tim. 2: 19-26.)

7. Work in spite of discouragement

and persecution. (1 Thess. 2: 1, 2; 2 Cor. 8: 1-5.)

8. The rich are to engage in good works. (1 Tim. 6: 17-19.)

9. Jesus will reward good works in the judgment. (Matt. 25: 34-39.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What is taught in our text on the necessity of work?

What two types of work are mentioned in the Bible?

What does our lesson teach with reference to submission to a higher will?

Show how the rich young ruler failed at this point.

What attitude should we have while doing the works of him who is over us?

What is the meaning of the word day in our text? and the word night?

Show how our text stresses the value of time and of opportunity.

How does Jesus teach that no one will have opportunities after death?

Encouragement to Work

What exhortation does Paul give in view of the resurrection?

What idea is suggested in the word abounding?

What benefits do we derive from abounding labors?

What is meant by the term "work of the Lord" as used in our text?

What encouragement does God give us to labor for him?

Discuss three reasons given why our labor is not in vain.

Nature of Our Work

How does Paul show his gratitude for his children in the gospel?

What do we learn from our text about Paul's prayer life?

What is the meaning of the expression "work of faith"?

What are the essential elements of the work of faith?

What connection is there between labor and love?

What is the meaning of "patience of hope"?

What does Paul say of these three Christian graces?

Relation of Faith and Work

What is the value of faith without works?

Can you harmonize the teaching of Paul and James on faith and works?

How does Paul harmonize faith and works?

What is said of the faith of the demons?

What point does James seek to prove by the faith of demons?

Judged by Our Works

When are we judged by our works?

Who is to be the judge?

By what are we to be judged?

What does this teach with reference to a second chance after death?

Who is suggested as begging for another chance after death?

What is there of interest to you in the division of general information?

Lesson III—April 19, 1953

HELPING OTHERS

The Lesson Text

Luke 10: 30-37; Gal. 6: 1, 2, 9, 10

30 Je'-sus made answer and said, A certain man was going down from Je-ru'-sa-lem to Jer-i-cho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

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

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

33 But a certain Sa-mar'-i-tan, as he journeyed, came where he was:

and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion,

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

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

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

37 And he said, He that showed mercy on him. And Je'-sus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

1 Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens,

Golden Text.—*"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ"* (Gal. 6: 2.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rom. 15: 1-3.

and so fulfil the law of Christ.

9 And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

Daily Bible Readings

April	13. M.....	Social Effects of Salvation (Acts 2: 37-47)
April	14. T.....	Who Is My Neighbor? (Luke 10: 25-37)
April	15. W.....	Personal Religion and Social Service (James 1: 19-27)
April	16. T.....	Just Conduct Required (Lev. 19: 9-18)
April	17. F.....	Helping Others to Salvation (Acts 8: 26-39)
April	18. S.....	Helping Others a Condition of Salvation (Matt. 25: 31-46)
April	19. S.....	Proper Attitudes Toward Others (Luke 6: 27-36)

TIME.—For Luke A.D. 28; for Galatians A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Judea and Galatia.

PERSONS.—Jesus, a lawyer, Paul, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. Bear Ye One Another's Burdens.

In the Greek construction of this sentence, the words *one another* have the place of emphasis. Paul is emphasizing the idea that we ought to bear one another's burdens and not consume all our time and interest and sympathies in bearing our own burden. This text should be interpreted in the light of the verse preceding it where Paul tells those who are spiritual to restore the one who is overtaken in a trespass. They are to be forgiving, they are to be sympathetic, and they are to make an effort to restore that one to his former position of faithfulness and usefulness in the church. In this way they would be helping that individual to bear his burdens. We are so situated in this life that no man can live his life to himself. No one can live alone. Hence, we must learn to weep with them that weep and rejoice with them that rejoice. Most of us find it easy enough to rejoice with people in their good fortunes, but it is a difficult thing for us to enter fully into the life and feelings of another when he has come into disappointment and sorrow and poverty. When some one has been overtaken in a sin, we are liable to stand off

to one side and say that it is good enough for him, and that he knew better than to do what he did; now let him reap the consequences. But, instead of having that superior, Pharisaic attitude, we are to be sympathetic and to help him to bear the burden of his sorrow, his grief, and we are to give him such encouragement as will help him to work himself out of the toils of sin and back to the plane of right living. For the sake of a clearer understanding, we may view these burdens in three classes, (a) Financial burdens. Jesus said that we will have the poor with us always, and so we do today. There are those who are poor by reason of no fault of their own. There are others who are not able to take care of themselves and their family because of mismanagement. And then there are children who are poor because of the prodigality of their parents. In our generation there are many who are in poverty because of the ravages of war. All of these should have our sympathy and our active help. A man who can shut his ear against the cry of the poor need not expect God to listen to him when he prays. (Prov. 21: 13.) And, on the other hand,

the man that hath pity on the poor lendeth to Jehovah, and his good deed will he pay him again. (Prov. 19: 17.) While we are not to help the willfully lazy man, since Paul said that he who will not work shall not eat, we may be obligated to help his children who suffer on account of his laziness. To refuse to help them to bear their burdens would be to disobey the commandment of our text, (b) The burden of affliction. Here is where we have the opportunity of weeping with them that weep. When long periods of illness come to a home, there will be burdens too heavy for a family to bear alone. They will need sympathy, they will need encouragement, and they will need help in a physical or material way other than that which can be supplied with money. In times of disappointment and sorrow, it is possible for one Christian to stand by another in such way as to give him the moral strength and courage to bear his burdens with fortitude, whereas he might fail and even become so discouraged as to fall away from the faith without that encouragement. When people go through long periods of illness and of sorrow, and the church does not visit and encourage them, they are likely to think that the church is not what it ought to be, that it offers nothing worth while, and so look elsewhere for their encouragement. Denominational people are usually strong on giving people encouragement during such times of illness and sorrow, and hence we may lose people from the membership of the body of Christ simply because we do not bear one another's burdens. (c) Spiritual burdens. This is the type of burden which is nearest in line with the context of the verse we are studying. Paul had spoken of a man being overtaken in sin and those who are spiritual restoring him. Instead of turning our back upon him in Pharisaic, self-righteous style and avoiding him in public, we are rather to go to him with sympathy and encourage him to turn away from that which is wrong and do that which is right. We are not to allow his mistake to cause us to refuse to give him encouragement and help in time of need. If,

in spite of our help and encouragement, a man should continue in sin, it would become necessary to withdraw from him or avoid him lest the public might think that we were condoning him or fellowshiping him in his sin. But the public will not criticize as long as we are keeping ourselves clear of sin and only using our influence to recover our brother from sin.

2. And so fulfill the law of Christ. Bearing one another's burden is said here to be a fulfillment of the law of Christ. James said that if we love our neighbor as we love ourselves we will fulfill the royal law. (James 2: 8.) One of the last things which Jesus told his disciples before his death was, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." (John 15: 12.) Jesus loved us enough to bear the burden of our guilt on Calvary. If we love one another as he loved us, we will certainly bear with the infirmities of our brethren. We will be willing to bear with them in their mistakes. We will not condone or excuse them in their mistakes, but we will certainly be sympathetic with them in their weaknesses, realizing that we have our weaknesses, and in this way encourage them to overcome the temptation. Another idea that needs to be stressed in this connection is that there are some people who think that since the law of Moses was taken out of the way we are not under any law of any kind. Here we are taught that we are under the law of Christ. Any time a commandment is given and the penalty specified for violation of that commandment, if there is sufficient authority back of the commandment to execute the penalty for violation, if these elements obtain, we have a law. Thus we may say that Christ has a law. He has issued commandments to us. He has specified the penalty for violation of these commandments, and he has all authority in heaven and on earth to execute the penalty upon those who violate the law. Hence, it is perfectly right to speak of the commandments of Christ as the law of Christ. It is thus right to speak of us as his disciples, his servants, as living under that law and subject to that law.

Exposition of the Text

I. Examples of Failing: to Help Others (Luke 10: 30-32)

A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. The student should read the context in which this lesson text occurs. By doing so, the student will learn that a certain lawyer stood up and made trial of Jesus, asking him what one must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus referred the lawyer to the law and said, "What is written in the law?" The lawyer replied that the law said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus took an advantage of the lawyer, knowing that he knew the law, and that in the presence of his associates he would be bound to give a correct answer. So, Jesus made the lawyer answer his own question. To love God with all his being and to love his neighbor as himself was the whole duty of man, for it included all of the ten commandments. All that Jesus had to do was simply to say to the lawyer, "This do, and thou shalt live." This implied that the lawyer was not then doing what was included in his answer. And the lawyer, feeling this implication, tried to justify himself and, in his effort to justify himself, he raised the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Our lesson text is the answer which Jesus gave to the question about who is my neighbor. And, again, Jesus framed the parable in such way as to make it impossible for the lawyer to give the wrong answer to his question about who his neighbor was. Jesus pictured a man going from Jerusalem down to Jericho. The highway led through a district of country honey-combed with caves and places for perfect hideouts for thieves and all types of violators of the law. Hence, it was a dangerous journey, and men often were attacked and robbed of their money and left by the roadside either dead or unable to defend themselves.

A certain priest was going down that way. The priests lived in cities allotted to them in various portions of Palestine. It was necessary for

them to go back and forth between their home and Jerusalem. David divided the priests into twenty-four courses. (1 Chron. 24.) These courses took their turn at serving in the temple. When they were not on duty they were allowed to go home. Hence, the constant traveling of priests between their homes and Jerusalem. All of those who lived on the east of the Jordan would necessarily be going between Jerusalem and Jericho. Hence, this road was frequently traveled by both priests and Levites.

He passed by on the other side. When the priest saw the man who had been robbed and left by the roadside half dead, he passed by on the other side. No doubt he could give a number of excuses for doing so. It is possible that he could have said he had been on duty for some time in the temple, that he had been away from home a good while, that his family needed him, that there was pressing business at home, and he just did not have time to stop and render the service he would like so very much to render. Many of us today fail to use our opportunities to do good when we have no better excuse than that. Or, if the priest had been going from Jericho up to Jerusalem, when he saw the unfortunate man in need, he could easily have made the excuse that he got away from home late and it was about time for his course to begin its service in the temple, and that therefore the pressing duty of religious service made it impossible for him to stop and render the service to this man in need. But the consideration of excuses was not necessary to the lesson which Jesus intended to teach. Hence, none of them are mentioned. He simply meant to picture the leaders of religion in his day passing up a man in need without giving him the help that human kindness dictates one should give on such occasion.

In like manner a Levite also. The priest was also a Levite. All priests were Levites but not all Levites were priests. The priests were all of a certain family in the tribe of Levi, the family of Aaron. Only the sons of Aaron and their descendants

could be priests. All others in the tribe of Levi were servants to the priests, to assist them in carrying on the ceremonies and the sacrifices in connection with the temple. This Levite also passed by on the other side, refusing to give help to the man in need. It is significant that Jesus used these two classes of religious leaders in their day to illustrate this lack of neighborliness. If anyone was obligated to be a good neighbor to others, it would be the priest and the Levite. They lived off the tithes given by the other tribes. Hence, they should have recognized the obligation of helping those who made it possible for them to have a living. But in spite of this added obligation to helpfulness, they passed by on the other side without rendering assistance.

II. An Example of Helpfulness (Luke 10: 33-37)

But a certain Samaritan . . . came where he was. Samaritans were composed of a mixture of Assyrians and Jews. When the kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria, the Jews were carried into captivity and many Assyrians were brought over to take their place lest the land should go to waste. The few Jews who remained in the land intermarried with these Assyrians and so produced this mongrel race known as Samaritans. They were despised by the Jews because of this mixture.

He was moved with compassion. Jesus pictured the Samaritan as having those traits of character which are appreciated the world over. And he pictures the priest and the Levite as being destitute of those qualities which cause people to be respected. It is often the case that people get so busy with the mechanics of their religion that they have no time for the practical part of Christianity. While, on the other hand, it is true that many people outside of the church are not interested in the formalities of religion, but are even more willing than those in the church to take care of the practical obligations of neighborliness. This is not as it should be. We should be careful to maintain the formalities of religion, such as are scriptural, but we should not become so involved in these that

we would not recognize our opportunities nor use them for the good of others, for the good name of the church, and the glory of God. An analysis of the service rendered by the Samaritan will show: (a) That he rendered personal service. He was not so busy that he could not take time to render first aid to the man in need. He bound up his wounds, he poured in oil and wine. He set him on his own beast and took him to the tourist station or inn and took care of him through the night. Sometimes we are willing to help others provided that it does not demand any personal service on our part. We are willing to pay a nurse to visit the sick, we will tell the grocer to send a box of groceries to the poor, but we are not willing to use our time and to go ourselves and render a personal service. This personal service is good for us in that it develops sympathy on our part and other gentle characteristics which were a part of the character of our Lord. And, furthermore, it gives us an opportunity to teach, which we would not have if we paid a nurse to go in our place, (b) The action of the Samaritan on this occasion showed his liberality. He was willing to spend his money for the good of others. (c) This shows the good reputation which the Samaritan had. He told the innkeeper to take care of the man and "whatsoever thou spendest more, I . . . will repay" when I come back this way. This showed that the Samaritan had a good reputation with the innkeeper and was trustworthy.

Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor? In answer to this question the lawyer was forced to say that the Samaritan had proved the good neighbor. By helping those in need he proved himself a good neighbor. The lawyer was too prejudiced to use the term Samaritan, so he said the one that rendered aid. Someone has said that three philosophies of life are demonstrated in this parable. First, there is the philosophy of the robbers as follows: What is thine is mine also, and I'll take it if I have to kill you. Next, there is the philosophy of the priest and the Levite, which is: What is mine is mine, and I'll keep it regardless of how much others may need it. And the philos-

ophy of the Samaritan was this: What is mine is thine also, and I'll share it with those in need. We should examine our own lives and see which of these philosophies we are following.

III. Exhortations to Helpfulness (Gal.

6: 1, 2, 9, 10)

If a man be overtaken in any trespass. Being overtaken in a trespass suggests our falling to temptation in an unguarded moment. There is a difference between overtaking a trespass and being overtaken in a trespass. The fact that we are overtaken in a trespass does not relieve us of responsibility or guilt, but does make us more worthy of sympathy and understanding.

Ye who are spiritual, restore such a one. Our helpfulness to one another includes restoring one when he is in sin. Certainly if it is our duty to help one another in physical and temporal matters, it is all the more essential that we help one another in our spiritual difficulties. We are told to confess our faults one to another and pray one for another. (James 5: 16.) We are so busy with the temporal affairs of life that we hardly have time to get well enough acquainted with each other to be of much assistance. We do not take time to confess our faults one to another and to pray one for another. In fact, very few people know one another well enough to trust each other with a recounting of their sins and an explanation of their weaknesses and failures. Very few elders know their congregations well enough to render the assistance that is here demanded.

Let us not be weary in well-doing. Paul exhorts us to continue in well-doing and not to grow weary of it, and gives as a reason, "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." The tendency is to become careless and indifferent. We start out in the Christian life with a great zeal and the intention to do all the good we possibly can, but for one reason or another, we become careless and indifferent. We allow opportunities to pass by unused. We use excuses for not doing as much as we once did. Hence, it is easy for us to leave our first love and to make it necessary for us to repent and do our first works in order to be acceptable to the Lord.

Work that which is good toward all men. Thus, we are to do as we have opportunity, and to overlook our opportunities is to sin. James said, "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4: 17.) When we allow our opportunities for doing good to pass by unused, we have committed a sin. Paul exhorts us to do good toward all men, regardless of race or color or social condition. This good Samaritan did good to one who needed him. So we are to do good to them that despise us and say all manner of evil against us falsely. Paul exhorts us that especially should we do good to them that are of the household of faith. Those that are members of the church of the Lord are entitled to our first interests and our greatest care. Having taken care of those in the faith, we are to reach out beyond as opportunity and ability will permit and do good unto all men.

General Information on Helping Others

1. Christ our example, (a) Rich, but became poor. (2 Cor. 8: 9.) (b) Pleased not himself. (Rom. 15: 1-3.) (c) Gave his life for others. (Matt. 20: 25-28.)
2. Churches helping others, (a) Antioch helps Judea. (Acts 11: 27-30.) (b) Macedonia helps Judea. (2 Cor. 8: 1-3; 9: 1-5.) (c) Church at Rome to help by praying for the success of the work. (Rom. 15: 30-32.)

3. Individuals to be helpful, (a) Seek good of others. (1 Cor. 10: 24, 32, 33.) (b) Counting others better. (Phil. 2: 3-8.) (c) Fulfill the law in loving others. (Rom. 13: 8-10.) (d) Foregoing liberties to help others. (1 Cor. 8: 9-13; Rom. 14: 15-21.) (e) Care one for another. (1 Cor. 12: 22-26.) (f) Care for strangers and prisoners for Christ's sake. (Heb. 13: 1-3.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text from memory.
Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What idea is emphasized in our text?
What is the Pharisaic attitude we may have toward others?
Name and discuss three types of burdens which we may help others to bear.
What is said of the man who shuts his ear against the cry of the poor?
How can we lend to Jehovah?
Are we commanded to help the willfully lazy?
What opportunities do long periods of illness in the home afford the church?
What are people likely to think of the church that does not use these opportunities?
What is to be our attitude toward those overtaken in sin?
What course should we follow toward those who refuse to respond?
How do we fulfill the law of Christ?
What are the necessary elements of a law, and in the light of this is it right to say that Christ has a law?

Examples of Failing to Help Others

What do we learn from the context of our lesson?
In his effort to justify himself, what question did the lawyer raise?
Why was the road between Jerusalem and Jericho traveled frequently by priests and Levites?
Can you distinguish between a priest and a Levite?
What excuses could the priest offer for his action?

Why were priests and Levites especially obligated to do good to others?

An Example of Helpfulness

What do you know of the origin of the Samaritans?
What was the attitude of the Jews toward the Samaritans and why?
What characteristic did the Samaritan have which was lacking in the priest and Levite?
What mistake did the priest and Levite make which we might easily make to day?
Show how the Samaritan set an example of rendering personal service?
What is the value of personal service to us who serve? and to those whom we serve?
What is suggested in our lesson as to the liberality of the Samaritan?
How does this story suggest the good reputation of the Samaritan?
Name and discuss three philosophies of life suggested in this parable.

Exhortations to Helpfulness

What is meant by being overtaken in a trespass?
To whom does the word spiritual refer?
Why is it difficult for us to render this service to one another?
What reason is given for not becoming weary in well-doing?
What does James say of the man who knows to do good and does it not?
Should race, color, or social condition be considered in the matter of well-doing?
What class of people is to receive our special attention?
What is there of interest to you in the division of general information?

Lesson IV—April 26, 1953

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The Lesson Text

Acts 2: 42-45; Phil. 1: 3-7; 1 John 3: 16-18

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

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.

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 Je'-sus 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 defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers with me of grace.

16 Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we

ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoso hath the world's
goods, and beholdeth his brother in
need, and shutteth up his compassion

from him, how doth the love of God
abide in him?

18 *My* little children, let us not
love in word, neither with the tongue;
but in deed and truth.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin."* (1 John 1: 7.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 John 1: 1-9.

Daily Bible Readings

April 20. M..... Fellowship Through Worship (Acts 2: 42-47)

April 21. T..... Fellowship Through Prayer (Matt. 6: 5-15)

April 22. W..... Fellowship Through Service (1 John 3: 13-24)

April 23. T.....Fellowship in Light (1 John 1: 1-9)

April 24, F.....No Fellowship in Darkness (2 Cor. 6: 14-16)

April 25. S..... Fellowship in the House of God (Psalm 122: 1-9)

TIME.—For Acts A.D. 30; for Philippians A.D. 63; for First John A.D. 85.

PLACES.—Jerusalem, Rome, and Ephesus.

PERSONS.—Paul, John, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. **Walk in the Light.** John speaks of us as *walking* in the light, but he speaks of God as *being* in the light. Paul tells us that God dwells in light unapproachable. (1 Tim. 6: 16.) The word light has several meanings. If it is to be given a physical meaning, it represents *glory*. If it is to be given an intellectual meaning, it represents *truth*. If it is given a moral meaning, it represents *holiness*. The former meaning is easily ruled out here, but whether we are to take this intellectually or morally is difficult to determine. The word walk in our text literally means to walk about, and so indicates the habitual course of life. So, the meaning of our text seems to be this: If we habitually walk in holiness as he is in holiness, we have fellowship one with another. If someone object to this interpretation because it obligates us to be as holy as the Father, he should read the statement of Jesus, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. 5: 48.) God is perfect and holy in the absolute. Man cannot be perfect or holy in the *absolute* but in a *relative* sense. Hence, if we live in relative holiness as he is in absolute holiness, we have fellowship one with another. But the only way we can walk in the light or live a relatively holy life is to walk in the

light of God's word. David said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path." (Psalm 119: 105.) Again, Solomon said, "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light." (Prov. 6: 23.) And David continues, "The opening of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Psalm 119: 130.) From these passages it is clear that we are dependent upon the word of God to furnish light and direction for our manner of life. As long as we are obeying his commandments, we are walking in the light; but, when we refuse to do what God commands and practice that which man teaches, **we are** walking in the darkness. "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that said, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby we know that we are in him: he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." (1 John 2: 3-6.)

2. **We Have Fellowship one with Another.** Scholars are about equally divided as to whether John means to say we have fellowship with God and his Son if we walk in the light; or whether he means to say one Chris-

tian has fellowship with all other Christians if he walks in the light. Clarke, Calvin, and MacKnight say that John means we have fellowship with the Father and the Son if we walk in the light. While Barnes, Meyer, and Pulpit Commentary, along with Marvin Vincent, say that John means that Christians have fellowship one with another when they walk in the light. There is a difference in the wording of the old Greek manuscripts in this verse; hence, we should not be too dogmatic as to its meaning. Certainly we do have fellowship with God when we walk in the light of his truth. In verse 3 of this same chapter, John said that we have fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. So the idea of fellowship with the Father and the Son is not an unscriptural idea. Neither is the thought of fellowship with other Christians an unscriptural idea, for as long as we obey the same commandments, walk the same manner of life, we certainly will be having fellowship one with another. Two cannot have fellowship when one walks in the light and the other in the darkness. The prophet said, "Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?" (Amos 3: 3.) Paul teaches the same lesson in these words, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever?" (2 Cor. 6: 14, 15.) Religious denominations that teach and practice human traditions sometimes have a difficulty understanding why we cannot have fellowship with them in their union meetings. But on this principle we are forbidden to have fellowship with that which is error. As light cannot mix with darkness,

so we who walk in the light cannot fellowship those who walk in darkness.

3. Blood of Jesus Cleanses Us. Our cleansing from sin is conditioned upon our walking in the light of God's word. As long as we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus cleanses us. This is present tense and hence has the idea of continual cleansing. As long as we walk in the light, the blood of Christ cleanses us from that wrong caused by human frailty, forgetfulness, and errors incident to humanity. But, if we go beyond the light and walk in darkness, the promise is not applicable to us. There is such thing as placing one's self beyond the reach of the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ will reach and cleanse all who are in the light of God's word. But, the blood of Christ will not reach nor will it cleanse those who have gone beyond the light and are walking in darkness. This principle is applicable to two classes of people, (a) The church member who says he is in the light but hates his brother and so is walking in darkness. "He that hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes." (1 John 2: 11.) (b) This principle applies to those who have joined denominations. No apostle was ever a member of a denomination. No apostle ever commanded anybody to join a denomination. Hence, when one joins a denomination, he has gone beyond the teaching of God's word. He has gone beyond the light and is in the darkness. The blood of Christ will cleanse us as long as we remain in the light of God's word, but when we go beyond the light and walk in darkness, doing things not taught by the apostles, we are beyond the reach of the blood of Christ and there is no possibility of being cleansed from our sins.

Exposition of the Text

I. Fellowship in the Jerusalem Church (Acts 2: 42-45)

They continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and, fellowship. The word *they* in our text refers to the three thousand people who were added to the church on the day of

Pentecost. By looking into the context we find that they were added to the church when they believed the gospel, repented, and were baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of their sins. This obedience to God's commandments was necessary

in order that they might enjoy true Christian fellowship. Since only those who walk in the light as he is in the light can enjoy this true Christian fellowship, and since these who believed the gospel, repented, and were baptized in the name of Christ for remission of sins enjoyed that true fellowship, we conclude that those who refuse to believe, refuse to repent and be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins are not in position to enjoy the true Christian fellowship. They who do different from that are walking in the darkness and consequently not capable of enjoying true Christian fellowship. The word *fellowship* in our text has been taken by some to mean only the Lord's day contribution. That this is included is undoubtedly true, but that this exhausts the meaning of the word in our text is not true. In Rom. 15: 26; 2 Cor. 8: 4; Phil. 1: 5; and Heb. 13: 16, the Greek word translated *fellowship* in our text occurs and undoubtedly refers to the contribution or financial fellowship or partnership in some undertaking. But in such passages as 1 Cor. 1: 9, 10: 16; 2 Cor. 6: 14; Eph. 3: 9; and 1 John 1: 3, 6, 7, the word cannot possibly be limited to financial fellowship or participation. The thought here is that the 3,000 who became members of the church that day continued steadfastly in the fellowship and teaching of the apostles. They gave the apostles both their moral and financial support and hence fellowship was broader than simply financial participation.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common. This is an expression of fellowship beyond that of the apostles. These 3,000 and more had fellowship one with another in the matter of material things. They even went so far as to sell their possessions and goods and parted them to all according as any man had need. This was an unusual situation. People had come from all over the then known world to Jerusalem to the feast of Pentecost. They had been converted to Christianity and they needed to stay there for indoctrination. But their money soon gave out, since they had expected to be away from home only a few weeks. Therefore, those in and near around

Jerusalem sold their property and laid the money at the apostles' feet, making a common fund out of which the needy could live. It was an expression of generosity beyond any demonstration we have seen. It is a tribute to the power of the gospel, for it can move people to be so unselfish with one another. As the apostles had given up all to follow Christ, so these early Christians found the courage to sell all their property and give it away that the cause of Christ might be advanced.

Continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple. This expression, *with one accord*, suggests the unity of mind which found its expression in their unity of action in selling their earthly possessions and supporting those who were in need. When people are of one mind, they can act in unison, but when people are of different mind, when there is disagreement, it is impossible that there shall be unity of action.

II. Fellowship in the Philippian Church (Phil. 1: 3-7)

I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you. The church at Philippi was the one church with which Paul found no fault. He was happy upon every remembrance of them. He found joy and satisfaction *in his* remembrance of the way they received him, as well as in the way which they remembered him after he was gone from them.

In every supplication of mine on behalf of you. Paul often prayed for the brethren at Philippi. His grateful remembrance of them found expression in his prayers to God on their behalf.

For your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel. The church at Philippi had fellowship with Paul in the furtherance of the gospel. By this he means they contributed financially to him so that he might spend his time preaching the gospel to others. "Howbeit ye did well that ye had fellowship with my affliction. 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 manner of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need." (Phil. 4: 14-16.) This

tells only a part of the story of the fellowship which the Philippians had with Paul in the furtherance of the gospel. Another story may be found in the following verse, "but I have all things, and abound: I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things that came from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." (Phil. 4: 18.) This tells us that while Paul was in prison at Rome the church at Philippi remembered him and sent one of its members on that long journey from Philippi to Rome to take some things to Paul which he would need. He was thus expressing his appreciation for their kindness toward him and thanking them for their fellowship with him in the gospel.

From the first day until now. The Philippian church was not the off-and-on kind. They were not the hot-and-cold kind. They were regular, steadfast, in their love to Paul and in their fellowship with him. For their fellowship on the first day, we turn to Luke's account of the establishment of the church in Philippi. (Acts 16.) They had gone out by the river to preach to Lydia and her helpers. These women were converted, and when they were baptized they besought Paul and his company to come and abide in their house. From the context we conclude that Paul was slow to accept the invitation to go to her house. Lydia and her helpers were unattached women. Paul and his company were unattached men. For a group of Jews from Asia to take up quarters in the home of a group of women from Asia would not look too well to these people in Europe, where they were now living. So, they hesitated. But Lydia seemed to know she was on safe ground, so Luke says she constrained them and they went and stayed in the home of Lydia. This was genuine fellowship in the gospel. Every gospel preacher has had such experiences.

He who began a good work in you will perfect it. This refers to God, who began the good work in the church at Philippi. It was God who inspired the church to have fellowship with Paul. Paul was confident that God would continue thus to work through that church even un-

til the day of Jesus Christ. In this language Paul gives credit and glory to God for the good work done by the church. Indeed God is to have the glory for every good work, for it is he who enables us to do good works, and who gives us the opportunity to do good works, and inclines our hearts to do these good works.

Ye all are partakers with me of grace. Grace here is the favor of God. Paul says that, since these Philippians have been partakers with him in the furtherance of the gospel, they are now to be partakers with him in the grace or the favors or blessings which God will bestow upon them for that work. Gospel preachers sometimes make reports of meetings, giving the number of the people converted during the meeting; and from the report one would think that the preacher was entitled to all the praise and the credit. But those who had fellowship with him in the gospel, making it financially possible for him to be there, are due as much credit as he, so Paul says that since the church at Philippi had fellowship with him in the gospel they will be partakers with him in the blessings of God upon them for doing that work.

III. Fellowship with the Poor (1

John 3: 16-18)

Hereby know we love. In this text John says we know love when we see it manifested. Jesus manifested his love for us when he laid down his life for us. And so John concludes that we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Giving our lives in humble, thoughtful service to the brethren is an indication of our love for the brethren, but to live a life of unthoughtfulness and unconcern for the welfare of others is an indication of a lack of love for them.

Whoso hath the world's goods. John draws a contrast here between those who are thoughtful enough of one another to lay down their lives for the brethren and those who have this world's goods and shutteth up his compassion from the brother in need. John says that the one who has this world's goods and sees his brother in need and refuses to respond to that need cannot say the love of God abides in him. By giving our lives for the brethren, we

manifest the love of God in us. By withholding from the needy brother that which would bring him health and happiness, we prove that the love of God is not in us. There is no such thing as loving God and hating one's brother for, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen." (1 John 4: 20.) Seeing a brother in need and refusing to give him that which he needs, to the extent of our ability, proves that we do not love the individual. If we do not love our brother, we do not love God. Hence, refusing to give to them that are in need, as we are able to give, proves not only that we

do not love the brethren, but that we do not love God.

Does not love in word. John is saying that it is **not enough to affirm** our love for God and our love for the brethren; that's simply loving with the word or with the tongue. But he says we should love in deed and in truth. Our actions should make manifest the truth of the words which we speak. If we speak one thing and live **another, we are hypocrites.** From this lesson we learn that fellowship with the poor is essential to fellowship with God. The man who refuses to fellowship the poor is disobeying God, and the man who disobeys God walks in darkness, and the man who walks in darkness cannot have fellowship with God who is light.

General Information on Christian Fellowship

1. Fellowship of suffering, (a) In Christ's sufferings. (Phil. 3: 8-11.) (b) Partakers with him. (1 Pet. 4: 12, 13.) (c) Partakers with others. (Heb. 10: 32-34.)
2. Fellowship of spirits, (a) With the Holy Spirit. (2 Cor. 13: 14; Phil. 2: 1.) (b) With God. (1 John 1: 3.) (c) With Christ in Lord's supper. (1 Cor. 10: 16, 17.) (d) With demons forbidden. (1 Cor. 10: 20, 21.)
3. Fellowship of the gospel, (a) Cooperation in preaching. (2 Cor. 8: 23.) (b) Supporting preachers. (Gal. 6: 6; Phil. 4: 14-18.) (c)

Duty of churches. (1 Cor. 9: 1-14; Heb. 13: 16.)

4. Fellowship of evil, (a) With evil forbidden. (Eph. 5: 7-11.) (b) Other men's sins. (1 Tim. 5: 22.) (c) Evil works of false teachers. (2 John 9-11.) (d) Unequal yoke with unbelievers. (2 Cor. 6: 14-18.)

5. Fellowship of material things, (a) Contribution to the poor. (Rom. 15: 26, 27.) (b) Communicating to necessity. (Rom. 12: 13.) (c) Remembering the poor. (Gal. 2: 10; Acts 24: 17.) (d) Church practices fellowship. (Acts 4: 34-37; 6: 1-4.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.
Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

How is our relation to light contrasted with God's relation to light?
Give three possible meanings of the word light.
What is the meaning of the word walk in our text?
In what sense may man be perfect or holy?
How may we live a relatively holy life?
How do men walk in darkness?
Does our text teach that we have fellowship with God or with one another?
In what language does Paul teach this lesson on fellowship?
How does this affect our relation to those in religious error?
What is the promise to those who walk in the light?
How may one put himself beyond the reach of the blood of Christ?
What two classes of people have put themselves beyond the reach of the blood?

Fellowship in Jerusalem Church

What obedience is necessary to the enjoyment of Christian fellowship?
What is the meaning of the word fellowship in our text?
How extensive was the fellowship of the Jerusalem church?
What situation made this fellowship necessary?
How did this compare with the sacrifice made by the apostles?
Show how the Jerusalem church manifested unity of mind and unity of action?
Did the Jerusalem church make an equal distribution of wealth? If not, what determined the amount each received?

Fellowship in the Philippian Church

What was Paul's attitude toward the Philippian church?
What did his love for them cause him to do on their behalf?
Relate two instances of their fellowship with Paul.
How did they have fellowship with him from the first day?

Who had begun a good work in the church at Philippi?
Why is God to be given the credit for every good work?
What is meant by being partakers of grace?

Fellowship with the Poor
How may we know that we have Christian love?

What is said of one who refuses to give to the poor?
Who is described as a liar in our text?
What is meant by loving in word?
Why is fellowship with the poor essential with the fellowship with God?
What is there of interest to you in the division of general information?

Lesson V—May 3, 1953

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

The Lesson Text

John 4: 1-7; 19-26

1 When therefore the Lord knew that the Phar'i-sees had heard that Je'-sus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

2 (Although Je'-sus himself baptized not, but his disciples),

3 He left Ju-dae'-a, and departed again into Gal'i-lee.

4 And he must needs pass through Sa-ma'-ri-6.

5 So he cometh to a city of Sa-ma'-ri-a, called Sy'-char, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph:

6 And Jacob's well was there. Je'-sus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Sa-ma'-ri-a to draw water: Je'-sus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

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 Je-ru'-sa-16m, is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Je'-sus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Je-ru'-sa-lem, 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 Mes-si'-ah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things.

26 Je'-sus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*.

Golden Text.—“*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*” (John 4: 24.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Psalm 84.

Daily Bible Readings

April	27.	M.....	Love for God's House (Psalm 122)
April	28.	T.....	Love for God's Word (Neh. 8: 1-8)
April	29.	W.....	Incentives to Worship (Heb. 10: 19-26)
April	30.	T.....	John and the Angel (Rev. 22: 1-9)
May	1.	F.....	Vain Worship Forbidden (Matt. 15: 1-9)
May	2.	S.....	Ignorant Worship Condemned (Acts 17: 16-31)
May	3.	S.....	True Worship (John 4: 19-26)

Time.—A.D. 27.

Place.—Near Sychar in Samaria.

Persons.—Jesus and the woman of Samaria.

Golden Text Explained

1. **The Nature of God.** Our text is full of meaning with reference to the nature of God. (a) God is invisible. All spirits are invisible to the human eye. We are unable to see the human spirit when it leaves this body to return to God who gave it. The servant of the prophet Elisha could not see the spiritual forces protecting him until Elisha prayed God to open the eyes of the young man that he might see that those who were for them outnumbered those that were against them. (2 Kings 6: 15-18.) In Col. 1: 15, Paul says that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Hence, we conclude that God is invisible. Again, in 1 Tim. 1: 17, Paul says, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever." (b) God is immaterial. By this we mean that God is not matter. The term spirit is the opposite of matter. There are those who say that spirit is matter more highly refined. But one might as well say that light is darkness as to say that spirit is matter. They are opposites, and one cannot be developed or refined to the extent that it approaches its opposite. On one occasion after his resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples. They were troubled because they supposed they had beheld a spirit. But to quiet their troubled hearts he said, "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having." (Luke 24: 39.) The proof which Jesus offered that he was not a spirit consisted of two things. First, they were to look upon him. They could see him. A spirit is invisible. Hence, he, being seen, was not a spirit. Second, they were to handle him. A spirit cannot be felt. A spirit is immaterial. Only matter can be felt. Since God is a spirit, he is both invisible and immaterial. He can neither be seen nor felt, (c) God is not dependent upon matter. Even the human spirit is not dependent upon matter for its consciousness. The rich man could remember in hell and he could feel in hell and he could converse with another. Though his body was in the grave, yet, the inner man, the spirit, was

conscious and capable of all the activities of conscious life. If the human spirit is not dependent upon matter for its life and existence, we may well conclude that God, the Father of our spirits, is not dependent upon matter for his life or existence. Life is an essential attribute of the spirit. (1 Thess. 1: 9.) Jesus said, "For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself." (John 5: 26.) As evidence of the deity of the eternal word, which was in the beginning with God, John said, "In him was life." (John 1: 4.) (a) One of his essential attributes is life. And, he is life because he is spirit and not matter. Matter does not have the essential element of life in it. It derives its life from spirit. (b) Another essential attribute of spirit is personality. There is no such thing as an impersonal spirit. Personality has been defined to mean the power of self-consciousness and of self-determination. Self-consciousness is more than consciousness and self-determination is more than mere determination. The brute has consciousness and shows signs of determination, but no brute has the power of self-consciousness or self-determination. Since God is a spirit, we conclude that he is both immaterial and invisible and that he is a living personality.

2. **The Nature of Worship God Will Accept.** Since God is a spirit, he requires worship of a kindred nature. He requires spiritual worship and not that which is material. "The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by man's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." (Acts 17: 24, 25.) (a) We must worship him in spirit. To worship God in spirit means that the worship shall come from the heart. We must be sincere in our worship. Not only must we be sincere, that is, free from all insincerity, but the worship must proceed from the heart. It must be the stirrings of the heart, the meditation of the heart, in order to be acceptable

to God. This forbids mere formality and ceremonialism. While the prayer is being led, we must not allow our thoughts to wander here and there upon business, pleasure, and our social relationships. Our minds must be centered upon the thoughts being expressed by the one leading the prayer. While singing songs of praise and adoration to God, our thoughts must be upon God. While partaking of the Lord's supper, our thoughts must not be upon the business or social affairs of life, but we must discern the Lord's body. We must see in the bread the body which suffered for us and we must see in the fruit of the vine the blood which was shed for the remission of our sins, (b) We must worship in truth. Regardless of how sincere a person may be, if his worship is not in truth or according to the truth, his worship will not be acceptable. There are certain items of worship which are taught us in the book of truth. We can engage in these items of worship and be acceptable to God, but if we add to these items some things not taught by the Lord, it matters

not how sincere we may be, our worship will not be acceptable. Some people have thought that any act, which they may render to God, in a sincere manner, will be acceptable; but that is wrong. One must not only be sincere, but his worship must be directed by the word of God. Paul says we walk by faith in our worship, and faith comes by hearing the word of God. Hence, we can do only those items of worship which are taught in the word of God when we walk by faith. To do something not taught in the word of God is to walk by human reason and tradition. So let us remember that the items taught by truth must be done sincerely and with our heart upon the worship that we render in order for it to be acceptable; and let us remember that regardless of how sincere we may be, if we do other than that which is taught in the word of truth, our worship will not be acceptable. Our worship must have both these points of identification. It must be in spirit and it must be in truth.

Exposition of the Text

I. Jesus Teaches in Samaria (John 4: 1-7)

Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John. The Pharisees had learned of the increasing popularity of Jesus. This was in fulfillment of what John said with reference to their work. "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3: 30.) If the Pharisees were displeased in the success that John had enjoyed in his work, they were more displeased with the increasing popularity and success of Jesus. It is said in this text that Jesus made and baptized disciples, though he himself did not do the actual work of baptizing. His disciples did that. Yet, he is said to have baptized his disciples. So today we may say that we have been taught and baptized by our Lord, though the actual work of teaching and baptizing was done by the Lord's servants.

He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. It was not the purpose of our Lord to stir the enmity and animosity of the Jews any more than was absolutely necessary. So, know-

ing that the Pharisees were stirred up over his success, he withdrew from Judea to go into Galilee.

He must needs pass through Samaria. Palestine was a land occupied by the Jews and was divided into four sections. One, occupied by two and a half tribes, was east of the Jordan. Three lay on the west side of the Jordan. Judea was the southernmost division. Galilee was the northernmost division. Samaria lay between Judea and Galilee. When traveling from Galilee to Jerusalem, tourists usually went east of the Jordan because of the unfriendly disposition of the Samaritans. But when they were going from Jerusalem back into Galilee, they took the shorter route because Samaritans were not usually unfriendly when they were returning. Some months later, Jesus and his disciples received rude treatment from the Samaritans, "because his face was as though he were going to Jerusalem." (Luke 9: 51-55.)

He cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar. Many have thought

that the word Sychar is another form of the word Shechem, and that it refers to the same city, but overwhelming evidence has been furnished to disprove this theory. In late years, explorers of Palestine have found within half a mile of Jacob's well a village called El' Askar. Late authorities are pretty well agreed that this is the city from which the woman came for water and not from the city of Shechem. When Jacob came from Padan-aram into Canaan, he encamped near the city of Shechem. It is said that he bought a parcel of ground from the children of Hamor for a hundred pieces of money and there he erected an altar. (Gen. 33: 18-20.) Mention is made of this again when the bones of Joseph were brought from Egypt and buried in this same parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor. (Josh. 24: 32, 33.)

Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well. From this expression we get a picture of the real humanity of Jesus. He was wearied with the journey. Though John wrote his gospel for the purpose of proving that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (John 20:30, 31), he emphasizes over and over the humanity of our Lord. "This gospel alone records his presence and miracle . . . at Cana, his travel-worn sympathy with our weakness, his making clay with spittle, his weeping over the grave of a friend, his thirst upon the cross, the blood that issued from his wounded side, and the obvious physical reality of his risen body, and thus furnishes the church with the grounds on which the apostle maintained his divine humanity." (Pulpit Commentary.)

It was about the sixth hour. John is careful on numerous occasions to give the exact time or the exact place of happenings. There is difference of opinion as to the meaning of the term, sixth hour. Some say that it is six o'clock in the evening, a few contend that it was six o'clock in the morning. But, according to the ordinary way of counting time, it would be high noon. Undoubtedly, this is the truth. Jesus was wearied with the morning's journey and was ready to take refreshments.

There cometh a woman of Samaria

to draw water. The Samaritans were a mixture of Assyrians with the Jews. When the Jews of the northern kingdom were carried into Assyrian captivity, some Assyrians were transplanted to this territory and intermarried with Jews who were left there, thus producing the mongrel race detested by the Jews. But to Jesus this woman was just another opportunity to seek and save the lost. He therefore disregards the racial prejudices of his time, and he seeks to convert her to the belief that he was the Christ and her Saviour.

II. Jesus Teaches Men How to Worship (John 4: 19-26)

I perceive that thou art a prophet.

The student should read the verses connecting the two paragraphs of our text. In these verses he will find that Jesus talked with the woman in such a way as to impress her with a knowledge of him as a teacher from God, and to impress her with a sense of her own sinfulness and the need of a Saviour. To accomplish these two aims, he told her of her past, that she had had five husbands, and the man she was then living with was not her husband.

Our fathers worshiped in this mountain. When she found that she was talking to what she conceived to be a prophet, she did the human thing. She started a religious argument. For centuries Jews and Samaritans had argued about the scriptural place to worship. The Samaritans thought that Mount Gerizim was the place for worship. The Jews said that Jerusalem was the place. Samaritan tradition says that Abraham sacrificed Isaac on Gerizim and that Abraham met Melchizedek on Mount Gerizim. Some modern scholars, as Dean Stanley, and others, accepted that theory. But, the evidence is overwhelmingly convincing that the tradition is not well supported. According to Josephus, the Samaritan temple was built by Sanballat on Mount Gerizim. This is the Sanballat who opposed Ezra and Nehemiah in their work of rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple. (Ezra 9: 2; Neh. 13: 23.) By reading Deut. 12: 1-14, 1 Kings 9: 3; and 2 Chron. 6: 6, the student will see that Jerusalem is the place where God intended men should worship him.

Neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem. Jesus taught the woman that the place for worship was of no consequence. It matters not whether we are in a city, devoted to the worship of God, or whether we are in the country. It matters not whether we are in a house or in a tent. The place where men worship has nothing to do with whether the worship is acceptable to God. This statement of Jesus sounded the death knell for the ceremonialism of Judaism.

Ye worship that which ye know not. Jesus reminds this woman of the fact that she was a Samaritan and that the Samaritans were not worshipping God according to the true teaching. The Samaritans had their Pentateuch; however they rejected all the prophecies of the Old Testament. Though Jesus had much criticism of the worship of the Jews, yet he realized it was nearer the truth than that of the Samaritans. Since the Jews preserved the whole of the Old Testament, and since the Messiah was to come through the Jews, and not through the Samaritans, he said that salvation is from the Jews.

True worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth. There are such as engage in vain worship and false worship and ignorant worship. Jesus accused the Samaritans of ignorant worship. With all of these he contrasts the true worshipers. True worship is characterized by two things, (a) It is in spirit or from the heart. It is sincere, (b) It is in truth; that is, according to the dictates of truth.

For such doth the Father seek to be his worshipers. Jesus gave two reasons why people must worship God in spirit and truth in order to be acceptable to him. (a) God seeks people who thus worship. This is an interesting expression. **Good** seeks worshipers. **God** seeks men

who worship after a certain fashion. We hear much from the pulpit about seeking God, and certainly we are to seek after God, but here we have the statement reversed. God is seeking worshipers. He wants people who are willing to worship after a certain fashion, (b) The second reason why people must worship in spirit and truth is the fact that God is a spirit. The nature of God determines the nature of the worship which we offer to him. Since God is a spirit, we must worship him in spirit and truth.

I know that Messiah cometh. This is the response of the woman of Samaria to the teaching of Jesus about worship. She could not answer his argument, so she simply said that they both were looking for the Messiah—they could never agree on these things about which they argued, but they both would be willing to accept what the Messiah had to say about it. So, when he came, he would settle all these arguments between Jews and Samaritans.

I that speak unto thee am he. This is the answer of our Lord to the woman who said the Messiah will tell us all things. Jesus revealed himself as clearly and as fully to this woman of Samaria as he ever revealed himself to anybody. Having admitted that **she** would **receive** the teaching of the Messiah, she was now obligated to accept the teaching Jesus had given her with reference to how God is to be worshiped. If we today accept Jesus as the Messiah, we should certainly accept his teaching with reference to our worship. We should worship in the manner in which he directs us to worship and we should offer our worship to God through the channels or activities that he has determined that we shall worship God through.

General Information on Christian Worship

1. Kinds of worship mentioned.
 - (a) Vain worship. (Matt. 15: 9.)
 - (b) Ignorant worship. (Acts 17: 23.)
 - (c) Will-worship. (Col. 2: 23.)
 - (d) Spiritual worship. (Phil. 3: 3.)
2. Items of true worship. (a) Singing. (Eph. 5: 19; Col. 3: 16.) (b) Praying. (1 Cor. 14: 15; 1 Thess. 5: 17, 18; 1 Tim. 2: 8.) (c) Lord's

supper. (1 Cor. 11: 23-33; 10: 14-21.) (d) Giving. (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2; 2 Cor. 9: 6-11.) (e) Scripture reading. (Acts 2: 42; Col. 4: 16; 1 Thess. 5: 27; 1 Tim. 4: 13.)

3. Object of worship, (a) God. (Matt. 4: 10; Rev. 22: 9.) (b) Jesus Christ. (Matt. 28: 17; John 20: 28; Acts 7: 59.) (c) Holy Spirit. (2

Cor. 13: 14. (It is not intimated that we make a practice of directing our worship to the Holy Spirit, but this benediction is a prayer to the Spirit as a person in the Godhead.)

4. Blessings of worship, (a) Communion with the Lord. (Matt. 18: 20.) (b) Christian fellowship. (1 Cor. 3: 7-9; 1 John 1: 3.) (c) Spiritual strength. (Eph. 3: 14-19.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What is taught in our lesson about the invisibility of God?

What is said about God being immaterial?

What evidence did Jesus give that he was not a spirit?

Discuss the relation of spirit with matter.

Name and discuss two attributes of spirit.

What does the nature of God have to do with the kind of worship we offer him?

What is meant by worshiping in spirit?

What is meant by worshiping in truth?

Jesus Teaches in Samaria

What did John say with reference to his work and that of Jesus?

Why did Jesus leave Judea on this occasion?

How did Jesus make and baptize disciples?

Name and locate the four sections of Palestine.

Why did people in the north of Palestine travel one route to Jerusalem and another back home?

What do you know of the city called Sychar?

What is said in our lesson which suggests the real humanity of Jesus?

At what time of the day did Jesus reach Sychar?

What was the attitude of Jesus toward racial prejudices of his time?

Jesus Teaches Men How to Worship

With what two ideas did Jesus seek to impress the woman?

What two places of worship are mentioned in our text?

What do you know of the Samaritans' place of worship?

What authority did the Jews have for worshiping in Jerusalem?

What did Jesus teach this woman about the place of worship?

What Scriptures did the Samaritans accept?

What did Jesus mean when he said salvation is from the Jews?

What two kinds of worship are mentioned in our lesson?

What are two essential elements of true worship?

Name and discuss two reasons why people must worship God in spirit and in truth.

To whom did the Samaritan woman look for settlement of the arguments between Jews and Samaritans?

How clearly did Jesus reveal himself to the woman?

What is there of interest to you in the division of general information?

Lesson VI—May 10, 1953

WINNING OTHERS TO CHRIST

The Lesson Text

John 1: 40-45; Prov. 11: 30; Dan. 12: 2, 3; James 5: 19, 20

40 One of the two that heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Si'-mon Peter's brother.

41 He findeth first his own brother Si'-mon, and saith unto him, We have found the Mes-si'-ah (which is, being interpreted, Christ).

42 He brought him unto Je'-sus. Je'-sus looked upon him, and said, Thou art Si'-mon the son of John: thou shalt be called Ce'-phas (which is by interpretation, Peter).

43 On the morrow he was minded to go forth into Gal'-i-lee, and he findeth Philip: and Je'-sus saith unto him, Follow me.

44 Now Philip was from Beth-sa'-1-da, of the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Na-than'-a-el, and saith unto him, We have found

him, of whom Mó'-ses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Je'-sus of Naz'-a-reth, the son of Joseph.

30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that is wise winneth souls.

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

19 My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 Let him know, that he who his way shall save a soul from death, converteth a sinner from the error of and shall cover a multitude of sins.

Golden Text.—*"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that is wise winneth souls"* (Prov. 11:30.)

Devotional Reading.—Acts 16: 9-15.

Daily Bible Readings

May 4. M.....	The Great Commission (Matt. 28: 18-20; Mark 16: 14-16)
May 5. T.....	Missionary Workers (Acts 13: 1-12)
May 6. W.....	Witnesses of Christ (Acts 1: 6-8)
May 7. T.....	Carrying the Gospel to Others (Acts 16: 6-10)
May 8. F.....	Winning of the First Gentiles (Acts 10: 1-48)
May 9. S.....	Personal Evangelism (Acts 8: 26-40)
May 10. S.....	Paul's Mission in His Own Words (Acts 26: 12-20)

Time.—For John A.D. 85; for Proverbs 1000 B.C.; for Daniel 534 B.C.; for James A.D. 50.

Places.—Bethany, Jerusalem, Babylon.

Persons.—Jesus, Andrew, Philip, Solomon, Daniel, and James.

Golden Text Explained

1. The Influence of the Righteous.

Our text says that the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life. The fruit we bear in this verse is the influence we wield in word and in deed. The righteous man wields a good influence on all with whom he comes in contact; hence, is called a tree of life. By the term, tree of life, is meant that tree which bears fruit that contributes to the life and happiness and good health of those who eat of it. Hence, the righteous man is one who contributes to the good health, spiritually, and the continued life of those with whom he associates. To the righteous man, then, we *may* look for a number of blessings, (a) We may look to him for food. As people look to fruit bearing trees for fruit to keep their physical bodies so we may look to the righteous man for food for our souls. Through teaching and example, the righteous man may supply the needed food and strength for those who are weak and wavering in the Christian life, (b) We may look to the righteous man for peace and encouragement. As the weary find rest in the shade of a tree, so those who are weak and discouraged may find peace and satisfaction in the company of the righteous, (c) The righteous may be as a shelter to those who are weak. As we find shelter from the storm under the boughs of a great tree, so the weak and discouraged and the tempted and tried may find shelter in the

company of the righteous. If Peter had been in the company of righteous men the night Jesus was on trial, he would not have denied his Lord. Young people and babes in Christ today need the shelter of righteous association to keep them from doing wrong.

2. The Wise Winneth Souls. Sometimes it is difficult to see the relation between the phrases of these Hebrew parallels, but in this verse the relation is obvious. The righteous man exerting his influence in ways similar to that of a tree in the natural realm is parallel with the thought of the wise winning souls from destruction. The wisdom of winning souls for Christ is seen in the following considerations, (a) When we win a soul for Christ, we lessen the influence for evil in the world. Every individual exerts an influence, either for good or for evil. A soul who is lost in sin is exerting an influence for evil, and, when we convert that soul to Christ, we have changed that stream of influence from being exerted for evil to being exerted for good. Hence, in order to lessen the amount of evil in the world, it is wise to win souls for Christ, (b) On the other hand, when we convert a soul to Christ, we add to the total influence for good in the world. As every soul has its influence either for evil or for good, when we turn one from evil to Christ, we have added that much influence for Christ in the

world, (c) When we win a soul for Christ, we have done that person the greatest favor it is possible to do. Every soul that bears the likeness of Christ has a desire to do good to others. It is impossible for us to do one a greater favor than to lead that one to Christ. Hence, if we want to be wise, we will lead people to Christ in order that we may do them the greatest favor possible. (d) It is wise to win souls to Christ, because in that way we cause more joy in heaven than we can cause in any other way. Jesus said there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner I hat repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. (Luke 15: 7.) The angels of heaven are pictured as interested in the return of lost souls and as rejoicing much over the return of even one. Hence, when we have won a soul for Christ, we have caused immeasurable joy in heaven, (e) It is wise to win souls for Christ because in doing so we save a soul from eternal death. "Let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins." (James 5: 20.) Death in this verse cannot mean physical death, for it is appointed to all of us once to die, whether we are ever converted or not. But James says when we convert a sinner from the error of his way, we save that soul from death. This must mean eternal death, death in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. (Rev. 21: 8.) (f) When we win a soul for Christ,

we save a life from sin and shame unto a life of righteousness and usefulness. We can spend our time to no better advantage nor can we use our mental and physical energies to any better advantage, than to transform sinful, ugly lives into the beautiful life of righteousness and godliness. We honor the men who dig the rough, ugly ores out of the bowels of the earth and transform them into beautiful and useful household items. Why not give greater honor to the man who wins a soul for Christ and transforms that life of sin and shame and disgrace into a life of righteousness and honor and glory? (g) Since the wise win souls, and since he that does not win souls is unwise, we raise the question, can the unwise be saved? Jesus pictured the unwise as the man who hears his sayings and does them not, while the wise is the man that hears his sayings and does them. (Matt. 7: 24-27.) We are taught to win souls for Christ. The individual who neglects or refuses to win souls is not doing the teaching of Christ; hence, he is like the man who built his house upon the sand. Therefore, the wisdom of winning souls is seen in that we are trying to save our own selves from destruction by not only hearing but doing what Jesus has taught us to do. Daniel states the blessedness of the soul winner in these words. "And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Dan. 12: 3.)

Exposition of the Text

I. Soul Winning (John 1: 40-45)

One of *the two that heard John speak . . . was Andrew*. The events of our lesson occurred in the early days of the personal ministry of our Lord. Jesus had been recently baptized by John the Baptist and was still in the vicinity of the forerunner. Many of the Jews were asking John if he was the Christ or were they to look for another. John took advantage of the opportunity to bear witness to the Christ. He said, "I baptize in water: in the midst of you standeth one whom ye know not, even he that cometh after me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not

worthy to unloose." (John 1: 26.) On the day following, he gave this testimony. "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man who is become before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing in water." (John 1: 29-31.) It was on the morrow following this last testimony that Andrew heard John the Baptist speaking of Jesus and followed after him. When Jesus saw them following, he asked them what they were seeking. And they asked

him where he lived. He invited them to come to see him and they abode with him that day. Thus, John the Baptist was humbly doing his work of preparing material for Jesus. And the disciples of John were being convinced of the superiority of Jesus and were leaving John to follow Jesus.

He findeth first his own brother Simon. Here is a fine example of bringing others to Jesus. Andrew was unwilling to enjoy the rich blessings he had found by himself. He wanted someone else to share these blessings with him. So, he went to find his brother. Surely each one of us loves someone else enough to wish to share our blessings with him and that is what soul winning is; simply sharing our blessings with someone else. When we talk of saving souls, of whom do you think first? Andrew thought first of his brother. Perhaps you may think of a father or a mother, a son or a daughter, a husband or a wife, but surely there is someone who has first place in your heart with reference to these matters. If all your family are Christians, perhaps it will be your neighbor or your business partner, but surely there is someone for whom you have a genuine concern. Too many people say that they are not interested in any one in particular, but that they are interested in everybody in general. The truth is, the only way we can be interested in the salvation of everyone is to be interested in the salvation of each one. There is no such thing as being interested in the salvation of everybody in general without being interested in individuals.

We have found the Messiah. This was Andrew's message to his brother Simon Peter. The word, Messiah, simply means Christ, or the anointed. Messiah is the Hebrew term and Christ is the Greek term. They both mean the anointed. To the Jew that message meant deliverance and salvation. It was the greatest message that Andrew could take to his brother. Spiritually, it is still the greatest message that one man can take to another. It is the greatest message that parents can give to their children. It is the greatest message that a housewife can take

to her neighbor across the back fence. It is the greatest message that a business man can take to his partner or to his customer. Is it possible that we are willing to talk to our family, our friends, and our business associates on life insurance, on the proper way to do business, on how to make big money, and a hundred other items of little importance as compared to this one great subject of salvation from sin? If we have found the Christ, let us share this blessing with someone else.

He brought him unto Jesus. It was impossible for Andrew to do Peter a greater service than to bring him to Jesus. And it is still impossible for us to do a greater service for our children, or our friends or business associates, than to bring them to Jesus. In order to bring people to Jesus, we must teach them. "No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father and hath learned, cometh unto me." (John 6: 44, 45.) Hence, we conclude that only those who are taught of the Father can come to Jesus. Consequently, we must spend our time teaching people of the Father. But what shall we teach them about the Father? (a) We must teach them about the goodness of God, for it is the goodness of God that leads men to repent. (Rom. 2: 4.) The goodness of God is manifested in giving us life, in preserving that life, in giving his Son to die for our sins, and in preparing mansions in the sky for us who are faithful. If this goodness of God will not lead men to repentance, there is little hope for them, (b) We will teach them of the severity of God. Paul said, "Behold then the goodness and severity of God." (Rom. 11: 22.) Someone has said that the goodness of God is the light artillery of the gospel, and the severity of God, as manifested in hell fire, is the heavy artillery of God. If a soul cannot be stopped from sin and turned toward God by the light artillery of his love, then we turn the heavy artillery of hell fire on it to arrest it in its downward course and turn it back toward God. (c) We

must teach them how to be saved. People do not become Christians by accident, nor do they become Christians by doing what their parents did in order to be saved. But people become Christians by doing what the Lord says people must do to be saved. Hence, teach them, (d) We must teach them to count the cost. People must give up sin in order to be Christians. And, until an individual is willing to make that sacrifice, to deny himself ungodliness and worldly lusts, and take upon himself the obligation of living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, he has no business coming into the church. Hence, we must teach them to count the cost, pay the price of living the Christian life. When we have taught them these things about the Father, they then can come unto Christ.

Philip findeth Nathanael. Here we have another example of one man sharing his blessings with another. Philip found the Christ and was so glad to find his deliverer and Saviour that he wanted to share this joy with another. So, he went out and found Nathanael and brought him unto the Lord. Churches that depend solely on the big meeting for their additions are not going to grow. We live in an age when the big meeting tactics are not enough. We will never get beyond the necessity of preaching the gospel and preaching it night after night as we do in what we call revival meetings. Such preaching is a peculiar characteristic of Christianity and as long as Christianity is in the world, preaching will still be an effective instrument in the saving of souls. But, to depend upon that solely, is unwise. There must be a lot of personal and individual effort expended before public preaching of the gospel can get results in this age in which we live. A revival meeting may be announced over the radio, advertised in the daily paper, and tracts and invitations may be handed out from door to door, and yet, with all of this effort, there will not be many new people to hear the preacher. Those that attend the meetings will be those who have been contacted and influenced by individual and personal

efforts. If a check is made on the non-members who attend your revival meeting, it will be found, as a rule, that the attendance of each one can be accounted for by some personal contact and not through radio announcements and newspaper advertising. It follows, therefore, that every individual in the congregation should be a personal worker for the Lord, making individual efforts to win people for the Lord and to convert them from sin.

II. The Blessing's of Soul Winning:

(Dan. 12: 2, 3; James 5: 19, 20)

Many of them, that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. Resurrection and eternal life receive little attention in the Old Testament. Very few references can be found to these subjects. These are gospel subjects. Jesus brought them to light through the gospel. But, Daniel, in our text, got a vision of the sleeping saints rising from the dust of the earth. Some of the dead, he said, would rise to everlasting life, while others would rise to shame and everlasting contempt. This is in harmony with New Testament teaching on the matter of the resurrection and the parting of the righteous from the unrighteous following that resurrection. (Matt. 25: 31-46.)

And they that are wise. To be wise is simply to hear and to keep the sayings of the Lord. (Matt. 7: 21-27.) "True religion is wisdom, and sin is folly, and they who live for God and for heaven are the truly wise. The meaning is that they have chosen the path which true wisdom suggests as that in which man should walk, while all the ways of sin are ways of folly." (Barnes.)

Shine as the brightness of the firmament. The stars that shine in the firmament are emblematic of glory, so those who are wise and spend their time and efforts in winning souls for Christ, shall be glorified, they shall be highly rewarded, and in that sense will shine as the stars in glory.

If any among you err from the truth. James is writing to the church, and so we conclude that James thought it possible for one to err from the truth; and that it was possible for him to err sufficiently from the truth to be exposed to death.

For, he said that one who converts this sinner that errs from the truth shall save a soul from death. So, one may err far enough away from the truth to be exposed to eternal death. And when we save that one who has thus wandered from the truth, we save a soul from death. If it were impossible for a child of God to wander far enough from the truth to be exposed to eternal death, it would be impossible for us to save that one from death.

Shall cover a multitude of sins. There is a question as to whose sins will be covered. Some contend that if we convert a sinner from the error

of his way, our sins will be covered; that is, the forgiveness of our sins is the reward which we receive for saving another soul. But, obviously the meaning is that the sins of the one that is converted will be covered. The one who has erred from the way and is guilty of sin we save from death, which is the penalty of his sin, and that penalty is averted simply because his sins are forgiven or covered. Hence, when we convert a sinner from the error of his way, his sins are covered so that he is no longer guilty of them and will not be punished with death as the consequence of them.

General Information on Winning Others to Christ

1. Examples of soul winners, (a) Jesus. (Luke 19: 10.) (b) Paul. (1 Cor. 9: 20-22; Rom. 9: 1-3.) (c) Preachers from Cyprus. (Acts 11: 19-21.)
2. Essential qualifications of soul winners, (a) Appreciation of salvation and a desire to share this joy with others. (Psalm 107: 1, 2; Isa. 35: 10; 1 Tim. 1: 12-16; Rom. 1: 14, 15.) (b) Knowledge of gospel. (1

Tim. 4: 13-16; 2 Tim. 2: 15; 3: 14-16; Tit. 1: 9.) (c) Love for the lost. (1 Thess. 2: 5-12.) (d) Willingness to suffer hardship. (2 Tim. 2: 1-4, 10-12; Phil. 1: 12-14, 21-26.)

3. Rewards for soul winning, (a) Crown of joy and glory. (Phil. 4: 1; 1 Thess. 2: 19, 20.) (b) Approval of the Lord. (Matt. 25: 20, 21.) (c) Joy of bringing sheaves. (Psalm 126: 5, 6.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places, and persons in this lesson.

Golden Text

What is the fruit mentioned in our text?

Why is the righteous man called the tree of life?

In what sense does the righteous man supply food for others?

What do the weak and discouraged find in the company of the righteous?

Who may find shelter in the company of the righteous?

How does winning souls for Christ lessen the influence of evil?

What is the greatest favor one person can do for another?

What effect does soul winning have in heaven?

What effect does soul winning have on the person won?

What effect does soul winning have on the soul winner?

Soul Winning

Give the setting of our lesson as contained in the context.

Which of John's disciples proved to be the first soul winner?

Of whom did he think first?

Why is it necessary to be interested in winning certain individuals?

What is the meaning of the word Messiah?

What meaning did this word have for the Jew?

What did Andrew do for Peter?

How do we bring people to Jesus?

Name and discuss four *things* we must teach people to bring them to Jesus.

Name another soul winner mentioned in our text.

Discuss the importance of individual efforts in addition to public preaching and teaching.

The Blessings of Soul Winning

What doctrine did Daniel teach more clearly than other Old Testament writers?

Who are the truly wise people of this world?

What is the reward promised to the soul winner?

According to James, what is the consequence of erring from the truth?

What is suggested in this text about the possibility of apostasy?

Whose sins are covered when a sinner is converted from his error?

What is there of interest to you in the division of general information?

Lesson VII—May 17, 1953

CARRYING THE GOSPEL TO THE WHOLE WORLD

The Lesson Text

Matt. 28: 18-20; Luke 24: 45-48; Acts 1: 8; Rom. 1: 13-16

18 And Je'-sus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.

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.

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 Je-ru'-sa-16m.

48 Ye are witnesses of these things.

8 But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Je-ru'-sa-lem, and in all Ju-dae'-a and Sa-ma'-ri-a, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

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 Gen'-tiles.

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.

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.

Golden Text.—*"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation(Mark 16: 15.)*

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 6: 1-8.

Daily Bible Readings

May 11.	M.....	Work to Begin in Jerusalem (Luke 24: 44-47)
May 12.	T.....	Middle Wall of Partition Abolished (Col. 2: 1-17)
May 13.	W.....	Gospel God's Power to All (Rom. 1: 8-17)
May 14.	T.....	Passion for Souls (Psalm 67: 1-7)
May 15.	F.....	Isaiah's Willingness to Go (Isa. 6: 1-8)
May 16.	S.....	A Prayer for Others (2 Chron. 6: 28-42)
May 17.	S.....	The Success of a Missionary (Acts 8: 5-12)

TIME.—For Matthew, Luke, and Acts, A.D. 30; for Romans, A.D. 58.

PLACES.—Galilee, Jerusalem, and Rome.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the apostles, and Paul.

Golden Text Explained

1. Go Ye into All the World. Our text is contained in what we have been pleased to call the great commission, given by Jesus to his apostles. It is the marching order of the apostles, which sent them into every nation under heaven in their day. It applies to us with equal force as it did to them. We are as much obligated to preach the gospel to the

whole world today as they were obligated to preach the gospel to the world of their day. The necessity for preaching the gospel is seen in that (a) all men have sinned. "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3: 23.) (b) Another reason for preaching the gospel is the gospel is the only power God has to save men from sin. (Rom.

1: 16.) Since all men have sinned, and the penalty for sin is eternal death, all are condemned to eternal death. And, since the gospel is the only power God has to save men from sin, it follows that we must preach the gospel to save men from death, and that in the preaching of the gospel is the hope of the world. If we fail to preach the gospel, men go unsaved. But, if we preach the gospel to every creature, many of them will accept it and will be saved, (c) Another reason for preaching the gospel to the lost is seen in the value of the soul. "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" (Matt. 16: 26.) In this passage Jesus teaches us that the soul is worth more than the world. If an individual should gain the whole world and fail to gain eternal life, he would be miserably cheated. Hence, one soul is worth more than all the wealth of the world. Since all have sinned and consequently are lost, it follows that the wealth involved is beyond our power to calculate. Millions of souls, each worth more than all of the combined wealth of the world, are lost and will be eternally lost unless we preach the gospel to them to save them. Nations have gone to war to protect the investments of their citizens in foreign countries. Right now England is on the verge of war in Egypt and Iran because of the immense wealth invested in those countries. Should we not then go to war with sin and Satan on account of the immense value of the souls held in his dominion? Should we not be willing to give our lives in fighting for their freedom? Our nation is now engaged in a war in Korea to preserve the freedoms of the nations of the East. Should we not go to war with sin and Satan to preserve the spiritual freedoms of people? If men are willing to leave their homes and families, go into foreign countries and fight, in order to preserve freedom and to protect their financial investments, surely citizens of the kingdom of Christ should be willing to go into all the world to save men from the bondage of sin and from eternal death as the consequence of sin.

2. Possibility of Going into All the World. Many people have argued that it is impossible for the church of today to preach the gospel in every nation under heaven. They tell us that only a small portion of the earth was inhabited in the days of the apostles and that they could reach the then known world, but that the whole globe is inhabited in our day, and therefore, we have a *greater* task. Those who thus argue forget that our means of travel and communication are so much more rapid today than in the days of the apostles that the world is really smaller for us than it was for them. Others say that there are plenty of workers, missionaries, to go into all the world but there is not sufficient money to send them. Certainly it is best for the church to send missionaries and to support them on the field. But, if the church does not do its duty, are individuals released from their obligation of going into all the world? Did the apostles wait until their travel funds were collected and in the bank before they started? Did the apostles wait until some church guaranteed them financial support for one year, three years, or five years? This is not intended as a criticism of any methods now being used to carry the gospel into all the world. It is simply to argue the possibility of carrying the gospel to all the world. If there were enough of us who were willing to give up our homes and our income and go preach the gospel to anybody and everybody who would listen to us without any thought of support or income, we could carry the gospel to the whole world in our generation. It was that spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial that made it possible for the church of the first century to take the gospel to every creature under heaven. It is that spirit of self-sacrifice that is lacking in us today.

3. Preach the Gospel. Let us put the emphasis on the word *gospel* this time. Jesus said to go preach the *gospel*. He did not say preach some philosophies of life. He did not say preach some theory of social service, but he said preach the *gospel*. He did not intend that we should deal in speculation either of a philosophical or spiritual nature. He sim-

ply said for us to preach the gospel. He did not intend that we should inject our political views, that we should use the pulpit for the election of our favorite candidates for this or that office. He simply said preach the gospel. Nor are we allowed to teach human tradition. It is difficult for us to keep our opinions and man-made laws and conclusion out of the pulpit. We should be careful to preach that and that only for which we have a plain *thus saith the Lord*. We have the ears of the public so seldom and for such a short time that we ought not to talk about anything except that which is directly related to the saving of souls from sin. "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but

in the power of God." (1 Cor. 2: 1-5.)

4. **To Every Creature.** Let us now place the emphasis on *every creature*, whether white or black, red or yellow; whether rich or poor, whether on the right side or the wrong side of the railroad track, whether living in a mansion or a hovel, preach the gospel to *every creature*. There is a tendency in our generation to neglect the poor, those living in the slum sections of the city. We are appealing more and more to the middle class and upper middle class of people to the neglect of those that are poor and needy. In some of our large, rich, city congregations, there is a tendency to frown on the attendance of people in poor, shabby clothing, especially if they wish to come down toward the front or to take a part in the program of worship. In some churches, a man dressed in overalls would not be allowed to preside at the Lord's table or pass the emblems regardless of his ability. The soul of a beggar is worth as much as the soul of a banker. The soul of a charwoman is worth as much as the soul of a congressman.

Exposition of the Text

I. The Great Commission (Matt. 28:

18-20; Luke 24: 45-48)

All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. This expression can mean nothing less than universal authority. That Jesus is Lord of both heaven and earth is seen in the fact that he created and now preserves both heaven and earth. (Col. 1: 16, 17.) He impressed the apostles with the fact of his universal authority in order that they might be assured that he had sufficient authority to control this tiny speck of the universe on which we live. However, Paul reminds us that this claim to universal authority does not mean that the Father is subject to the Son. For his discussion of this, read 1 Cor. 15: 27, 28. Again, authority is inseparably connected with the idea of ruling, reigning in a kingdom. Jesus states that his authority is in heaven and on earth. This should have impressed the apostles with the idea that his kingdom was not merely of this earth, that he

was not going to establish a temporal kingdom, but the kingdom in which he would exercise this authority would be a heavenly kingdom operating on earth and requiring one at the head who has authority both in heaven and on earth.

Go . . . *and make* disciples. The command to go is based upon the fact of all authority in heaven and on earth. For he says, go ye *therefore*. The going, or rather the command to go, is based upon the possession of all authority in heaven and on earth. This would naturally do two things for the apostles, (a) It would give them a deeper sense of obligation to go. If they are commanded by one who has all authority in heaven and on earth, they would feel a greater obligation to go than if one of less authority had spoken, (b) It would give them the assurance of protection as they carried out the order. Not only would it assure them of protection, it would assure them of success in the undertaking. If the com-

mand to go is backed by all authority in heaven and on earth, the only reason for failure would be their refusal to obey the command. Hence, with a determination to obey the Lord, they were assured of success before they started out. If the church today could learn these two lessons, we could accomplish much more than we are now accomplishing, though there is more mission work being done today than ever before in the history of the church since the days of the apostles. The word *disciple* originally meant simply a pupil, scholar, or student. But Webster says, "Through the influence of its Biblical sense it has ceased to be an exact synonym for pupil or scholar; it always implies personal adherence to the views of one's master or teacher." And certainly the use of the word here includes more than making a student or a pupil out of the people whom they contacted. It was the sense of our Lord, when he used the word *disciple*, to make people followers of his teaching. It was not enough to interest people in the study of the teaching of Jesus, but it was also necessary to influence them to obey the teaching; and one is not a disciple, in the Biblical sense of the term, unless he both learns and puts into practice the teaching of Christ.

Baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Nations can be baptized only as the individuals comprising the nations are willing to be baptized. Hence, we are not to take the statement as meaning that nations, as such, were to be baptized, but that the individuals composing those nations were to be baptized. Nations cannot become learners or disciples except as the individuals in those nations become disciples. Notice also that these apostles were directed to baptize people into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. To baptize people in the name of Christ is to baptize by the authority of Christ. But, to baptize people into the name of Christ does not have the meaning of authority but rather of relationship. "Baptizing into the name has a twofold meaning: (1) *unto*, denoting object or purpose, *unto repentance* (Matt. 3: 11); *for the remission of*

sins (Acts 2: 38). (2) *into*, denoting union or communion with, as Rom. 6: 3, baptized into Christ Jesus; into his death; we are brought by baptism into fellowship with his death. Baptizing into the name of the Holy Trinity implies a spiritual and mystical union with him." (Marvin R. Vincent.) So we come into communion and fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit when we are baptized into that relationship.

Teaching them to observe all things. This means that the apostles were to teach those whom they baptized to observe all the things that Jesus had commanded them. Those who think that the great commission applied to the apostles only should take notice of the fact that Jesus told the apostles to command those baptized to observe all he had commanded them to do. Since he had commanded them to go into all the world and preach the gospel, then those baptized by the apostles were to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

Then opened he their mind. By opening their mind is meant simply leading them into an understanding of the teaching. The same word is used with reference to Paul's teaching in Thessalonica where he opened and alleged that it behooved Christ to suffer. (Acts 17: 2, 3.)

That the Christ should suffer. Here Jesus tells them that the sufferings through which he had recently gone were in fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures; that it had been prophesied that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day.

Repentance and remission of sins. The preaching of repentance and remission of sins into all the world was also a subject of prophecy. The prophecy also said that this work was to begin in Jerusalem. (Isa. 2: 2-4.) It should not be overlooked that John the Baptist had preached repentance and remission of sins. (Mark 1: 4.) But, his preaching was not in the name or by the authority of Jesus Christ. His preaching was done before Christ was manifested to Israel and before he stated that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to him. The first time that repentance and remission of sins

were preached in the name of Christ in Jerusalem was on the first Pentecost after the death of Christ.

II. From Jerusalem to the Ends of the Earth (Acts 1:8; Rom. 1: 13-16)

When the Holy Spirit is come upon you. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to his apostles not many days after his ascension. They were to wait in Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. (Luke 24: 49.) They were to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit to (a) bring to their remembrance all that Jesus had taught them, (b) to guide them into all truth. (John 16: 7-16.)

Witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and uttermost part of the earth. We have seen that the preaching was to begin in Jerusalem. By turning to the second chapter of Acts, we see that the preaching did begin in Jerusalem. Judea was the country surrounding Jerusalem. Samaria was the country north of Judea, and the preaching of the gospel was to be done in that order, reaching outside of the city into Judea, and then on northward toward the other parts of Jewish territory. Judea was the southernmost region. Hence, the gospel was to go north through the Jewish sections, and then on into the uttermost parts of the earth.

I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians. This feeling of indebtedness is the spirit that characterized all the apostles, and the spirit which made it possible for them to carry out the commission in their lifetime. It is impossible for us to do enough or to be good enough to pay the Lord for saving us. The only way we can discharge our debt is by sharing this salvation with others, taking it to them. Children can never repay their parents for services rendered, but

parents always feel well paid when children live upright, honorable lives, start their families, and rear them to be Christians. So we cannot pay the Lord for services he has rendered us, but he is glorified in our righteous living and in our sacrifices in taking the gospel that others may be saved.

I am ready to preach the gospel to you. This was Paul's way of paying his debt. He was a debtor to Greeks and Barbarians, to wise and foolish. So, in order to pay that debt, he was ready to preach the gospel to everyone within his reach.

I am not ashamed of the gospel. Paul was not ashamed to preach the gospel before kings and philosophers.

(a) He was not ashamed of the person of the gospel which was Christ.

(b) He was not ashamed of the power of the gospel which transforms men from the likeness of Satan into the likeness of Jesus Christ. He realized that the gospel was the only power that God had for saving a lost world, and he felt obligated to take that saving power to every lost person he could possibly reach. It is that spirit that caused him to suffer, as perhaps no other person ever suffered, for the Lord; and until the church today can recapture that spirit of indebtedness to the world and the willingness to suffer that others may be saved, there will not be as much missionary work done as should be done.

To every one that believeth. This shows that salvation is conditioned upon human response. Any theory that makes God entirely responsible for the salvation of the soul and overlooks the power of man to choose whether he will obey or disobey is a false theory. The gospel is God's power to save the believer. God has no power to save the unbeliever.

General Information on Carrying the Gospel to the Whole World

1. Limited commissions, (a) The law of Moses. (Deut. 5: 2, 3; Rom. 9: 4.) (b) John the Baptist. (Luke 1: 16; John 1: 31.) (c) The twelve. (Matt. 10: 5, 6.) (d) The seventy. (Luke 10: 1.) (e) Jesus in his personal ministry. (Matt. 15: 24.)

2. Gospel symbols suggestive of its value, (a) Seed. (Luke 8: 11; 1 Pet. 1: 23.) (b) Food. (1 Cor. 3: 1-3; Heb. 5: 12-14; 1 Pet. 2: 1, 2.)

(c) Light. (2 Cor. 4: 4, 6.) (d) Sword of the Spirit. Eph. 6: 17.)

3. Missionary churches, (a) Antioch. (Acts 13: 1-4.) (b) Thessalonica. (1 Thess. 1: 8.) (c) Philippi. (Phil. 1: 5; 4: 14-16.)

4. Universal qualities, (a) Can be understood by the simple. (1 Cor. 1: 26-29.) (b) Can be obeyed by the poorest. (2 Cor. 8: 2; James 2: 1-5.)

(c) Appeals to the weary and oppressed. (Matt. 11: 28-30.) (d) Does not exclude the rich. (1 Tim. 6: 17-19.) (e) Provides for governors and kings. (Acts 9: 15; 24: 24, 25; 26: 1ff.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Does the great commission apply to us with as much force as it did to the apostles?

What condition of mankind makes this commission necessary?

Why is it so necessary that the gospel be preached to every creature?

What characteristic of the soul makes gospel preaching so profitable?

Is it reasonable to expect men to make as great sacrifices to save the lost as they make to save the freedoms of their country?

Is it as easy for us to preach the gospel to every creature as it was for the apostles in their day?

What spirit did the apostles have that enabled them to carry out the great commission, the lack of which makes it impossible for us to preach the gospel to every creature?

Contrast that which we are commanded to preach with the things which many preach.

What example did Paul set in his preaching at Corinth?

Whom do we have a tendency to neglect in our preaching?

The Great Commission

Why did Jesus assert his universal authority?

Is there any exception to this universal authority?

What does this authority suggest with reference to a kingdom? and the nature of the kingdom?

What two things did the assertion of this authority do for the apostles?

What is the meaning of the word disciple? How can nations become disciples of Christ?

What is meant by baptizing people in the name of Christ?

What is meant by baptizing people into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

What are baptized people to be taught?

What is meant by opening the mind?

What preaching was to begin in Jerusalem?

When was this preaching first done in Jerusalem?

From Jerusalem to the Ends of the Earth

For what were the apostles to wait in Jerusalem?

What two things would the Holy Spirit do for them?

To what countries was the gospel taken and in what order?

What feeling did Paul have which caused him to take the gospel to so many?

Of what elements of the gospel was Paul justly proud?

What evidence do we have in our text that salvation is conditioned upon human response?

Does God have a power for saving the unbeliever?

What is there of interest to you in the division of general information?

Lesson VIII—May 24, 1953

LIBERALITY

The Lesson Text

Luke 21: 1-4; 2 Cor. 9: 6-11

1 And he looked up, and saw the rich men that were casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And he saw a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than they all:

4 For all these did of their superfluity cast in unto the gifts; but she of her want did cast in all the living that she had.

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 every thing, 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.

Golden Text.—*"In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20: 35.)"*

Devotional Reading.—2 Cor. 8: 1-15.

Daily Bible Readings

May 18. M.....	God the Owner of All (Psalm 50: 1-12)
May 19. T.....	Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25: 14-30)
May 20. W.....	Recognizing God's Claims (Mal. 3: 7-12)
May 21. T.....	Reward of Faithful Stewardship (Prov. 3: 1-10)
May 22. F.....	Must Give Cheerfully (2 Cor. 9: 6-15)
May 23. S.....	The Stewardship of Grace (1 Peter 4: 7-11)
May 24. S.....	The Unrighteous Steward (Luke 16: 1-13)

Time.—For Luke A.D. 29; for Second Corinthians A.D. 58.

Places.—Jerusalem and Corinth.

Persons.—Jesus, the widow, Paul, and the Corinthian Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. Following: Great Examples of Liberty. (a) When people are liberal in their giving, they are following the example of God. We are told that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to die for our sins. (John 3: 16.) Again, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4: 10.) This is the greatest demonstration of love that ever has been made or ever can be made. God's love is infinite, and the gift of his Son was an infinite expression of that infinite love, hence, beyond our power to comprehend fully. The individual who learns to give liberally and abundantly is learning to be like God. It should be noticed that it was God's love which moved him to give his Son for us. If we then follow his example, we will give because we love. Some give because they are afraid they will be lost if they do not give, but that is a poor motive compared to the love that should lead us to give. We become like God in our giving only when we give because we love, (b) When people learn to give liberally, they are following the example of Jesus Christ. Jesus came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many. (Matt. 20: 28.) Jesus gave his time, his energy, and his very self in serving people every day of his ministry. So when we learn to give liberally of our time and energy and our very self in helping others and in building up the church and in glorifying God,

we can say that we have grown into the likeness of Jesus Christ. But, as long as we are stingy and selfish in the use of our time and our money, it is foolish to speak about being like Christ. (c) Those who have learned to give liberally are following the example of the great apostle Paul. In our text Paul tells us that he gave us an example that so laboring we ought to help the weak. So Paul left us an example of laboring with our hands that we might give to them that are in need. And, when we learn to give liberally, for the relief of those in need, we will be following the example of Paul. Paul worked with his own hands for two reasons. First, that he might not be a burden to the weak churches which he established and with which he labored. (2 Cor. 11: 7-9; 1 Thess. 2: 9, 10.) And, next, Paul worked with his own hands that he might have to give to the weak or those that were in need. (Eph. 4: 28.)

2. The Blessedness of Giving. Our text tells us that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Wherein is the blessedness? (a) Our giving to others who are dependent gives us a sense of our independence of our fellow men. Not many people are satisfied to be dependent upon their fellow man. We labor, we save for old age so that we will not be dependent even upon our children, much less upon those who have no interest in us. As long as we are able to give to others, we enjoy this sense of independence of our fellow man. (b) Giving to others is a proof

had, even all her living. Hence, when she got through giving, she had nothing, and when the rich got through giving, they still had great sums of money on which to live. When people give a little out of their abundance, they have made no sacrifice. They have practiced no self-denial. But when people give much out of the little they have, they have denied themselves the things they need in order that others may enjoy life. This is liberal giving in spite of the fact that the amount we give is of little consequence. So liberality is not giving much money, but giving a great portion of what we have. Albert Barnes draws a number of practical lessons from this paragraph, the gist of which follows. First, God is pleased with offerings made to him and his cause. Second, it is our duty to devote our property to God and to his use. Third, the highest evidence of love for the cause of religion is not the amount given, but the amount compared with our means. Fourth, it may be proper to give all our property to God and to depend on his providence to supply our wants. Fifth, that God does not despise the humble offering if made sincerely. Sixth, there are none who may not in this way show their love to the cause of religion. Seventh, it is every man's duty to inquire, not how much he gives, but how much compared with what he has. Eighth, we may remark that few practice self-denial for the purpose of charity. Most give of their abundance; that is, what they can spare without feeling it and many feel that this is the same as throwing it away. Among all the thousands who give to these objects, how few deny themselves one comfort, even the least, that they may advance the kingdom of Christ.

II. Some Principles of Liberality (2

Cor. 9: 6-11)

He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly. Every farmer knows that, if he is so stingy with his wheat that he will sow but one gallon to the acre, he will not reap an abundant harvest. If he expects to reap an abundant harvest, he knows he must sow six to eight gallons of wheat to the acre. Knowing this, it would be foolish for him to withhold seed

from the ground. Paul teaches us that it would be just as foolish for us to be stingy in our giving for the cause of the Lord. If we give selfishly, we will reap but little. If we give liberally, we will reap bountifully. Jesus said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6: 38.) The first principle of liberality is to sow as you hope to reap. If you hope to reap bountifully, sow bountifully, give liberally.

Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart. The second principle of liberality is to give according to a purpose made in the heart. Here many of us miserably fail to follow the teaching of the Lord. The average church member pays his monthly installments, his utility bills, his grocery bills, and what other obligations of a financial sort he has, and then out of the balance he gives a portion to the work of the Lord. There is no purpose of head or heart in this manner of giving. We should determine how much of our income we will give to the Lord, and then we should plan to spend the balance of it. If there is not enough of the balance to enable us to live on the plane on which we desire to live, it will be better for us to live on a lower, a cheaper plane than to rob the Lord of that which belongs to him that we may live on the higher plane. Too many people are robbing God in order that they may live on the higher plane with their wealthy neighbors. To do so means that we think it more important to keep up our standing in the social and financial world than to give of our means for the support of the gospel and the care of the poor.

Not grudgingly, or of necessity. The third principle of liberality taught by Paul in this text is to give cheerfully, for God loveth a cheerful giver. We are not to give grudgingly or of necessity, but to give cheerfully. Some have misunderstood Paul's statement with reference to giving of necessity. They have interpreted it to mean that we are not to give that which we need, but such

is obviously the wrong interpretation. It means we are not to give because we feel that we must do so. Ananias and Sapphira seem to have sold their property because others were doing so and giving the money to the apostles. They felt like they must sell their property and give some of the money in order to maintain their social standing in the community, but they were unwilling to part with their money. They wanted the glory, the praise, but were unwilling to pay the price for it. Hence, they lied to God and died as a result of it. Many give today out of the feeling of necessity. They think they must do it in order to maintain their good standing in the community. Such gifts are repulsive to God and do not benefit the giver. Only that which is given cheerfully will benefit the giver.

God is able to make all grace abound unto you. This is a statement made by Paul to encourage us to liberal giving. We will not be impoverished by our giving. God will bless the cheerful giver. God is able to make us able to give liberally. No one has been impoverished by his liberality. Paul speaks of the Macedonians giving liberally, even beyond what he thought they were able to give. Yet he does not write as if they were impoverished by their liberality.

May abound unto every good work. In this verse Paul says that God is able to make all grace abound to you so that you may abound unto every good work. It would be foolish for him to affirm that God is able to do a thing and then say that God will not do that which he is able to do. The very fact that he affirms that God is able to do it is proof that we may expect God to do that thing. So, if God is able to make us able to abound to every good work, we may rest assured that God will make us able to abound to every good work if

we are willing to use that which God places in our hand. Too many people are waiting for God to put great sums of money into their hands before they do anything. When, as a matter of fact, God would give them more with which to do if they would do more with that which they have.

He . . . shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing. According to this, God does two things for us. (a) God supplies us with the material things of life, (b) God multiplies that which we have for the doing of good. Paul puts this in a figure of a man's sowing seed. God supplies the seed and then multiplies the seed in the sowing so that the increase is more than that which was sowed.

Enriched in everything unto all liberality. In this verse Paul suggests that God gives us our material wealth unto liberality; that is, in order that we may give liberally. God does not endow us with material wealth that we may spend it in luxurious living and in self-gratification. Too many spend their money in sensual enjoyment, going to places of amusement, on long expensive vacations, fishing trips, and such like. If they were asked to give half as much money for preaching the gospel as they spend on these vacations and fishing trips, they would feel like they were being persecuted. But let us remember that Paul says that we are enriched with these material things **unto liberality**, in order that we may give liberally and not to enjoy it upon ourselves. In this connection study what Paul says in Gal. 6: 7, 8. There he teaches us that whatever a man sows he shall reap. If he sows or spends his money unto his flesh, that is to the gratification of the desires of the flesh, he shall of the flesh reap corruption. But if he sows to the spirit, that is, if he spends his money for spiritual things, he shall of the spirit reap eternal life.

General Information on Liberality

1. Liberality is a Christian grace, (a) Like the grace of Christ. (2 Cor. 8: 9.) (b) We are to abound in it. (2 Cor. 8: 6, 7.) (c) God enables us to exercise it. (2 Cor. 9: 8.)

2. Liberal churches, (a) Jerusalem. (Acts 2: 44-46; 4: 32-35.) (b) Macedonia. (2 Cor. 8: 1-3) (c)

Antioch. (Acts 11: 27-30.) (d) Philippi. (Phil. 4: 14-20.)

3. Purposeful liberality, (a) Purposing beforehand. (2 Cor. 8: 10, 11; 2 Cor. 9: 2, 5.) (b) Purposing a definite amount. (2 Cor. 9: 5, 6.) (c) Giving each week to liquidate the purpose. (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2.) (d)

Purpose in the heart. (2 Cor. 9: 7.)

(e) Purpose made known to others.

(1) To Paul. (2 Cor. 8 and 9.) (2) To other churches for their encouragement. (2 Cor. 9: 1-3.)

4. What liberality does for us. (a) Proves our love. (2 Cor. 8: 24.)

(b) Secures the thanksgivings and prayers of others in our behalf. (2 Cor. 9: 12, 14.) (c) God is glorified through us. (2 Cor. 9: 13.) (d) Assures us of the love of God. (2 Cor. 9: 7.) (e) Lays up treasures in heaven for us. (Matt. 19: 21.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

By what standard does the Lord measure our gifts?

What practical lessons are suggested from this paragraph?

Golden Text

Whose example do we follow when we give liberally?

What is the greatest demonstration of love ever made?

Name and contrast two motives for giving.

How did Jesus set an example of liberality?

Show how Paul set an example of liberality?

For what two reasons did Paul work with his own hands?

Name and discuss five reasons why it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Will a realization of this truth tend to make us more liberal in our giving?

An Example of Liberality

What arrangement did the Jews have for giving money to the poor?

What was the monetary value of the poor widow's gift?

Some Principles of Liberality

What principle of giving is taught by sowing and reaping?

What did Jesus say would be done for the liberal giver?

What is taught about purposing to give?

Why and how are many people robbing God?

What is the third principle of giving taught by Paul?

What is meant by giving of necessity?

What does Paul teach about God's ability that he may encourage us to liberality?

What church does Paul commend as an example of liberality?

Why does God make his grace abound unto us?

What two things does God do for us that we may be liberal in our giving?

What responsibility do we have for the proper use of our wealth?

What is there of interest to you in the division on general information?

Lesson IX—May 31, 1953

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lesson Text

Matt. 26: 26-30; 1 Cor. 11: 23-29

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27 And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

28 For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

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.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me."* (1 Cor. 11: 24.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 22: 14-20.

Daily Bible Readings

May 25. M. The Institution of the Supper (Matt. 26: 17-30)
May 26. T. Interpretation of the Supper (1 Cor. 11: 21-29)
May 27. W. The Lord's Supper a Memorial (Luke 22: 14-22)
May 28. T. The Lord's Supper a Communion (1 Cor. 10: 14-22)
May 29. F. Supper Observed First Day of the Week (Acts 20: 7-12)
May 30. S. Supper a Sermon to All Others (1 Cor. 11: 23-26)
May 31. S. Jesus Observes It with Us (Luke 22: 14-22)

TIME.—For Matthew A.D. 30; for First Corinthians A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Corinth.

PERSONS.—Jesus, apostles, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. This Is **My Body**. This statement is not to be taken to mean that the bread is changed into the literal physical body of Jesus. It simply means that this bread represents the body of Christ. Similar expression abound in the Bible. In Gen. 40: 9-15, we have the record of Joseph interpreting the dream of the chief butler. The butler dreamed that he saw a vine with three branches and clusters of ripe grapes thereon. Joseph said that "the three branches are three days." Joseph did not mean that these three branches were turned into three days, but he simply meant that the three branches represent three days. Again in Gen. 41: 25-36, we have the record of Pharaoh's dream in which he saw seven good cattle being devoured by seven lean cattle. In giving the interpretation of the dream Joseph said, "The seven good kine are seven years." Joseph did not mean to say that the seven good kine were changed miraculously into seven years, but he simply meant to say that the seven good cattle of the dream represented seven years of plenty which the land was to enjoy. Coming to the New Testament, we find Paul speaking of the experiences of the children of Israel in the wilderness, and he said they all drank a spiritual drink, for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them, "and the rock was Christ." (1 Cor. 10: 1-4.) Paul did not mean to suggest that a literal flinty rock in the

desert was changed into the literal physical body of Christ, but he simply meant to say that that rock represented Christ, and that Christ through the means of that rock furnished water for the people as an indication of his presence with them and his provident care over them. Again, the apostle Paul, giving an allegory to teach the difference between the old covenant and the new covenant, said, "Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia." (Gal. 4: 25.) Paul did not mean to say that Hagar was changed actually into a literal mountain called Sinai, but he simply said in this allegory that Hagar represents Mount Sinai and the covenant which God made thereon. So the expression of our text, "This is my body," is not to be taken to mean that the bread is changed into the literal physical body of Christ, but that the bread represents to us or brings to our remembrance the body of Christ as it suffered on Calvary. The Roman Catholic Church believes and teaches the doctrine of transubstantiation, which means that the bread is changed into the literal physical body of Christ and that, regardless of how many pieces the loaf may be broken into, each piece contains the whole literal physical body of Christ and that each participant partakes of or eats the whole physical body of Christ. They also believe that if any pieces are left over, not used during the worship,

these continue to contain the literal physical body of Christ, and that if some unconverted person or even a dog should eat one of these pieces, he would be eating the physical body of Christ, both the humanity and the deity of Christ. They also teach that in the institution of the supper Jesus changed the bread into his literal physical body and gave it to the disciples to eat, and not only did they eat his body, but that he ate it also. There we have the foolish statement that Jesus ate his own body.

2. **Which Is for You.** Some versions say which is broken for you. The words of our text seem to be incomplete. We must insert which is *given* for you, or *broken* for you, or *sacrificed* for you. Some such statement seems necessary to complete the sense of the statement. It is true that his body was given in sacrifice for us in order that he might atone for our sins and that we might be spared the suffering which comes as a consequence of our sins. (Heb. 9: 26; 10: 10.)

3. **This Do in Remembrance of Me.** (a) This suggests that the Lord's supper is a memorial. No one likes to be forgotten. Jesus did not wish for his disciples to forget him. Hence, he gave them this institution by which they were to remember him. He was not selfish in wishing to be remembered, for in their remembrance of him they would get a blessing. Furthermore, memorials are proof of the existence of some thing or person. The Washington Monument stands as

evidence of the fact that a man by that name lived and served his country. The Lord's supper stands as a monument to the fact that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world. As long as people continue to break the bread and drink the cup, they show the Lord's death until he comes. They give evidence of the fact that Jesus lived and died and that he wished to be remembered by those who believed in him. (b) This statement indicates the spirit or frame of mind in which we are to observe the Lord's supper. Since it is a memorial of the death of Christ for our sins, we will not partake of it in a rowdy or boisterous manner. Though there will be joy in our hearts that Jesus died that our sins might be forgiven, we will be subdued by the consciousness of the fact that our sins made it necessary for him to die that shameful, painful death. Hence, we will approach the Lord's supper with thanksgiving on our lips for his atoning death and with sorrow in our hearts that our sins made it necessary for him to die. (c) Our text suggests that it is our duty to take the Lord's supper. Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of me." This is a command to us to do this. While it tells us that we are to remember him while we are doing it, it also tells us that we must do this, and that individual who neglects or refuses to obey this commandment has no hope of entering the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 7: 21.)

Exposition of the Text

I. Jesus Institutes the Supper. (Matt.

26: 26-30)

Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it. Since the institution of the Lord's supper came at the conclusion of the eating of the passover meal, we may be sure that Jesus used the unleavened bread which was used in connection with the passover meal. Hence, practically the whole religious world holds to the custom of using unleavened bread. Matthew says that Jesus blessed the bread. Some think that the word *blessed* has some mystical or mysterious meaning, but Luke says that he gave thanks. (Luke 22: 19.) And in speaking of the cup Matthew says that Jesus gave thanks.

It is hardly possible for one to think that Jesus would bless the bread and merely give thanks for the cup. Hence, we conclude that the blessing of the bread is equal to the giving of thanks for the cup. The breaking of the bread is looked upon as being symbolic of the sufferings of the body of Christ.

He took a cup, and gave thanks. Some sincere brethren have been bothered about the number of cups to use in celebrating the Lord's supper. Since Matthew says Jesus took a cup instead of a number of cups, they think that it is sinful for us to use more than one cup in taking the Lord's supper. We should learn that

it is the contents and not the container which the writer had in mind. Obviously Jesus gave thanks for the contents, not the container. Holding the cup he said, "This is my blood of the covenant." Obviously he did not mean that the container was his blood of the covenant. Again he said, "I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Here he speaks of the same thing for which he gave thanks, the same thing which he said was his blood of the covenant and calls it the fruit of the vine. Hence, the cup which he took was called the *blood of the covenant* and the *fruit of the vine*. A container could not be called the blood of the covenant nor the fruit of the vine. Hence, the cup does not refer to the container but the contents. Of the contents of that cup it was perfectly right to say it was his blood and it was the fruit of the vine. Furthermore, Paul said in 1 Cor. 11: 26 that they drank the cup. Certainly they did not drink the container, but they drank the contents of the cup. So, when Jesus took the cup and gave thanks and called it his blood and spoke of it as the fruit of the vine, he had in mind the *contents* and not the *container*. It is not, therefore, right to use this statement of the Lord to prove that we must use one cup and one only in taking the Lord's supper. Since the church in Jerusalem consisted of more than three thousand on the first day, and soon thereafter the number came to be five thousand, it would be difficult for those who contend for one cup to explain how they could all take the Lord's supper together using but the one cup.

This is my blood of the covenant. Covenants were sealed with blood. Usually an animal was slain in the presence of the two parties entering into a covenant. In this lesson Christ represents himself as the victim from which the blood was to be taken to ratify or seal the new covenant, and he makes the cup a symbol of that blood.

Poured out for many unto remission of sins. Jesus speaks of his blood as being poured out. Sometimes brethren speak of it as being spilled.

The word *spilled* implies an accident. Jesus did not accidentally give his blood. He poured it out as the fulfillment of the eternal purpose of God. Hence, the word *pour* is better in this place than the word *spill*. The phrase *unto remission of sins* expresses the purpose for which Jesus poured out his blood. It was in order that our sins might be forgiven. It is worth while to notice that we have the same phrase, "unto remission of sins," in this text that we have in Acts 2: 38, where Peter told people to repent and be baptized "unto remission of sins." Here the phrase must mean in order that our sins might be forgiven. Since it has that meaning here, we may be sure that it has the same meaning in Acts 2: 38. Hence, Peter teaches that people should repent and be baptized in order that their sins might be forgiven.

I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine. Some take this to mean "that he will partake of joy with them in heaven; that they will share together the honors and happiness of the heavenly world." But there is no good reason to take the word *kingdom* here as meaning anything other than the kingdom over which Jesus is king and which he established on the day of Pentecost. It is that kingdom which is the church. In this statement Jesus used the expression *fruit of the vine* to mean the Lord's supper. It is an example of the part being put for the whole. We have an example of the same thing in Acts 20: 7, where it is said the disciples met together on the first day of the week to break bread. There the term *break bread* stands for the whole of the Lord's supper. Hence, Jesus said that he would not eat of this supper which he was instituting until that day when he would take of it anew with his disciples in the Father's kingdom. So when we take the Lord's supper we commune with Christ. This lesson is forcibly taught in 1 Cor. 10: 14-21. In this passage Paul says that the cup which we bless is a communion of the blood of Christ and the bread which we brake is a communion of the body of Christ. He then uses an illustration, saying that Israel after the flesh have communion with the

altar when they eat the sacrifices which they offer. He also says that when the Gentiles make sacrifices they sacrifice to demons and not to God. In this he refers to those Gentiles who were heathen idolaters. And he said, "I would not that ye should have communion with demons." Paul did not wish the members of the church to take part in these Gentile sacrifices because in those sacrifices they had communion with demons. He wished them to take of the cup of the Lord and of the bread or body of the Lord in order that they might have communion with the Lord and not communion with demons as the heathen Gentiles did. Hence, Paul teaches in this passage that, when we take the cup of the Lord and eat of the bread, which to us is the body of the Lord, we have communion with the Lord. The Lord is communing with us in his Father's kingdom in this way.

And when they had sung a hymn. The Jewish practice was, in connection with the Passover, to sing Psalms 113 through 118. Psalms 113 and 114 were sung during the time they were observing the Passover and the Psalms 115 through 118 were sung following the observance of the Passover. Those who try to make a distinction between a psalm and a hymn have difficulty with this verse. Since the apostles undoubtedly followed the Jewish custom in singing these psalms, and yet Matthew says they sang a hymn, we conclude that the psalms were called hymns also.

II. Paul's Teaching on the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11: 23-29)

For I received of the Lord. Paul says that he did not get his gospel from man, but it came to him through revelation of Jesus Christ. (Gal. 1: 11, 12.) Paul did not depend upon others to teach him how the church was to observe the supper. He received of the Lord that which he delivered to the church at Corinth with reference to the observance of the Lord's supper.

In the night in which he was betrayed. Paul reminds us of the fact that the supper was instituted the same night in which Jesus was betrayed. By turning back to the gospel records, we learn that Judas was

with the apostles during the time they were eating the passover. While they were eating the supper Jesus mentioned the fact that one of them would betray him. They asked of whom he spake and Judas asked, "Is it I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered him in the affirmative, and then it is said that when Jesus handed him the bread dipped in the dish, called the sop, Satan entered into him and Jesus told him to do quickly what he had in mind to do. When he had received the sop, he went out straightway, so we conclude that Judas left before the institution of the Lord's supper. (John 13: 26-30.)

As often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup. In this text Jesus teaches that by eating the bread and drinking the cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again. This supper is therefore a memorial of the Lord's death, and every time we take the supper we say to the world that Jesus died for our sins. It is, therefore, the Christian's privilege to proclaim to the world the death of the Lord as long as he lives in the world.

Eat the bread or drink the cup . . . in an unworthy manner. This verse does not have reference to the condition of the one taking the supper but rather the manner in which that one takes the supper. If we take the supper in an unworthy manner, we shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. Commentators disagree somewhat in the details of the meaning of this statement. All of them are agreed that one guilty of the body and blood of the Lord is guilty of a most serious offense against Jesus Christ. One who would treat the emblems of the body and blood of Christ with irreverence would identify himself with that group who put Jesus to death. Such irreverence would indicate that they had the same feeling toward Jesus that the Jews had toward him when they crucified him.

If he discern not the body. In this verse Paul says that the one who takes the supper without discerning the Lord's body eats and drinks damnation to himself. To discern the Lord's body means to see in these emblems the body and the blood of Jesus shed for our sins. When people think of business or of

pleasure while they take the emblems, they are failing to discern the Lord's body. It is a more serious offense against Christ than the average person realizes. We ought, therefore, to cultivate the habit of thinking seriously of the crucifixion of Jesus, of his burial and his resurrection,

and then with an eye of faith looking forward to the time when he shall come again to punish the wicked and reward the righteous. These are the thoughts that should fill our hearts while we partake of the loaf which is his body and the cup which is his blood shed for us.

General Information on the Lord's Supper

1. Institution, (a) In connection with passover. (Luke 22: 15, 16.) (b) Elements of passover used. (1) Unleavened bread. (Luke 22: 19.) (2) Fruit of the vine. (Matt. 26: 27-29.) (c) New meanings given. (1) Bread. (Luke 22: 19.) (2) Fruit of the vine. (Mark 14: 23-25.)
2. Celebration by the churches, (a) Time. (Acts 20: 7.) (b) Man-

ner. (1 Cor. 11: 27-34.) (c) Purpose. (1 Cor. 11: 24-26.) (1) Memorial of Christ's death. (2) Evidence of Christ's death for sin. (d) Importance. (1) Jesus eats and drinks with us. (Matt. 26: 29; Mark 14: 25.) (2) Communion with the Lord. (1 Cor. 10: 15-21.) (3) Commanded to assemble. (Heb. 10: 25.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What is meant by the expression "This is my body"?

Give several examples of such use of language in scripture.

What is the doctrine of transubstantiation and who teaches it?

What absurdities are suggested in our lesson as a consequence of this doctrine?

What is suggested in the phrase "Which is for you"?

What memorial value does the supper have?

In what frame of mind is the supper to be observed?

What does the text suggest with reference to our duty to observe the supper?

Jesus Institutes the Supper

What kind of bread did Jesus use when instituting the supper?

What is the meaning of the word blessed in our text?

Of what is the breaking of the bread symbolic?

To what does the word cup in our text refer?

What did Jesus mean when he said, "This is my blood of the covenant"?

What was the purpose of the shedding of his blood?

What other controverted text does this verse suggest?

When did Jesus say he would next drink of the fruit of the vine?

How does Paul teach the lesson on communing with Christ in the Lord's supper?

What did the Jews usually sing in connection with the Passover?

What light does this throw on efforts to distinguish between a psalm and a hymn?

Paul's Teaching on the Lord's Supper

Where did Paul say he got his gospel?

How does Paul identify the night in which the supper was instituted?

What do we proclaim to the world every time we take the supper?

What does Paul teach about the manner in which we take the supper?

What is meant by being guilty of the body and blood of the Lord?

What is meant by discerning the body and blood of Christ?

What habit should we cultivate while taking the Lord's supper?

What is there of interest to you in the division on general information?

Lesson X—June 7, 1953

PRAYER

The Lesson Text

Matt. 6: 5-15

5 And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Ver-

ily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy

Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

7 And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the ὀδῆ'-tiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will

be done, as in heaven, so on earth.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Golden Text.—“*Pray without ceasing.*” (1 Thess. 5: 17.)

Devotional Reading.—Luke 11: 1-13.

Daily Bible Readings

June 1. M.....	Encouragement to Pray (Luke 11: 9-13)
June 2. T.....	Prayer Jesus Taught the Disciples (Matt. 6: 9-15)
June 3. W.....	Persistent Prayer (Luke 18: 1-8)
June 4. T.....	Humility in Prayer (Luke 18: 9-14)
June 5. F.....	A Prayer of Jesus (Luke 22: 39-46)
June 6. S.....	Hypocritical Prayers (Matt. 6: 5-8)
June 7. S.....	Wisdom Through Prayer (James 1: 5-8)

TIME.—A.D. 27.

Place.—A mountain in Galilee.

Persons.—Jesus and the multitude.

Golden Text Explained

1. What Is Meant by Unceasing Prayer? These are very strong terms used by the apostle Paul to teach us the necessity of being much in prayer. But that it does not mean for us to be on our knees in prayer all the time is obvious. It is also obvious that it does not mean for us to be uttering prayers to God twenty-four hours out of the day. Neither Paul nor Jesus himself spent that much time praying. In Luke 11: 1 we read that Jesus ceased praying and one of his disciples asked him to teach the disciples how to pray, so Jesus actually ceased praying. One writer comments that Paul does not say for us to be praying at all times but rather that we should never be done praying. Another writer explains this text in these words, “both at all stated times for public or family prayer, and at all such times as are suitable or required by circumstances, for private devotion.” Paul says that he gave thanks to God always for the

brethren at Thessalonica and remembered them without ceasing. (1 Thess. 1: 2, 3.) He also said that he thanked God without ceasing that when they received the word they received it as the word of God, not as the word of men. (1 Thess. 2: 13.) Paul also said that he made unceasing remembrance of Timothy in his prayers and supplications both night and day. (2 Tim. 1: 3.) And in Col. 1: 3, he said that he gave thanks to God the Father, praying always for the brethren at Colossae. Obviously it would be impossible for him to pray without ceasing for a number of churches and individuals at the same time. He would have to cease praying for one in order that he might pray for the other. So to pray without ceasing is to be taken to mean to pray much, never to get through praying for these people in whom we are interested.

2. Why Pray Without Ceasing, (a) The Lord commands it. **Our text 1»**

a command of the Lord through the inspired apostle Paul. If this were the only text we have, it would still be our duty to pray without ceasing. When Paul was describing the armor of the Christian soldier, he concluded in these words, "With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." (Eph. 6: 18.) This command to pray at all seasons has about the same idea contained in our text—to pray without ceasing. In Luke 18: 1-8, we have a parable given by our Lord in which he taught that men ought always to pray and not to faint. This is just as binding on us as it would be if the statement had been in the form of a positive commandment, (b) We have examples of people continuing in prayer. In Acts 1: 14 we read that the apostles and perhaps one hundred twenty disciples in Jerusalem spent the time between the ascension of Jesus and the day of Pentecost in prayer. Luke says they "continued stedfastly in prayer." Again, when the matter of distributing food to the needy in Jerusalem got so big the apostles could not take care of it, they said it was not good for them to leave the word of God and serve tables, so the brethren should look out among themselves seven men of good report who should be appointed over that business. But the apostles said, "We will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word." (Acts 6: 4.) Then we have Paul as an example of one who engaged unceasingly in prayer. "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." (Rom. 1: 9, 10.) (c) We should pray unceasingly for our own benefit. God does not make arbitrary demands of us. Everything he commands us to do is for our good and his glory. So, he does not demand that we pray simply for the pleasure that

he derives from seeing people bow before him in prayer, but we are to pray because it is good for us. We need to pray because there is a devil, called Satan, who is going about seeking whom he may devour and destroy. (1 Pet. 5: 8, 9.) Jesus tells us in our lesson text that we should pray that we be not brought into temptation but delivered from the evil one. Paul tells us in 2 Thess. 3: 3 that the Lord is faithful to guard us from the evil one. Since Satan is seeking continually to destroy us, we ought to continue in prayer for deliverance from him. (d) We need to pray without ceasing, because to do so makes us ever mindful of our own weakness and of the strength and the willingness of the Lord to deliver us from evil, (e) Another reason for praying without ceasing is the fact that God is blessing us unceasingly, and we ought to be giving thanks to him. Thanksgiving is one form of prayer, and we are ever obligated to give thanks to God for the unceasing and unnumbered blessings which he brings to us. (f) Again we need to pray without ceasing because there are so many people in the world in need of our prayers. Paul often asked people to pray for him, and he reminded people that he was praying without ceasing in their behalf. There are the sick physically, the weak spiritually, the discouraged, who need our prayers and who would be encouraged to know that we make mention of them often in our prayers. We are told to pray for the rulers of our country. (1 Tim. 2: 2.) They are always in need of wisdom from God and of courage to do the right thing. Since their need is continual, our prayers in their behalf should be continual. We should pray without ceasing in our own behalf. We are constantly in need of courage and of wisdom. James tells us that if we lack wisdom, we may ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given unto him. (James 1: 5.)

Exposition of the Text

I. Instructions Relative to Prayer. (Matt. 6: 5-8)

Ye shall not be as the hypocrites.

Jesus issued many warnings against hypocrisy, especially that type practiced by the sect of the Pharisees.

The reader should read Matt. 23 in this connection. If there is ever a time when men should avoid hypocrisy, it seems that it would be when they are talking to God. But the Pharisees practiced hypocrisy even in prayer.

They love to stand and pray in the synagogues. Emphasis here should be placed on the word love. The Pharisees *loved* to stand in the synagogue and in the corners of the streets that they might be seen of men. These hypocrites hoped that people would think they were caught on the streets at the hour of prayer and that they were simply engaging in prayer at the hour of prayer in spite of being on business errands on the street. But really in their hearts they loved to be seen of men. Hence, they made it convenient to be on the street where they could be seen by men when the hour of prayer came. Some have misunderstood the point of emphasis here and thought that Jesus was condemning standing to pray, but this passage must not be used to condemn people standing while praying. Even those who condemn standing for prayer always stand for the dismissal prayer. There is no more sin in standing for the main prayer of a period of worship than to stand while praying for dismissal. That Jesus was not condemning the fact that they were standing while praying is seen from the following. "Whosoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one." (Mark 11: 25.) Jesus would have condemned the prayers of these hypocrites, even if they had been kneeling, because they loved to be seen of men while they prayed.

They have received their reward. Their reward was to be seen of men, and they had been seen of men; hence, they had received all of the reward they would ever receive for those prayers. The praise of men is the only reward that we will ever receive for any act which is done primarily for the purpose of being seen and praised by men.

When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber. There is no sin in allowing people to see and hear one pray. Paul taught brethren at Corinth to pray in such manner that others might say amen at the close of

the prayer. (1 Cor. 14: 16, 17.) In our text Jesus was giving instruction with reference to private prayers and devotion. He intended that his disciples should not be classed with the hypocritical Pharisees. Hence, he told them to enter into their chamber, their inner chamber, and after shutting the door, they should pray to the Father who is in secret. With reference to the inner chamber, or closet, we are told that it was the custom of the time in which Jesus lived for people to build rooms where one might be alone simply for prayer. Over the porch or entrance to the house one story above the ground many Jewish houses had a room for privacy. This was usually referred to as the *upper room*, and that expression has come to mean, in our language, a place of private devotion. No doubt many of us fail to avail ourselves of a period of time when we can be alone with God. We live in such crowded conditions and in such a hurry that we do not have either place or time for private meditation and prayer. Someone has said that apostasy begins at the closet door. When people fail to have a place and time for private prayer it is easy for them to depart from the way of righteousness. For such a practice of private prayers Jesus says that the Father who hears in secret and sees you in your secrecy shall recompense thee. There is a reward for that type of prayer, but no reward from God for the type of prayer used by the hypocritical Pharisee. The rewards for such prayers are wisdom, courage, strength, and a good clean conscience.

Use not vain repetitions. The hypocrites were in the habit of using repetitions in order that they might make their prayers last longer. Jesus did not condemn long prayers. He often prayed hours at a time and sometimes spent a whole night in prayer. Neither does Jesus condemn praying the same thing over and over. When Jesus was facing the cross in Gethsemane he prayed the same thing three times. "And he . . . went away, and prayed a third time, saying again the same words." (Matt. 28: 44.) The emphasis in this text is not on repetition but on the word *vain*. Their repetitions had no meaning. The

only reason they were repeating was that they might lengthen their prayers and thus be thought of as praying much. And they had brought themselves to think that there was a virtue in long prayers, that they would be heard if they prayed long, whereas they would not be heard if they did not pray long.

II. An Example of Prayer (Matt. 6: 9-13)

Our Father who art in heaven.

Notice the beauty and the simplicity of this address. Some brethren approach God with a long string of terms of address, some of them applicable, some of them not. But even if they were all applicable they still give the impression of stilted formality. Sometimes while praying Jesus addressed God simply as Father, or Holy Father. (John 17: 1, 11.) Jesus recommended this form of address, and we can do no better in our prayers than simply to say, "Our Father who art in heaven."

Hallowed be thy name. The word *hallowed* means blessed or holy or consecrated. This is the expression of a wish or desire that all men would reverence or bless the name of God. To reverence the name of God is to reverence him who wears that name. Hence, this is really a prayer that God may be revered in that way which his holy name implies he is worthy to receive. The student would do well in this connection to use his concordance and collect all or at least many of the names used to designate God and then study the meaning of these names. It will give him an insight into the character of God that he has not had before.

Thy kingdom come. John had come predicting that the kingdom was at hand. He had prepared material for the kingdom. Now Jesus had taken up the work of preaching that the kingdom was at hand. Jesus now teaches his disciples to pray that this kingdom may come. We, today, cannot pray this prayer as they were taught to pray it. For that for which they were taught to pray has already come. We may pray for the spread of the kingdom into all the world, and not only pray for it, but we should work for it. But to pray that the kingdom may be established is to deny that Jesus did what he

came to do—to establish his kingdom.

Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. This is the expression of a desire on the part of the one praying that the will of God may be known and done by the people of the earth as the will of God is known and done by the citizens of heaven. Some have objected on account of the fact that the will of God is done perfectly in heaven and we on earth will never be able to follow his will to perfection. While it is true that we may never be able to do so, yet the standard is perfection, and it is our duty to attain as nearly to perfection as is humanly possible.

Give us this day our daily bread.

The three statements above deal with the divine side, and the three following statements deal with the human. We are to pray for our physical needs. Daily bread simply means all that we need for our sustenance day by day. This includes all those things which Jesus promised to them who seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness first. (Matt. 6: 33, 34.) While we are told to pray for our daily bread, we must not forget that there is some work to be done. Paul says that if a man will not work neither let him eat. (2 Thess. 3: 10.) It should be noticed that Jesus does not teach us to pray that we may get rich, that we may lay up a big bank account, or that we may accumulate a lot of property. Many people spend a lot of time and energy laying up wealth, and doubtless some of them pray for God to bless them in their efforts to gain wealth, but in this prayer Jesus simply teaches us to pray for our daily provisions. A man who has good health and provisions for the day should be there-with content. (1 Tim. 6: 6-8.)

And forgive us our debts. Obviously the word debt is used here in a figurative sense. Jesus uses the word *trespasses* in verse 14 and so the word debt in verse 12 corresponds to trespasses in verse 14. The resemblance between the two is this, that only a creditor can forgive a man his debts and only God can forgive us our trespasses against him.

Bring us not into temptation. God does not tempt us with evil. (James 1: 13, 14.) But God sometimes, as

in the case of Job, allows the devil to try us. Then in case it is for our good that we be brought unto trial, Jesus tells us to pray that we may be delivered from the evil one, that is, from the one that brings the trial upon us. If we were left alone in the trial, certainly Satan could overcome any of us, but we are to pray that God will not allow us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear, but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape. (1 Cor. 10: 13.)

III. Forgiveness on Condition (Matt. 6: 14, 15)

If ye forgive men their trespasses.

The example of prayer ends at verse 13, and now Jesus addresses himself to his disciples along the same line with which he closed that prayer and says if we forgive men their trespasses, our heavenly Father will also forgive us but if we do not for-

give men when they trespass against us, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us when we trespass against him. So in reality we determine whether or not we can be forgiven for our sins. If we refuse to be forgiving in our hearts, the Lord will deal with us accordingly. But if in love, humility, and brotherly kindness we forgive and forget the wrongs done us by our brother, then the Lord, in mercy and kindness toward us, will forgive us. The treatment which the father extended toward the returned prodigal son of Luke 15 is an illustration of complete forgiveness. In spite of all that the son had done to disgrace and dishonor his father, that man received his son with open arms and put him back in the place he enjoyed before he left home. That is forgiveness, and anything short of that is not forgiveness.

General Information on Prayer

1. Elements of prayer, (a) Supplication. (1 Tim. 2: 1; Eph. 6: 18.) (b) Intercessions. (1 Tim. 2: 1; Rom. 15: 30; 2 Thess. 3: 1.) (c) Thanksgiving. (1 Tim. 2: 1; Eph. 5: 20; 1 Thess. 5: 18; 1 Tim. 4: 3, 4.) (d) Praise. (Matt. 6: 9; 1 Kings 8: 15, 23, 24.) (e) Confession. (Neh. 9: 32-38; 1 John 1: 8-2: 2.)

2. Principles governing prayer, (a) In the name of Christ. (John 14: 13, 14; 16: 23-26; Col. 3: 17.) (b) According to God's will. (Matt. 6: 10; 1 John 5: 14; James 4: 15.) (c) In

obedience. (1 John. 3: 22; James 5: 16-18.) (d) Unselfishness. James 4: 2, 3.) (e) In faith. (James 1: 5, 6; Matt. 21: 22.) (f) In worshipful attitude. (John 15: 7; 1 Cor. 14: 15; 1 Tim. 2: 8.)

3. Examples of prayers, (a) Old Testament. (1) David. (Psalm 23.) (2) Solomon. (1 Kings 8: 22ff.) (3) Habakkuk. (Hab. 3: 1-19.) (b) New Testament. (1) The disciples. (Matt. 6: 9-15.) (2) Jesus. (John 17.) (3) Paul. (Rom. 15: 30-33; Phil. 1: 9-11.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the 'Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What Is meant by praying without ceasing.

Cite both commands and examples of prayer without ceasing.

Give arguments to show that our own condition requires prayer without ceasing.

Does the condition of the world about us require unceasing prayers?

For whom are we taught In the Scriptures to pray?

Instructions Relative to Prayer

Against what sin does Jesus give special warning?

Does Jesus condemn the Pharisees for standing while praying?

Why did the Pharisees love to stand in public places for prayer?

What was the reward which they received?

Where did Jesus say his disciples should enjoy their devotions?

What do you know of the origin of the term "upper room"?

Where does apostasy begin?

Does Jesus condemn long prayers?

Does Jesus condemn saying the same prayer several times?

Show the difference between vain repetition and praying the same prayer many times.

An Example of Prayer

How did Jesus teach his disciples to address God?

Discuss the propriety of using a long list of pious sounding terms of address.
 What is the meaning of the word hallowed?
 Can one respect the name of God without respecting his person?
 Can one respect the person of God who shows little or no respect for his name?
 Is there a part of this prayer which we cannot pray today?
 What should be our prayer with reference to the will of God on earth?
 For how much material sustenance are we told to pray?
 How does this part of the prayer agree with the average person's ambitions?

What is the measure of forgiveness for which we are to pray?
 For what deliverance are we told to pray?
 What hope do we have of being able to overcome temptation?

Forgiveness on Condition

On what condition are we promised forgiveness of our sins?
 In what parable do we have an example of complete forgiveness?
 Is such forgiveness easy to practice?
 What is there of interest to you in the division of general information?

Lesson XI—June 14, 1953

INCREASING IN STRENGTH

The Lesson Text

Eph. 6: 10-18; 2 Pet. 3: 18

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,

18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Je'-sus Christ. To him *be* the glory both now and for ever. A-m6n\

Golden Text.—*"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."* (Luke 2: 52.)

Devotional Reading.—2 Pet. 1: 5-8.

Daily Bible Readings

June 8. M.....Strength in the Lord (2 Tim. 2: 1-5)
 June 9. T.....Fighting a Good Fight (1 Tim. 6: 11-16)
 June 10. W.....Growing in Faithfulness (John 15: 1-10)
 June 11. T.....Jesus Our Example in Growth (Luke 2: 40-52)
 June 12. F.....Growing in Knowledge (Col. 1: 9-18)
 June 13. S.....Growing in Love (Phil. 1: 1-11)
 June 14. S.....". Growing in Grace (2 Pet. 3: 14-18)

Time.—For Ephesians A.D. 63; for First Peter A.D. 60.

Places.—Ephesus and Asia Minor.

Persons.—Paul, Peter, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. Our Text Implies the Humanity of Christ. The fact that Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature implies that he was a human being and that he grew as any ordinary human being would grow in mind and body. Early in the life of the church men began to speculate with reference to the person of Christ. There were those who denied the reality of Christ's divine nature and held him to be merely man. They believed that at his baptism he was endowed with an unmeasured fullness of the Holy Spirit which rested upon him and guided him. The sect holding this view was known as the Ebionites. Another sect known as the Docetae denied the reality of the human body of Jesus. They viewed all matter as inherently evil, and that since the human body would be composed of matter, God could not live in that which was inherently evil. But our text implies that both the body and the mind of Jesus grew with the years. If they actually grew, the body developing in strength, and the mind in its ability to comprehend the things about it, it was something more than an appearance, it was the real thing as we know reality. Many people are inclined to attribute to Jesus powers beyond his age. In the New Testament apocrypha there are stories which attribute to Jesus miraculous powers at the age of four to seven. One story goes that he and other children were on the banks of the creek fashioning mud into the form of birds. His action was reported to the elders. The story continues that when Jesus saw them coming he destroyed the evidence by giving wings to the birds and causing them to fly away. Other stories attribute to him knowledge beyond his age. There are many who read the story of his conversation with the lawyers and doctors in the temple at Jerusalem at the age of twelve and see in that an indication of the possession of knowledge beyond his age at that time. But there is no indication that Jesus possessed miraculous knowledge at that time. The knowledge that he displayed on that occasion was such as any twelve year-old child could have displayed had he

used his time in study and meditation as Jesus obviously used his time.

2. The Fourfold Growth of Jesus.

(a) Jesus grew mentally. We have already suggested that Jesus did not have miraculous knowledge in his infancy and childhood. His mental growth was caused by the teaching which he received and the study and application which he made of the teaching. (b) Jesus grew physically. All who believe in the humanity of Jesus believe that he grew physically. He was born as any other baby and was helpless during infancy, but developed as a normal child would to take care of himself and finally to the estate of manhood. (c) Jesus grew spiritually. Our text says that he grew in favor with God. This we take as spiritual growth. There are some who are afraid to take the position that Jesus grew spiritually for fear they will imply that there were times when he was not what he should be spiritually. If he grew spiritually, they think that implies that before his growth he was not what he should have been spiritually. But the thought is that, as he grew mentally and physically, his spiritual growth kept pace. His growth in these various realms was harmonious. There was never a time when he was unbalanced or, to put it in a common term, lopsided. To clear the matter a little, his Father required more spiritual understanding of him at the age of twenty than he required of him at the age of five or ten. Hence, in order to meet the increasing requirements of the Father, on account of his increasing mental ability, he must grow spiritually. He was everything the Father required of him at ten or twelve, but he was not as strong spiritually at ten or twelve as he was required to be at twenty or thirty. But when he reached the age of twenty or thirty, he was everything the Father expected him to be at that age. (d) Jesus grew socially. The social growth of Jesus is implied in his growing in favor with men. The lovely character of Jesus naturally attracted the attention of people, and since his character was all that even the heavenly Father expected it to be, it was one that ap-

pealed to people. It was attractive in its purity and innocence, in its holiness and guilelessness. It was not until Jesus began to teach things contrary to the conceptions of religious leaders, and to criticize them for their human traditions, that he lost this favor with men.

3. **Jesus Our Example of Growth.** Since Jesus advanced mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially, we as parents should provide for the growth of our children in these four ways. It is not wise to provide for the development of our children mentally and physically and socially but to deprive them of the means of growing spiritually. Yet, there are many parents who make no provision whatever for the spiritual growth of their children. They do not provide good books and magazines, they do not teach their children the things that will promote spiritual growth, and many of them do not encourage their

children to attend Bible study on Sunday where they may grow spiritually. Too many children are left without any provision whatever for their spiritual growth until they reach manhood and womanhood and feel the need of such development themselves. Furthermore, it is good for us to provide for this fourfold development on a harmonious scale. In some institutions there is too much stress on the mental development; in others there is too much stress on the physical development; while there are other societies and institutions where the emphasis is placed upon the social development. We believe that these three should be stressed, but we also believe that children should be in educational institutions which stress the spiritual development along with the other three so that they may develop harmoniously and not become unbalanced in their growth.

Exposition of the Text

I. Exhortation to Increase in Strength

(Eph. 6: 10-13)

Finally, be strong in the Lord. Paul does not simply exhort us to be strong, but rather he exhorts us to be strong in the Lord. We are not to depend upon our own wisdom for strength, but we are to depend upon our relationship with the Lord and our help from him to make us able to do that which we are expected to do. The apostle Paul said he could do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthened him. (Phil. 4: 13.) The people of Israel repeatedly made the mistake of depending upon political alliances formed with Egypt, or some other neighboring nation, instead of depending upon the strength which was promised them in God. So we today may rely upon various things for our strength. We may rely upon our education or upon our experience or we may rely on our financial ability, but all of these are but broken reeds as compared with putting our trust in the Lord. In Eph. 3: 16 Paul suggests two things with reference to this strength which we are to exercise in the Lord, (a) He suggests that it is the inward man who receives the strength. In this connection one should read where

Paul says that though our outward man is decaying yet our inward man is renewed day by day. (2 Cor. 4: 16.) (b) Paul suggests that it is the Holy Spirit that gives the strength to this inward man. Later in our lesson we learn that the Holy Spirit has a sword, or an instrument, with which he accomplishes such work as this. That sword is the word of God. Hence, the Holy Spirit strengthens our inward man by the use of the word of God. That individual who refuses to study and apply the word of God need not expect to increase in spiritual strength. There can be no such thing as being strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and at the same time being ignorant of his word.

Able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Paul suggests that we put on the armor of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. This suggests that our chief enemy is the devil, that he is the chief source of danger to us spiritually. We will need to increase in spiritual strength in order that we may be able to stand the temptations that will come to us from Satan. We should notice also that the devil uses wiles. A wile is defined to be a

trick or stratagem, a sly artifice, a beguiling or playful trick, also as deceit. So the devil uses all sorts of tricks or strategies to carry his point and to bring us to destruction.

Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood. This suggests two things,

(a) Our enemy is not weak. Flesh and blood are symbols of weakness, and so the apostle would tell us that the forces against which we wrestle are not weak, but are strong and terrible, (b) The forces against which we wrestle are invisible. Flesh and blood stand for that which is visible and tangible, and we do not wrestle with such things primarily, but against Satanic powers which are invisible and deceitful. Nor does the apostle mean to suggest that we have no flesh and blood enemies, for if a person lives right and teaches the truth, he will have enemies among his fellow men. Our Lord made enemies by his teaching. The apostles all made enemies of men by their teaching. But yet these enemies were used by Satan, and consequently he looked upon Satan as the real enemy.

Against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. Paul uses several terms here in apposition to flesh and blood. Among them are *principalities, powers, world rulers of this darkness, and spiritual hosts of wickedness*. None of these terms are to be taken to mean the kings and governors of the territories in which the Christians lived. These are all spiritual, invisible, and intangible powers. These are the powers of the kingdom of darkness and error and sin, not the kingdoms of this world politically speaking. "Darkness is an emblem of ignorance, misery, and sin; and no description could be more accurate than that of representing these malignant spirits as ruling over a dark world. The earth—dark and wretched, and ignorant, and sinful—is just such a dominion as they would choose, or as they would cause; and the degradation and woe of the heathen world are just such as foul and malignant spirits would delight in. It is a wide and powerful empire. It has been consolidated by ages. It is sustained by all the authority of laws; by all the power of the perverted religious principle; by all the reverence for antiquity; by all the power

of selfish, corrupt, and base passions. No empire has been so extended, or has continued so long, as that empire of darkness; and nothing on earth is so difficult to destroy." (Barnes.) The term, "spiritual hosts of wickedness," does not refer to wicked influences but rather to wicked spirits. The statement might well be translated, *hosts of wicked spirits*. So our warfare is not against flesh and blood but against hosts of wicked spirits. For this reason we need to increase our spiritual strength.

Wherefore take up the whole armor of God. This is the provision that God has made for our protection. If man were left to his own wisdom and ingenuity to stand against this host of wicked spirits, his salvation would be impossible. The devil is too wise and too wily for any of us to overcome without help from above. Hence, we are dependent upon God to furnish us an armor and strength to use that armor in the evil day that we may stand against this host of spirits.

Having done all, to stand. The emphasis here is to be placed upon the word *all*, having done all the Lord has said do, having made all the preparation the Lord intends us to make, and by having done all, we may stand. That individual who does not feel the necessity of doing all that God tells him to do is presumptuous and one day may regret his presumption. When we have availed ourselves of all that God provides, we will still have to depend upon him to be merciful and exercise grace toward our mistakes and our lack of faithfulness and perseverance.

II. Equipment Provided (Eph. 6: 14-18)

Having girded your loins with truth. The girdle was a piece of cloth or a sash which served two purposes. First, it held a long flowing robe of the soldier when in action or running, and second, it provided strength for the midsection of the man. Paul says this girdle on the Christian soldier is truth. The truth will lend strength. Everybody knows that in teaching or in defending the gospel of Christ, if one has the truth on his side, he is strong when otherwise he

would be weak. Whether in the pulpit or in the classroom or in living before our neighbors, if we have the truth, we have a hidden strength that will give us courage and power to overcome the obstacles.

Put on the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate was a piece of armor, which covered the body from the neck to the thighs, and sometimes was made of rings or plates so fastened together that it would be flexible and yet guard the body from a sword, a spear, or an arrow. Paul says that righteousness plays the part on the Christian soldier that the breastplate played on the Roman soldier. When condemning sin in others, there is nothing that lends us courage like the consciousness of our own righteousness. But if we are conscious of unrighteousness, we are continually afraid that someone will bring up our past and thus weaken our defense for the truth.

Having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel. Shoes were very necessary, especially for foot soldiers, on long marches over rocky ground. So the Christian soldier needs to be shod with preparation of the gospel of peace. The emphasis here is on the *preparation*. We are to be prepared by having studied our lesson and by having so arranged our thoughts and material that we can use them effectively. Many of us have a knowledge of the gospel which is satisfactory to us, but not such a knowledge that we are able to pass it on to others. We are lacking in the preparation of the gospel, which Paul says the gospel shoes will give us.

Taking up the shield of faith. The shield was that instrument which was held in one hand and kept before the body to protect it from the arrows and darts of the enemy. So our faith is that which protects us from the fiery darts of the evil one.

Since faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10: 17), we must read and study the Bible in order that we may have a shield. Those who never read their Bibles do not have a shield to quench the fiery darts of Satan. For that reason many people fall before the enemy.

Helmet of salvation. The helmet is that which protects the head. And here the helmet of the Christian soldier is said to be salvation. In 1 Thess. 5: 8 Paul says that the helmet is the hope of salvation, and this throws some light upon our passage. John tells us that everyone that has this hope purifieth himself. (1 John 3:3.) So this hope of salvation helps us to purify ourselves and to be ready for the onslaught of the enemy.

And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This is the only offensive weapon which the Christian soldier has. All other pieces of the armor are defensive, but the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, is the one offensive weapon which the Christian soldier has for use. Those who never read and study their Bible have no sword. We would think it foolish for a soldier to go into battle without any weapon. And so the Christian who goes out without having studied his Bible is more foolish.

With all prayer and supplication. These pieces of armor are to be used prayerfully. We are not to depend upon these in our own strength. But we are to use these weapons and these pieces for defense, praying that we may be successful in our fight against the enemy. Some who would not dare enter the fight without the Christian's armor will yet, after having taken that armor, use it in their own strength and their own wisdom without engaging in prayer. It is just about as foolish to do without the armor at all as it is to try to use the armor without using it prayerfully.

General Information on Increasing in Strength

1. Must grow in knowledge. (2 Pet. 3: 18.) (a) Of God. (John 17: 3; Col. 1: 9, 10.) (b) Of Christ. (Phil. 3: 8-10; 1 Pet. 1: 2.) (c) Of the Word of God. (Heb. 5: 11-14.) (d) Of Satan and his devices. (2 Cor. 2: 11; 4: 4; 1 Pet. 5: 8, 9.)

2. Must grow in practice, (a) Filled with fruits. (Phil. 1: 9-11.) (b) Growing in faith and love. (1 Thess. 1: 3; 2 Thess. 1: 3.) (c) In good works. (1 Tim. 6: 18; 1 Pet. 2: 12.)

3. Must grow in appreciation of spiritual values, (a) Come to know

the love of Christ. (Eph. 3: 14-19.)

(b) Value Christ above world. (Phil. 3: 7-11.) (c) Give up the world for Christ. (Matt. 16: 24-26.)

4. Must grow in enjoyment, (a)

Rejoice in the Lord. (Phil. 3: 1; 4:

4.) (b) Rejoice in hope. (Rom. 5: 2; 12: 13.) (c) Rejoice in suffering for the Lord. (Acts 5: 41; Col. 1: 24; 1 Pet. 4: 12-16.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What in our text implies the humanity of Christ?

Name two mistakes that have been made with reference to the person of Christ.

How have people attributed to Jesus powers beyond his age?

Do you think Jesus possessed miraculous knowledge at the age of twelve?

Discuss the growth of Jesus in the four ways mentioned in our text.

Explain how Jesus could grow spiritually and yet be all the Father expected of him.

Who is responsible for the fourfold development of young people?

Discuss the difficulty of such development in institutions of higher learning.

Exhortation to Increase in Strength

In what relationship are we to find our strength for right living?

What part of man's nature is capable of receiving this strength?

By whom is our inward man strengthened?

Through what instrument does the Holy Spirit strengthen the inward man?

Who is our chief enemy, and what are we to use in resisting him?

What is the meaning of the word wile?

What two lessons does Paul suggest when he says we wrestle not with flesh and blood?

What other terms does Paul use to describe our enemies?

What provision has God made for our protection against these enemies?

How does Paul emphasize the need for complete preparation?

Equipment Provided

What does the soldier's girdle represent on the Christian?

How do the knowledge and practice of truth lend strength to the Christian?

What does the soldier's breastplate represent on the Christian?

Show how our consciousness of righteousness lends strength and courage?

With what are the Christians feet to be shod?

What does such preparation necessitate on our part?

What is the shield, and from what does it protect?

What is the Christian helmet?

What is the only offensive weapon the Christian has?

Using the figures of speech in our text, how many barefooted and weaponless soldiers are there in this class?

In what frame of mind is the Christian to use this armor?

What is there of interest to you in the division on general information?

Lesson XII—June 21, 1953

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

The Lesson Text

Matt. 4: 1-11

1 Then was Je'-sus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered.

3 And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

5 Then the devil taketh him into

the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple,

6 And saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and, on their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Je'-sus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and

showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

9 And he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Je'-sus unto him,

Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

11 Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Golden Text.—*"Abstain from every form of evil."* (1 Thess. 5: 22.)

Devotional Reading.—Dan. 1: 8-20.

Daily Bible Readings

June 15. M.....	The Temptation of the Lord (Luke 4: 1-13)
June 16. T.....	Way of Escape Provided (1 Cor. 10: 1-13)
June 17. W.....	Withstanding Temptation (Prov. 1: 10-19)
June 18. T.....	Prayer and Temptation (Mark 14: 32-42)
June 19. F.....	Daniel's Victory Over Temptation (Dan. 1: 8-16)
June 20. S.....	Girding Against Temptation (Eph. 6: 10-20)
June 21. S.....	Jesus Our Advocate (1 John 2: 1-4)

Time.—A.D. 27.

Places.—Wilderness of Judea and Jerusalem.

Persons.—Jesus and Satan.

Golden Text Explained

1. There Are Many Forms of Evil.

Our adversary, Satan, is a versatile enemy. He has the ability to appear in many forms and to attack us from many angles. Paul tells us that Satan is able to fashion himself into an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11: 14.) Again Paul suggests that Satan has various devices through which he may gain an advantage over us if we are ignorant of these devices. (2 Cor. 2: 11.) On account of his various ways of taking us into captivity, Peter says we should "be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Pet. 5: 8.)

In speaking of evil, the Scriptures use a number of terms, (a) Paul speaks of our cleansing ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit. (2 Cor. 7: 1.) The prodigal son is a good example of one who is defiled in flesh. He stooped to indulge in those low base fleshly sins satisfying the lusts and desires of the flesh. The elder brother is a good example of one who needs to cleanse himself of the defilement of the spirit. While he would not stoop to the base things which two prodigal son did, yet he would indulge in sins of disposition that rendered him as much in need of the love and mercy of his father as

the sins of the prodigal, (b) Another classification of evil is moral and spiritual. We may classify as moral evil everything that is wrong in the realm of morals. Lying, cheating, drunkenness, adultery, and many, many other violations of moral principles would come in this class. Then in the spiritual realm all violations of the spiritual laws would constitute spiritual evil. Idolatry, the lack of piety and reverence for God and for things holy, the preaching of false doctrines, and the practice of unscriptural things in worship would be classed as spiritual evils, (c) Another classification of evil would be sins of ignorance, weakness, and rebellion. All moral and spiritual evil might be committed in either of these three ways, thus multiplying the possibility for sin. (d) The Scriptures classify all sin as either the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, *or* the pride of life. John tells us that this is all there is in the world. (1 John 2:

16.) (e) Then there are three great realms of human activity: society, business, and religion. There are several forms of evil that are peculiar to each one of these realms of activity. Each person has his own place and responsibility in each of these realms, and due care must be taken

to keep himself from the evils that are peculiar to each of these realms of activity.

2. Emphasis Is Placed on Every Form of Evil. Some find it rather easy to refrain from evil in their business and religious activities, but at the same time find it very difficult to refrain from sins in their social relationships. There are others who have little or no trouble doing right in their social relationships but find it difficult to conduct their business activities according to the principles of Christ. Some are inclined to think that doing right in two of these realms of activity will make up for the fact that they do wrong in one realm of activity. There are others who think that if they keep themselves clean in their social and business relationships, and if they are sincere in their religion, they are acceptable to God whether they follow the instructions of the apostles or not. In fact, some think that religion consists of being sincere and not offending one's conscience, that God will accept anything they wish to offer him so long as they are sincere and honest about it. They realize they must live in harmony with the laws of society and business in order to be acceptable in the realms of society and business, but they refuse to accept that principle of action in the realm of religion. They ought to realize that they must walk in harmony with the laws and regulations governing their religious activities if they expect to be acceptable to God in that realm of activity.

3. Why Abstain from Every Form of Evil, (a) Engaging in evil disinclines one from fellowship and communion with God. When Adam and Eve sinned, they hid themselves in the garden from the presence of God. So when people today engage in sin in either realm of activity, they are inclined to hide themselves from God. They lose interest in going to church, there is nothing there to encourage them. It keeps them upset and uneasy in their conscience.

Hence, finding no joy in worship, they soon cease to attend public worship, (b) Not only are we disinclined to have fellowship with God, but engaging in evil renders one unfit for communion and fellowship with God. There can be no fellowship between God and evil, and when we sin we are unfit for his fellowship. Adam and Eve were unfit for fellowship and communion with God when they sinned, (c) Partaking in evil separates one from God. As soon as our first parents sinned, God drove them from the garden and placed a flaming sword at the gate to keep them from the garden, because their sin had rendered them unfit for further fellowship and communion with him. A prophet of old said that sin separates between people and their God. (Isa. 59: 1, 2.) And Paul tells us that we were dead through our trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2: 1.) (d) Evil renders one useless for God. People who practice sin are not fit to serve God; hence, are useless in his vineyard. The apostle Paul tells us "if a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. 2: 21.) From this we see that we must purge ourselves from sin, abstain from every form of evil if we would be meet or prepared for the master's use in every good work, (e) Taking part in evil makes one a servant of Satan. Jesus said, "Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin." (John 8: 34.) (f) Evil dooms one to hell. (Rev. 21: 8.) There is no truth more frequently taught in the Scriptures than this that the practice of sin renders one unfit for communion with God both here and hereafter and dooms one to eternal punishment. If there were no other reason why we should abstain from every form of evil, these are sufficient to make us realize that partaking of evil in any form is a most unwise and a most dangerous practice.

Exposition of the Text

I. The Lust of the Flesh (Matt. 4: 1-4)
Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit.
These words suggest that this temp-

tation was a part of the plans of the Father for the Son. Jesus did not court temptation on his own respon-

sibility. He was willing to contend with the tempter if it was his Father's will. We should not knowingly subject ourselves to temptation by going into places where we know we will be tempted or by associating with people when we know that we will be under temptation as long as we are with them. Mark tells us that this temptation was immediately after his baptism. (Mark 1: 12.) This suggests to us that Satan is always on the job and that he will be tempting us as soon as we declare ourselves to be on the Lord's side. He makes his assaults upon us before we have formed any settled habits of piety, so that he may the more easily turn us from our course.

When he had fasted forty days and forty nights. Unbelievers frequently say that a man cannot go forty days without food and live. To meet this objection some have said that the fast was not complete but that it was only a partial fast for that length of time. However, Luke says that during the forty days Jesus ate nothing. (Luke 4: 2.) Jesus is not the only Bible character who fasted for that length of time. Both Moses and Elijah are said to have fasted forty days. (Ex. 34: 28; 1 Kings 19: 8.) Another question often raised in this connection is whether the temptation lasted during the entire period of forty days or whether Satan came to Jesus at the end of the forty days. Luke's statement concerning the temptation to turn the stones to bread seems to imply that the temptation was during the forty days. His statement follows: "During forty days, being tempted of the devil." According to this, it seems that the temptation ran during the forty days. No doubt Satan made his supreme effort at the close of the forty days, at which time our Lord's hunger was at its highest while his strength to resist temptation was at its lowest.

If thou art the Son of God. Satan began on Jesus the same way he began on Eve, by seeking to plant a doubt in his mind. The reader will remember that the first approach Satan made to Eve was to create in

her mind a doubt as to whether she might eat of all the trees of the garden. (Gen. 3: 1-3.) Here Satan plants a doubt in the mind of Jesus and seeks to get him to perform a miracle to prove whether he was the Son of God. It should be noticed that the thing which Satan suggested for Jesus to do was a very simple and innocent thing. In fact, there could be no more wrong about turning stones to bread than there is in turning water to wine. (John 2: 1-11.) But to do so at the suggestion of Satan and to determine whether or not he was the Son of God would have been wrong. There is also the suggestion of mistreatment in this temptation. Since Jesus was the Son of God and all the world and the fullness thereof belongs to God, certainly Jesus should not go without bread. Satan seeks to plant discontent with his lot in the mind of Jesus, but Jesus was content with whatever lot his Father chose for him and would not follow the devil's suggestion to make that lot easier and more comfortable for himself.

Man shall not live by bread alone.

Jesus quoted from Deut. 8: 3, and from this we may learn several lessons. (a) Jesus considered this portion of scripture as inspired and as a rule of life for those who lived in his day. There is no truth more needed today than this one that people are to study the Scriptures and follow them as the rule of their lives, (b) From the example of Jesus we learn to meet temptation with scripture. Jesus had stored up the word of God in his heart that he might use it in time of temptation. He now uses that which he has gleaned from his study of God's word in this time of trial. We should follow his example by storing the word in our hearts and being ready to use it in time of trial,

(c) There is something in man which cannot subsist on bread. The children of Israel were in the desert, and God provided for their sustenance. In that way God taught them to depend upon him to sustain their lives. We are to learn that God can sustain

us. Jesus was in the care and keeping of his Father. If it was his Father's will for him to go without bread, he would not contravene that will by turning stones into bread. Thus, he taught that living by the will of God was a higher law than living by temporal things. Furthermore, man is of a dual nature, both body and spirit, and for a man to provide for the body alone and to forget the spiritual creature is a very unwise and fatal mistake. If we would give as much time and attention to nurturing our spiritual nature as we give to caring for our physical nature, we would have brighter hopes and better chances of going to heaven.

II. The Pride of Life (Matt. 4: 5-7)

Then the devil taketh him into the holy city. The word devil, when used with reference to the evil spirit, is always in the singular. When the plural is needed to refer to his angels, the word demon is used. The word devil is always used to refer to the archenemy of God and of humanity. By the term holy city, of course, Jerusalem was meant, and from the mention of the temple, we know that the city had to be Jerusalem. On what portion of the temple Satan tempted Jesus, it is difficult to determine. If it was the very highest portion of the temple, it was very likely on the south side, for here the temple was one hundred fifty feet high; and since the terrain on which the temple was built was very rough, it was necessary for the foundation to be very high in order to make the building level. We are told that it was more than seven hundred feet from the top of the south side of the temple to the bottom of the valley below.

If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down. By casting himself from the temple, it would be possible for Jesus to gain two things, (a) He would prove to himself whether he was the Son of God. (b) He would prove to the people that he was under the protection of God and that he was the Messiah. Hence, there was something to be gained from

taking the suggestion of the devil. In fact, one of the deceiving things about some of the devil's temptations is that there is seemingly a lot of good to be accomplished by following his suggestions. It should be noticed that in this connection Satan quoted scripture. However, Satan applied the scripture by implying that God would fulfill his promise to care for people even when they were making trial of him to see if he would care for them, and to this Jesus objects by saying, "It is written, thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God."

III. The Lust of the Eyes (Matt. 4: 8-11)

The devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain. This time Satan appealed to the lust of the eyes by showing Jesus the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. There has been much discussion as to how Satan could show Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Obviously the eye could not see that far. Hence, this was not a natural view. At any rate Satan presented to Jesus a conception of the glory and the riches and the honor of being over all the kingdoms of the world.

All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Some contend that Satan could not give these to Jesus, for they were not his to give. However, they were his by right of usurpation, and to the extent that he controlled them, he could give them to Jesus. If the devil had nothing to give and Jesus knew it, there would have been no temptation. So, obviously, Satan had something to give Jesus. But Jesus also had something to give, and that was his allegiance. Satan was willing to trade his hold upon the world for the allegiance of Jesus.

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Jesus saw that Satan was bidding for his allegiance, and in righteous indignation at this presumption, Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan." Again Jesus reveals the fact that his life was ordered by the Scriptures.

The Scriptures said that man shall worship God only, and Jesus realized that he was bound as a man to live by the Scriptures. Here Jesus set the example of giving up this world to be a worshiper of God. Some brethren refuse to give up a very, very small portion of "the world in order to worship God."

Then the devil leaveth him. Luke says that the devil left him for a season. The devil never leaves us very long at a time. He is continually

coming back, never seemingly discouraged in his efforts to lead us astray.

Angels came and ministered unto him. After his struggle with Satan, and having fasted for forty days, Jesus was very much in need of sustenance. The angels brought him that which he needed. So we may be sure that angels encamp round about the saints and that they do service for them who shall be heirs of salvation. (Heb. 1: 14.)

General Information on Overcoming Temptation

1. Know something about the tempter, (a) His character. (John 8: 44.) (b) His devices. (2 Cor. 2: 11; 1 Pet. 5: 8.) (c) His end. (Heb. 2: 14; 1 John 3: 8; Rev. 20: 10-15.)

2. How to overcome, (a) Form a firm purpose. (Dan. 1: 8.) (b) Pray for protection. (Matt. 6: 13; 2 Thess. 3: 3.) (c) Store God's word in your heart. (Psalm 119: 11; 37:

31.) (d) Use the way of escape provided. (1 Cor. 10: 13.) (e) Resist the devil; draw near to God. (James 4: 7, 8.) (f) Watch and pray. (Matt. 26: 41; 1 Pet. 5: 8, 9.)

3. Blessings to overcomers. (a) God will perfect you. (1 Pet. 5: 10.) (b) Receive the crown of life. (James 1: 12; Rev. 2: 10.) (c) Eat of the tree of life. (Rev. 2: 7; 22: 2-5.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the "Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, places, and persons of this-

Can you show that Satan is a versatile enemy?

Distinguish between defilement of flesh and defilement of spirit.

What two New Testament characters are used to illustrate these types of defilement?

Define and illustrate both moral and spiritual evils.

What is the third classification of evil suggested in our lesson?

In what three classes does John place all the evil in the world?

In what three realms of human activity may these evils be practiced?

Discuss the necessity of doing right in every realm of activity.

Name and discuss six reasons why we should abstain from every form of evil.

Lust of the Flesh

What is implied in the statement that Jesus was led into temptation?

What is suggested by the fact that this temptation was immediately after his baptism?

Was the forty days' fast of Jesus partial or complete?

Was Jesus tempted during the forty days or did the temptation begin at the end of the forty days' fast?

What was Satan's first move in the temptation of both Jesus and Eve?

Why would it have been wrong for Jesus to turn stones into bread?

How did Jesus meet this temptation?

Name and discuss three lessons learned from Jesus' use of the Scriptures.

What is meant by "bread alone" and by living by the word of God?

The Pride of Life

What do you know of the use of the word devil and demon in the scripture?

To what city was Jesus taken for this temptation?

What do you know of the portion of the temple from which Jesus was told to leap?

What did Jesus have to gain by leaping from the temple?

How did Satan make this temptation attractive?

How did Jesus meet this temptation?

The Lust of the Eyes

Where was Jesus taken for this temptation?

Could Satan give the things which he offered in this temptation?

What was Jesus asked to give in return for what Satan had to give?

What does Jesus teach us with reference to our love and enjoyment of the world?

What scripture did Jesus quote in meeting this temptation?

What is said about the devil leaving Jesus?

What is said of the angels in connection with this temptation?

What is there of interest to you in the division on general information?

Lesson XIII—June 28, 1953

FRUITS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

The Lesson Text

John 15: 1-8; Gal. 5: 22-26

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away; and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.

3 Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast

them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and *so* shall ye be my disciples.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 Meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.

24 And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.

25 If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.

26 Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another.

Golden Text.—*"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing"* (John 15: 5.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 3: 8-12.

Daily Bible Readings

June 22. M.....	Fruitfulness of the Righteous Man (Psalm 1: 1-6)
June 23. T.....	Fruitfulness of Old Age (Psalm 92: 6-15)
June 24. W.....	The Vineyard of God (Isa. 5: 1-7)
June 25. T.....	Curse Upon the Unfruitful (Matt. 21: 18-22)
June 26. F.....	The Fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 16-26)
June 27. S.....	Fruits of Righteousness (Phil. 1: 3-11)
June 28. S.....	Destiny of the Unfruitful (Luke 13: 6-9)

TIME.—For John A.D. 30; for Galatians, A.D. 57.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Asia Minor.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, Paul, and all Christians.

Golden Text Explained

1. Our Relationship to Christ. In

this text Jesus teaches that Christians bear a relationship to him which is comparable to the relationship which branches bear to a vine. This relationship is seen in the following:

(a) The vine bears the branch. The branch grows out of and is dependent upon the vine. This describes the Christian's relationship to Christ. As the vine existed first and put forth before the branches, so Christ existed first before there could be Christians de-

pending upon him. Paul uses a similar figure of speech in Rom. 11: 18 to teach us humility and appreciation for the fact that God bears us. He says for us to remember that we do not bear the root but the root bears us. So we are to remember that it is the vine that bears the branch and not the branch that bears the vine. This should teach us a lesson in humility and of dependence upon him to whom we owe our very existence,

(b) The vine supplies the branch. As

the branch is dependent upon the vine for its very life so we are dependent upon Christ for our spiritual life. In John 1: 4 we are taught that Jesus is the source of all life. And again, "for as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself." (John 5: 26.) Another thought suggested here is that as the vine supplies the branch with the ability to bear fruit, so Jesus supplies his followers with the spiritual strength and vitality to bear Christian fruit. In Rom. 12: 3-8 and 1 Pet. 4: 9-11 we are taught that the strength which we have for doing good is from God and that none of us should think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think but to think soberly according as how God has dealt to each one of us the measure of faith. It would be foolish for a branch which bears large fruit to despise another branch on the same vine which bears small fruit. So it is foolish and sinful for a Christian who bears much Christian fruit to despise one who is not as fruitful as he. Since our ability to bear fruit depends upon our relationship with Christ, he is entitled to all the glory, (c) This is a glorious relationship. We take the highest relationships of life for granted and so lose our appreciation of the glory and the grandeur of them. The sunrise and the sunset are gloriously thrilling events, and yet they are so common that we fail to enjoy and appreciate them. Our family relationships are great and productive of much joy and happiness, yet we sometimes lose sight of the glory of them because we are so familiar with them. Our close and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ is a glorious relationship, and yet we see little of the glory attached to it because we take it for granted. Our going to church on Sunday morning for the purpose of having communion with our Lord and our private devotions in which we say our prayers and read our scriptures become much a habit and so we lose an appreciation of the glorious privileges that are ours, (d) This is a responsible relationship. With all our opportunities in life there come responsibilities, and our relationship to Jesus Christ is no exception to this rule. By vir-

tue of the blessings and privileges of this intimate relationship with him, illustrated by the relationship of the branch to the vine, there comes a great responsibility. As the branch is obligated to bear fruit, so we in our relationship to Christ are obligated to bear fruit; and as the branch which bears no fruit is cut off, so we will be destroyed if we remain fruitless.

2. Result of This Relationship. Our text tells us that he that abides in Jesus and Jesus abides in him, the same will bear much fruit. Some have been troubled over the expression of Christ abiding in us and our abiding in him at the same time. Perhaps this trouble comes because we are prone to take things too literally. Certainly the branch does not abide in the vine in the sense that it is wrapped up inside the vine nor does the vine abide in the branch in any such way. So we are not in Christ in the sense that we are totally surrounded by him or is he in us in that sense. But as the branch is in the vine and the vine is in the branch, so we are in Christ and Christ is in us. And the result of this relationship is that we bear fruit. Paul expressed about the same lesson when he said, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. 2: 20.) And again he said that the life of Jesus is manifested in our mortal flesh. (2 Cor. 4: 9, 11.) So our relationship with Christ makes it possible for his life and character to be made manifest in our life.

3. Necessity of This Relationship. Our text tells us that apart from Christ we can do nothing. This emphasizes the necessity of our relationship to Jesus. As the branch cannot bear fruit unless it abides in the vine, so we cannot bear fruit unless we abide in Christ. One writer sums up the lesson suggested as follows: (a) That to Christ is due all the praise for all the good works Christians perform, (b) That they will perform good works just in proportion as they feel their dependence upon him and look to him for strength, (c) That the reason why others fail at being holy is because they are unwilling to look to Jesus and they are unwilling to seek grace and strength from him who alone is able to give it. (Barnes.)

Exposition of the Text

I. Source of Fruitfulness (John 15: 1-5)

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Our text is a part of the teaching done by our Lord between the time he instituted the supper and the time he was betrayed by Judas in the garden. He wished his disciples to know their relationship to him and to realize their dependence upon him for the strength they would need not only in the events to follow immediately but throughout all their lives. He also wished his disciples to realize his relationship with the Father. He said his Father is the husbandman. This word means the vine dresser or the one who tends or cares for a vineyard, one whose office is to plant and to nurture and to trim and defend the vine. By this he meant that his heavenly Father sent him to the world, maintained him while he was here, gave him the strength to be what he was to them, and to furnish them with all the strength they would need for bearing fruit as his disciples.

He taketh it away. This is said of of the branch in Christ that does not bear fruit. There are those who contend that one in Christ has no choice as to whether or not he will bear fruit, but this would rob us of our right of choice. God does not force us to be branches in the vine nor does he force us after we become branches to bear fruit. If we force this passage to teach that we have not more responsibility with deciding whether we will bear fruit or not than the branch has as to whether or not it will bear fruit, we do injustice to the passage. It is a known fact, however, that some branches become fruitless and have to be taken away. This simply teaches that some who are in Christ may, for one reason or another, become fruitless in their lives and all such God takes away.

He cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. This is said of the branch in Christ that bears fruit. Here we have a contrast between the fruitful and the unfruitful branch. The unfruitful branch is taken away, while the fruitful branch is cleansed or pruned that it may bear more

fruit. This is the same lesson that Jesus taught in the parable of the talents when he said, "Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away." (Matt. 25: 29.)

Already ye are clean because of the word. The word clean here is to be taken in the sense in which it is used in the second verse. There he said that the fruit-bearing branch is cleansed or pruned that it may bear more fruit, and now here he says that ye are cleansed or pruned by the word that I have spoken. Through his teaching he had removed many misconceptions of theirs and thus had prepared them for fruit bearing. The word of God is still the instrument which is used to cleanse our lives and make us fruit bearers. And Peter tells us that we have purified our souls in obedience to the truth. (1 Pet. 1: 22.) So through the teaching of Jesus and our response to his teaching, we are put in condition to bear fruit for the Lord.

The branch cannot bear fruit of itself. Jesus uses this obvious truth to teach us that we cannot bear fruit unless we are in him. Paul teaches us that we are baptized into Christ. (Rom. 6: 3; Gal. 3: 27.) If we are baptized into Christ and none can bear fruit unless they are in Christ, it follows that none can bear the fruit which God expects until and unless they are baptized into Christ. To contend that we can bear fruit to God without first being baptized into Christ is as foolish as saying that a branch can bear fruit without any connection whatever with a vine.

I am the vine, ye are the branches. This language was addressed to Jesus' disciples. Hence, individuals are branches in the vine. There are those who contend that Jesus is the vine and the various religious denominations in the world are the branches. But since none of these denominations were in existence at the time Jesus made this statement, it is foolish to contend that he was talking about them when he said, "Ye are the branches." If individuals were addressed there as branches, we see no reason to change

and say that religious organizations are now the branches in Christ.

He that abideth in me. To abide in Jesus simply means that we maintain a living faith in him, that we maintain that union with him which was established by our baptism into him. We establish that union by the grace of God through our obedience to him and through the grace of God we maintain that union by our continued obedience of him and dependence upon him.

II. Curse of Unfruitfulness (John 15:

6-8)

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch. From this verse we gather the following lessons. (a) That individuals are branches. Here Jesus says if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch. From this we conclude that religious denominations are not the branches, but men or individuals are the branches. (b) From this verse we learn that it is possible for a man who was once a branch in the vine and abiding in the vine to cease to abide in him. How could one be cast forth from the vine if that one had never been united with the vine? Those who believe in the impossibility of apostasy are forced to say that this branch was never in the vine. This puts Jesus in the ridiculous position of saying that a branch, which was never really in the vine, was cut off from the vine and cast forth from the vine as a branch.

(c) As a branch separated from the vine withers, so we when cut off from Christ wither or perish spiritually. Our only hope of spiritual health and growth depends upon our maintaining a union with Christ. This union is maintained by our faithful obedience to him; hence, the necessity of learning what his will is, and of complying with the demands of the Lord.

And they are burned. This is the end of the unfruitful branch. Jesus says that they are cut off and thrown into the fire and burned. The application is that the man who does not abide in Jesus, through faithful obedience to him, will be cut off, he will lose his spiritual life, will wither and die, and will be cast into hell. Literally hundreds of passages in the Bible were written to teach us that a man can fall from grace and to warn

us from following a course which will lead us away from Christ and into eternal death. All these passages must be denied or misinterpreted or misapplied in order to hold to the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy.

Ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you. This is the generous promise made to the man who abides in Christ and allows Christ to abide in him. There is the added thought in this verse of the words of Christ abiding in us. To allow his word to abide in us simply means that we will believe his words and obey his words. The individual who does not believe or obey the words of the Lord need not think that he can ask and receive that which he needs. The man in whom the word of Christ abides is the one who can pray to God and be heard. But the man who turns his ear away from the hearing of the law, even that man's prayer is an abomination in the sight of God. (Prov. 28: 9.)

That ye bear much fruit. Two things are said in our text about the man that bears much fruit, (a) God is glorified. It is no less than marvelous that we can do anything that would glorify God. God is the maker of this universe and the immensity of it, and its beauty and its grandeur are beyond our conception. How can frail, puny, weak man do anything that would glorify the maker of the heavens and the earth? Yet Jesus assures us that, if we allow his word to abide in us and cause us to bear fruit, in this very thing God will be glorified, (b) So shall ye be my disciples. In bearing fruit we continue our relationship with the Lord and we advertise it to the world.

III. Elements of the Fruit We Bear

(Gal. 5: 22-26)

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace. Nine things are here listed by Paul as the fruit of the Spirit. These are not to be looked upon as nine different kinds of fruit but rather nine elements in one fruit. The fruit will be perfect only when each of these nine elements is present in its proper proportion. But to the proportion that one is lacking, the fruit will be imperfect. So in the character of the Christian. If all of

these elements are present in their proper proportion, the character will be what the Lord desires and expects. But if one or more of these elements is lacking, then the character will not be what the Lord desires. These should be contrasted with the works of the flesh in verses 19 through 21 in order for us to appreciate the beauty and loveliness of the Christian character. These nine things are said to be the fruit of the Spirit, because it is the Spirit that is striving to build these things into our character. The Holy Spirit is said to dwell in us to use the word of God in forming in us such a character as is described by these nine things called the fruit of the Spirit.

They that are of Christ Jesus. Those who belong to Jesus have crucified or put to death the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof. This simply means that they have put out of their life the works of the flesh and they have gone one step farther and put to death the lusts that caused these works of the flesh to be present in their lives. The job is

only partially done when we quit sin. We must not only quit practicing sin but we must rid our hearts of the love of sin. The individual who still entertains in his heart the love for sin will be continually liable to go back into sin. Our only guarantee of quitting sin is to crucify the lusts or desire that we have in our heart.

By the Spirit let us also walk. In this verse Paul is saying that if we propose to be influenced by the Spirit, we should walk in such a way as to prove that we are influenced by the Spirit. To walk by the Spirit is to walk in harmony with the teaching of the Spirit. The only way we can know how the Spirit wants us to walk is to read that which he has revealed to us. The Spirit speaks to us only through the Scriptures. Hence, to walk by the Spirit is to walk in harmony with the teachings of the Spirit. And Paul concludes our lesson by suggesting that if we walk by the teaching of the Spirit, we will not be vainglorious nor will we provoke one another nor envy one another.

General Information on Fruits of the Christian Life

1. Kind of fruit to bear, (a) Good fruit. (Matt. 7: 16-20; James 3: 17.) (b) Fruit of righteousness. (Phil. 1: 11; Heb. 12: 11.)
2. Necessity of bearing fruit, (a) Fruitless tree cut down. (Luke 13: 6-9.) (b) Fruitless tree cursed. (Mark 11: 12-14.) (c) Evil fruit

condemned. (Isa. 5: 1-7; Heb. 6: 7, 8.)

3. Things that hinder fruit bearing. (a) Tribulation. (Matt. 13: 20, 21.) (b) Cares and deceitfulness of riches. (Matt. 13: 22.) (c) Pleasures of life. (Luke 8: 14.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text from memory.
Give the time, places, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

How does our text teach the relation of a Christian to Christ?
How does our text teach the dependence of a Christian upon Christ?
What is said in our lesson with reference to the glory of this relationship?
What is said of the responsibility of this relationship?
What is the result of this relationship?
In what sense are we in Christ and Christ in us?
What is said of the necessity of this relationship?

Source of Fruitfulness

When did Jesus deliver the teaching contained in our text?

According to our text, what was the relationship between Jesus and the Father?

What is said of the unfruitful branch?
What does God do for the fruitful branch?
How is this lesson expressed in the parable of the talents?
What is the meaning of the word clean in our text?
What is the instrument by which God cleanses us?
Can you show that one must be baptized into Christ before he can bear fruit?
Can you show that religious denominations are not the branches mentioned?
What is meant by abiding in Jesus?

Curse of Unfruitfulness

What three lessons do we learn from the man who abides not in Jesus?
What does our text do for the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy?

What promise is made to the one who
abides in Christ?
What two things are said of the man that
bears much fruit?

Elements of the Fruit We Bear
Of how many elements is Christian fruit
composed?
Why are these nine things called the fruit
of the Spirit?

What is said of those who belong to Jesus?
Have we done all that God expects of
us when we quit sin?
What is meant by walking with the
Spirit?
How does the spirit lead us?
With what practical suggestion does Paul
conclude our lesson?
What is there of interest to you in the
division on general information?



THIRD QUARTER

STUDIES IN JOSHUA AND JUDGES

AIM.—To make a brief survey of great events and personalities in Joshua and Judges, and to find in them lessons applicable to us today.

Lesson I—July 5, 1953

JOSHUA ENCOURAGED

The Lesson Text

Joshua 1: 1-11

1 Now it came to pass after the death of Mo'-ses the servant of Je-ho'-vah, that Je-ho'-vah spake unto Josh'-u-a the son of Nun, Mo'-ses' minister, saying,

2 Mo'-ses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Is'-ra-el.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Mo'-ses.

4 From the wilderness, and this Leb'-a-ḡōn, even unto the great river, the river Eu-phra'-tes, all the land of the Hit'-tites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Mo'-ses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Mo'-ses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Je-ho'-vah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10 Then Josh'-u-a commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11 Pass through the midst of the camp, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye are to pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which Je-ho'-vah your God giveth you to possess it.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."* (Josh. 1: 9.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Deut. 31: 14-23.

Daily Bible Readings

June 29. M..... Joshua and the Conquest of Canaan (Josh. 1: 1-9)
 June 30. T..... Moses and Joshua (Deut. 31: 1-8)
 July 1. W..... Joshua Commissioned (Deut. 31: 14-23)
 July 2. T..... Genealogy of Joshua (1 Chron. 7: 20-27)
 July 3. F..... Faithfulness of Joshua (Num. 32: 6-12)
 July 4. S..... One of the Twelve Spies (Num. 14: 1-6)
 July 5. S..... Joshua Encouraged Through Moses (Deut. 31: 6-8)

TIME.—1451 B.C.

PLACE.—Beyond Jordan east of Jericho.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, Joshua, and Israel.

Golden Text Explained

1. The Persons Giving: the Command. From Josh. 1: 1 we learn that Jehovah spoke the words which serve as our text. And the words, "have not I commanded thee," prove that Jehovah was the speaker who issued the command referred to in our text. What does this mean to Joshua? It will be necessary for us to look back into the activities of the past forty years to see what Joshua would know about the speaker issuing the command of this text. (a) Probably Joshua got his first clear impressions of Jehovah from Moses when he came into the land of Egypt with the request that Pharaoh allow his people to leave. It was on that occasion that Moses performed his miracle to convince the elders of Israel that he was sent from God and to convince Pharaoh that the people should be allowed to leave. Then in quick succession ten plagues followed, advertising the power of God, the superiority of Jehovah over the gods of Egypt. Jehovah now speaking to Joshua was the God who overthrew the Egyptians and demonstrated his superiority over the gods of the Egyptians in many ways, (b) Next, Joshua saw the waters of the Red Sea divide and the people of God go through on dry land, which the Egyptians attempted to do and were overthrown and destroyed. Thus again Jehovah demonstrated his superior power over the Egyptians, (c) Not many weeks after their deliverance Joshua saw the cloud which shielded Jehovah from the eyes of the people as he descended upon Mount Sinai. He saw the fire and the cloud and the smoke, he felt the trembling of the ground beneath him around the mountain, and he heard the voice of Jehovah and was among the people who asked that Jehovah not speak to them again but speak to Moses and allow Moses to convey the message to them. (4) For forty years Joshua had seen the power of Jehovah demonstrated night and day in his care for the people and in his punishment of the rebellious. He had seen the forces of nature turn from their usual course to serve the purposes of Jehovah, and he had seen the enemies of Israel scattered before the demon-

stration of the power of Jehovah. It was this God that was speaking to Joshua.

2. The Things Commanded by Jehovah. (a) The book of the law of God was to be Joshua's constant companion and guide. Moses had done his work of writing the law. God had written the ten commandments on two tables of stone. These writings were to be in Joshua's possession and he was not to depart from them, either to the right hand or to the left. No better advice could be given to people today, both young and old, than this which was given to Joshua. We should make the Bible, God's word, our constant companion and our sole and alone sufficient rule of faith and practice. We should also remember that the same God who commanded this of Joshua now demands it of us. And our Saviour, when tempted by Satan, left us an example of how we ought to recognize the scripture as our rule of faith and practice and how we ought to be submissive to it even in times of temptation, (b) Joshua was commanded to be strong. We are told that the Hebrew word here suggests a man of action. Joshua was to be alert and energetic. He was not to be one of these weak, timid, undecided souls, but he was to be a man who could make up his mind and take swift energetic action on the issues before him. With their promised land in the hands of enemies strongly entrenched in their mountain strongholds, Israel needed a leader who was energetic and who would give them that brand of leadership which is suggested by this word. And the great need of the church today to overcome its enemies entrenched in their strongholds of infidelity and materialism is a leadership whose constant companion is the law of God, and who is able to make decisions and carry them out with energy and decision, (c) Joshua was commanded to be courageous. He was told to be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed. There was much to frighten Joshua. There was little to encourage him. He had an army untrained and not well equipped. He was facing enemies who knew their territory, who were entrenched in

mountain strongholds and who had superior weapons. If Joshua had looked at his problem from the viewpoint of a scientific military man, he would have seen little to encourage him. He would have seen much to frighten and dismay him.

3. **Encouragement to Joshua to Obey.** About the only encouraging thing in the whole situation was in the language of our text, "Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Joshua had learned during forty years of wilderness wanderings what this statement meant. If God was with them, they would succeed. If God was not with them, they would fail. Now that he has God's word to the effect that he will be

with Israel, Joshua had sufficient ground for encouragement. One man and God are a majority. But millions of men without God are a minority in any situation. One man and God can overcome Satan. One man and God can overcome all the forces of evil in a community and establish a church there. So there is no need for anyone to be discouraged in any situation so long as he has the promise of the presence of God to help him. Let us take courage from this experience of Joshua and remember that as long as we conduct ourselves in such manner that God is pleased to be with us, we can accomplish in our lives everything that God intends for us to accomplish for him.

Introduction

1. **The Author of the Book of Joshua.** While it is not possible for us to say positively who wrote the book of Joshua, the contention of the critics that it was not written until in the time of the later kings of Israel is to be rejected. In Josh. 24: 26 we are told that Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God. It is true that this statement refers only to a covenant which was made with the people at that time, but there is proof in this that Joshua did leave writings behind him. In Josh. 5: 1 we are told that Jehovah dried up the waters of the Jordan "until we were passed over." This indicates that the writer of this book was among those who passed over the river Jordan with Joshua. One writer sums up the matter in this fashion. There is nothing improbable in the supposition that Joshua wrote memoirs of his time. These with the description of the land given in the book (Chap. 18: 4-9) served as the basis of the work which was probably composed by Eleazar or Phinehas.

According to the Talmud, the book of Joshua was written by Joshua himself. To this work Eleazar, the son of Aaron, gave the conclusion and Phinehas afterwards added the last verse.

2. **The Contents of the Book.** The events recorded in the book of Joshua are said to have transpired within a period of seventeen to thirty years. It is said to be both a continuation and a completion of the Pentateuch written by Moses. The book tells how the people of Israel entered the land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua and how they conquered the land and divided it among the Israelites. It describes the various military campaigns which were necessary to subdue the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. The book concludes with an account of the assembling of the people to hear the last address of their leader Joshua. The last chapter is devoted to an account of his death and burial. This chapter was obviously written by someone else after the death of Joshua.

Exposition of the Text

I. Joshua Commanded to Enter Canaan (Josh. 1: 1-4)

It came to pass after the death of Moses. The writer of the book of Joshua intentionally connects with the last chapter of the book of Deuteronomy. **There we have the account of the death of Moses and his burial in the valley of Moab over**

against Beth-peor. In Num. 7: 15-23 we have the account of the appointment of Joshua to be the successor of Moses. Our first introduction to Joshua is in connection with the battle against the Amalekites in Rephidim. Joshua was in command of the army, and Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses as he prayed to God for the victory. (Ex. 17: 8-15.)

Joshua the son of Num, Moses' minister. This is the way Joshua is introduced to us in this book. During all the time of the wilderness wandering, Joshua served as the minister of Moses. In Ex. 24: 13 he is referred to as the minister of Moses and as accompanying Moses into the mount of God. In Ex. 33: 11 Joshua is referred to not only as the minister of Moses but as a young man. Hence, Moses chose a young man to be his minister to lead his army, one who would eventually be fit to serve as his successor to lead the people into Canaan and the possession of their land.

Therefore arise, go over this Jordan. The Jordan River runs through a deep, narrow gorge which divides the land of Palestine. This river rises from springs some ten miles north of the northern end of the Sea of Galilee. These springs are slightly above sea level, but the river soon goes below sea level; and, when it passes through the Sea of Galilee, it is several hundred feet below sea level. It continues until it reaches the Dead Sea where it is 1,300 feet below sea level. The gorge through which the river runs is from four to fourteen miles wide, hemmed in on either side by mountains from 1,500 to 3,000 feet high.

Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon. This is God's promise to Joshua and the people. He would give them every foot of land upon which they should walk. He then describes the boundaries "from the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, and all the land of the Hittites, and unto the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border." From this we learn that their northern boundary was the Lebanon mountains and their eastern boundary was the Euphrates River. Their western boundary was to be the Mediterranean Sea.

All the land of the Hittites. Mention of the Hittites was for a long time used by critics as proof that the Bible was not inspired. Historians knew nothing about the Hittites. The Bible is the only book that made any mention of them. Hence, the critics said the Bible is wrong, but archaeologists have given abundant evidence that the Hittites were a great and powerful nation.

II. Sources of Joshua's Encouragement (Josh. 1: 5-9)

There shall not any man be able to stand before thee. The only thing that could keep Joshua from taking courage from this statement is a lack of faith. If he had any faith at all in God to fulfill his promises, he would certainly be encouraged by this promise that no man should be able to stand before him all the days of his life. By this is meant that he would be victorious in his battles, that he would be able to accomplish all that he started out to accomplish.

As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. Since Joshua had been intimately associated with Moses for forty years as his minister, he had every reason to know to what extent God had been with Moses. And now the only thing that could keep him from believing that God would give him the victory was a lack of faith in God to keep his promise. God is here promising to be with Joshua in the same way and to the same extent that he was with Moses.

I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. This seems to be an explanation of the promise that he would be with Joshua. First he would not fail him. When Joshua needed a friend, the Lord would not fail to be there. When Joshua needed strength, God would lend it; when Joshua needed courage, God would give it. When Joshua needed wisdom, God would supply it. Next, God would not forsake him. In times of trial he would not support him for a while and then leave him by himself. So we today may take courage from the fact that we worship and serve the same God that was so faithful to Joshua. If we, like Joshua, will be faithful to him we may be assured that he will be as faithful to us. He will never leave us nor forsake us.

Thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them. This refers to the promise that God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with reference to giving the land of Canaan to their seed. (Gen. 12: 7; 13: 15; 15: 18.) There are those today who say that this land promise was never fulfilled and that consequently the Jews will have to be raised from the dead and return to Canaan in order for the promise to be fulfilled.

But in his last days Joshua said that Jehovah delivered all of their enemies into their hands and there failed not aught of any good thing which Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass. (Josh. 21: 44, 45.) And Solomon referring to the same thing said that Jehovah gave rest unto his people Israel according to all that he promised. "There hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by Moses his servant." (1 Kings 8: 56.)

Observe to do according to all the law. This was the part of the covenant which Joshua and the people were to perform. God would be with them and never forsake them, but it was their duty to observe to do according to all the law which Moses had commanded them. They were not to turn from it, to the right hand nor to the left. "That thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest." Hence, we see that God's promise that no man would be able to stand before Joshua all the days of his life was really conditioned upon Joshua's obedience to the law which was given by Moses, for, if he would observe all that law, he would have good success wherever he went. This is in harmony with all we know of God's dealings with man through all the centuries. God has always been willing to bless provided man will be willing to obey.

Thou shalt meditate thereon day and night. This is the way Joshua was to keep from turning from the

law either to the right hand or to the left. People who meditate upon the law of the Lord day and night do not turn from the law. But when we forget the law and fail to meditate upon its requirements, then we stray from the demands of the Lord. David said it was the righteous man who meditates on the law of the Lord day and night. (Psalm 1.) He does not meditate upon the law because he is righteous, but he is righteous because he meditates on the law day and night.

III. Joshua Encouraged to Act (Josh.

1: 10, 11)

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people. In the mind of Joshua the promises of God were not idle talk. He believed God. His faith moved him to act. So he commanded the officers of the people to pass through the midst of the camp and tell the people to make preparations, for within three days they were to pass over Jordan.

Go in to possess the land. This is the language of confidence. It is the language of faith. They were going in not to attempt to take the land, not merely in the hope that they might be able to possess the land, but they were going in with the full persuasion that the land was theirs, for Jehovah had given it to them. If we could have such faith in the promises of God today, we no doubt could accomplish more of the things which it is his will for us to do.

Lessons to Learn

1. **When God needs a leader for his people, he chooses one who has proven himself to be dependable.** Through forty years of trials Joshua had been faithful as the minister of Moses. In this faithfulness he had demonstrated his dependability in the face of every kind of hardship. If we wish to occupy positions of power and influence, we must be willing to do the little duties of life in spite of the discouragements and of the hardships we must suffer along the way.

2. **God's promises are always conditional.** When God promises to bless us, though a condition may not in the immediate connection be stated, they are generally conditioned upon our obedient and submissive response.

As in our text, God promised that he would be with Joshua, so that no man would be able to stand before him all his life. But later on we learn that he was to keep the book of the law with him and was to meditate thereon day and night and to do the things that were written therein that he might have good success.

3. **The book of the law of God had a primary place in the life of Joshua and of Jesus.** You remember in the temptations of Jesus he quoted scripture. And when people came to him to know his answer, he frequently asked them what is written in the law. So we today must make the book of God our constant companion and our guide in all matters of faith if we expect to be pleasing to God.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Where did Joshua get his first impressions of Jehovah?

What miracles did Joshua see Moses perform?

What conceptions did Joshua get of Jehovah at Mount Sinai?

What command did Joshua have concerning the book of the law?

Discuss the meaning of the word "strong" in our text as it referred to Joshua.

What is suggested in our lesson as a great need of the church today?

What encouragement did Jehovah give to Joshua?

Introduction

According to Bible critics, when was the book of Joshua written?

What proof do we have that the writer of the book lived in the days of Joshua?

How long is the period of time covered by the book of Joshua?

What information is to be gleaned from the book?

Joshua Commanded to Enter Canaan

What is our first introduction to Joshua?

What position did Joshua hold during the wilderness wanderings?

What do you know of the river Jordan and the terrain through which it runs?

What do you know of the boundaries of the land of Canaan?

What do you know of the Hittites?

Sources of Joshua's Encouragement

With what words did Jehovah encourage Joshua?

What could keep Joshua from being encouraged by these words?

Did God make any difference in his dealings with Moses and Joshua?

What encouragement may we derive from these promises to Joshua?

What proof do we have that Jehovah gave Israel all the land he promised them?

Upon what condition were these promises made to Joshua?

How was Joshua to keep from turning away from the law?

Joshua Encouraged to Act

What great principle enabled Joshua to receive and obey Jehovah's commandments?

What indication do we have that they believed they could take the land?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson II—July 12, 1953

CROSSING THE JORDAN

The Lesson Text

Joshua 3: 5-17

5 And Josh'-u-a said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow Je-ho'-vah will do wonders among you.

6 And Josh'-u-a spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7 And Je-ho'-vah said unto Josh'-u-a, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Is'-ra-el, that they may know that, as I was with Mo'-ses, so I will be with thee.

8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, ye shall stand still in the Jordan.

9 And Josh'-u-a said unto the children of Is'-ra-el, Come hither, and hear the words of Je-ho'-vah your God.

10 And Josh'-u-a said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is

among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Ca'-naan-ite, and the Hit'-tite, and the Hi'-vite, and the Per'-iz-zite, and the Gir'-ga-shite, and the Am'-or-ite, and the Jeb'-u-site.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into the Jordan.

12 Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Is'-ra-el, for every tribe a man.

13 And it shall come to pass, when the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of Je-ho'-vah, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, even the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand in one heap.

14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over the Jordan, the priests that bare the ark of the covenant being before the people;

15 And when they that bare the ark were come unto the Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (for the Jordan overfloweth all its banks all the time of harvest),

16 That the waters which came down from above stood, and rose up in one heap, a great way off, at Adam, the city that is beside Zar'-e-than; and those that went down

toward the sea of the Ar'-d-bah, even the Salt Sea, were wholly cut off: and the people passed over right against Jer'-icho.

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of Je-ho'-vah stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Is'-ra-el passed over on dry ground, until all the nation were passed clean over the Jordan.

GOLDEN TEXT. — "*When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.*" (Isa. 43: 2.)

DEVOTIONAL READING. — Josh. 4: 1-22.

Daily Bible Readings

July 6. M.....A Promise of Protection (Isa. 43: 1-7)
 July 7. T.....A Land of Opportunity (Num. 13: 25-33)
 July 8. W.....The Land On Which They Entered (2 Sam. 3-14)
 July 9. T.....The Promise of the Land Conditional (Deut. 4: 26, 27)
 July 10. F.....Boundaries of the Land (Gen. 15: 18-21)
 July 11. S.....Heathen Occupants Excluded Gradually (Deut. 7: 22-24)
 July 12. S.....Number Who Crossed Over (Num. 26: 21-62)

TIME. — 1451 B.C.

PLACE. — East of Jericho.

PERSONS. — Jehovah, Joshua, and Israel.

Golden Text Explained

1. Sorrow and Suffering- Come to All. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit Isaiah looked forward to the time when Israel would suffer punishment on account of sin. He pictured how God would pour upon Israel the fierceness of his anger and the strength of battle because the people of Israel refused to walk in his ways and to be obedient unto his law. (Isa. 42: 23-25.) Following this prediction of the wrath of God upon the disobedient, Isaiah pictures the tender mercies of Jehovah upon Israel in returning them to their own land. Our text is found between those statements concerning his wrath upon them for disobedience and the promise of his loving-kindness toward them in returning them to their own land, (a) The first thing suggested by Isaiah is that all of us must suffer for our wrongdoing. Isaiah represents God as saying, "when thou passest through the waters." This expression of passing through the waters is meant to convey the idea of suffering. The question is not raised as to whether the people will pass through the waters, it is taken for granted that they will do so, but God gives them the assurance that, when they do **pass**

through the waters or endure their suffering, he will be with them. New Testament passages assure us that we today may expect some sufferings along the way. The apostle Paul says that "all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3: 12.) Job's friends thought that he had committed some great sin because his suffering was great, but Job maintained his innocence. There are those today who think that suffering is a sure proof of sin. But, according to Paul's statement, it is those who would live godly in Christ Jesus who shall suffer persecution. It is still true that people suffer on account of their sins, but it is also true that all suffering is not on account of wrongdoing, (b) Suffering may be beneficial. James said, "Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience. And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing." (James 1: 2-4.) From this we learn that suffering trials will work patience or steadfastness in us. Since Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with

grief, it will be necessary for us to know something of sorrow in order that we may grow into the likeness of our Lord. Peter says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as though a strange thing happened unto you: but inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of his glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy. If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you." (1 Pet. 4: 12-14.) Here again we are told to rejoice in sufferings because they identify us with Christ and his cause, and furthermore they entitle us to expect to be rewarded in the next life. Suffering is also an indication of the presence of the Spirit of God resting upon us.

2. **God's Presence Promised in Our Suffering.** Isaiah told the people that when they passed through the waters, or endured their sufferings, they had the assurance that God would be with them. In the passage just quoted above from Peter, we are assured that, if we are reproached for the name of Christ, we are blessed or happy and we have a right to be happy, "because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you." And Peter ends this exhortation with this encouraging statement: "Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator." (1 Pet. 4: 19.) Peter's thought here is that God created us for his glory and for our happiness, and that we may commit our souls to him as unto a *faithful* creator. His lesson is that, if we commit our souls in well-doing, God will be faithful to his original design for us and will bring about our happiness and his glorification through our salvation, but this is conditioned upon our committing ourselves to him in well-doing. Another promise of the presence of God with us through all our sufferings is found in Heb. 13: 5, 6. "For himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: what shall man do unto me?" If one needs ex-

amples of God's presence with people through their periods of suffering, he need not look further than Job in the Old Testament and Paul in the New Testament. But if more are needed he may read Heb. 11: 32-40, where a general statement is made with reference to those who suffered in manifold ways the persecutions of the world being preserved by the Lord, who had some better things for them that they might enjoy in the next life.

3. **God's Protection Through Suffering.** In our text Isaiah says that, when we pass through the waters and through the rivers, "they shall not overflow thee." Since the words *waters* and *rivers* are used to represent suffering, we conclude from the fact that these shall not overflow those who are mentioned that Isaiah was teaching that God would not allow these sorrows and sufferings to overwhelm or destroy those who suffered them courageously. This is in harmony with New Testament teaching, for the apostle Paul says in 1 Cor. 10: 13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." A further proof of the fact that these sorrows and sufferings are not for our destruction is seen in that God uses these for our good and not for our destruction. In Heb. 12: 4-10 the apostle teaches us that the purpose of God in sorrows and sufferings is correction and purification, not the destruction of his people. Also in 1 Pet. 1: 6, 7 we are taught that the manifold trials through which we pass are proof of our faith and for the purpose of purifying us as gold is purified by the refiner's fire. Hence, we should face our sorrows and our sufferings with humility, knowing that God will not allow experiences to come our way with which we are not able to cope, and realizing that he will cause us to be stronger and purer and better for having gone through these experiences. It is on this basis and this alone that we may be asked, with any degree of reasonableness, to rejoice in our suffering.

Introduction

In Josh. 1: 11 we learn that the people were given three days' notice before they were expected to cross the Jordan. It was during these three days that Joshua reminded the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh of the promise that Moses made to them that they would be allowed to settle on the east side of the Jordan River. But Joshua reminds them that it was their duty to cross over with the rest of the people of Israel to take the land for their possession and, when the land had been possessed by the other tribes, these two and a half tribes might come back to the east side of the Jordan to live. The people of these two and a half tribes were perfectly willing to bear their part of the burden of capturing the land and promised to do their part and asked a blessing upon Joshua, saying, "Only Jehovah thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses."

In the second chapter of Joshua we have an account of the sending of the spies to spy out the city of Jericho. It was on this occasion that they were trapped in the city and were saved by Rahab. It was from this woman that they learned that the people of Jericho had heard how Israel had taken the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og, and had utterly destroyed them. This had caused the peoples' hearts to melt within them and to take from them any spirit to resist the people of Israel. Having aided the men in their escape, she exacted a promise from them that she and her family would be saved when the city was taken. The promise was given her provided she would be inside her house and that she would put a scarlet line in the window as an indication of the house where she and her family would be.

Exposition of the Text

I. Preparation for Crossing Jordan

(Josh. 3: 5, 6)

Sanctify Yourselves. We are not told what the ceremony of sanctification was, but on an occasion similar to this, forty years previous, we find them sanctifying themselves by washing their garments and keeping themselves from all activities which would hinder them in their most faithful obedience to God's commands. (Ex. 19: 7-15.)

Jehovah will do wonders among you. Jehovah was among them at all times, and his provident care was extended toward them at all times, but on this occasion he was to do something out of the ordinary, and they were to go through special services of sanctification that they might be properly prepared for the exhibition of his power and glory.

Joshua spake unto the priests. On this occasion the priests were to carry the ark of the covenant. From Num. 4: 15 we learn that it was the duty of the Levites to carry the ark. The sons of Kohath were the ones to bear it, and they were one division of the Levites. Only on extraordinary occasions did the priests carry the ark of the covenant. Adam Clarke outlines the occasions on which the

priests carried the ark of the covenant as follows: First, in this present case. Second, when they encompassed the city of Jericho. (Josh. 6: 6.) Third, when it was carried to war against the Philistines by the priests, the sons of Eli. (2 Sam. 15: 25.) Fourth, when David sent it back to Jerusalem at the time he was obliged to fly from it through the rebellion of his son Absalom. (2 Sam. 15: 25.) And fifth, at the time it was taken out of the tabernacle to be deposited in the temple. (1 Kings 8: 6-11.) Hence, we see that it was on extraordinary and solemn occasions that the priests were asked to bear the ark of the covenant instead of the sons of Kohath.

II. Instruction and Encouragement

(Josh. 3: 7-13)

This day will I begin to magnify thee. This is God's statement to Joshua. It was necessary that the people be taught to accept and respect Joshua in the same way and to the same extent that they respected Moses. When God delivered the people into the care and instruction of Moses, he led them through the Red Sea. This was a demonstration of the fact that God was with Moses, and

none could doubt that God was with him. So it was necessary that a similar proof of his presence with Joshua should be given. Hence, God led the people through the swollen waters of the Jordan River on dry ground, thus proving that he was with Joshua in the same way and to the same extent that he was with Moses.

Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you. This is the language of Joshua. It seems that he was not so much concerned with their realizing that God was with him as he was that they would realize that God was among the people. He not only wished that they would know that God was among them, but that God would drive out from before them the people of Canaan. The seven nations of Canaan are named in our text and assurance is given that all of them would be driven out before the Israelites.

The ark of the covenant. . . passeth over before you. The priests were to bear the ark of the covenant to the middle of the stream, and there they were to stand until all the people had passed over. In Josh. 3: 4 we learn that the people were to keep a distance of "about two thousand cubits" from the ark. This distance was to be kept first out of reverence for the ark as an indication of the presence of Jehovah, and second that the ark could be seen by the people.

Take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel. The purpose for which these twelve men, one out of each tribe, were selected is not here mentioned. But in Josh. 4: 2-9 we learn that these twelve men were to carry twelve stones out of the bed of the river and to build a monument on the western bank of the river.

III. Crossing the River Jordan (Josh. 3: 14-17)

The Jordan overfloweth all its banks. The Jordan rises in a mountainous region and is fed in the spring by melting snow. Hence, there is a time of overflow. Brother McGarvey says the river bottom near Jericho was more than one-half mile wide. This does not mean that the regular channel of the river was that wide. But the river bottom, that which would take care of the overflow, was that width.

Waters which came down from above stood. The water south of the priests went on down to its destination, the Dead Sea, called in our text the Salt Sea. But the waters north of the priests stood in a heap the text says. Some think that the flow of the water was changed so that the waters north of the priests flowed back toward the Sea of Galilee. But our text indicates that it accumulated, getting deeper and deeper. This seems to be expressed in the words, "rose up in one heap, a great way off."

At Adam, . . . beside Zarethan. Neither of these cities can be located with any degree of certainty. Some have thought to locate Zarethan near Jezreel, but that is too far north for this crossing, since it is said that the people crossed over right against Jericho.

All Israel passed over on dry ground. The crossing is said to have been right against Jericho. Since there were at least two million to two and a half million people crossing and since the crossing was made in one day, we would conclude that the people spread out over several miles of territory. Whether the priests stood opposite the city of Jericho or the center of the crossing was opposite Jericho cannot be determined, neither is it of much importance. But, since the camp was made just east of Jericho, it is possible that the center of the crossing was at that place. Though the water was divided, the crossing of the river was no easy thing. McGarvey gives the following description of the crossing. "It was no easy task even then to get down the steep slope; to struggle through the wet brush and the mud and climb down into the channel of the river. Perhaps they had to use some of their axes, shovels and spades; and then they must climb up the ascent on the other side before sunset that evening. But, hard as the labor was, before the sun had gone down, in the simple style of our book, 'all the people had passed clean over the Jordan.' The priests were standing in the middle of the channel all this time, and when they came up, the mighty river resumed its course."

Lessons to Learn

1. *With God on our side, we can accomplish the unexpected.* The Canaanites did not expect the Israelites to cross the Jordan at this time. Since the river was overflowing its banks, the Canaanites thought they would have plenty of time to finish their harvest before the people could possibly cross the river. They supposed the crossing impossible at that time, but they did not take into account the fact that Jehovah was with the people.

2. *God does not leave his people without evidence of his presence among them.* On the occasion of our lesson this evidence was of a miraculous nature. The miraculous work of God is not necessarily stronger proof of the presence of God than are the ordinary works of providence. Paul says, "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts

with food and gladness." (Acts 14: 17.)

3. *God does not wait for better times or conditions to do his work.* The people might have felt that they came to the Jordan at an unfortunate time since it **was overflowing** its banks. But God took advantage of seemingly discouraging circumstances and turned it to the good and to the success of his people. So we today need to remember that time and circumstances have little to do with whether or not we will succeed in doing what God commands us to do. Churches are sometimes discouraged by a spell of rainy weather at the time they hold their revival meetings. And, if failure follows, it is not because of unfavorable weather as much as it is because of the discouraged attitude of the people. We need to learn the lesson that it is ours to do the best we can do under whatever circumstances and conditions the Lord sees fit for us to work.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Give the setting of our text.

What does Isaiah suggest in our text with reference to suffering?

What did Job's friends think about his suffering?

What benefit may be derived from suffering?

What encouragement does Isaiah give to help people bear their sufferings?

How does Peter encourage those who suffer?

In what portions of the Scriptures may sufferers find great encouragement?

In what words does our text assure us of God's protection during suffering?

In what words does Paul offer the same encouragement?

Introduction

How much notice were the people given to prepare to cross Jordan?

Which tribes were especially reminded of their duty at this time?

Give an account of the work of the spies in Jericho.

What did the spies learn about the courage of the people of Jericho?

Preparation for Crossing Jordan

What do you know of their manner of sanctifying themselves?

For what purpose were they to sanctify themselves?

Who were usually responsible for carrying the ark?

On what occasions were the priests asked to bear the ark?

Instruction and Encouragement

To what extent was it necessary for the people to respect Joshua?

How were the people to know that God was with Joshua as he was with Moses?

Can you name the seven nations in Canaan at this time?

What position did the ark occupy during the crossing?

How did the people show their reverence for Jehovah in the ark?

For what purpose were twelve men selected from the tribes?

Crossing the River Jordan

What was the condition of the river at this time?

Give your conception of the dividing of the waters of the Jordan.

At what point did Israel cross the Jordan?

About how many people crossed the river?

About how much time was consumed in crossing?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson III, July 19, 1953

THE FALL OF JERICHO

The Lesson Text

Joshua 6: 8-20

8 And it was so, that, when Josh'-u-a had spoken unto the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Je-ho'-vah passed on, and blew the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of Je-ho'-vah followed them.

9 And the armed men went before the priests that blew the trumpets, and the rearward went after the ark, *the priests* blowing the trumpets as they went.

10 And Josh'-u-a commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor let your voice be heard, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

11 So he caused the ark of Je-ho'-vah to compass the city, going about it once; and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

12 And Josh'-u-a rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of Je-ho'-vah.

13 And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of Je-ho'-vah went on continually, and blew the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; and the rearward came after the ark of Je-ho'-vah, *the priests* blowing the trumpets as they went.

14 And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early at the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Josh'-u-a said unto the people, Shout; for Je-ho'-vah hath given you the city.

17 And the city shall be devoted, even it and all that is therein, to Je-ho'-vah: only Ra'-hab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

18 But as for you, only keep yourselves from the devoted thing, lest when ye have devoted it, ye take of the devoted thing; so would ye make the camp of Is'-ra-el accursed, and trouble it.

19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are holy unto Je-ho'-vah: they shall come into the treasury of Je-ho'-vah.

20 So the people shouted, and *the priests* blew the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, that the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days.”* (Heb. 11: 30.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Josh. 6: 21-27.

Daily Bible Readings

July 13.	M.	The Fall of Jericho (Josh. 6: 12-20)
July 14.	T.	Sun Stands Still (Josh. 10: 12-20)
July 15.	W.	Seven Kings Conquered (Josh. 10: 28-33)
July 16.	T.	Joshua Conquers the Land (Josh. 11: 6-30)
July 17.	F.	Victories of Faith (Heb. 11: 30-40)
July 18.	S.	All-Conquering God (Psalm 66: 1-9)
July 19.	S.	Victory Through Faith (1 John 5: 1-4)

TIME.—1451 B.C.

PLACE.—Jericho.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, Joshua, and Israel.

Golden Text Explained

1. Israel Accepted God's Word.

(a) Israel accepted God's word through his servant Joshua. So far as we know, Israel had no means of knowing that God had commanded them to take the city of Jericho except through the word of Joshua. We learn from the context that Jehovah visited Joshua and gave him the directions for taking the city of Jericho. In the sixth verse of the sixth chapter, we read that Joshua called the priests and told them what to do, and they told the people. Then in the eighth verse we are told that Joshua spoke unto all the people. Whether this means that he spoke to them through the priests, as is suggested in the seventh verse, or whether he had something to say to the people in addition to what he said to them through the priests is difficult to determine, but certainly the people based their faith upon what God had spoken through Joshua and the priests, (b) Israel accepted God's word when there was no visible relation between what they were told to do and the results which they desired to obtain. This is always an effective means of testing the faith of people. The prophet of God tested the faith of Naaman by telling him to dip in Jordan seven times in order that he might be cleansed from his leprosy. Again there was no relation between what Naaman was told to do and the results he desired to accomplish. There are people today who object to being baptized for the remission of sins because they say they cannot see any relationship between baptism and the results which they desire to obtain; no relation between baptism and the remission of sins. But there is as much relation between baptism and the remission of sins as there is between dipping in the Jordan seven times and being cleansed of leprosy, and as much relation between baptism and the remission of sins as there is between marching around the city thirteen times in order to tear its walls down and capturing the city. These people of Israel immortalized their faith on the pages of inspiration because they accepted God's word when there was no visible relation between

what they were told to do and the results they wished to obtain. So people today who expect to be saved by faith must accept God's word whether they see any relationship between what they are told to do and what they expect as a result of their faith or not. (c) Israel was encouraged in accepting God's word by the memory of what God had done for them in the past. Some of them could remember the crossing of the Red Sea. Many of them could remember God's goodness to them through their years of wandering in the wilderness. All of them were acquainted with the fact that God had preserved their lives through this wilderness wanderings by giving them manna each day from heaven. The crossing of the Jordan was fresh in their memory. All of these things encouraged them to believe that God would fulfill the promise to give them the city. God does not tell us to do anything without giving us sufficient encouragement to move us to do the thing which it is our duty to do.

2. Israel Obeyed God's Word. The statement of our text that the walls of Jericho were compassed about for seven days indicates that the people of Israel obeyed the word of God which they had accepted. (a) It should be noticed that Israel obeyed the word of God when there were no physical signs to encourage them in doing so. As suggested above, they had much to encourage them in accepting God's word, but it is emphasized here that there were no physical signs of encouragement. They were given the task of capturing a great walled city. They had no engines of war. They had no battering rams with which to tear down the wall. Had they been walking by sight instead of faith, they would have cried for battering rams and other equipment necessary for tearing down the thick walls surrounding the city of Jericho. Furthermore, when they had gone around the city one time there was no sign of the weakening of the walls. And when they had gone about the city the second time and the third time, there was no crumbling of the walls to encourage them to continue march-

ing around the city. And when they appeared before the city on the seventh day, the walls looked as strong and as impregnable as they looked on the first day they started marching around the city. This constituted quite a test of their faith, (b) There were no suggestions of better ways to accomplish the destruction of the city than that which God had given them. Nor were there any suggestions of ways and means which were just as good as that which God had commanded. This, too, is an evidence of the fact that they accepted God's word and that they were willing to obey God's word as it was given. There are many people today who invent things to do which they think will be just as acceptable as that which God has commanded. For instance God has taught us that we should be buried with Christ in baptism and be raised to walk in the newness of life. Somebody thinks that sprinkling is just as good as burial, so he has water sprinkled on him instead of doing what God says do. If these people had decided that five times around the walls would be just as good as thirteen, it could not have been said of them that they did the thing by faith. If they had decided that they would divide their forces by seven and a different force would march around the walls each day, it could not be said that they acted by faith. But be it said to the credit of Joshua and his people that they were willing to accept God's word for what

should be done. And they were willing to do just what God said for them to do without making any suggestion as to what would be just as good or better than that which the Lord said do.

3. **Israel Was Blessed after Their Obedience.** Notice that our text says, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days." The blessing came after the obedience. That is God's order always. God never gave a blessing before the conditions were met. God's order is first the promise, second the faith, and third obedience, and fourth a blessing promised. In Heb. 6: 12 we are told to be imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Inheriting the promises comes after patience has been exercised on account of our faith. In Heb. 6: 15 we read "And thus, having patiently endured, he obtained the promise." Here again is the promise of God, then the patient endurance doing what God says to do, and then, third, the obtaining of the thing promised. Again in Heb. 10: 36 we read, "For ye have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise." We are promised salvation through faith, but it is a faith that works by love. The salvation does not come before faith has acted, but, when faith has prompted us to obey the commandments of God, we may expect to receive the salvation which God has promised.

Introduction

There are some matters of interest between our last lesson and the material for this lesson. The first is the memorial that was built by the children of Israel by taking twelve stones out of the bed of the Jordan River and building them into a monument east of Jericho. This was done that in generations to come the people might tell their children that Jehovah dried up the waters of the Jordan until the Israelites were all passed over the river, and thus be a memorial of God's goodness to them in their day of extremity. The next matter of interest is the influence which the crossing of the Jordan, while it was overflowing its

banks, had on the people of Canaan. Our record tells us in Josh. 5: 1 that when the Amorites and the kings of the Canaanites heard that Israel had crossed the river in flood time, and had done so because Jehovah had divided the waters, their hearts melted in them, neither was there spirit in them any more to try to defend themselves. A third thing of interest is the circumcising of all the males who had been born during the wilderness wandering. On account of the difficulties of the journey during the forty years of wanderings, none of the children had been circumcised. All the men who were twenty years old and upward when

they left Egypt had died during the forty years, and now all of those who were forty years and under needed to be circumcised. So the Lord told them to make them knives of flint and circumcise all of those who had gone uncircumcised during the period of wilderness wanderings. On account of this, the place where they camped was called Gilgal. The word Gilgal means rolling, and it was given that name because Jehovah said, "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." The fourth thing of interest that happened here at Gilgal was the ceasing of the manna. They had been eating manna for forty years, and now the manna ceases to fall, and they began eating the produce of the land. A fifth thing

of interest is the appearance of Jehovah to Joshua in the form of a man. The student should read Josh. 5: 13 to 6: 7. The record tells us that Joshua saw a man standing over against him with a drawn sword in his hand, and Joshua learned that this man was "prince of the host of Jehovah," and Joshua fell on his face on the earth and did worship the person. From there on it is said that Jehovah spoke unto Joshua. So we learn that this is Jehovah in the form of a man, such as appeared and wrestled with Jacob on the night of his return from Padan-aram. The second person of the Godhead made numerous appearances to people during Old Testament times in a similar manner.

Exposition of the Text

I. Directions for Attack (Josh. 6: 8-11)

The seven priests bearing the seven trumpets . . . passed on. Joshua gave the order of march on this occasion that the people might be prepared to march as the Lord expected them to do. The order of march seems to be suggested in the eighth and ninth verses. The armed men went before the priests that blew the trumpets. We are told that those who carried the ark of the covenant of Jehovah followed the priests and then, following the priests, came the people.

Ye shall not shout. This is a part of Joshua's instruction to the people. They were to follow the armed men and the priests and others bearing the ark of the covenant, and they were to follow quietly. They were not to shout nor speak even a word until the time that Joshua commanded them to shout. This was to be a solemn religious procession. It was not a picnic, and the people were to be impressed with the idea that they were doing the bidding of God and that they were to be quiet and reverent in the doing of his bidding.

II. The People Obey Orders (Josh. 6: 12-16)

Joshua rose early in the morning. Almost invariably great men of God rose early in the morning to do things which were commanded to be done on a certain day. When God set the

day on which Abraham was to offer Isaac in sacrifice, we are told that Abraham rose up early on the day appointed and left for the place where he was to offer Isaac in sacrifice. (Gen. 22: 3.) And now we are finding Joshua, another man of God, on the day appointed to take the city of Jericho. We are told that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of Jehovah went on blowing their trumpets. The armed men were before them and the rearward, or the great company of people, came after the ark of Jehovah. In all this Joshua and his people were obeying the directions which God had previously given them. Theirs is an example of obedience in the very smallest of details. If they had been as anxious to obey the Lord all through their forty years of wilderness wanderings as they were on this occasion, more of them would have been privileged to enter the land of Canaan.

The second day they compassed the city once, and returned. They were ordered to circle the city once each day for six days, then on the seventh day they were to go around the city seven times. We are prone to look at this military maneuver from the viewpoint of the Israelites alone. Let us view it from the viewpoint of the people of Jericho. An army took the lead in the march. Then came a handful of priests, and behind them the people. With the army in front

and the people in the rear, they were left exposed to the action of the enemy. Why would a sensible military man leave his people unguarded while an army was on one side of the city? The men of Jericho could attack the body of people and destroy many of them on the other side of the city. This must have impressed the people of Jericho with the idea that Joshua was not depending on his army for the destruction of the city, but was simply waiting the pleasure of God, who would destroy the city for it. With reports of the miraculous intervention of Jehovah to aid his people in victory over their enemies ringing in their ears, the men of Jericho simply waited to hear what calamity was in store for them.

Shout; for Jehovah hath given you the city. This is the instruction of Joshua to the people on the seventh day after they had compassed the city about seven times. Thus they had come to the end of God's commandment and were now ready for the promise of God to be fulfilled to them that the city should be given into their possession.

III. Special Directions (Josh. 6: 17-19)

And the city shall be devoted. This simply meant that everything in the city was devoted to God. The people were to be destroyed, and the valuables of the city were to be used for the glory of God.

Only Rahab the harlot shall live. This was according to a promise which the spies had given Rahab in exchange for her kindness to them in hiding them from the men of the city, that they should not be destroyed. (Josh. 2: 15-21.)

Only keep yourselves from the devoted thing. That which was devoted to God could not be used for individual purposes. Hence, individuals were forbidden to take any silver or gold or any other valuables for their personal use. All had to be taken to the treasury of Jehovah and there deposited to be used for the benefit of all the people alike.

So would ye make the camp of Israel accursed. By this it is meant that if any men should take of the devoted things such as silver and gold or other valuables, the entire

camp would suffer for it, and this we learn happened in the case of Achan who took a Babylonish mantle and some silver and gold and hid them in his tent. The army of Israel was not able to take the city of Ai because of his sin. Hence, the whole camp was accursed and troubled by his sin in taking the devoted thing.

IV. The Fall of the City (Josh. 6: 20, 21)

So the people shouted, and the priests blew the trumpets. This was poor military scientific strategy, but it was in obedience to the command of God, and hence brought the blessing which God had promised.

And the wall fell down flat. It is said that the wall gave way, fell down, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him. The wall was not broken at one point to permit the people to file through at that place, but every man from around the entire length of the city wall was able to walk into the city from the place where he was standing when the shout was given. A recent work on archeology has this to say. "It is clear that Jericho could have been reduced to submission by prolonged siege, but the divine plan called for a miraculous deliverance, and the consequent devotement both of the city and its spoil as an expression of Jehovah's judgment against the heinous iniquity of the rejected Canaanite?. Startling indeed have been the results of excavations at Jericho in their confirmation of the Biblical narratives regarding the fall of the city. Evidences indicate the following items in particular: First, the apparently impregnable walls of the city fell, as stated in the Joshua account, under its own weight. Remains of this wall are now exposed in the midst of complete desolation. Second, in the light of pottery remains, the approximate date of the city's destruction can be fixed at 1400 B.C., the exact period in which the Israelite invasion occurred. And, finally, according to the curse pronounced against the rebuilding of Jericho, excavations disclose that the mound remained deserted until the

era of Ahab, when Hiel the Bethelite began to rebuild the city on its old

foundations." (Ancient Records and the Bible, by J. M. Adams, p. 268.)

Lessons to Learn

1. *Foolish and absurd are the efforts of infidels to explain this incident.* We must either accept the story of the unusual procedure of conquering a city or we must reject the whole thing as a fable concocted by the historian. If we reject this story, we may as well reject every other story in the Old Testament. Critics have about decided to reject all which cannot be demonstrated scientifically, and thus they refuse to walk by faith in the Bible as the word of God.

2. *We find Israel keeping their promises.* The spies promised Rahab that she and all whom she gathered in her house would be saved, provided she gave them a sign by which they might know her house. We find in the record that they kept their promise. It is refreshing nowadays

to find a man who will give you his word and live by it whether it is in writing or not.

3. *This incident is another illustration of what may be called "the foolishness of faith."* God has asked his people on numerous occasions to do things which looked foolish to them and now look foolish to the worldly wise. To set out to capture a city with a great wall built around it in such fashion as this must have seemed extremely foolish. But yet it is a test of faith, and God rewards the faithful when they have stood their test. By demonstrating their faith in God they proved themselves worthy of the blessing he was to give, and we today should learn the lesson that we are entitled to his blessings only when we have proved our faith.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text from memory.
Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

On what did the people of Israel base their faith that they would capture Jericho?
In what way was the faith of the people tested?
What other Old Testament character had his faith tested in a similar way?
In what New Testament command is our faith similarly tested?
From what experiences could Israel draw encouragement to accept Joshua's command?
What military equipment did Israel have?
Did the walls show signs of weakening daily?
Were there differences of opinion among the people as how to take the city?
Give examples of how people's opinion differ from God's ways today.
What is God's order of promise and blessings?
What New Testament passages are cited to prove this order?

Introduction

What memorial was erected after the crossing?
What influence did this crossing have on the people of Canaan?
What is the meaning of the word Gilgal and what incident gave it this name?
What change was made in the feeding of the people?

Tell of the appearance of Jehovah to Joshua at Gilgal.
Give the order of march around Jericho.
What indicates the solemnity of this procession?

The People Obey Orders

At what time of day did Joshua begin obedience?
What other great man rose early to do God's will?
How many times did the people march around the city?
Did Joshua use good military tactics in capturing the city?
What impression must have been made on the people of Jericho during this procession?
What was the last condition for the people to meet to gain the city?

Special Directions

What was done with the valuables of the city?
What instruction was given with reference to Rahab?
What warning was given with reference to devoted things?
What would be the consequence of violating this commandment?
Who violated this command?

The Fall of the City

What part did the people and the priest have in taking the city?
What suggests the complete destruction of the walls?
What lessons do we learn about Jericho from archeology?
What is there of interest to you in the Lessons to Learn?

Lesson IV—July 26, 1953

ISRAEL DEFEATED AT AI

The Lesson Text

Joshua 7: 10-26

10 And Je-ho'-vah said unto Josh'-u-ó, Get thee up; wherefore art thou thus fallen upon thy face?

11 Is'-ra-el hath sinned; yea, they have even transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: yea, they have even taken of the devoted thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also; and they have even put it among their own stuff.

12 Therefore the children of Is'-ra-el cannot stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, because they are become accursed: I will not be with you any more, except ye destroy the devoted thing from among you.

13 Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow: for thus saith Je-ho'-vah, the God of Is'-ra-el, There is a devoted thing in the midst of thee, O Is'-ra-el; thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the devoted thing from among you.

14 In the morning therefore ye shall be brought near by your tribes: and it shall be, that the tribe which Je-ho'-vah taketh shall come near by families; and the family which Je-ho'-vah shall take shall come near by households; and the household which Je-ho'-vah shall take shall come near man by man.

15 And it shall be, that he that is taken with the devoted thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath; because he hath transgressed the covenant of Je-ho'-vah, and because he hath wrought folly in Is'-ra-el.

16 So Josh'-u-a rose up early in the morning, and brought Is'-ra-el near by their tribes; and the tribe of Ju'-dah was taken:

17 And he brought near the family of Ju'-dah; and he took the family of the Ze'-rah-ites: and he brought near the family of the Ze'-rah-ites man by man; and Zab'-di was taken:

18 And he brought near his household man by man; and A'-chan, the

son of Car'-mi, the son of Zab'-di, the son of Ze'-rah, of the tribe of Ju'-dah, was taken.

19 And Josh'-u-a said unto A'-chan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to Je-ho'-vah, the God of Is'-ra-el, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

20 And A'-chan answered Josh'-u-a, and said, Of a truth I have sinned against Je-ho'-vah, the God of Is'-ra-el, and thus and thus have I done:

21 When I saw among the spoil a goodly Bab-y-lo'-nish mantle, and two hundred shek'-els of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shek'-els weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

22 So Josh'-u-a sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

23 And they took them from the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Josh'-u-a, and unto all the children of Is'-ra-el; and they laid them down before Je-ho'-vah.

24 And Josh'-u-a, and all Is'-ra-el with him, took A'-chan the son of Ze'-rah, and the silver, and the mantle, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them up unto the valley of A'-chor.

25 And Josh'-u-a said, Why hast thou troubled us? Je-ho'-vah shall trouble thee this day. And all Is'-ra-el stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire, and stoned them with stones.

26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones, unto this day; and Je-ho'-vah turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of A'-chor, unto this day.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against Jehovah; and be sure your sin will find you out."* (Num. 32: 23.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Josh. 7: 1-9.

Daily Bible Readings

July 20.	M.....	Joshua Attacks Ai (Josh. 7: 1-3)
July 21.	T.....	Joshua's Forces Defeated (Josh. 7: 4-9)
July 22.	W.....	Sin in the Camp of Israel (Josh. 7: 16-20)
July 23.	T.....	Achan Destroyed (Josh. 7: 22-26)
July 24.	F.....	Touch Not the Unclean Thing (2 Cor. 6: 14-18)
July 25.	S.....	Put Away Evil from Among You (1 Cor. 5: 1-13)
July 26.	S.....	God Promises the Fall of Ai (Josh. 8: 1-29)

TIME.—1451 B.C.

PLACE.—Ai.

PERSONS.—Joshua, Achan, and the people.

Golden Text Explained

1. The Setting of the Text. Our text has its setting back in the days of Moses while the children of Israel were still on the eastern side of the Jordan River. Representatives of the tribes of Reuben and Gad went to Moses with the request that they be allowed to settle on the eastern side of the river in the land of Jazar and the land of Gilead. (Num. 32: 1-5.) The half tribe of Manasseh is not mentioned in this connection until we reach the thirty-third verse of that chapter. If they had representatives among those who made the request of Moses, no mention is made of it, and how and why they were included in the number that stayed on the east side of Jordan, we have no way of knowing. The land which they wished to occupy had formerly belonged to two tribes of the Amorites. One of these tribes was under King Sihon and the other was under King Og. (Num. 21: 21-35.) Their possession finally came to include more than that of the two Amorite kingdoms and included that of the Amorites and some of Moab. They desired this land because they saw that it was a good place for cattle. When the request was first made known, Moses thought they intended to shirk their duty of helping their brethren take the land west of the Jordan from the enemies. So they removed this fear by offering to cross the Jordan with the balance of the people and fight until the land was conquered. Then they would expect to go back and join their families on the east side of the Jordan. A question has been raised as to wheth-

er all the soldiers of these two and a half tribes crossed over the Jordan. From Num. 26 we learn that there were over one hundred thousand soldiers in these two and a half tribes, but from Josh. 4: 13 we learn that there were forty thousand of these two and a half tribes that passed over the Jordan armed before the children of Israel to help take the land of Canaan. Hence, we conclude that there were enough of their soldiers left on the east side of Jordan to protect and care for their women and children. When they agreed to send an armed force to represent them in the conquest of Canaan, Moses granted their request, but gave this verse which serves as our text as a warning to them that they should not turn back before they had accomplished their mission. But if they did, they might be sure that their sin would find them out.

2. Sin Involves Our Relation to God. When Moses granted their request to be allowed to settle on the east side of Jordan, he reminded them that, if they did not go across and help to conquer the land of Canaan, they had sinned against Jehovah. This is the idea which we wish to stress at this time. If they failed to bear their responsibilities, which they had accepted; if they failed to help their brethren in taking the land of Canaan for their possession, it would be counted as a sin against Jehovah. If all of us could realize that when we sin against our brethren we are sinning against Jehovah, surely we would be more careful about how we treat our fel-

low men. In Matt. 25: 31-46 we have a picture of the judgment scene. In that picture Jesus represents the nations of the world as being gathered before him at the time of his coming and their being divided the one from the other, as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats, and to them upon the right hand he gives a blessing because he says that they fed him when he was hungry, they clothed him when he was naked, and they visited him when he was sick and in prison. But they respond that they did not know they had thus served him. Then he informs them that inasmuch as they did it unto one of the least of these his brethren, they had done it unto him. This is a principle which we must remember: not only when we do good to people are we thus treating the Lord; but, when we treat people unkindly and harshly, we are treating the Lord after this fashion. When brethren start calling one another ugly names, either face to face or through our religious papers, if they could remember that they are treating the Lord in that fashion, in the person of their brother, they would surely deal more kindly with the brethren.

3. **Sin Will Out.** It is a difficult thing to hide our sins from our fellow men. If we continue the practice of sin very long, we will likely be detected in our sin. But if we manage to escape detection, there is another way in which sin will out. Those who come to realize their sin, and are stricken in their conscience on account of their sin, are driven to confess their sin in order that they may have an easy conscience. Hence, another way of sin coming to light. Sometimes people go to great lengths

to cover their sin to keep them from being made known. David is a good example of this. You remember that, when he sinned with Bathsheba, he was tempted to hide his sin. He called Uriah from the battlefield to return home, thinking that this would remove any suspicion from himself. But when Uriah refused to go home, it became necessary for David to resort to sterner methods. He first made him drunk, thinking that he would go home, but Uriah refused to go even when drunk. Then in desperation David sent a note to Joab to put Uriah in the front line of battle where he would surely be killed, and when word was sent to David that Uriah was dead, David took Bathsheba for his wife, thinking this would cover his sin of adultery with her. David lied to Uriah and finally had him murdered to try to keep his sin covered. But in spite of that Nathan, the prophet, uncovered his sin and brought him under conviction.

But even if people could cover their sins in this life, their sins will come out in the judgment for, "God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Eccles. 12: 14.) Again, "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." (2 Cor. 5: 10.) Jesus said that even the idle words which we speak must be accounted for in the day of judgment. (Matt. 12: 36.) Hence, we see the importance of avoiding sin, because our sins will find us out, usually in this life, but certainly in the judgment.

Introduction

By way of introduction it will be worth while to notice two things. First is the fact that the people of Israel kept their promise, made through the spies, to Rahab and her family. Joshua told the spies who had given Rahab the promise to go into the doomed city and find Rahab and her people **and** bring them out safely. This they did, according to their promise, **and** allowed her to dwell in the midst of Israel. And

according to Matt. 1: 5 we learn that she married a man by the name of Salmon, and they had a son named Boaz, who was the husband of Ruth, and their son was Jesse, who was the father of King David. Her name is preserved in the Bible hall of fame in these words. "By faith Rahab the harlot perished not with them that were disobedient, having received the spies with peace." (Heb. 11: 31.) Next, we notice that Joshua placed

a curse upon any man who would rise up and attempt to build the city of Jericho. The curse was that he would lose his first born when he laid the foundation and he would lose his youngest son when he set up the gates of the city. In 1 Kings 16: 34 we learn that Hiel, the Bethelite, built Jericho and that he lost his two sons in his attempt to do so. By way of preparation to take the little city of Ai, Joshua sent spies to spy out the land. These spies returned to Joshua and said that the city was small and there was no need to take all the great army to take that small city. They recommended that about three thousand men be

taken to do the work. Ai is located almost due north of Jerusalem, and it is about the same distance northwest from Jericho. When the men of Israel approached Ai, the army of Ai attacked, and the men of Israel turned and fled from before them. About thirty-six men of Israel lost their lives in this encounter. When the news was brought to Joshua, he fell upon the earth on his face before the ark of Jehovah and lay there until the evening. And the elders of Israel put dust upon their head. Joshua then laid the matter before the Lord, and our lesson text begins with Jehovah's address to Joshua.

Exposition of the Text

I. Cause of Defeat Discovered (Josh.

7: 10-15)

Israel hath sinned. Joshua was very much concerned about the defeat of his army at Ai, not only for the loss of the men, but for what would be done for the name of Jehovah. The Canaanites would surely learn of this defeat and would be encouraged by it to stiffen their resistance. This was Jehovah's explanation for the defeat of the army of Israel at Ai. In verse eleven we have an enumeration of the sins which had been committed. (1) They had transgressed his covenant. That is, they had broken a solemn vow which they had taken to put the valuables of the city in the proper place instead of taking them for themselves. (2) They had stolen; that is, they had taken some of the things devoted to the Lord to use in their private life. This was taking that which did not belong to them but which belonged to the Lord and using it for themselves. (3) They had dissembled. This means they had practiced deceit. They were trying to hide their sin. (4) They had even put it among their own stuff. By this it is meant that they had appropriated to themselves that which belonged to God. This the Lord considered a very serious crime.

I will not be with you any more. This was the Lord's attitude toward Israel as long as there was sin among them. He would not be with them in their battles, he would not prosper them in their efforts to capture the

land of Canaan if they permitted this sin to remain unpunished among them. This ought to be a good lesson to the elders of churches today. It is their duty to keep the churches pure of worldliness, ungodliness, and immorality. If they allow these sins to continue in the church without rebuke, without discipline, they should not expect the Lord to be with them and to bless the labors of the church.

Up, sanctify the people. From a former lesson we have learned that in sanctifying themselves the people were required to go through certain washings. The purpose of this was to emphasize the uncleanness of sin and the necessity of being free from this uncleanness to come into the presence of Jehovah. That is a lesson which all of us should learn, that we are to keep ourselves free from sin; but, if we become involved in sin, we should cleanse ourselves from this sin before attempting to come into his presence for worship or service.

Thou canst not stand before thine enemies. Only one man of all the great army of Israel had sinned. Yet, this one sin makes it impossible for the army to stand before their enemies in battle. If one sin thus enfeebled and weakened the army of Israel before its enemies, how much more would sin in the life of an individual today enfeeble that individual and render his efforts useless in serving God. Sin in one's life not only robs that one of his courage but also compromises his influence with all who know of his sin.

He that is taken with the devoted thing shall be burnt with fire. This shows God's estimate of the seriousness of sin. This one who had stolen that which was devoted to the Lord must pay with his life. Two reasons are given for this severe justice. (1) The man had transgressed the covenant of Jehovah. (2) He had wrought folly in Israel. When we become Christians, we take a vow to wear the name Jehovah without soiling it. When we sin, we violate this covenant which we have made. Sin is a serious thing, and we should avoid it as we would a poisonous reptile. When people sin today, they also work folly in spiritual Israel, the church. The sin of an individual brings reproach upon the church of our Lord. That individual who can sin lightly and so put to shame the church of the Lord in the community really works folly in Israel more so than this man did in the long ago.

II. The Sinner Discovered (Josh. 7: 16-21)

Joshua . . . brought Israel near by their tribes. This is in harmony with the instructions which Jehovah gave. (Verse 14.) They were to be taken first by their tribes, and the Lord would indicate the tribe in which the sin was. We learn that the tribe of Judah was taken, so indicating that the sinner was in the tribe of Judah. And then he brought forth the family in which the sin existed. When God had indicated the family in which the sin existed, he then brought forth the households of this family. And the person in that household that had sinned was pointed out. Achan, the son of Carmi, was the one indicated as the sinner.

My son, give . . . glory to Jehovah, . . . make confession unto him. We should notice the tenderness of Joshua in dealing with this unfortunate sinner. A man had fallen victim to his lusts and had taken that which was devoted to the Lord. It was such a serious sin that it must be punished, and yet Joshua had compassion for the man and addressed him as his son. This reminds us that we ought to deal kindly, yet firmly, with those who have sinned. (Gal. 6: 1.)

Of a truth I have sinned against

Jehovah. Achan made a full and free confession. He did not stutter, nor did he say, *if* I have sinned. He simply said, "I have sinned against Jehovah." Then he detailed his sin. He said, "I saw among the spoil a goodly Babylonish mantle, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight." Then he said he coveted them and took them and hid them in his tent. Notice the things that this man says he did. (1) "I saw." He looked upon that which was devoted to God, and he looked with favor. He allowed himself to think favorably of taking that which belonged to God. When we allow ourselves to contemplate sin, our battle is half lost. (2) "I coveted them." The coveting naturally follows looking or contemplating with favor the doing of a thing that is wrong. (3) He took. That is the natural consequence of looking and desiring. (4) He said he hid them in his tent. That is the natural thing to do; to try to cover sin, and so today many after following their desire to sin, try to hide their sin.

m. Punishment of the Sinner (Josh. 7: 22-26)

They took them from the midst of the tent. Achan had tried to hide his sin, but sins will find people out. And Achan's sin was no exception to the rule. His sin has now been made public, both by his confession and by producing the things which he had stolen.

Why hast thou troubled us? The sin of Achan had brought trouble upon Israel. Thirty-six men had died in battle. They left a number of women behind to know the sorrow and suffering that only widows could know in that day. They left a number of children fatherless, to go through life without the care and instruction of a father. This sin had given the enemies of Israel encouragement and would make their battles harder in the future. So, when people today sin, they bring trouble into the camp of Israel.

All *Israel stoned him with stones.* Bible scholars argue whether Achan's family was stoned with him. The first part of the statement is that Israel stoned *him*. Then we are told they burned *them* with fire and stoned *them* with stones. Some argue that

his family would not have been stoned and burned unless they knew of the sin and helped him to hide the sin. Of that we have no proof. Neither the Septuagint nor the Syriac version mentions the stoning of Achan's family. These simply say that "all Israel stoned him with stones and burned what pertained to him

with fire." But whether the family were stoned or not, the punishment was sufficiently severe to warn Israel that God knows our sins, that he will not be with us when we are in sin, and that our sins will bring dire punishment upon us and suffering upon those with whom we are associated.

Lessons to Learn

1. *Trying to hide our sins is utter folly.* Very few of us are able to hide our sins from our friends and neighbors. Someone said, "You can fool some of the people all the time and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time." It may very well be added that you cannot fool God any of the time.

2. *Paul tells us that the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.* (1 Tim. 6: 10.) The love of material wealth is the thing that caused Achan to sin. It brought sin to his own life, defeat to Israel, death to several soldiers and suffering, maybe destruction, to his own family. Certainly the love of money brought evil into the life of Achan and all Israel.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Give the setting of our Golden Text.

To whom had the land east of Jordan formerly belonged?

What did Moses think when the request was first made?

Did all the soldiers of the two and one-half tribes take part in the conquest of Canaan?

How serious would be their failure to do as they promised?

What did Jesus teach about our treatment of himself through our treatment of his brethren?

Name some ways in which sins are brought to light?

To what will people resort to cover their sins?

Illustrate this principle by the use of David.

What is taught with reference to our sins in the day of judgment?

Introduction

Tell how Israel kept their promise to Rahab.

What mention is made of Rahab in the New Testament?

What did Joshua say would happen to the man who attempted to rebuild Jericho?

Tell of Israel's defeat at Ai.

Cause of Defeat Discovered

Name and discuss four ways in which Israel had sinned.

What did this sin cause Jehovah to do?

What lesson may elders of churches today learn with reference to the discipline of congregations?

What purpose did God have in sanctifying the people?

What effect did this sin have on all Israel?

What was to be done with the guilty party?

Discuss two reasons given for this severe punishment.

The Sinner Discovered

By what method was the sinner discovered?

What shows the compassion of Joshua for Achan?

Does this suggest that we should hate sin but have compassion on the sinner?

Was there any reservation in the confession of Achan?

What four elements of sin are seen in his confession?

Punishment of the Sinner

How did Achan attempt to hide his sin?

In what way had Achan's sin troubled Israel?

What was Achan's punishment for his sin?

Do you think his family suffered with him?

What effect does sin usually have upon those closely related to the sinner?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson V—August 2, 1953

THE LAW RECORDED AND READ

The Lesson Text

Deut. 27: 1-7; Joshua 8: 30-35

1 And Mo'-s6s and the elders of Is'-ra-el commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandment which I command you this day.

2 And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over the Jordan unto the land which Je-ho'-vah thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster:

3 And thou shalt write upon them all the words of the law, when thou art passed over; that thou mayest go in unto the land which Je-ho'-vah thy God giveth thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Je-ho'-vah, the God of thy fathers, hath promised thee.

4 And it shall be, when ye are passed over the Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount E'-bal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster.

5 And there shalt thou build an altar unto Je-ho'-vah thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt lift up no iron *tool* upon them.

6 Thou shalt build the altar of Je-ho'-vah thy God of unhewn stones; and thou shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon unto Je-ho'-vah thy God:

7 And thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings, and shalt eat there; and thou shalt rejoice before Je-ho'-vah thy God.

30 Then Josh'-u-a built an altar

unto Je-ho'-vah, the God of Is'-ra-el, in mount E'-bal,

31 As Mó'-ses the servant of Je-ho'-vah commanded the children of Is'-ra-el, as it is written in the book of the law of Mó'-ses, an altar of unhewn stones, upon which no man had lifted up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto Je-ho'-vah, and sacrificed peace-offerings.

32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Mó'-ses, which he wrote, in the presence of the children of Is'-ra-el.

33 And all Is'-ra-el, and their elders and officers, and their judges, stood on this side of the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, that bare the ark of the covenant of Je-ho'-vah, as well as the sojourner as the home-born; half of them in front of mount Ger'-i-zim, and half of them in front of mount E'-bal; as Mo'-s6s the servant of Je-ho'-vah had commanded at the first, that they should bless the people of Is'-ra-el.

34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

35 There was not a word of all that Mo'-s6s commanded, which Josh'-u-a read not before all the assembly of Is'-ra-el, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners that were among them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: there-fore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed"* (Deut. 30: 19.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Deut. 11: 29-32.

Daily Bible Readings

July 27. M..... The Recording and Reading of the Law (Josh. 8: 30-35)
 July 28. T..... Moses' Commandment to Read the Law (Deut. 27: 1-7)
 July 29. W..... An Example of Reading the Law (Neh. 8: 1-8)
 July 30. T..... Paul's Injunction to Timothy (1 Tim. 4: 13-16)
 July 31. F..... Value of the Law of God (2 Tim. 3: 15-17)
 Aug. 1. S..... Law in the Heart Day and Night (Psalm 1: 1-6)
 Aug. 2. S..... Delight in the Law (Psalm 119: 33-40)

TIME.—1451 B.C.

PLACE.—Between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim.

PERSONS.—Moses, Joshua, and the people.

Golden Text Explained

1. Great Witnesses. The words of our text are the language of Moses in his last discourse before the people of Israel shortly before his death. He was trying to impress the people with the importance of obeying the law that he had given to them. The more important a matter is, the greater the witnesses called upon to witness the transaction. It would be impossible to select greater witnesses than heaven and earth. Hence, the greatest possible importance should be attached to the law and their obedience to it. Calling heaven as a witness of the transactions of that day suggests two things. (1) The material heavens are peopled with the stars and planets and they were looked upon as witnesses to this transaction. David speaks of them as the servants of God continuing in all the ordinances of God relative to them. (Psalm 119: 91.) Since all the heavenly bodies obey implicitly the will of their Creator and Preserver, they are represented as looking with disfavor upon mankind as the only creature of God who is self-willed and rebellious against his Creator. (2) The angels of heaven may be included in this. They are said to be interested in the affairs of man. Peter represents the angels as being interested in the sayings of the prophets, and that they desire to look into these things. (1 Pet. 1: 12.) And Jesus represents the angels as being interested in our affairs and rejoicing when even one sinner repents. (Luke 15: 10.) To call upon them as a witness against our transactions suggests that they would look with disfavor upon our transgression of the law. In the second place Moses called earth to witness against Israel, suggesting that the earth is interested in and affected by the righteousness of people or by the transgression of people. And Paul speaks of the physical creation being subjected to vanity, not of its own will but by reason of him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into which it was brought by the sin of

man, on account of which he says the whole creation "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." (Rom. 8: 19-22.)

2. Great Destinies. Moses continues our text by saying that he had set before Israel life and death—the blessing and the curse. The blessing would lead to life. The curse would lead to death. These are the great destinies of our text and the great avenues which lead to these great destinies. This thought is enlarged upon in a preceding verse in these words, "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I commanded thee this day to love Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, that thou mayest live and multiply, and that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in the land whether thou goest in to possess it. But if thy heart turn away, and thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish; ye shall not prolong your days in the land, whither thou passest over the Jordan to go in to possess it." There was a temporal destiny conditioned upon obedience to carnal commandments and ordinances. If they obeyed the commandments of the Lord, they would be allowed to enjoy that great destiny. But if they disobeyed the commandments of the Lord, they would be driven out of their land and subjected to another destiny. This is intended as an object lesson for us. And New Testament writers use these experiences of Israel to teach us lessons for our good. Our destiny is eternal and conditioned upon obedience to a spiritual law. But the same principle of respect for the lawgiver and obedience to the law being necessary for our enjoyment of the blessings is important for each one of us to learn. There are still two possible destinies for each one of us. If we obey the Lord, we can enjoy heaven forevermore; but, if we live in disregard and

disobedience to his law, we will endure the tortures of hell forevermore.

3. A Great Choice. Moses concludes our text by saying, "Therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed." Moses called upon them to make one great choice. In fact, if we make that one great choice and decision, all the lesser decisions and choices of life will be easy to make. The man who chooses and decides deep in his heart to accept and to serve God all the days of his life will find the daily decisions and choices easy to make; but the one who is divided in his love and his loyalty will find that day by day he is having difficulty in making his decisions. So, if our daily decisions are difficult for us to make, we should examine our hearts and see whether or not the one great choice to love and serve God faithfully and loyally has been made. In the next

place, to choose God is to choose life. And in choosing life in this way we have the assurance that we shall live. Moses said, "Choose life, that thou mayest live." Our enjoyment of eternal life depends upon whether we choose, in this life, life or death. So it is in this life and by our choice that we decide our eternal destiny. We should notice further that Moses suggested that our choice would have something to do with our children. Moses encouraged these people to choose life, not only that they might live, but that their seed also might live. Hence, the choice that we make will have something to do with the choice which our children and their children after them will make. In this we see the importance of making the right choice and living by it. Life is indeed a solemn and serious affair, and we should accept the responsibilities and the duties of this life soberly and in view of eternity.

Introduction

After the sin of Achan had been punished, God **gave** Joshua encouragement, saying, "Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai; see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land." This was a serious experience through which the people had gone. Sin had caused God to leave the camp and refuse to be with them in their battles. If that continued, the destruction of Israel was certain and imminent. Hence, they needed encouragement, and God does not leave his people without encouragement, especially when they are willing to rid themselves of sin as they did in this case. Next, we notice the strategy used in taking the city of Ai. Some thirty thousand men of valor were sent forth by night to lie in ambush against the city on the far side. Then Joshua and his army were to approach the city as they had done before, and, when the men of Ai came out to join them in battle,

this force before the city turned and fled as they had done previously. Then the men of Ai, with the help of those of Bethel, followed after Israel, expecting to slay some of them as they had done before. But at the proper time Joshua gave his signal and the men lying in ambush behind the city arose and went into the city unopposed. They set fire to the city, and, when the men of Ai saw the city in flames, they realized that they had been ambushed from the rear and knew that their defeat was imminent. The city and its inhabitants were destroyed, the king was hanged on a tree, and the spoils of the city were given over to the people of Israel for their own use and enjoyment. These two battles with the city of Ai should teach us that we can do anything God expects us to do so long as we live right and have God as our helper, but that we will go down in utter defeat, when we, by our ungodliness, make it impossible for God to be with us.

Exposition of the Text

I. Moses Gives Instructions (Deut.

27: 1-7)

Keep all the commandment which I command you this day. Moses was deeply concerned about the future of

the people whom he led. So over and over he admonishes and exhorts them to keep in mind the commandments of the Lord and to obey them. Moses had every reason to fear that

the people would not keep the commandments. Later he said, "For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against Jehovah; and how much more after my death? . . . For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you." (Deut. 31: 27-29.)

Thou shalt set thee up great stones.

This was to be done after they had crossed the river Jordan into the land of Canaan. These stones were to be plastered with plaster. How many stones were used we are not told. Some suggest twelve because of the twelve tribes of Israel. But that is mere fancy. The object was to gather stones of such shape as to give them a surface on which to write, and plaster was to be put over them to make a smooth surface for writing. Some inscriptions have been found where the surface of the stone was chiseled away, leaving the letters in relief. Others have been found where the letters were chiseled into the surface of the stone. Since the stone was covered with plaster, it is probable that the writing was done upon this plaster. Travelers in the Holy Land testify that they have seen specimens of writing on such plaster as much as two thousand years old, and that the writing is still distinct.

Write upon the stones all the words of this law. It is impossible for us to determine positively what was written on these stones. The second section of our lesson says, "He wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses." But since that term, the law of Moses, is used to represent the five books which Moses wrote, as well as portions of the law, we are left to wonder how much of the law was written. Certainly not the whole five books which Moses wrote. Some say that a condensation of the law of Moses was written on these stones. Others say that the curses and blessings which are mentioned in the context of our lesson were written, while others say that the ten commandments were written on the stones. Since the term, the law, is often used in scripture to refer to the ten commandments, but is not used anywhere to refer to these blessings and curses,

pronounced on Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, this writer prefers to say that on this occasion the term refers to the ten commandments, and that the ten commandments were written on the plaster on these stones.

There shalt thou build an altar unto Jehovah thy God. This altar, as well as the stones on which the law was written, was to be erected on Mount Ebal. This altar was to be built of rough unhewn stones, and upon it were to be offered both burnt offerings and peace offerings. So from the instructions which Moses gave, people were to be acquainted with the law and to learn respect for the authority of God as expressed through this law, and they were to be taught to worship God in connection with the reading of the law.

II. Joshua Follows Instructions (Josh.

8: 30-35)

Then Joshua built an altar unto Jehovah. This brings us back to the time after the battle of Ai. The armies of Israel had gained a foothold. They had established a spearhead in the land of Canaan. They were firmly entrenched in this eastern portion of the land, and they now could take time to worship God. They could now give God thanks that he had brought them into the land which he had promised them and that he had given them victory over their enemies, which was a pledge of the success of the entire campaign to take the land. Jericho and Ai might be looked upon as the first fruits of the land of Canaan. Since God had given them these victories, they could well depend upon him to give them victories over all the other enemies.

As it is written in the book of the law of Moses. Critics of the Bible have attempted to prove that the book of Deuteronomy was written hundreds of years later than Moses—perhaps in the days of Ezra. But here Joshua tells us that it was written in the book of the law of Moses that an altar should be built upon Mount Ebal, so this verse is positive proof that the book of Joshua was written after the book of Deuteronomy. We must, therefore, accept the fact that the book of Deuteronomy was written before the events of the blessings

and the curses, or we must deny the inspiration of the book of Joshua.

Half of them in front of Mount Gerizim, and half of them in front of Mount Ebal. This refers to the arrangement of the people to pronounce the blessings and the curses. Half of them stood on Mount Gerizim to pronounce the blessings, and the other half stood on Mount Ebal to pronounce the curse. The ark of the covenant was surrounded by the priests, Levites and the elders of the people and was stationed between the two groups on the mountainside. It is difficult to determine whether they actually stood upon these mountains or whether they stood facing these mountains when they pronounced the blessings or the curses. Deut. 27: 11-14 says they stood upon the mountain, while this thirty-third verse of our text seems to suggest that they stood facing the mountains when they pronounced the blessings and the curses.

Afterward he read all the words of the law. Critics have said that it would have been impossible for Joshua to read the law so as to be heard by the vast assemblage of people on that occasion. Brother McGarvey went to this very spot and conducted a test to see whether or not the voice of a man could be carried far enough to be heard by people on the two mountains. A summary of his report of this test was: It is interesting to know that the spot chosen by God for this reading is a vast natural amphitheater, in which the human voice can be heard to a surprising distance. About halfway between Shechem and the mouth of the valley in which it stands there is a deep semi-circular recess in the face of Mount Ebal and a corresponding one precisely opposite to it in Mount Gerizim. No man with his eyes open

could ride along the valley without being struck with this singular formation. As soon as I saw it, I recognized it as the place of Joshua's reading. It has been asserted repeatedly by travelers that, although two men stationed on the opposite slope of these two mountains are a mile apart, they can read so as to be heard by each other. We preferred to try the experiment in stricter accordance with Joshua's example. So I took a position, Bible in hand, in the middle of the valley while two of my associates stood on either mountain. When I had read the blessing or the curse they pronounced an amen afterwards. One of my associates heard me distinctly, and I could hear his response. But the other, though he could hear my voice, could not distinguish the words. This, Brother McGarvey says, was owing to the fact that some mountain walls prevented him from ascending high enough that the trees between Brother McGarvey and his associate interrupted the passage of the sound, but since the man could hear his voice, and Brother McGarvey's voice was weak, he concluded that Joshua, with a strong voice, could have been heard by his associate. (Lands of the Bible, page 507.)

Before all the assembly of Israel. This was a vast assemblage of some two million people gathered in this recess between the mountains. Their sacrifices upon the altar, the writing of the law on the stones, their repeating of the curses and the blessings in the hearing of all Israel must have made a great impression upon the people. It, no doubt, helped to account for the fact that the people were faithful as long as Joshua lived and as long as the elders who were associated with Joshua lived. (Judges 2: 6, 7.)

Lessons to Learn

1. ***We should learn from this incident the part which the law of the Lord plays in the life of a nation.*** Here a nation of people assembled to hear the law of the Lord read and emphasized in their presence. It was to mean much to them. Upon their attitude toward this law depended their national security. If the rulers of the people of the world today could

learn this lesson, we might have peace.

2. ***From this incident we should learn the place that worship has in the life of people and of nations.*** Here the people of Israel assembled to worship God by offering sacrifices upon their altar. They heard the law read and were impressed with the authority of him from whom the law

came, and now in gratitude for their successes in battle and for the gift of the land of Canaan they humbly worshiped before their Creator and their Preserver. If the nations of the world today could learn to respect the law of the Lord and to pay due homage and adoration to him in worship as he directs, we could live together in peace.

3. *But religion is not a national affair today.* We do not accept God by nations nor do we worship God in national units, but religion is a per-

sonal affair: Each one must make his own choice regardless of the direction the nation travels, or the community about us; we can make our choice for God and live for him all the days of our lives. If the majority of people do not choose to live for God, our pathway will be more difficult and our burdens heavier, but we are promised the help of the Lord, and with that help we can do all that he expects and demands of us. So let each one of us make his own choice and abide by it.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

With what was Moses trying to impress the people in his last discourse?

What two things are suggested by calling heaven as a witness to their transactions?

What is the significance to their calling the earth a witness?

What does Paul say the earth has suffered on account of sin?

What are the two great destinies of our text?

What are the two avenues which lead to these destinies?

How do New Testament writers use these experiences of Israel?

What great choice did Moses call upon them to make?

How does this great choice affect our daily life?

How does this choice affect succeeding generations?

Introduction

What encouragement did God give Joshua after the death of Achan?

Tell the story of the capture of Ai.

What lesson should we learn from Israel's experience with Ai?

Moses Gives Instructions

Did Moses believe Israel would be faithful after his death?

On what were the people to write the words of the law?

How much of the law of Moses do you think was written on these stones?

Where were the people commanded to build an altar?

What two things were the people to learn from the altar and from the law written on plastered stones?

Joshua Follows Instructions

What two cities may be called the first fruits of the conquest of Canaan?

What do Bible critics say of the date of the writing of Deuteronomy?

What proof do we have that it was written before the days of Joshua?

On what mountains were the blessings and cursings pronounced?

What use have Bible critics made of this experience?

Give a summary of Brother McGarvey's experiment.

What effect was this experience calculated to have upon Israel?

What is there of interest to you in the division of Lessons to Learn?

Lesson VI—August 9, 1953

JOSHUA AND CALEB

The Lesson Text

Joshua 14: 6-15

6 Then the children of Ju'-dah drew nigh unto Josh'-u-a in Gil'-gal: and Ca'-leb the son of Je-phun'-neh the Ken'-iz-zite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that Je-ho'-vah spake unto Mó'-ses the man of God concerning me and concerning thee in Ka'-desh-bar'-ne-a.

7 Forty years old was I when Mó'-ses the servant of Je-ho'-vah sent me from Ka'-desh-bar'-ne-a to spy out the land: and I brought him word

again as it was in my heart.

8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed Je-ho'-vah my God.

9 And Mó'-ses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy foot hath trodden shall be an inheritance to thee and to thy children for ever, because thou hast wholly followed Je-ho'-vah my God.

10 And now behold, Je-ho'-vah

hath kept me alive, as he spake, these forty and five years, from the time that Je-ho'-vah spake this word unto M6'-s6s, while Is'-ra-el walked in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.

11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Mo'-s6s sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, and to go out and to come in.

12 Now therefore give me this hill-country, whereof Je-ho'-vah spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the An'-a-kim were there, and cities great and fortified: it may

be that Je-ho'-vah will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as Je-ho'-vah spake.

13 And Josh'-u-é blessed him; and he gave He'-bron unto Ca'-leb the son of Je-phun'-neh for an inheritance.

14 Therefore He'-bron became the inheritance of Ca'-leb the son of Je-phun'-neh the Ken'-iz-zite unto this day; because that he wholly followed Je-ho'-vah, the God of Is'-ra-el.

15 Now the name of He'-bron beforetime was Kir'-i-ath-ar'-ba; *which Ar'-ba was the greatest man among the An'-a-kim.* And the land had rest from war.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite unto this day; because that he wholly followed Jehovah, the God of Israel"* (Josh. 14: 14.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Num. 13: 26-33.

Daily Bible Readings

August	3. M.....	Joshua and Caleb (Josh. 14: 6-8)
August	4. T.....	Caleb at Forty (Josh. 14: 6-9)
August	5. W.....	Caleb at Eighty-five (Josh. 14: 10-15)
August	6. T.....	Caleb Takes Possession (Josh. 15: 13-20)
August	7. F.....	The Strength of Jehovah (Psalm 71: 12-18)
August	8. S.....	Joshua's Exhortation to Israel (Josh. 23: 1-11)
August	9. S.....	Righteous Man's Reward (Psalm 15: 1-5)

TIME.—1444 B.C.

PLACE.—Gilgal.

PERSONS.—Joshua and Caleb.

Golden Text Explained

1. Caleb Blessed for His Obedience.

Our text suggests that Caleb was given an inheritance in the land of Canaan because of his loyalty and faithfulness to God. It is a little difficult to identify and locate this man Caleb as definitely as we would wish. Our text says that he was the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite. The Kenizzites are mentioned as a tribe of people in Canaan at the time that Abraham came into the land. (Gen. 15: 19.) And yet we are told in Num. 13: 6 that Caleb was of the tribe of Judah. Some have supposed that his ancestors attached themselves to Abraham as servants and so journeyed with him in Egypt and were delivered from bondage, and that Caleb went through the wilderness wanderings attached to the tribe of Judah. Regardless of whether he was an actual descendant of Abraham or became a proselyte and at-

tached himself to the tribe of Judah, by his loyalty and obedience to the Lord he gained and deserves a place in the hall of fame for the faithful among the people. The first mention we have of Caleb is in Num. 13, where he was selected to represent the tribe of Judah in the spying out of the land, one man being selected from each tribe to go into the land of Canaan to see the conditions with which they would have to deal. And be it said to his honor that he was one of the two of that number who made a favorable report. After the ten spies had made their unfavorable report, it was Caleb who stilled the people and said, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." (Num. 13: 30.) Later on he joined with Joshua in saying, "If Jehovah delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it unto us; a land which floweth

with milk and honey. Only rebel not against Jehovah, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is removed from over them, and Jehovah is with us: fear them not." (Num. 14: 8, 9.) And only the appearance of the glory of Jehovah in the tent of meeting saved Joshua and Caleb from being stoned by the people. God pardoned the people for their rebellion on this occasion, but he condemned them to die in the wilderness on account of their rebellion. But he made an exception of Joshua and Caleb. And of Caleb in this connection the Lord said, "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it." (Num. 14: 24.) So on account of his faith in God to give them the land and because of his obedience based upon that faith, he was blessed. This should teach us that, if we too will be faithful to the Lord and loyal to his word, clean in our lives, we will be blessed by the Lord.

2. Caleb Wholly Followed Jehovah.

This is a wonderful statement to be made in reference to anyone. When it can be said a man wholly followed Jehovah, that man has earned the highest praise it is possible for an individual to earn in this life. (1) That one who wholly follows Jehovah is following without any reservations whatsoever. A full and unreserved consecration of one's self to God is necessary and yet it is a very difficult thing for one to do. In Luke 9 we have examples of people who would follow Jesus, but there were certain things they wished to do before they started following him. In each case Jesus tells them to remove that hindrance and come on and follow him. He even demanded that the dead be allowed to bury the dead. If we would follow Jesus, we must put him even before father or mother, husband or wife, son or daughter. (2) Following Jehovah wholly not only means following him without reser-

vation, but it means following him in all the various relations of life. There is a realm of activity known as our business life. With some it is difficult to be absolutely upright and honest and honorable in their business dealings. They would like to be known as followers of the Lord in their religious life, but it costs too much to be a follower of the Lord in their business life, so they will follow the Lord on Sunday, but will be of the world and like the world through the week. Then we have social activities and relationships. In these social relationships we are sometimes inclined to take liberties that are not in harmony with the will of the Lord. We sometimes justify ourselves in saying that we are regular in our church attendance and that we are honest and upright in our business dealings, and so we feel that we have liberties in the field of our social relationships. There are others whose actions in the business and social world are above reproach, but who in their home relationships are not Christian. The husband and father who deals harshly with his wife and children at home is not wholly following Jehovah. If we would wholly follow Jehovah, we must take Jesus along as our example and our counselor in all the various activities of all the realms of life and conform to his will, his teaching, and his example. (3) Another thought suggested in wholly following Jehovah is that one's relationship to Jehovah is what it ought to be. This could not be said of Caleb if he had refused to identify himself with the people of God, to share their fortunes and misfortunes, suffer when they suffered, as well as rejoicing with them when they rejoiced. He had to identify himself with God's people in order that he might wholly follow God. So today that person who refuses to identify himself with the people of God in their work and worship, in their joys and in their sufferings, is not in that relationship that would allow him to say that he is wholly following the Lord.

Introduction

The events of this lesson transpired some seven years after the events of our last lesson. During this time a number of interesting things had

happened. Among them the Gibeonites had deceived Joshua and his people and had made a treaty with the Israelites, allowing them to be

servants and thus avoiding destruction along with the rest of the tribes of Canaan. This story is found in the ninth chapter of Joshua. When the treaty with the Gibeonites became known to the other tribes of Canaan, they were called together by the king of Jerusalem who organized a military campaign against Gibeon. The men of Gibeon called on Joshua for help. It was in this battle to assist the Gibeonites that Joshua needed more time than the day allowed so he called upon the sun to stand still upon Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon so that, "there was no day like that

before it or after it, that Jehovah hearkened unto the voice of man: for Jehovah fought for Israel." (Josh. 10: 14.) Their campaign against the various nations of Canaan continued until "Joshua took the whole land, according to all that Jehovah spake unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes." (Josh. 11: 23.) In chapters thirteen to twenty-two of the book of Joshua, we have the record of the division of the land of Canaan among the tribes of Israel. It is in the midst of this account that we find our lesson text.

Exposition of the Text

I. Caleb Remembers a Promise (Josh.

14: 6-9)

The children of Judah drew nigh unto Joshua. Here again we have evidence of the fact that Caleb was either a member of the tribe of Judah or had associated himself with that tribe so as to inherit land with them.

Jehovah spake unto Moses . . . concerning me and . . . thee. This refers to the record of events that happened at Kadesh-barnea when the twelve spies had returned from the land of Canaan. Joshua and Caleb were the only two of the twelve who thought the Jews would be able to take the land. They encouraged the people to be faithful to God and to enter into the land in spite of the danger of being stoned for so encouraging the people. Kadesh-barnea is the point south of Canaan where the Israelites first touched the border of the promised land. It was from this point that the spies were sent out and it was from this point the Israelites could have entered the land from the south. But on account of their unfaithfulness and rebellion against God, they were turned back into the wilderness to wander another thirty-eight years. They had been out of Egypt two years, having spent about one year at Sinai. (Num. 14: 26-35.)

I brought him word again as it teas in my heart. This statement indicates the integrity and the courage of Caleb. He made his report according to what was in his heart. He was not concerned about what other people thought or what other people

were going to say. He made his report concerning the conditions of the land and gave his recommendations as to their action in the matter without regard to what others thought or felt. His courage is manifest in that he made a minority report. It is difficult for some people to stand in a minority. It is easy to stand with the majority and even make a public plea for that for which the majority contends, but for one to stand with the minority or alone and express his convictions is an evidence of courage. We need men in civic, state, and national offices today who have the right thing in their heart and who can speak according to what is in their heart. The time-serving, flattering, men pleasers, who say the things that they think their constituents want to hear, will never accomplish any good in office. The church also needs men of conviction who are willing and able to stand alone if need be and express those convictions. And those convictions need to be formed by a knowledge of the word of God. If convictions are formed in harmony with the wisdom of men, the courage to express our convictions and stand by them is of little value. But if those convictions are based upon a knowledge of the word of God, the expression of them and a courageous stand for them will do good.

My brethren . . . made the heart of the people melt. Caleb is here speaking of the ten spies who brought back an unfavorable and discouraging report. They admitted that the land

was a fertile land and one to be desired, but it was in the possession of giants and it would be impossible for them to take the land from the giants. People who do not enjoy working and suffering for the Lord are glad when they are told they cannot do anything. Preachers and elders who are continually exhorting the people to do more and urging them to make greater sacrifices are not very popular. If a preacher or an elder wishes to be popular, let him encourage the people to fold their hands and do nothing. The people listened to the ten faithless spies, and their hearts melted within them. That is, their courage and determination melted away.

Surely the land whereon thy foot hath trodden shall be an inheritance to thee. This is the promise that Moses made Caleb, and this is the promise that Caleb remembered through the years of wandering, and he is now reminding Joshua that Moses made this promise. When God condemned the people to wander in the wilderness and be destroyed, he made an exception of these two faithful spies, Joshua and Caleb, and said that all the rest of the people who were of age when they left Egypt would fall in the wilderness, but that their little ones, whom they said would be a prey to their enemies, should live to enter into and enjoy the land with Caleb and Joshua.

II. Caleb Claims the Promise (Josh. 14: 10-12)

Jehovah hath kept me alive . . . these forty and five years. According to Caleb, it had been forty-five years since the time the spies went into the land of Canaan until the time that the land was being divided and Caleb was claiming his inheritance. Thirty-eight of these years were spent in wandering in the wilderness, and seven years had been consumed in the campaign to conquer the land and divide the land among the tribes.

As my strength was then, even so is my strength now. Caleb was eighty-five years of age, and yet his physical condition was remarkable. Of Moses, at the time of his death, it is said, "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." (Deut. 34:

7.) This is what Caleb meant when he said his strength, at eighty-five, was what it was at forty. He was able to go to war the same as he was forty-five years before, could do as much work as he was able to do at the time he went in to spy out the land. It is not necessary for us to conclude that any miracle was performed in the preservation of their physical strength, but certainly the providence of God was with them in the preservation of their physical and mental energies.

Give me this hill-country. Here Caleb claims the promise made to him forty-five years before by Moses, the servant of God.

Thou heardest in that day how the Anakin were there. Caleb called upon Joshua to remember the incidents connected with the promise, and Caleb goes on to say that, in spite of the great fortified cities in that section of Palestine, he believed that Jehovah would be with him and he would be able to drive the people out. The years of wandering in the wilderness and of fighting their enemies in Canaan had not robbed Caleb of his faith in the ability of Jehovah to do what was in his plans to do. Caleb believed that if he would be faithful to the Lord, the Lord could accomplish anything that he had promised to do.

III. Joshua Grants the Promise (Josh. 14: 13-15)

And Joshua blessed him; and he gave Hebron unto Caleb. Joshua recognized Caleb's right to the territory he claimed because his claim was based upon the promise that God made through Moses forty-five years previous. Time does not render a promise invalid. God keeps his promises regardless of the time intervening.

Because that he wholly followed Jehovah. Three times in this text Caleb is said to have wholly followed Jehovah. Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and thousands of others failed to enter the land of promise because they did not wholly follow Jehovah.

The name of Hebron beforetime was Kiriath-arba. The meaning of this word cannot certainly be known. The first part of it means city. Some say the latter part, "arba," means four, making the whole word mean the

city of four. Others say that "arba" is the name of a man, and so it was the city of Arba, and the translators of our text seem to agree with that and say that this Arba was the great-

est man among the Anakim. **The** Anakim were a race of giants, who inhabited this portion of Canaan; but when driven out by Joshua, they disappeared.

Lessons to Learn

1. *We should learn from this lesson the value of standing for the right though we have to stand alone.* Caleb had only one associate when he stood for that which was right. But he was not discouraged by the fact that he had only one associate. He knew that he was standing with the Lord, and he and the Lord were a majority. So we today, when we stand with the Lord, for a proposition, are in the majority regardless of how many are against us.

2. *God always rewards faithful service, though it may be postponed*

by circumstances over which we have no control. God promised Caleb the land on which he had walked because Caleb felt sure the people could take the land with the help of God. The unfaithfulness and rebellion of the people were circumstances over which Caleb had no control, and these circumstances made it necessary for Caleb to go forty-five years without realizing the promise which God made him, but God did not forget the promise, and in his providence he preserved Caleb for the enjoyment of that promise.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons in this lesson.

Golden Text

What do you know of Caleb's ancestors?

Where is Caleb first mentioned?

What do you know of his faith and his loyalty to God?

What reward was promised Caleb on account of his faithfulness?

To what degree did Caleb follow Jehovah?

Discuss three thoughts suggested in wholly following Jehovah.

Introduction

How many years transpired between our last lesson and this one?

Tell the story of the Gibeonite deception.

Tell of the campaign of the king of Jerusalem against Gibeon.

On whom did the Gibeonites call for assistance?

Caleb Remembers a Promise

Where was the promise made which Caleb remembered?

For what is Kadesh-barnea remembered in the experiences of Israel?

What evidence do we have of Caleb's integrity and courage?

What did Caleb say of his fellow spies?

What is usually the popular course for church leaders to follow?

Can you give the language in which the promise was made to Caleb?

Caleb Claims the Promise

How long from the giving of the promise until Caleb claimed it?

What was Caleb's age when he claimed the promise?

What do you know of his physical condition?

For what portion of the land did Caleb ask?

Joshua Grants the Promise

Was Joshua willing to give Caleb that which he requested?

In what way is the fact emphasized that Caleb wholly followed Jehovah?

How does Caleb compare with Moses and others in the way of faithfulness?

What was the former name of Hebron?

What do you know of the meaning of this word?

What peculiar race of people formerly lived there?

What is there of interest to you in the division of Lessons to Learn?

Lesson VII—August 16, 1953

THE CITIES OF REFUGE

The Lesson Text

Joshua 20: 1-9

1 And Je-ho'-vah spake unto Josh'-u-a, saying,

2 Speak to the children of Is'-ra-el, saying, Assign you the cities of

refuge, whereof I spake unto you by Mo'-ses,

3 That the man-slayer that killeth any person unwittingly *and* un-

a wares may flee thither: and they shall be unto you for a refuge from the avenger of blood.

4 And he shall flee unto one of those cities, and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city; and they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver up the man-slayer into his hand; because he smote his neighbor unawares, and hated him not beforetime.

6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the man-slayer return, and come unto his own city,

and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7 And they set apart Ke'-desh in Gal'-i-lee in the hill-country of Naph'-ta-li, and She'-chem in the hill-country of E'-phra-im, and Kir'-i-ath-ar'-ba (the same is He'-bron) in the hill-country of Ju'-dah.

8 And beyond the Jordan at Jer'-i-cho eastward, they assigned Be'-zer in the wilderness in the plain out of the tribe of Reu'-ben, and Ra'-moth in Gil'-e-ad out of the tribe of Gad, and Go'-lan in Ba'-shan out of the tribe of Ma-nas'-seh.

9 These were the appointed cities for all the children of Is'-ra-el, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person unwittingly might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

Golden Text. — *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble"* (Psalm 46: 1.)

DEVOTIONAL READING. — Num. 35: 9-34.

Daily Bible Readings

- August 10. M..... Cities of Refuge Appointed (Josh. 20: 1-9)
- August 11. T..... Law of Refuge Applied (1 Kings 2: 36-46)
- August 12. W. Levites Lived in Cities of Refuge (Num. 35: 1-8)
- August 13. T..... Deliberate Murderer Not Protected (Num. 35: 22-28)
- August 14. F..... Witnesses Necessary (Num. 35: 29-34)
- August 15. S..... Law of Eye For An Eye (Deut. 19: 15-21)
- August 16. S..... God Our Refuge (Psalm 62: 1-12)

TIME. — 1443 B.C.

PLACE. — Shiloh.

PERSONS. — Joshua and the people.

Golden Text Explained

1. **God Is Our Refuge.** We are not told who is the author of this psalm, but most scholars agree that it was written after the days of David. Evidently it was written in a time of national trouble, when danger was threatening. The threatened destruction of Jerusalem by the army of Sennacherib furnishes such an occasion as would call forth a psalm of this type and may well have been the incident which occasioned the writing of this particular psalm. To say that God is our refuge is simply to say that he is our protection from trouble and sorrow. And this indicates that the writer or perhaps the nation for whom he spoke was going through a period of trouble when the psalm was writ-

ten. To take refuge in God would simply be to believe in him, to trust him, and to go to him in prayer with our troubles. The book of Psalms abounds in such statements, one of which is as follows: "He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my high tower; I shall not be moved. With God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in him at all times, ye people; pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us." (Psalm 62: 6-8.) There are certain attributes of God which are suggested and implied in the fact that he is our refuge and strength. (1) This implies the omnipotence of God. If God is a refuge from all troubles, he

must be stronger than all enemies. In order to be stronger than all enemies, he must be omnipotent. If he is any less than omnipotent, it is possible that there is some enemy stronger than he. Hence, the omnipotence of God is required when he is spoken of as our refuge from all trials and troubles. (2) The goodness of God is implied in this statement. It is taken for granted that God will be a refuge for all those who are in trouble, and this implies his goodness. For many who wish to take refuge in God have been enemies of God heretofore. If they turn from their wicked ways and come to him in time of trouble, he will be their refuge. This requires goodness. Those who will protect and care for those who have in the past been their enemies must have a forgiving spirit, must be good at heart. God is infinitely good because he is infinitely willing to care for all who put their trust in him regardless of what their attitude has formerly been. (3) Our text implies the unchangeable character of God. In Mal. 3: 6 we read, "For I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed." If Jehovah were changeable, man would not know whether to put his trust in him in times of trouble. If God were changeable, the fact that he helped others in times past when they were in trouble would be no indication that he would help us in our times of trouble. But since we read that God changes not, we may be assured that he will be our refuge in time of trouble the same as he has always been a refuge to those who were in trouble.

2. **God Is Our Strength.** Man has never been able to exercise or develop enough strength to care for himself with reference to the ways of life. Man has never been able to direct his own steps. He has never been able to devise a way of salvation to save him from his sins. He has never been able to avoid indefinitely ill-health, old age, and death. Man has never been able to avoid storms, floods and pestilence. So these things should teach us that we should not trust in our own strength, but trust

in Jehovah who is our strength. In this connection the student should read Psalm 52. In this psalm the wicked man is described as making a failure, and the righteous are spoken of as saying, "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness." The wise man said, "He that putteth his trust in Jehovah shall be made fat. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." (Prov. 28: 25, 26.) The weeping prophet speaks for Jehovah in these words: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he hath understanding, and knoweth me, that I am Jehovah who exerciseth lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith Jehovah." (Jer. 9: 23, 24.)

3. **An Accessible Help.** Our text says that Jehovah is a very present help. The words *very present* simply mean an accessible help, a help near at hand, easily accessible. David says, "Jehovah is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit." (Psalm 34: 18.) Moses said, "For what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him?" (Deut. 4: 7.) The accessibility of Jehovah does not depend upon any physical conditions. We can approach him in the darkness as well as in the light. He is accessible to us in the mountains and on the plains. No trouble is so great that he makes it difficult for us to find him. No one becomes so stained and polluted with sin that God is not accessible to him if he but turn from his sin and put his trust in God. The student should read the second chapter of Jonah to see that God is accessible to us regardless of where we are. When Jonah was in the bottom of the sea in the belly of the whale, God was accessible to him, heard his prayer, and answered that prayer.

Introduction

As a connecting link between this and our last lesson, we have the dividing of the land of Canaan among the people of Israel. Two and one-half tribes had settled east of the Jordan. The Levites got no inheritance, so there were nine and a half divisions left to be made among the other tribes. The tribe of Judah and the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh received their allotment of territory. Then there seems to have been a lull in the matter of dividing and possessing the land. Joshua reproved them for their slackness in going to possess their land. (Josh. 1b: 3-o.) He instructed them to appoint three men from each of the seven remaining tribes to receive an inheritance on the west side of the Jordan, and send them out to survey the land and make the proper division. These twenty-one men went throughout the land and made the division according to the number of people to inherit it and according to the richness of the land. When the divisions were made, they cast lots to see which tribe would inherit which division. When the

division was thus made, the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh that settled west of the Jordan were dissatisfied with their inheritance. They complained to Joshua about it, but Joshua stood firm, telling them that they must accept that which fell to them by the lot of Jehovah. (Josh. 17: 14-18.) The unselfishness of Joshua is manifested by the fact that he did not take an inheritance along with the balance of the people, but waited until all the others had received their inheritance. Then he asked for a place in the hill country called Tinnathserah. (Josh. 19: 49, 50.) It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to locate the site of Joshua's inheritance today. Two places have been pointed out as probable locations. It is also said that Joshua's request was granted by the people according to a commandment of Jehovah. Some have thought that it was necessary for Jehovah to command the people to grant Joshua's request. If this is true, it shows a sinful lack of appreciation on the part of the people for the service which Joshua rendered.

Exposition of the Text

I. Purpose of Cities of Refuge (Josh.

20: 1-6)

Assign you the cities of refuge. Jehovah reminded Joshua that he had spoken to Moses about these cities of refuge. We find the record of this in Num. 35. In this chapter Moses was told to set aside forty-eight cities for the Levites. They were to have no inheritance as the other tribes had but were to be allowed to live in forty-eight cities scattered throughout the land of promise. Six of these cities were to be cities of refuge, where the man slayer might flee and reside until he could have a fair trial.

That killeth any person unwittingly. Anyone who killed another person might flee to a city of refuge, but these cities were not to harbor anyone who committed murder with malice aforethought. In Num. 35: 12 it is said that the person may go to the city of refuge, "until he stand before the congregation for judgment." So these cities were not set aside to harbor intentional crimi-

nals. They were intended for the protection of innocent people until their innocence could be established. If one went there who was guilty of first-degree murder, he was protected only until he could have a fair trial. When found guilty of murder, he was delivered to the avenger of blood for his punishment.

A refuge from the avenger of blood. This avenger of blood was the nearest male relative to the one slain. It was not only his privilege to slay the one who killed his relative, but it was his duty to do so. If the avenger of blood overtook the man slayer before he reached the city, the avenger could slay the man killer even though the slaying was accidental and unintentional. For this reason it is always said that the one guilty of killing another should flee into the city.

Declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city. It was the right of everyone to have a free trial before the elders of that city nearest which the killing occurred. It was

also the duty of the elders of the city to give the one who had killed his fellow man a place to live among them until such time as trial could be held. Though it is not specifically mentioned here, it would take time to summon witnesses and have them appear to testify either in behalf of or against the one accused of murder. So the elders of the city were to furnish a man a place to live among them until such time as fair trial could be had.

Until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days. If a man was found to be guilty of intentional murder, he was delivered to the avenger of blood, who put him to death. But if the man was found to be innocent of first-degree murder, guilty of only accidentally killing someone, he was protected from the avenger of blood. He was allowed to live in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest then in office. At the time of the death of this high priest, the man could return to his own city, and, if the avenger of blood took his life, he was dealt with as a murderer. The writer of Hebrews seems to refer to this when he speaks of our having fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us. (Heb. 7: 18, 19.) We may view the Lord as our city of refuge and in the language of our golden text, we learn that God is our refuge and our strength and a very present help in time of trouble. As in the case of the city of refuge, so with Christ, this place of refuge must be entered by us if we expect to be blessed. Those who refused or neglected to go to the city of refuge suffered for it. So those who fail to go to Christ will fail to find their blessings. Again, good intentions of a man to go to the city of refuge did him no good unless he put those intentions to work. So good intentions to go to the Lord as our refuge are of no avail unless we put them into effect. There is, however this significant difference between the city of refuge and our refuge in the Lord. The city of refuge was for the innocent only. But the Lord is a refuge for those who are guilty of sins; not that he will protect them in their sins, but when they turn from their sins and flee to him

for refuge, he accepts them and forgives them. The city of refuge was a place where men could find justice. But in Christ we go not for justice but for mercy.

II. Location of the Cities of Refuge

(Josh. 20: 7-9)

They set apart Kedesh in Galilee.

These cities were located as conveniently as possible. Three of them were on the west side of the Jordan and three were on the east side of the Jordan. West of Jordan was Kedesh in Galilee for the northern section of the country. Then there was Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim in the central portion of the country. Then there was Kiriath-arba, which is also called Hebron. This was in the southern section of the west half of the land of Canaan.

And beyond the Jordan at Jericho eastward. The first city of refuge on the east side of the Jordan named is the city of Bezer, which was in the wilderness in the tribe of Reuben, which was in the extreme southern portion of the territory of Reuben. Reuben was in the southern portion of the eastern half of the land of Canaan. The second city mentioned is Ramoth in Gilead. This was the territory of Gad and was in the central portion of the eastern half of the country. The third mentioned is Golan and was in the territory of the tribe of Manasseh. This was in the northern section of the country east of the Jordan. However, the city of Golan was not nearly so far north as the city of Kedesh was on the west side of the Jordan.

For all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourned among them. These cities of refuge were for the strangers as well as for the children of Israel. Those who deal largely with the types of the Old Testament and find their anti-types in the New, see in this a type of Christ being a refuge not only for the Jews but also for the Gentiles. It is possible that God took this opportunity to teach the Jews that he was the God of the strangers as well as the God of the Israelites, and that he cared for them to a greater extent than the Jews were willing to admit.

Lessons to Learn

1. *God's mercy is shown in his provision for the safety of those who had unwittingly committed a crime.* So, God's mercy is shown to us today in his provision for our safety. He provides not for the innocent but he in his mercy provides for the guilty. And if we turn from our sins, flee to him, we have rest.

2. *Men who in that day delayed to flee to the city of refuge to escape the avenger of blood were foolish.* So, we today often act foolishly because we delay to go to a place of refuge. Many good moral men realize that their morality is not enough to

save them, and they intend someday to obey the gospel, but they delay going to the place of refuge. If they would value their eternal life as highly as men value their physical, temporal life, they certainly would flee for refuge.

3. *Those who fled to the cities of refuge were safe, if they were innocent, until the death of the high priest.* We are safe in our place of refuge because our high priest never dies. He ever lives to make intercession for, and to care for, those who are under his protecting care.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Is David the author of the psalm in which our text is found?

What is suggested as to the time that this psalm was written?

Name and discuss three characteristics of Jehovah which are suggested by our text.

Through what experiences do all men pass which should teach us not to rely on our own strength?

What is said of the man who trusts in his own strength?

In what does Jeremiah advise us to glory?

What is said of the accessibility of Jehovah?

What do we learn from Jonah about the accessibility of Jehovah?

Introduction

What portion of Israel settled on the east side of Jordan?

Which tribes were first to receive their allotment on the west side?

What arrangement was made to give the other seven tribes their allotment?

Which tribes were dissatisfied with their allotment?

How was the unselfishness of Joshua manifested?

For what portion of the land did Joshua ask?

Purpose of Cities of Refuge

What portion of the land did the Levites receive for their inheritance?

How many cities were they given?

How many of these were cities of refuge and where were they located?

What kept these cities from being harbors for criminals?

Who was the avenger of blood?

What was the duty of the elders of the city in behalf of the manslayer?

What was done with the man found guilty of intentional murder?

How long must the innocent manslayer remain in the city of refuge?

In what ways were the cities of refuge like Christ?

What significant difference in the cities of refuge and our refuge in Christ?

Location of the Cities of Refuge

Name and locate the three cities on the west side of the Jordan.

Name and locate the three cities on the east side of the Jordan.

Were strangers extended the privileges of these cities?

What lesson should the Jews have learned from this privilege of strangers?

What is there of interest to you in the division on Lessons to Learn?

Lesson VIII—August 23, 1953

JOSHUA'S LAST DAYS

The Lesson Text

Joshua 24: 14-29

14 Now therefore fear Je-ho'-vah, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in E'-gypt; and serve ye Je-ho'-vah.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve Je-ho'-vah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Am'-or-ites, in whose land ye dwell:

but as for me and my house, we will serve Je-ho'-vah.

16 And the people answered and said, Far be it from us that we should forsake Je-ho'-vah to serve other gods;

17 For Je-ho'-vah our God, he it is that brought us and our fathers up out of the land of E'-gypt, from the house of bondage, and that did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the peoples through the midst of whom we passed;

18 And Je-ho'-vah drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Am'-or-ites that dwelt in the land: therefore we also will serve Je-ho'-vah; for he is our God.

19 And Josh'-u-a said unto the people, ye cannot serve Je-ho'-vah; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgression nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake Je-ho'-vah, and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Josh'-u-a, Nay; but we will serve Je-ho'-vah.

22 And Josh'-u-a said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against

yourselves that ye have chosen you Je-ho'-vah, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

23 Now therefore put away, said *he*, the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto Je-ho'-vah, the God of Is'-ra-el.

24 And the people said unto Josh'-u-a, Je-ho'-vah our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken.

25 So Josh'-u-a made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in She'-chem.

26 And Josh'-u-a wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a great stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of Je-ho'-vah.

27 And Josh'-u-a said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us; for it hath heard all the words of Je-ho'-vah which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness against you, lest ye deny your God.

28 So Josh'-u-a sent the people away, every man unto his inheritance.

29 And it came to pass after these things, that Josh'-u-a the son of Nun, the servant of Je-ho'-vah, died, being a hundred and ten years old.

Golden Text.—*"And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah."* (Josh. 24: 15.)

Devotional Reading.—Josh. 23: 1-16.

Daily Bible Readings

August 17. M.....	Joshua Chose the Lord (Josh. 1: 2-6)
August 18. T.....	The Lord Chose Joshua (Josh. 24: 14-21)
August 19. W.....	Joshua Assembles Israel (Josh. 24: 1-13)
August 20. T.....	Joshua Renews the Covenant (Josh. 24: 14-25)
August 21. F.....	Choices to be Made (Matt. 6: 24-29)
August 22. S.....	Life or Death (Ezek. 33: 11-16)
August 23. S.....	Blessedness of Right Choices (Psalm 119: 1-8)

Time.—1443 B.C.

Place.—Shechem.

Persons.—Joshua and the people.

Golden Text Explained

1. A Challenge to Comparison.

From this text we learn that the forefathers of the Israelites had been idolaters. The reference to worship of gods beyond the river indicates that Abraham and his fathers wor-

shipped idols when they lived beyond the Euphrates River. There is a reference to images in Gen. 31: 34, which Rachael had when Jacob returned to Canaan with his family from Padan-aram. The Chaldeans

worshiped fire and light and the sun, but they had images to represent these various gods. The gods of the Amorites were Astarte, better known as Venus, and Baal in various forms. The challenge which Joshua puts before the people at this time is between Jehovah and these various gods of the heathens. It was necessary for them to meditate upon the value of each of these gods, make comparison, and choose the one whom they preferred. They could never think of anything definite or particular that the gods of the Amorites or the gods of the Chaldeans had done that was of any value to them, but when they turned to meditate upon the goodness of God toward them, they had much of recent times to remember. A little more than forty years before this, Jehovah had delivered them from Egyptian bondage. He had worked such miracles as demonstrated his power over the gods of the Egyptians. He had not only delivered them, but he had preserved them through forty years of wandering in the wilderness. He had given them victory over their enemies. He had given them bread from heaven daily. He had given them meat by bringing quails in abundance into the camp and around about. He had given them water to drink from the flinty rock. He had led them by a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire by night. Then at the end of forty years of wandering he had led them through the Jordan River when it was overflowing its banks. He had delivered the various tribes of Canaan into their hands and had given them victories over all of them. By the time Joshua gave them this challenge, Jehovah had settled them in the land of Canaan, a land that flowed with milk and honey. They had homes in which to live that they had not built. They were enjoying vineyards that they had not planted. All of these things were demonstrations of the power and the love and the goodness and the mercy of Jehovah. The choice which they were called upon to make should not have been a difficult one, nor is it difficult for us today if we but give some time to think upon the goodness and mercy and love of God.

2. The Choice Is Inevitable and Should Be Immediate.

Man is so constituted that he will worship something. Man is a worshiping animal, someone has said. Man is the only animal that worships, and he is so constituted that he must worship. Hence, the choice with them was inevitable. We also have to make our choice. Since we are worshiping beings, we will either worship Jehovah or some creature of his. There were many reasons why this people should choose to serve Jehovah. (1) Conscience required it. Paul indicates in Rom. 1: 18-20 that even the heathen is inexcusable for his idolatry since God has manifested himself to them through the invisible things since the creation of the world. For God can be perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity so that they are without excuse. But since these people had enjoyed the deliverance and preservation which God had blessed them with, their conscience demanded that they serve Jehovah. "Serving God, every law will be kept, every duty done, every claim met, every wrong avoided. Conscience points like a compass needle to the throne of God, and its every suggestion is in one form or another a suggestion to do his bidding." (2) Gratitude demanded it. Gratitude for their deliverance, preservation, and settlement in the land of Canaan demanded that they choose Jehovah in preference to the gods of the heathen. (3) Wisdom impelled this decision. After experiencing the goodness and mercy of God, as that people had done, it would have been worse than folly for them to turn away from him who blessed them so richly and serve the gods of the heathen who had no power to bless or protect. These same three reasons serve to impel us to make the choice for Jehovah today. The conscience of every one of us requires that we serve God, and our sense of gratitude demands that we render to him the service that is so justly due him in return for the blessings which he has so richly poured out upon us. And every one of us knows that this is the wise course, that this is the sane, safe course. Only our lack of gratitude can cause us to do otherwise.

3. Joshua Sets a Good Example.

Joshua said to the people, you may do as you please, you may serve the gods that your fathers served beyond the river, you may serve the gods of the Egyptians, or you may serve the gods of the Amorites in the land in which you dwell, but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah. Thus, he set the example of turning his back upon the gods of the heathen and serving Jehovah who had delivered, preserved, and given them a home in which to dwell. In this decision and example we see a number of good things. (1) We see a manly resolution, one that had been carefully thought out, one based upon study and comparison of the objects of worship involved. We see an example of one who had

come to a sane and sensible conclusion, and was willing to stand by that decision which he had made. (2) We see the example of one who has the strength to dare to stand alone if need be. He said you may serve the gods of the heathen if you wish, but I will serve Jehovah. It takes courage to stand alone on any proposition, and especially one as important as this one. (3) There is also an example of family piety and devotion in this statement of Joshua. He said as for me and my house. Joshua was able to control and direct his family. He not only would stand on this resolution himself but he would lead his family to do so. Every man should resolve not only to stand for God but to lead his family to stand with him for God.

Introduction

As a connecting link between this and our last lesson, two things should be mentioned. First, the transjordanic tribes. The tribe of Gad, Reuben, and half tribe of Manasseh returned after the land of Canaan was conquered. As they approached the Jordan, the thought came to them that they should erect a memorial monument. When the tribes west of the Jordan heard that this monumental altar was being erected, they gathered themselves together at Shiloh to do battle against the two and a half tribes. But before doing battle with them they decided to send Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, and with him one representative of each of the tribes for a conference with the two and a half tribes. When they met these representatives of these tribes west of the Jordan, they accused their brethren of rebellion against Jehovah and of erecting an altar for worship, which was contrary to the provisions of the law of Moses. But the children of the two and a half tribes replied they had a good and sufficient reason for erecting this altar. Then they explained that it had occurred to them that in time to come the children of the people west of the Jordan might say to the children of the people east of the Jordan that they had no part in Israel and in the worship of Jehovah carried on west of the Jordan. So they wished to build this altar as

a monument to their services in capturing the land and as proof of the fact that they were a part of the people and entitled to the rights and privileges of the worship that would be carried on west of the Jordan. When full explanation of their motive had been made, the people west of the Jordan were satisfied, gave them their blessing, and departed back to their homes in peace. From this incident we should learn, (1) not to make accusations before we have all the facts. If this were done, there would be a lot less wrangling among brethren in our religious papers these days. (2) The motive we have in mind may determine whether a thing is right or wrong. If these people had been building this altar for the purpose of worshipping thereon, it would have been wrong. But since they were not building it for the purpose of worshipping thereon, but simply as a memorial, the building of the altar was right.

Another thing of interest in connecting these lessons is the fact that Joshua said that Jehovah had given Israel all the land which he swore he would give unto their father. And he said, "There failed not ought of any good thing which Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." (Josh. 21: 45.) Again, Joshua said, "And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and

in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which Jehovah your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof." (Josh. 23: 14.) People who contend that God never did give the

Jews all the land he promised them, and that, therefore, the Jews must be returned to Palestine before these promises are fulfilled should read and reread these passages. They might also find a similar statement in 1 Kings 8: 56.

Exposition of the Text

I. Joshua's Example and the People's Response (Josh. 24:14-18)

Serve him in sincerity and in truth. The first verses of the chapter in which our text occurs tell that Joshua gathered all the people together at Shechem and gave them a farewell address. He reminded them of the fact that Jehovah had selected their fathers from beyond the river Euphrates, that he had brought them into the land of Canaan, had multiplied their seed, had given them the patriarchs, and a land in which to dwell. He reminded them of their bondage in Egypt and their deliverance therefrom, and of the victories which God had given them over their enemies in their journey through the promised land. He also reminded them of the fact that he had driven out the kings of the Amorites and the seven nations of Canaan, and had given them their land and cities which they had not built, and vineyards and olive yards which they had not planted. With this as a basis, he now demands that they fear Jehovah and serve him with sincerity in harmony with revealed truth. To serve God sincerely means to serve him with the whole heart and to serve him in truth was to serve him according to the teaching of Jehovah in the law which had been written by Moses.

Put away the gods' which your fathers served beyond the River. This is not to be interpreted to mean that all the people were worshiping other gods, but certainly there were some among the people at this time who were worshiping other gods. Otherwise, Joshua would not have called upon them to put away those gods. This is also proof that Abraham came out of a people who served and worshiped other gods. In Joshua 24: 2 we are told that they did serve other gods. Many people are inclined to wish for some physical aid to help them in their conception of God. Some depend upon images, others

use pictures, but God has said that we shall not make a graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or is in the water under the earth. This would forbid both the use of images and of pictures to aid us in our worship of God.

Far be it from us that we should forsake Jehovah. This is the response of the people to Joshua's challenge. When he said choose you this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods of your fathers, or Jehovah, and they gave as their reason for choosing to serve Jehovah that Jehovah had brought them out of Egyptian bondage, that he had preserved them in the way wherein they went, and that he had driven out the nations of Canaan, and had given them a place in which to live. They concluded by saying, "We also will serve Jehovah; for he is our God." This was a noble response and resolution, and, if the people had always stuck to it, they would have averted much sorrow and suffering; but because of their failure to keep faithfully that promise, much suffering was brought upon the Jewish nation.

II. Covenant to Serve Jehovah (Josh. 24: 19-25)

Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God. This is considered a difficult statement. Some think that Joshua had such a high conception of the law and its demands that he realized that this recently enslaved people would not be able to measure up to the high standards demanded by the law, and so he simply stated to them a truth that they could not keep the law which God had given them. Another explanation of it is that Joshua simply meant to convey the idea that you cannot serve Jehovah and hold on to the gods which are among you, which your fathers served beyond the river and in Egypt; that you must put these

away, for your God, Jehovah, is a jealous God and will not be served by those who put their trust in other gods.

He will not forgive your transgression nor your sins. If we take Joshua's statement that the people could not serve Jehovah to mean that they were not able to do so, then we should take this statement that he will not forgive their transgression in the same positive way. But this, of course, would involve us in false teaching, for God would forgive their transgressions and their sins. But we may interpret this in the same way we interpret the statement that they could not serve Jehovah and say that if they held on to these gods which their fathers worshiped beyond the river and in Egypt, God would not forgive their transgressions and their sins. With this condition, with reference to serving other gods, both these statements are clear. You cannot serve Jehovah while you retain these gods among you. God will not forgive your transgressions as long as you retain and serve these gods of the heathen.

Put away . . . the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto Jehovah. The people insisted that they could and would serve Jehovah and Joshua said, "Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye had chosen you Jehovah, to serve him," and they said, "We are witnesses." When they agreed thus to serve Jehovah, Joshua said, "Put away . . . the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto Jehovah." They could not serve Jehovah as long as they maintained these gods, nor would Jehovah forgive them their sins as long as they retained them. Hence, the necessity of putting them away and inclining their hearts to Jehovah. So we today must put away everything that stands between us and God; whether it be wealth or fame or family.

III. Last Acts and Death of Joshua

(Josh. 24: 26-29)

Joshua made a covenant with the people. We are told that the word *made* might literally be translated

cut, so Jehovah cut a covenant. This refers to the act of cutting an animal for sacrifice which was offered in the making of a covenant. Hence, an act of public worship here and sacrifice solemnizing their covenant with Jehovah to serve him instead of the heathen gods.

Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God. That which Joshua wrote on this occasion was the covenant which the people had made to serve Jehovah. These he wrote in the book of the law of God. Then he took a great stone and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of Jehovah and said to them, "This stone shall be a witness against us; for it hath heard all the words of Jehovah which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness against you, lest ye deny your God." Joshua spoke in a poetical figure of the stone as having ears to hear and a mind to retain the things it had heard on this occasion. So it was to act as an enduring witness of the covenant they had made.

Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died. It is said that Joshua was an hundred and ten years old when he died. Two things may be said of Joshua. (1) He served Jehovah faithfully all the days of his life. He was one of the two who served Jehovah so faithfully that he was allowed to enter the land of Canaan, while Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and other great characters failed to enter because of their lack of faithfulness. (2) Of the influence of Joshua, it is said that Israel served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had known of the work of Jehovah. So great was the influence of Joshua that he kept the people fairly faithful to Jehovah during his life and he trained his assistants so faithfully and efficiently that they were able to continue his influence upon the people during their lifetime so that Israel remained faithful to God during the life of Joshua and the life of his assistants. But when they died, then Israel fell into unfaithfulness.

Lessons to Learn

1. *God expects us to serve him and he gives us sufficient motives to cause us to serve him.* The motives which impelled the Israelites were abundant, but no more abundant than the motives God furnishes us to serve and worship him.

2. *There are always faithful men to serve as examples to lead us in our service and worship to God.* Joshua was an outstanding man, faithful always to God. He served as a wonderful example of faithfulness and loyalty to Jehovah and thus was a

great and safe leader for the people of Israel. There are great men among us to whom we may look for examples.

3. *There are witnesses against us both in nature and in scripture.* As this stone served as a witness against the people, so there are witnesses in nature today. Those stars and planets about us are faithful to their creator and sing his praises as they serve as witnesses against us in our unfaithfulness to God.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons in this lesson.

Golden Text

What do we learn from our text about the religion of Abraham's family?

Who were the gods of the Amorites?

What comparison could they make between the gods of the Amorites and Jehovah?

Do we have a choice as to whether we will be worshipers?

Give and discuss three reasons why Israel should have served Jehovah.

Can you apply these same three reasons to us?

What is it that most usually keeps people from serving Jehovah?

What good example did Joshua set the people?

Name and discuss three good things in this example of Joshua.

Introduction

Did the tribes east of the Jordan keep their promise to help in the conquest of Canaan?

What did they propose to do upon their return when they reached the Jordan?

What did the tribes west of the Jordan think of their action?

How was the difficulty settled?

What lesson should we learn from this incident?

Was the land promise made to Abraham fulfilled in the days of Joshua?

Joshua's Example and the People's Response

At what place did Joshua give his final discourse?

Name several things of which Joshua reminded the people?

In what manner did he exhort them to serve Jehovah?

What did he tell them to put away from them?

Is it right to use pictures of God or of

Christ to aid in our worship?

How did the people respond to Joshua's exhortation?

Covenant to Serve Jehovah

Why did Joshua say the people could not serve Jehovah?

Why did Joshua say that Jehovah would not forgive their transgressions?

What did Joshua tell them to do that they might keep their promise?

What lesson should we learn from this experience?

Last Acts and Death of Joshua

What did Joshua do to impress the people of the solemnity of their choice?

What was used as a witness against the people?

How old was Joshua when he died?

What is said of the service which Joshua rendered Jehovah?

What is said of the influence of Joshua on his generation?

What is said of the faithfulness of his assistants?

What is thereof interest to you in the division on Lessons to Learn?

Lesson IX—August 30, 1953

JEHOVAH APPOINTS JUDGES

The Lesson Text

Judges 2: 6-18

6 Now when Josh'-u-a had sent the people away, the children of Is'-ra-el went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

7 And the people served Je-ho'-vah all the days of Josh'-u-a, and all the days of the elders that outlived Josh'-u-a, who had seen all the

great work of Je-ho'-vah that he had wrought for Is'-ra-el.

8 And Josh'-u-a the son of Nun, the servant of Je-ho'-vah, died, being a hundred and ten years old.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Tim'-nath-he'-res, in the hill-country of E'-phra-im, on the north of the mountain of Ga'-ash.

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, that knew not Je-ho'-vah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Is'-ra-el.

11 And the children of Is'-ra-el did that which was evil in the sight of Je-ho'-vah, and served the Ba'-al-im;

12 And they forsook Je-ho'-vah, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of E'-gypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the peoples that were round about them, and bowed themselves down unto them: and they provoked Je-ho'-vah to anger.

13 And they forsook Je-ho'-vah, and served Ba'-al and the Ash'-ta-roth.

14 And the anger of Je-ho'-vah

was kindled against Is'-ra-el, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that despoiled them; and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of Je-ho'-vah was against them for evil, as Je-ho'-vah had spoken, and as Je-ho'-vah had sworn unto them: and they were sore distressed.

16 And Je-ho'-vah raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those that despoiled them.

17 And yet they hearkened not unto their judges; for they played the harlot after other gods, and bowed themselves down unto them: they turned aside quickly out of the way wherein their fathers walked, obeying the commandments of Je-ho'-vah; *but* they did not so.

18 And when Je-ho'-vah raised them up judges, then Je-ho'-vah was with the judge, and saved them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented Je-ho'-vah because of their groaning by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"And Jehovah raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those that despoiled them."* (Judges 2: 16.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Judges 2: 16-23.

Daily Bible Readings

August 24. M.....	Inhabitants in the Land (Judges 1: 22-36)
August 25. T.	Apostasy of People after Joshua's Death (Judges 2: 6-22)
August 26. W.	Canaanites Left to Prove Israel (Judges 2: 1-5; 3: 1-6)
August 27. T.....	Deliverance Under Ehud (Judges 3: 15-30)
August 28. F.....	Deborah's Deliverance (Judges 4: 4-23)
August 29. S.....	Gideon Chosen (Judges 6: 11-40)
August 30. S.....	Gideon's Victory (Judges 7: 1-25)

TIME.—1443 B.C.

PLACE.—Canaan.

PERSONS.—Joshua and the people.

Golden Text Explained

1. The Character of the People and Their Rulers. The time known as the period of the judges was a very critical time in the life of the Jewish nation. It should be remembered that these people were recently brought out of bondage. They had spent forty

years in the wilderness and a few more years in conquering the land of Canaan. During their time of wilderness wandering, they had an inspired leader. They had the cloud and pillar of fire to guide them day and night. They had the manna

fresh from heaven every day and meat miraculously provided when they needed it as well as water miraculously supplied. There was about them continually superhuman evidences of the presence of God and his guidance of them. When they entered the land of Canaan, these miraculous evidences of the presence of Jehovah were withdrawn or suspended. However, Joshua and his assistants were still with them. They were men who had seen the miracles worked by Jehovah and who had experienced this divine overruling providence, and hence served as a link between the miraculous age and the age in which miracles were at a minimum. But the time known as the period of the judges is a time after the death of Joshua and after the death of the men who assisted Joshua. Hence, it covers a period of time when they were completely divorced, as much as people ever were in Old Testament times, from these continuous outward manifestations of the presence and guidance of Jehovah. We might illustrate this by saying it is like a parent ceasing to hold the hand of a child who is learning to walk. The people of Israel were now on their own and they must learn to get along without the continuous miraculous guidance of Jehovah manifested in visible and physical ways. But as the parent occasionally gives direct aid to the child who has fallen in his efforts to learn to walk, so Jehovah occasionally interposed miraculously in helping the children of Israel to free themselves from their oppressors and to form their own governments. When the neighboring heathen tribes possessed a part or all of Israel, God miraculously appointed a judge and qualified that judge to lead them to victory. The word judge here is not to be taken in its usual signification, that is, one who determines controversies and denounces the judgment of the law in criminal cases, but one who rules or directs a state or nation with sovereign power, administers justice, makes peace or war, and leads the armies of the people over whom he presides. The office of judge was not hereditary, nor were the judges chosen by the people. They were

the representatives or lieutenants of God. They were chosen by him usually in a supernatural way and directed by the Lord to do the work they were supposed to do. They did not have any power either to make or change the law. They were simply to execute the laws under the direction of God. In this way God was the King of Israel. The government was a theocracy, and the judges were simply his deputies. God preferred to rule his people in this way and looked upon himself as being rejected by them when they demanded a king. (1 Sam. 8: 7.)

2. **The Length of the Period of the Judges.** It is impossible to determine exactly the length of the period of the judges. The sum of the number of years that the judges ruled, according to the book of Judges, is about three hundred years. In 1 Kings 6: 1, we are told that it was four hundred eighty years from the time of the Exodus to the building of the temple in the fourth year of the reign of Solomon. This period of four hundred eighty years includes the forty years of wandering in the wilderness and the time occupied in the conquest and settlement of the land of Canaan, as well as the undetermined period after the death of Joshua, before the first judge began his rule. Then there is a period of forty years under Eli and the unknown length of the judgeship of Samuel, then the years of the reign of Saul and of David and four years of Solomon; all of which must be subtracted from four hundred eighty, which would give us somewhere near three hundred years. Dean's *Outline of Bible History* gives the period of judges from the death of Joshua to the anointing of Saul as three hundred five years; however, other authorities differ as much as one hundred years. Archbishop Usher gives the period from the death of Joshua to the death of Eli. the beginning of the government of Samuel, as covering three hundred eighteen years. Some have tried to solve the chronological difficulties by saying that the reigns of some of these judges were simultaneous. By this they mean that while one man was judge over the northern portion of the country, another man was judge over

the southern portion. It is known that the land of Canaan was divided in three sections. That on the west side of the Jordan, divided between the north and the south, and all on the east side of the Jordan constituted a third district. However, more conservative scholars reject this theory on the ground that the writer

of the book of Judges evidently conceived of each judge as ruling over Israel. "His words must therefore be interpreted in their natural sense, that in his own belief the rulers whose deeds he related exercised control in the order named over the entire nation."

Introduction

The book of Judges is properly divided into three divisions. (1) The introductory from 1: 1 to 2: 5. In this introductory portion we have a brief summary of some things which went before concerning the conquest of western Palestine and the failure of the Israelites to expel completely the Canaanites from the land, which is looked upon as a violation of their covenant with Jehovah. Included in this is an account of the death of Joshua, which, according to the writer, had already taken place. (2) The central and main portion of the book consists of narratives of twelve judges and one usurper who ruled over the people. This period begins with the sixth verse of the second chapter and goes through the sixteenth chapter of the book. This portion of the book consists of a "series of narratives of twelve judges, each of whom in turn, by his devotion and prowess, was enabled to deliver Israel from thralldom and oppression, and for a longer or shorter term ruled over the people whom he had thus saved from their enemies. Successive repentance on the part of the people, however, and their deliverance are followed, on the death of the judge, by renewed apostasy, which entailed upon them renewed misery and servitude, from which they are again rescued when in response to their prayer the Lord raises up for them another judge and deliverer. Thus the entire history is

set, as it were, in a recurrent framework of moral and religious teaching and warning; and the lesson is enforced that it is the sin of the people, their abandonment of Jehovah and persistent idolatry, which entails upon them calamity, from which the divine longsuffering and forbearance alone makes for them a way of escape." In this portion of the book we have the record of six principal invasions of the land and six victories of the people over their enemies. The invaders were the Mesopotamians, the Moabites, the Canaanites, the Midianites, the Ammorites, and the Philistines. The six leading judges of the time were, Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson. (3) The third division of the book is an appendix covering chapters seventeen through twenty-one. Chapters seventeen and eighteen contain the story of a party of Danites establishing themselves by force in the northern part of the country and taking with them a young Levite and his equipment to be their priest. Chapters nineteen to twenty-one contain the story of the outrage of the Benjamites against the concubine of a Levite and the vengeance exacted upon the tribe of Benjamin, destroying all but six hundred men. In order to save the tribe from extinction, these six hundred men were allowed to marry by force daughters of the other tribe.

Exposition of the Text

I. Influence of Joshua and His Associates (Verses 6-10)

The people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua. This is a tribute to the personal influence of Joshua as a leader of the people. Many fine

things may be said about Joshua. He was the faithful minister of Moses as well as a servant of God. He was a bold and faithful spy, one who was willing to describe the land just as he saw it, and express his belief in

their ability to take the land when the other spies, with the exception of Caleb, were fearful and persuaded the people not to enter Canaan. He distinguished himself as a military leader in the conquest of the land of Canaan. But none of these things make him stand out conspicuously as a great man any more than the personal influences which he exercised over the people. It was through his influence that, for more than half a century, the fickle and unsteadfast people were rather faithful in their service and worship to God. It was his influence that caused them to put away the idols from among them and to resolve firmly that they would serve Jehovah all the days of their life.

Ail the days of the elders that out-lived Joshua. This is a continuation of the influence of Joshua. He not only kept the people straight during his lifetime but such was his influence that the people whom he trained to assist him in leading the people were so well grounded in the faith that they influenced the people to be faithful through their lifetime. So through two generations the personal influence of Joshua was felt in keeping the people from idolatry.

Who had seen all the great work of Jehovah that he had wrought for Israel. The fact that these people had seen the miraculous deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage, their entrance into Canaan, and the miraculous presence of the Lord with them in their great military victories made it possible for Joshua to exercise his influence. We must not think of Joshua being able to exercise this influence unaided by the Lord. It was primarily the work of the Lord that caused these people to be faithful but secondarily Joshua's faithfulness to the Lord and his calling the attention of the people to the works of the Lord, reminding them continually of these things that caused them to be faithful.

They buried him in the borders of his inheritance. Joshua was one hundred ten years old when he died. He died in that portion of land that fell to him at the time of the division of Canaan. I. was in the hill country of Ephraim on the north of the moun-

tain of Ga-ash. This mountain has not been located with any degree of certainty. Very few men, if any, have ever been as indispensable to the welfare of a nation as was Joshua. Sometimes towering figures in churches, communities, and nations are looked upon as indispensable, and when they die people wonder how they can possibly get along, but God is not dependent upon any one man in any situation. Even in Israel when conditions required it, God raised up men who were capable of leading Israel to victory.

There arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah. The assistants of Joshua seem not to have done their work as faithfully as Joshua did his. Joshua trained men to take his place after his departure, but it seems that these assistants whom Joshua trained failed to train others so that the generation following them is said to have been one that knew not Jehovah. A generation that fails to teach and to train the coming generation must bear its part of judgment for the failure of the succeeding generation. Churches should remember that it is their duty today to train the young people to take the place of the older people and to be qualified when the time comes for them to take their place.

II. Israel Goes Into Idolatry (Verses 2:11-15)

The children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and served the Baalim. The word Baalim is simply the plural form of Baal. The word means lord or ruler, and each community had its own Baal or lord. And there was a lord of the flies, a lord of heat, a lord of the sun. Then there was lord of grain, lord of the mountains, and so on. Hence, we find the compound names of Baal meaning the lord of this or that or the other as the second syllable of the word might imply. In our text it is explained that the people forsook Jehovah, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of Egypt, and followed other gods, the gods of the people that were around about them. These gods of the peoples about them; were the Baalim.

And served Baal and the Ashtaroth.

The word Ashtaroth is the plural form of Ashtareth, who was the goddess of the Sidonians. Ashtareth is said to be the female counterpart of Baal. Hence, there would be a number of these Ashtaroth, the same as there were a number of Baalim. It is believed that Ashtareth of the Canaanites came from the Istar of Babylonia and Assyria. There she was known as the goddess of love and war. But in Canaan she was simply known as the principal goddess of any part of nature or any territory or any mountain or any other single thing which might be consecrated to her.

The anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel. Because of their forsaking Jehovah and going after these Canaanitish gods and goddesses, Jehovah took from them his provident care and allowed their enemies to come upon them and make slaves of them. It is said he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

The hand of Jehovah was against them for evil, as Jehovah had spoken. In Deut. 28 Moses foretold the departure of Israel from Jehovah and Joshua implied their departure in several of his statements. Hence, the people were without excuse for their departure, and here it is said the hand of Jehovah was against them according as he had sworn to them. These statements of Moses and Joshua are here referred to as Jehovah's sworn statement that he would be against them when they did evil.

III. Jehovah Delivers Israel (Verses 16-18)

And Jehovah raised up judges. In no period of man's history, perhaps,

can we find a better demonstration of the love, the mercy, the longsuffering, and the forbearance of Jehovah with a wayward people than in this instance. Over and over the people forsook God and went into idolatry. But as many times as they forsook him, God turned and raised up a deliverer to save them from their enemies.

For they played the harlot after other gods. This statement may be taken in two senses. (1) When people leave God to go after strange gods, they are looked upon as being guilty of spiritual adultery. They break their vow, their covenant, to be faithful to God, in order that they may consort with another and enjoy the pleasures of another god. This is spiritual adultery. (2) On account of the nature of the worship of some of these gods, this statement may be taken in its literal and physical sense, that they literally played the harlot in the performance of the rights and ceremonies of worship to these heathen gods.

It repented Jehovah because of their groaning. The word repent must not be taken to imply that God did not know beforehand what these people would do. To say that God did not know beforehand is to deny the omniscience of God. When used with reference to Jehovah, the word simply means that he changed his course of action or his purpose with reference to them. Their groaning under the oppression of their enemies caused God to change his purpose to destroy them. He then raised up a deliverer and delivered them from their oppression to give them another opportunity.

Lessons to Learn

1. **We should be careful for our influence.** The influence of Joshua lasted not only during his time but during the generation that followed; and since we have a record of his life, his influence lives on and on and so our influence is felt. All of us have an influence. It is for good or for evil. We should be careful that

our influence is always on the side of right.

2. **When Israel forsook Jehovah to serve the Baalim, God forsook his people and allowed their enemies to oppress them.** God will not force himself upon us. We must desire him, we must seek after him, we must diligently follow after him.

3. *The longsuffering of God is evident in this lesson.* Regardless of the unfaithfulness and sinfulness of Israel, God was longsuffering. However, there is a point beyond which

the longsuffering of God will not go. Man must not presume upon the longsuffering and forbearance of God that he may enjoy sin.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What period in the history of the Jewish nation are we studying?

What difficulties did the Jews have during the period of the judges which they did not have in the time of Moses?

Did God give any miraculous assistance during the period of judges?

What is the meaning of the word judge as used in this lesson?

What were their duties and relation to the people?

What was the form of government during the period of judges?

About how long was the period of judges?

What event stands at the beginning and what at the end of judges?

Introduction

Into how many divisions is the book of Judges divided?

State briefly what is to be found in the first division.

How many chapters in the second division of the book?

Name six enemies of Israel during this period.

Name six leading judges of the period.

How many chapters in the third division? Tell something of the contents.

Influence of Joshua and His Associates

Mention several ways in which Joshua distinguished himself.

What personal characteristic recommends him more highly than any of his military accomplishments?

Through how many generations did his influence continue?

Where was Joshua buried?

How did the influence of Joshua's assistants compare with that of Joshua?

What seems to have been the cause of their failure?

Israel Goes Into Idolatry

What is the meaning of the word Baalim?

What is the meaning of the word Ashtaroth?

What is the relation of Ashtaroth to Baal?

What was the result of the idolatry of Israel?

Who had foretold these departures?

Jehovah Delivers Israel

What characteristics of Jehovah were abundantly manifested during this period?

In what two ways may Israel be thought of as playing the harlot after other gods?

Does the fact that Jehovah repented imply he did not know Israel would go into idolatry?

What does the word repent mean when used with reference to Jehovah?

What act on his part manifested repentance on the part of Jehovah?

What is there of interest to you in the division of Lessons to Learn?

Lesson X—September 6, 1953

THE ARMY OF GIDEON

The Lesson Text

Judges 7: 2-8, 19-22

2 And Je-ho'-vah said unto Gid'-e-ôn, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Mid'-i-an-ites into their hand, lest Is'-ra-el vaunt themselves against me saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and trembling, let him return and depart from mount Gil'-e-ad. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And Je-ho'-vah said unto Gid'-e-ôn, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and Je-ho'-vah said unto Gid'-e-ôn, Every one that lap-peth of the water with his tongue, as

a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And Je-ho'-vah said unto Gid'-e-on, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Mid'-i-an-ites into thy hand; and let all the people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets; and he sent all the men of Is'-ra-el every man unto his tent, but retained the three hundred men: and the camp of Mid'-i-an was beneath him in the valley.

19 So Gid'-e-on, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto

the outermost part of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch, when they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the pitchers that were in their hands.

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands wherewith to blow; and they cried, The sword of Je-ho'-vah and of Gid'-e-on.

21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran; and they shouted, and put *them* to flight.

22 And they blew the three hundred trumpets, and Je-ho'-vah set every man's sword against his fellow, and against all the host; and the host fled as far as Beth-shit'-tah toward Zer'-e-rah, as far as the border of A'-bel-me-ho'-lah, by Tab'-bath.

Golden Text.—*“And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands wherewith to blow; and they cried, The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon(Judges 7: 20.)*

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Judges 7: 9-18.

Daily Bible Readings

August	31. M.Oppression of Israel (Judges 6: 1-10)
September	1. T.	Gideon's Call (Judges 6: 11-24)
September	2. W.Gideon's Faithfulness (Judges 6: 25-32)
September	3. T.	Gideon's Faith Strengthened (Judges 6: 33-40)
September	4. F.	Gideon and the Three Hundred (Judges 7: 1-25)
September	5. S.	The Fearlessness of Faith (Psalm 27: 1-6)
September	6. S.	More than Conquerors (Rom. 8: 31-39)

TIME.—1245 B.C.

PLACE.—Mt. Gilead.

PERSONS.—Gideon and his army.

Golden Text Explained

1. God's Ways Are Not Our Ways.

If Gideon had been left to himself to determine how he was to bring about the defeat of the enemy that was oppressing Israel, he surely would not have acted as the Lord directed him to act. He would not have sent one single soldier home who was at all willing to fight or who could be pressed into the service of his people. Nor would he have used the tactics which God directed him to use in order to take the enemy.

God wished Israel to know that they had not gained the victory by their own wisdom or their own strength. He intended that his name should be honored and glorified. Hence, he chose such means and directed them to act in such fashion that the victory would be evidently of God and not of man. Many years later the prophet Isaiah, speaking for the Lord, said, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the

heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55: 8, 9.) God has repeatedly required man to do things for which there was no good reason to be seen. He required the people of Israel to march around the walls of Jericho thirteen times, blow the rams' horns, and give a great shout in order that they might tear down the walls and capture the city. From a military point of view that was foolish. Yet it was the means which God chose through which he could cause the people to believe in him and magnify his name rather than to depend upon their own strength. Many years later God required a Syrian soldier to dip seven times in the Jordan River that he might be cleansed of his leprosy. There was no sensible connection between dipping in the Jordan and being cured of leprosy, but that was God's way of curing this one man. Jesus made clay of spittle and anointed the blind man's eyes and told him to wash in the pool of Siloam in order that he might receive his sight. From a medical point of view this was sheer folly, but yet it was the way God chose to demonstrate his power and to lead men to believe in him. God requires us to be baptized for remission of our sins. He also requires us to partake of the loaf and the fruit of the vine in worship to him. From a purely human and physical standpoint, there cannot possibly be any blessing connected with the doing of either of these things. And yet since God says for us to do it, and promises certain blessings on condition that we do these things, it is worse than folly for us to refuse to do what God says if we desire to receive the blessings mentioned.

2. **Gideon a Man of Faith.** Gideon was facing a hostile army composed of one hundred thirty-five thousand men. He had gathered thirty-two thousand men with which to meet this great army. By one simple test twenty-two thousand of these men were sent home, and then by another and a more unreasonable test nine thousand seven hundred of them were

allowed to return home. This left Gideon with only three hundred men. Gideon believed he was being led by the Lord, and he was willing to accept the Lord's word even though it caused him to act contrary to common sense. Gideon was careful to ascertain the truth of God's word. He saw one who had the appearance of an angel. He saw the fire which consumed the sacrifice at the touch of the angel's staff. He saw the angel vanish from his presence and he saw his reappearance. He saw the fleece of wool dry while the ground around was wet. And he saw the ground dry while the fleece was wet enough to wring water from it, and all these he accepted as genuine proof that God was directing him. Having these as the basis of his faith, he knew he was following God's directions and not his own dreams and fancies. "In trying to take Gideon's faith as a model of our own, we must first imitate his care in ascertaining what the word of God really does require of us. The sad mistakes that have been made by misguided men in all ages, confounding the passions of their own heart, or the hallucinations of their own brain, with the requirements of the written word of God, and even in their heated fanaticism imagining that special revelations were made to them by the Holy Spirit, confirms the lesson, given us by Gideon, of not accepting anything as the word of God upon light or insufficient evidence. To accept as the word of God without sufficient evidence any impression, or impulse, or vision, or dream, or interpretation of scripture, is not a proof of a strong faith, but an evidence of a weak, and rash, and credulous mind." But having determined that a thing is the will of God, we ought then to express our faith by our obedience as did Gideon. He set the word of God and the promise of God on one side and all the fearful risks and dangers of the enemy on the other side, and these last were in his eyes as nothing in comparison with the former.

3. **Gideon Put God First.** Notice the words of our text, "The sword of

Jehovah and of Gideon." Had Gideon been as proud and as self-willed as Saul, the first king of Israel, this statement likely would read, "The sword of Gideon and of Jehovah." We preachers sometimes report, through our religious papers, what we

have done for God. But the apostles of old reported to their home church what God had done with them. (Acts 14: 27.) So Gideon shows his humility as well as his faith in his battle cry, "The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon."

Introduction

As a connecting link between this and our last lesson the student should read in Chapter 3 of the nations which Jehovah left in Canaan, that he might prove Israel by them to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah, which he commanded their fathers by Moses. (Judges 3: 1-6.) Soon there was intermarriage between the people of Israel and the Canaanites, and this led to the worship of heathen gods. Then Jehovah's anger was kindled against Israel, and he sold his people into the hand of the king of Mesopotamia. Othniel was raised up in God's own time to deliver the children of Israel from the Mesopotamians. Following that the king of Moab enslaved the people and Ehud was raised up to free them from this bondage. After him Shamgar delivered the people from the Philistines, who had enslaved Israel. Then the king of Canaan, Jabin, oppressed Israel, and Deborah, a prophetess, with the help of Barak, delivered the children of Israel from this oppression. When the land had rest from its enemies for forty years, and

the people had done evil in the sight of Jehovah again, the Midianites were allowed to oppress Israel. From this oppression of the Midianites, God chose Gideon as the deliverer. The angel of Jehovah appeared unto Gideon and told him that Jehovah was with him, indicating that he was to lead the people to victory. After the angel had caused fire to come out of the rock and consume the meat and the unleavened cakes upon it, Gideon still required another sign. He said that he would put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor and if dew appeared on the fleece only and the ground around it was dry, he would know that God was leading him. In the morning it was as he had required. But Gideon required of the Lord a second sign. Asking that the Lord's anger be not kindled against him, he said let now the fleece be dry but the ground all around it wet with dew, and God listened to his plea and gave him the sign he desired. The student should read the entire sixth chapter of Judges in preparation for this lesson.

Exposition of the Text

I. God's Selection of Gideon's Army

(Verses 2-8)

The people that are with thee are too many for me. From verse three of our text we learn that Gideon had thirty-two thousand men. From Judges 8: 10 we learn that the Midianite army consisted of one hundred thirty-five thousand men. So the Jews were outnumbered about four to one. Yet God said that was too many. The greater the number of men in their army, the more likely were they to feel that they had won the victory by their own wisdom and strength. God has often used unscientific, and to man unreasonable

means and methods of accomplishing his purposes. But he uses these means and methods in order that our faith may rest in him and not in our own strength or in the wisdom of man. This reminds us of Paul's statement to the church at Corinth that while he was with them he was in weakness and fear and in much trembling and his speech and preaching were not in persuasive words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power so that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2: 4, 5.)

Lest Israel vaunt themselves against me. The Lord gives a specific reason why he thought thirty-two thousand men were too many. He said if they should get the victory by the use of this many men, Israel would vaunt themselves against him, and would say that their own hand had freed them.

Whosoever is fearful and trembling. This was the first test which sent two-thirds of the army home. There was no place in this operation for men who were fearful and trembling. God has no place in his army today for the fearful. We are told that the fearful, along with other sinners, will have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. (Rev. 21: 8.) There are those who are fearful of responsibilities. Others are so afraid they will make a mistake that they never do anything. Others are afraid of criticism and consequently refuse to try. But regardless of why we are afraid, it still remains a fact that there is no place in the Lord's army for the fearful. He wants those who are of good courage, and are willing to bear the criticisms and the burdens of whatever responsibilities come their way.

The people are yet too many. When the first test was finished there remained but ten thousand men. Yet God said this is still too many. Numbers are of no consequence with God. He can win the victory with one man as well as with ten thousand. So he wishes to bring the number down so that there will not be any reason for Israel to think they have won the victory by their own strength.

Bring them down unto the water. Gideon took his ten thousand men down to the water's edge for the second test. And Jehovah said, "Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink." Only three hundred men lapped of the water like a dog. All the balance bowed down upon their knees to drink the water.

Let all the people go every man unto his place. These nine thousand seven hundred men were not cowards. They were not unfit as soldiers. Yet

they were told to go home. It took considerable faith in Gideon to send these men home. It also required faith on their part to accept such orders from Gideon and leave only three hundred men there to face an army of one hundred thirty-five thousand men. But it required a great deal more faith and courage in the three hundred men to stay there and face that army. Whether these men had seen the tests by which Gideon's faith was supported we have no way of knowing, but we do know that they manifested a lot of faith and courage to see their comrades go home to safety, while they remained to face such a great army. "But yet what marvelous heroism was there in those three hundred men! What strength of purpose, what iron firmness of nerve, to see above thirty thousand of their comrades leave them in the face of the myriads of their foes; to remain quietly at their posts, and, when the time came, to leave their camp and pour down into the plain. Their self-possession and self-restraint and absence of self-indulgence in the matter of the water was a true index of the unequaled qualities which they displayed in the sequel."

II. God's Victory Through the Army (Verses 19-22)

So Gideon . . . came unto the outermost part of the camp. The student should read the intervening verses of this chapter. There he will find that Jehovah sent Gideon and some of his men into the camp of the Midianites that their faith might be strengthened. While in the camp they heard one Midianite telling his dream to another and the other interpreting the dream to mean that God had delivered the Midianites into the hand of Gideon and his army. In these intervening verses will also be found the strategy which Gideon used in making the attack. He divided his three hundred men into three companies and put into the hands of all of them trumpets and empty pitchers with torches within the pitchers.

In the beginning of the middle watch. The attack of Gideon and his three hundred men was set to begin in the first part of the middle watch.

The ancient Israelites divided the night into three watches, four hours each. The first watch was from six to ten p.m. The second was from ten p.m. to two a.m. and the third, or morning watch, was from two to six a.m. According to this, the attack was made shortly after ten p.m. It is said that the watch had just been set, which puts the attack between ten and eleven p.m.

The three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches. The three hundred men were divided into three companies of one hundred each and were placed on three sides of the camp of the enemy. One company of soldiers usually had only one trumpet. Hence, three hundred trumpets sounding would indicate to the Midianites that there were three hundred companies of soldiers surrounding them.

Jehovah set every man's sword against his fellow. This simply indicates that, in their confusion, the

Midianites mistook one another for the enemy and that they consumed each other instead of fighting against the enemy. When the enemy was put to flight, word was sent to the neighboring communities around about, and quite a sizable army was gathered to pursue the Midianites to destroy them. In verse ten of the eighth chapter we read, "For there fell one hundred twenty thousand men that drew sword." So God won a great victory with a small army. God has been winning great victories with small armies ever since. The world was evangelized in the days of the apostles from a very small beginning. In countless numbers of communities since that time, the forces of evil have been routed by a few of the Lord's faithful. Such a victory can be won by any group regardless of how small it may be if they have the faith and the courage which characterized Gideon and his three hundred men.

Lessons to Learn

Gideon wished to be sure of God's will. He was apologetic in asking for further assurance that God had selected him and was going to use him for the deliverance of his people. But when once he determined that God was speaking to him, his faith was such that he never doubted any more.

2. **Gideon's faith in Jehovah gave him the courage to use Jehovah's methods.** The methods suggested were unorthodox. They were unscientific. It required a lot of faith

on Gideon's part to expose himself and his three hundred men to that great army of the Midianites. Only a man of faith could use such methods as Jehovah used on this occasion.

3. **Gideon made no preparation in case of failure.** This emphasizes his faith in God's ways. A man of less faith than Gideon would have told the thirty-one thousand seven hundred men to stand by, not very far distant, in case these three hundred could not handle the situation.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?
Repeat the Golden Text from memory.
Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

With what judge does our text deal?
Why did God have Gideon to use the military tactics he used?
Give other examples of God's requiring men to do things for which there seems to be no good reason.
How did Gideon's army compare in number with the enemy?
How many of Gideon's soldiers did the Lord send home?
On what was Gideon's faith based?
What means did Gideon use to ascertain the truth of God's word?

In what way did Gideon put Jehovah first?

Introduction

Why were some of the Canaanite nations left in the land?
What practice led to the worship of heathen gods?
Who was Israel's first oppressor? What judge delivered them?
Name other oppressors and deliverers.
Tell the story of Gideon and the fleece

God's Selection of Gideon's Army

Why did God think Gideon's army too large?
What was God's first test? How many were sent home by it?

Of what are many in the Lord's army fearful today?
 What was Jehovah's second test? How many men were rejected by it?
 What religious principle did Gideon's men manifest in the face of so great an enemy?

God's Victory Through the Army

How did Jehovah strengthen the faith of Gideon's men?

How did the ancient Israelites divide the night?
 What did the sounding of three hundred trumpets mean to the Midianites?
 How many Midianites were destroyed?
 Were all of these destroyed by Gideon and his men?
 How may similar victories be won in our own communities?
 What is there of interest to you in the division of Lessons to Learn?

Lesson XI—September 13, 1953

JEPHTHAH'S VOW

The Lesson Text

Judges 11: 29-40

29 Then the Spirit of Je-ho'-vah came upon Jeph'-thah, and he passed over Gil'-e-ad and Ma-nas'-seh, and passed over Miz'-peh of Gil'-e-ad, and from Miz'-peh of Gil'-e-ad he passed over unto the children of Am'-mon.

30 And Jeph'-thah vowed a vow unto Je-ho'-vah, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Am'-mon into my hand,

31 Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth from the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Am'-mon, it shall be Je-ho'-vah's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.

32 So Jeph'-thah passed over unto the children of Am'-mon to fight against them; and Je-ho'-vah delivered them into his hand.

33 And he smote them from Ar'-oer until thou come to Min'-nith, even twenty cities, and unto A'-bel-cher'-a-mim, with a very great slaughter.

So the children of Am'-mon were subdued before the children of Is'-ra-el.

34 And Jeph'-thah came to Miz'-pah unto his house; and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter.

35 And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth unto Je-ho'-vah, and I cannot go back.

36 And she said unto him, My father, thou hast opened thy mouth unto Je-ho'-vah; do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth, forasmuch as Je-ho'-vah hath taken vengeance for thee on thine enemies, even on the children of Am'-mon.

37 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me; let me alone two months, that I may depart and go down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my companions.

38 And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she departed, she and her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains.

39 And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew not man. And it was a custom in Is'-ra-el,

40 That the daughters of Is'-ra-el went yearly to celebrate the daughter of Jeph'-thah the Gil'-e-ad-ite four days in a year.

Golden Text.—*"I have opened my mouth unto Jehovah, and I cannot go back."* (Judges 11: 35.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Judges 11: 1-11.

Daily Bible Readings

September 7. M.....	Jephthah, a Man of Valor (Judges 11: 1-3)
September 8. T.....	Messengers Sent to Jephthah (Judges 11: 4-11)
September 9. W.....	Jephthah's Message to Ammon (Judges 11: 12-17)
September 10. T.....	Jephthah's Vow (Judges 11: 29-31)
September 11. F.....	Jephthah Is Successful (Judges 11: 32-33)
September 12. S.....	Jephthah's Daughter Meets Him (Judges 11: 34-38)
September 13. S.....	The Result (Judges 11: 39-40)

TIME.—1139 B.C.

PLACE.—Gilead.

PERSONS.—Jephthah, his army and his daughter.

Golden Text Explained

1. The Law Concerning Vows. In

Num. 30: 2 Moses said "When a man voweth a vow unto Jehovah, or sweareth an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth." Moses made no exception here for rash vows. Neither did he make any exception for illegal or immoral vows. Again, in Deut. 23: 21-23 we read, "When thou shalt vow a vow unto Jehovah thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it: for Jehovah thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto Jehovah thy God, a freewill-offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth." When animals were devoted to God by vow, if they were fit for sacrifice, they could not be redeemed at any price. But an animal unfit for sacrifice might be redeemed with the addition of a fifth part of the value and the money thus paid in redemption became the property of the priests. In case persons were devoted by vow, if no redemption was made, the devoted person became a slave of the sanctuary. The point of emphasis here is that the law of Moses required people to keep their vows. It has been suggested that vows are older than the law, and that the law of Moses did not *create* the practice of making vows, but simply *regulated* the keeping of vows.

2. **Examples to Show the Sacredness of Vows.** (1) The first vow mentioned in the scripture is that of Ja-

cob when he said, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God, then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." (Gen. 28: 20-22.) In Gen. 35: 1-7 we see Jacob going back to Bethel to worship God. And mention is made of his being there before and the vows which he made at that time. Undoubtedly Jacob remembered the vow that he made to give Jehovah one-tenth of all with which he was blessed, and Jacob regarded that vow as sacred and binding upon him, and no doubt lived up to the terms of that vow. (2) The second example for our consideration is that of Hannah vowing to give back the child which Jehovah would give to her. And in the latter part of that chapter, we have the record of Hannah fulfilling her vow when she took Samuel to the sanctuary and left him there in the care of Eli. She said, "And Jehovah hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also I have granted him to Jehovah; as long as he liveth he is granted to Jehovah." (3) The third example we cite is that of a wicked man, Herod. Herod made a vow when pleased by his dancing step-daughter that he would give her anything she might ask, even to half his kingdom. When she asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter, Herod was embarrassed. But for the sake of his oath in the presence of his company,

he would not break his word but fulfilled it by giving her John's head on the platter. From these examples we see that vows were considered very sacred, whether they were made by righteous people or by unrighteous people. One of the sins of the Gentile world, as listed by the apostle Paul, was that they were covenant breakers. (Rom. 1: 31.) The wise man said, "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou vowest." (Eccles. 5: 4.) From this we learn that a man who refused to pay his vow unto God was considered as a fool, for it is said God hath no pleasures in fools. He continues by saying, "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thy hands?"

3. Value of Men's Word Today.

There was a time in the memory of some of us when a man's word was generally considered as good as his bond. The spoken word of a man was worth just as much as his written word attested by a notary public. But the almost universal practice of putting every agreement or covenant into writing today and having it notarized is a solemn indictment of men concerning their veracity. We can have a good reputation for being honest and honorable but one time. If we are careless or rash enough to violate our covenants and destroy our good reputation, it will likely be impossible for us to live in such manner as to rebuild it. Men do not soon forget that we have considered our word lightly and have failed to keep our trust, and the news of such dishonorable doing will spread rapidly so that our reputation for honesty and for integrity will be lost and all but impossible to rebuild.

Introduction

The student should read the intervening chapters where it will be found that Gideon acted wisely when he refused to become the king of the people and would not allow his sons to be his successors. But we see him acting foolishly when he made an image of gold, which became a snare both to himself and to the people, and led them into idolatry. Following Gideon, one of his sons, Abimelech, aspired to rule over the people of Israel. Getting the support of his mother's brethren, he was able to have himself elected and installed in Shechem as the ruler, where he continued for some three years. But a rebellion led by one Gaal ousted him and brought about his death. Following that, we have a brief mention of Tola, who judged Israel twenty-three years, and following him there arose Jair of Gilead who judged Israel twenty and two years. After the death of Jair, the people went into sin again, serving the Baalim, and then the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Ammonites. And when they were oppressed, they called on

the Lord to save them again. But this time the Lord said, "Ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will save you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them save you in the time of your distress." (Judges 10: 12-14.) This brings us to the selection of Jephthah as the next leader and judge. Jephthah was the son of a man named Gilead. His mother was a harlot. Gilead's legitimate sons compelled Jephthah to leave home. He went to dwell in the land of Tob, and there he was associated with a group of "vain fellows." He became the leader of a band of lawless ruffians and led the life of a free booter. He gained such a reputation for himself as a leader of this band of men that, when the people of Israel were oppressed by the Ammonites, they called him to be their leader. However, Jephthah refused to listen to them unless they would guarantee that he could continue to rule over them after he had delivered them from the Ammonites. They readily made this promise.

Exposition of the Text

I. Jephthah's Vow and Victory (Verses 29-33)

The Spirit of Jehovah came upon Jephthah. The Spirit came upon him to qualify him for the work that he was to do, that of delivering the children from the oppression of the Ammonites. It must not be concluded that, since the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, all he said and did was right. Several times we read that the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Samson, yet we know that Samson's moral standards were very low. (Judges 13: 25; 14: 19; 15:14.) If the presence of the Spirit with Jephthah guaranteed his proper actions, he would not have made the rash vow that he made immediately following.

And Jephthah vowed a vow unto Jehovah. Jephthah's vow was to offer as a burnt offering whatever should meet him when he returned from the battle, provided the Lord would give him victory. There are two interpretations of this rash vow, and it is difficult, perhaps impossible, for us to determine which is correct. Therefore, we simply give you a statement of the two positions and let the reader make his own decision. The Pulpit Commentary takes the position that Jephthah intended to offer a human sacrifice and the argument runs as follows: "Many attempts have been made to show that Jephthah only contemplated the offering of an animal in sacrifice; but the natural and indeed necessary interpretation of the words shows that he had a human victim in mind. He could not expect any but a human being to come forth from the doors of his house, nor could any but a human being come forth to meet him—a common phrase always spoken of men. Obviously, in the greatness of his danger and the extreme hazard of his undertaking, he thought to propitiate God's favor by a terrible and extraordinary vow. But if we ask how Jephthah came to have such erroneous notions of the character of God, the answer is not far to seek. Jephthah was the son of a strange woman, probably, as we have seen a Syrian, and had passed many years of his life as an exile in Syria. Now it is well known that

human sacrifices were frequently practiced in Syria, as they were also by the Ammonites, who made their children to pass through the fire to Moloch, and it cannot surprise us that a man brought up as Jephthah was, and leading the life of a free booter at the head of a band of Syrian outlaws, should have the common Syrian notion of the efficacy of human sacrifices in great emergency." It should be said that this is the universal interpretation of the vow for the first thirteen centuries of the Christian era, that both Jews and Christians so understood it. The strongest exponent of the other interpretation is Adam Clarke. He begins by giving a different translation to what we have in our text. It reads as follows: 'I will consecrate it to the Lord, or I will offer it for a burnt offering.' His explanation follows: "If it be a thing fit for a burnt offering, it shall be made one; if fit for the service of God, it shall be consecrated to him. That conditions of this kind must have been implied in the vow, is evident enough; to have been made without them, it must have been the vow of a heathen, or a madman. If a dog had met him, this could not have been made a burnt offering; or if his neighbor or friend's wife, son, or daughter, had been returning from a visit to his family, his vow gave him no right over them. Besides, human sacrifices were ever an abomination to the Lord; and this was one of the grand reasons why God drove out the Canaanites, because they offered their sons and daughters to Moloch in the fire, that is, made burnt offerings of them, as is generally supposed. That Jephthah was a deeply pious man appears in the whole of his conduct; and that he was well acquainted with the law of Moses, which prohibited all other sacrifices, and stated what was to be offered in sacrifice, is evident enough from his expostulation with the king and people of Ammon. (Verses 14-27. Therefore, it must be granted that he never made that rash vow which several suppose he did; nor was he capable, if he had, of executing it in that most shocking manner which some Christian writers

have contended for. He could not commit a crime which he himself had just now been an executor of God's justice to punish in others."

And Jehovah delivered them into his hand. This is the record of Jephthah's victory over the Ammonites. The writer goes on to say that he smote them from Aroer until he came to Minnith, taking even twenty cities, and adds that he did so with a very great slaughter. So the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel. Once again God hearkened unto the cries of his disobedient children and in mercy gave them a victory over their enemies and rest from the oppression.

II. Jephthah Keeps His Vow (Verses 34-40)

Behold, his daughter came out to meet him. Emphasis is laid on the fact that this daughter was his only child. Emphasis is made in this way: "And she was his only child, besides her he had neither son nor daughter."

Thou hast brought me very low. This is the language of Jephthah when he saw that his daughter was the first to come forth from the doors of his house to meet him. It should be remembered that in his vow Jephthah said, whatever comes forth from the doors of my house to meet me will be offered. This could hardly be expected to include an animal, for animals were not likely to come forth from the doors of a man's house.

Do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth. Like Isaac, she was a willing sacrifice, but unlike Isaac, she was the victim of a foolish father. The willingness of Jephthah's daughter to suffer the consequences of this foolish vow is the only beautiful and refreshing thing about this whole sordid story. And it was fitting that the daughters of Israel should go annually

to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah.

Let me alone two months, that I may . . . bewail my virginity. She asked for two months in which to wail her virginity. If she were going to be confined to a life of virginity, she would have all her life in which to bewail it; why ask for two months on the mountains to do so? This seems to indicate that she realized that she had but two months to live and she wished to use that time in bewailing her virginity. She would bewail her virginity for two reasons.

(1) Being an only child, her father's family would be extinct at her death.

(2) Since she was a virgin, her death would put to an end her own line. Hebrew women considered it a great misfortune to go through life childless. Hence, she would bewail her virginity.

Who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed. The sacredness of vows was such that Jephthah felt that he could not go back on his vow. It matters not whether Jephthah burned his daughter in sacrifice or doomed her to a life of virginity, his actions do not measure up to Christian standards. So we are to understand that the Lord simply records this rash vow and its fulfillment but does not endorse it. The Lord recorded David's sin with Bathsheba and the fact that he murdered her husband to cover up his sin, but the fact that the Lord recorded these things does not mean that he endorsed them. And Jephthah's sin, even if he burned his daughter in sacrifice, is no more inexcusable than David's sin of adultery and then murdering the woman's husband to cover his sin. These are simply ugly spots in the lives of otherwise good men, and reminders to us all, if any of us are saved, we will be saved by the mercy and grace of God.

Lessons to Learn

1. *No lesson stands out more prominently in this connection than this, that we should be careful in making promises, resolutions, or vows.* We are taught to make our plans in harmony with the will of God. (James 4: 13-17.) Consequently, if we should plan to do something,

which we later learn to be wrong and out of harmony with the will of God, we would be released from that resolution if, indeed, we made the resolution with the will of the Lord in mind.

2. *Keeping our word when it is pledged to another is suggested by*

this lesson. And that indeed is a very important thing. When once we have pledged ourselves to do a thing that is right, we should do that thing regardless of the cost of suffering it may bring upon us. We should regard our word as very sacred.

3. *The obedience and submission of children to their parents is very beautifully suggested in this lesson.* This

daughter of Jephthah was unwilling for the reputation of her father to suffer, regardless of the suffering it brought upon her. Children ought to be concerned for the reputation of their parents and be willing to go along with them and be subject to their parents for the sake of the reputation of their parents.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What was the law of Moses concerning vows?

Did Moses make any exception for rash vows?

What provision was made for vows concerning clean and unclean animals?

What was the law concerning persons devoted by vow?

What is the first vow mentioned in scripture?

Tell of the vow made by Hannah.

Tell of Herod's vow and the trouble it caused.

How did God regard vows made by man?

What can be said for the value of men's word today?

What of the difficulty in rebuilding our reputation for honesty and integrity?

Introduction

In what did Gideon act wisely?

Of what foolish act was he guilty?

Which one of Gideon's sons had ambition to rule?

What do you know of Jephthah's parents?

What do you know of his life before he became judge?

Jephthah's Vow and Victory

What is meant by the Spirit of Jehovah coming upon Jephthah?

Did the coming of the Spirit on Jephthah keep him from making mistakes?

What was Jephthah's vow?

Give the position of those who believe that Jephthah offered human sacrifice.

State the position of those who believe that he did not offer human sacrifice.

Jephthah Keeps His Vow

What do you know of Jephthah's family?

What was the attitude of Jephthah's daughter toward the vow?

For what did his daughter ask?

For what Reasons would she bewail her virginity?

Does bewailing her virginity throw any light on the question concerning Jephthah's vow?

Does the fact that God recorded such sins mean that he endorsed them?

What is there of interest to you in the division Lessons to Learn?

Lesson XII—September 20, 1953

THE BIRTH OF SAMSON

The Lesson Text

Judges 13: 2-7, 21-25

2 And there was a certain man of Zo'-rah, of the family of the Dan'-ites, whose name was Ma-no'-ah; and his wife was barren, and bare not.

3 And the angel of Je-ho'-vah appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.

4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing:

5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and

bear a son; and no razor shall come upon his head; for the child shall be a Naz'-i-rite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to save Is'-ra-el out of the hand of the Philis'-tines.

6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of the angel of God, very terrible; and I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name:

7 But he said unto me, Behold,

thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing; for the child shall be a Naz'-i-rite unto God from the womb to the day of his death.

21 But the angel of Je-ho'-vah did no more appear to Ma-no'-ah or to his wife. Then Ma-no'-ah knew that he was the angel of Je-ho'-vah.

22 And Ma-no'-ah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

23 But his wife said unto him, If Je-ho'-vah were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meal-offering at our hand, neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would at this time have told such things as these.

24 And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and Je-ho'-vah blessed him.

25 And the Spirit of Je-ho'-vah began to move him in Ma'-ha-neh-dan, between Zó'-rah and Esh'-ta-ol.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and Jehovah blessed him."* (Judges 13: 24.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Judges 13: 8-20.

Daily Bible Readings

September 14.	M.....	Samson a Nazarite (Judges 13: 2-6)
September 15.	T.....	Samson's Parents (Judges 13: 8-14)
September 16.	W.....	Origin of the Danites (Gen. 30: 1-24)
September 17.	T.....	Manoah's Prayer (Judges 13: 8)
September 18.	F.....	Responsibility of Parents (Deut. 6: 4-10)
September 19.	S.....	The Nazarite Vow (Num. 6: 1-21)
September 20.	S.....	Strength in the Lord (Eph. 6: 1-10)

TIME.—1157 B.C.

PLACE.—Zorah.

PERSONS.—Manoah, his wife and Samson.

Golden Text Explained

1. The Woman Bare a Son. In the first part of our text we learn that this woman was the wife of Manoah. We also learn that she was barren. It is interesting to note the number of barren women in Bible times who were enabled by Jehovah to bear children, some of them in their old age. Sarah, the wife of Abraham, was barren for many years after the promise was made to him that through his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed. In her efforts to assist in the fulfillment of the promise made by Jehovah, she gave Abraham her handmaid, Hagar, for wife, that Abraham might have seed by her. But in Jehovah's own good time, he gave Sarah strength to conceive and bear the child of promise. Rachel, the favorite wife of Jacob, was barren also. While Leah, the one loved less, bore Jacob a number of sons. So important was the bearing of children, in the estimation of Hebrews, that Rachel envied her

sister to the extent that Jacob's anger was kindled against her. The fact that the scripture says God remembered Rachel and hearkened to her implies that Rachel made this matter a subject of her prayers. So it is said that she conceived and bare a son and called his name Joseph. In First Samuel we have the story of another barren woman, whose name was Hannah. She was the wife of Elkanah. Like Rachel, Hannah had a rival who bore children to her husband. Hannah was grieved and was bitter in soul. She prayed and wept sore before Jehovah. God heard her prayer and her promise, and gave her a son, whom she promised to return to the Lord as soon as he was weaned. Coming into the New Testament we have another barren woman, Elisabeth, the wife of Zacharias, and the mother of John the Baptist. She, too, felt the reproach of being barren, and with her husband prayed to God that she might receive strength to

bear a child. Like Sarah she was "well stricken in years," past that age in life when women would naturally conceive and bear children. From these examples we can see what childbearing meant to the average Hebrew family, and especially in those families where the woman was barren. (1) To such families, the fact that God gave the wife power to conceive and bear a child was evidence that God had taken particular notice of them. (2) It was evidence that God was pleased with them and pleased to use them for some particular purpose. (3) It made possible the continuance of their name and their family through other generations to come. (4) There was always the possibility that their child might be the promised Messiah or that he at least might be in the line of the promised Messiah.

2. They Called His Name Samson.

The meaning of the word Samson is difficult to determine from scholars. Some say that it means *sun* or *little sun*. Adam Clarke suggests that it may mean *little servant*. Gesenius, an outstanding Hebrew scholar, says the root from which the word Samson comes signifies *awe* and *astonishment*. Josephus says that the word Samson means "a strong one." But the majority of scholars think that the word means *sun*. Usually the names of

men signified something with reference to a man's work or character. When first we meet with the father of the Hebrew race, his name is Abram, which means exalted father, but later it is changed to Abraham, which means father of a multitude. The second son of Isaac was named Jacob, which means supplanter. Of him in later life, his brother Esau said, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing." (Gen. 27: 36.) So significant were names that sometimes the Lord gave men the name they should wear. Both John the Baptist and Jesus are examples of this.

3. **Jehovah Blessed Him.** How the Lord blessed Samson and to what extent we are not informed, and it would be useless to surmise. But since every child is blessed by the ordinary providence of God, it would be useless for the scripture to say that Jehovah blessed Samson unless he was blessed in some way that ordinary children were not blessed. But since in manhood Samson was blessed with much more than ordinary human strength, we may be safe in concluding that the Lord blessed Samson with more than ordinary strength as a child.

Introduction

As a connecting link between our present lesson and the one of last week, we have the story of Ephraim's complaint against Jephthah because he did not give them a prominent place in the war against the Ammonites. This was not the first time the tribe of Ephraim had done such. When Gideon had won his victory over the Midianites, the men of Ephraim made a complaint that they had not been called to the battle, and given the prominence they thought they deserved. Gideon handled them very diplomatically. He said that the little job he had to do was so small in comparison with some of the big things they had been doing that he just did not feel like calling on them to help him. Feeding their ego in this manner, he satisfied them and sent them away feeling good. But

Jephthah was not of the flattering kind. When they came with their complaint to him, he told them plainly that he had called on them to help him to save the land, and that they did not respond. (Judges 12: 2-4.) Jephthah called his army together and fought with Ephraim. Jephthah and his men took the fords of the Jordan River and held them against the Ephraimites. When an Ephraimite came to any one of the fords held by Jephthah's men, the Ephraimite was required to pronounce the word Shibboleth. Now it so happened that, there was sufficient difference between the dialects of the tribes that the men of Ephraim could not pronounce this word correctly. The Ephraimite could not put the letter "h" in the word. So the best he could do was to say Sibboleth. When a man

betrayed his identity as an Ephraimite, by mispronouncing this word, he was immediately slain. This continued until forty-two thousand of

the Ephraimites were slain. This should have taught them not to demand preferment above their brethren in the affairs of the nation.

Exposition of the Text

I. The Angel Promises a Son (Verses 2-7)

There was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites. The town of Zorah was due west of Jerusalem, about halfway between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean Sea. In Josh. 15: 33 it is listed as a town in the territory of Judah, but in our lesson it is said to be in the territory of Dan. The explanation of this difficulty is found in Josh. 19: 41, where we are told that the border of Dan's inheritance was Zorah and a number of other towns. From this we learn that Zorah was on the borderline between Judah and Dan, and so sometimes was spoken of as belonging to Judah and sometimes as belonging to Dan. No doubt a part of the city was in each of these territories, since it was on the borderline.

Whose name was Manoah. We know but little of Manoah and his wife, whose name is not given, but what little we know of them is good. When Samson wished to marry a Philistine girl, he told his father and mother and asked them to get her for him. His father and mother replied, "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" (Judges 14: 3.) Samson's parents preferred that their son should marry one of his own nation. Thus they must have held something of the same views of the sacredness of marriage as was common to the better type of Hebrews.

The angel of Jehovah appeared unto the woman. The identity of this angel is reserved for the latter portion of this letter. Here we notice the message of the angel. First, he gave her assurance that she would conceive and bear a son. Next, the angel gave the woman directions for her conduct until the time for the birth of the son. First, she was to drink no wine nor strong drink. It is significant here that wine was not

counted a strong drink. The Jews, like many in France today, drank a light wine that was hardly considered to be intoxicating. It was more like tea which many people drink in America. In the next place, she was not to eat anything unclean from the time of her conception to the time of the birth of the child.

The child shall be a Nazirite unto God from the womb. The word Nazirite means one separated or consecrated. In the sixth chapter of Numbers we learn the law of the Nazirite. In the first place, he was not to drink the juice of grapes, nor eat fresh or dried grapes. He had specific directions to refrain from anything that came from the grapevine. Next, no razor should come upon his head during the days of his vow. If the vow was for a certain period of time, no razor was to be on his head. If his Nazirite vow was for life, then no razor was to come upon his head for life. In the third place, he was not to come near a dead body, not even his own father or mother. We know of only three men who were Nazirites for life. They were Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist.

He shall begin to save Israel. This is certainly the correct way to state the work of Samson. He did not deliver the people from the Philistines. He only began the deliverance, which was carried on by his more worthy successor, Samuel, and was completed in the days of David.

A man of God came unto me. This is the statement of Samson's mother to Manoah, her husband. The angel took the form of a man and the message which he delivered indicated that he was from God. So the woman simply spoke of him as the man of God. His countenance also impressed her with the idea that he was from God, for she said that his countenance was like the countenance of the angel of God, very terrible. The word terrible is not to be taken in

the sense of frightening or terrifying, rather than that it was impressive and awe-inspiring.

I asked him not whence he was.

The woman was so overjoyed with the promise that she was to have a son that she did not ask the man his name nor where he came from. This is an indication of the interest she had and the desire she entertained with reference to a child. She then related to her husband what the angel had said to her with reference to the child. And again, we find mention of the character of the son that was to have no strong drink nor to drink any wine, nor eat any unclean thing, since he was to be a Nazirite unto God all the days of his life.

II. The Intervening Verses (Verses 8-20)

We do not usually make comments on the verses between those paragraphs which comprise our text, but this time the material is of such interest it is thought best to say a few words about it. We should notice the confidence which Manoah had in his wife when she told him of the conversation the man of God had with her. "Nor is Manoah's trust in his wife less conspicuous than her trust in him. Not a shadow of a doubt as to the truth or her statement crossed his mind, nor a shade of jealousy that the message came to her rather than to him. . . . The conduct of Manoah's wife after her first interview with the angel is a beautiful exemplification of this spirit in the wife: then the woman came and told her husband. Many things might have moved her to secrecy. The fear of exciting her husband's suspicions, the risk of being disbelieved, the possibility that the stranger had deceived her with false hopes; or, on the other hand, a feeling of pride and self-sufficiency at the marvelous apparition and revelation made to herself, not to her husband, and a spirit of independence engendered by such a distinction—such feelings as these, had they existed, or had they ruled her conduct, might have led her to conceal the mysterious interview." From

these considerations we infer that Manoah and his wife loved each other deeply and that they had perfect confidence in each other. They prayed God for a return of the visitor and a repetition of the promise, and God granted their prayer. On this second visit, they asked the name of the angel, and they watched while the angel did wondrously before them, and saw him as he went up to heaven from off the altar in the flame that ascended therefrom.

III. The Angel Identified and the Promised Fulfilled (Verses 21-25)

Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of Jehovah. This expression, "the angel of Jehovah," is used many times in the Old Testament to refer to Jehovah himself as was manifested in the second person of the godhead. It was this angel that talked with Jacob at Bethel, and Jacob called him Jehovah. (Gen. 28: 13-17.) In Gen. 48: 15, 16 Jacob calls him the angel. This is the angel Jacob wrestled at Penueel, whom he called God, saying that he had seen God face to face. Hosea says of this incident that he had power over the angel and prevailed, and continued by saying that Jacob also found him in Bethel. (Hos. 12: 3-5.) These passages leave no doubt in our mind whatever that the angel of Jehovah was Jehovah in a form which could be seen and handled by man.

We shall surely die, because we have seen God. This is the statement of Manoah to his wife after this angel had left them. This also identifies the angel as God. Manoah realized that he was the angel of Jehovah, which was none other than Jehovah manifested in a form which man could see and handle. So Manoah was afraid that he would die because he had looked upon Jehovah with his eyes.

But his wife said unto him. Sometimes women manifest more courage, especially with reference to spiritual affairs, than men. Manoah's wife had clearer understanding and better reasoning than her husband on this occasion. She said that if Jehovah were pleased to kill them, he

would not have received the burnt offering and the meat offering which they had offered. In verses nineteen and twenty of this chapter we have the record of the offering that they offered Jehovah, and since he had condescended to receive that offering, he certainly would not put them to death.

The Spirit of Jehovah began to move him. In due time the child was born and was given the name of Sam-

son. And, as shown in our golden text, the child grew under the blessing of Jehovah. Then the Spirit of God began to move him or direct him in his work of beginning to deliver the people from the Philistines. Here again there is no indication of inspiration or moral guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was simply moving him to do that work which God had called him to do, and for which God had eminently qualified him.

Lessons to Learn

1. *From this lesson we learn something of God's interest in the use of individuals in carrying out his great purposes.* Some men become too great and too busy to find time to deal with individuals, but God is never too busy to deal with individuals that he may accomplish his purposes. And none of us are so insignificant that we may not be used by him for the accomplishment of his purposes.

2. *We learn from this lesson something of the blessings and joys of unity of interest in a home.* Both Manoah and his wife were concerned about her barrenness and inability

to bear a child. No doubt they were interested to the extent that they prayed about it, and when the woman was old that she should have a son, her first thought was to convey the glad news to her husband.

3. *There is also this lesson concerning the joy of giving God a servant.* It is not possible for a woman to render a greater service to God nor to humanity than that of rearing children who will serve God and humanity. This is the place that God has given her, and she will do her greatest work in that sphere in which the Lord has placed her.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

Cite a number of instances of barren women being enabled to bear children.

Discuss four things suggested in our lesson that childbearing meant to the average Hebrew family.

What is the meaning of the name Samson?

What significance does Bible names usually have?

What evidence do we have that Samson was especially blessed of Jehovah?

Introduction

What tribe made a complaint against Gideon? How did he handle them?

What complaint did this same tribe make against Jephthah? How did he handle them?

How many Ephraimites were slain at this time?

The Angel Promises a Son

In what town did Samson's family live?

What is peculiar about the location of this city?

Who was Samson's father?

What is suggested in our lesson with reference to their views on marriage?

What information did the angel bring Manoah's wife?

What instruction was she given?

What does the word Nazirite mean?

What three Bible characters are known as Nazirites?

Did Samson deliver Israel from the Philistines?

What form did the angel take when appearing to Samson's mother?

What indicates the woman's interest in the message of the angel?

The Intervening Verses

What is said of the confidence which

Manoah had in his wife?

Tell of the second visit of the angel.

The Angel Identified and the Promise

Fulfilled

What do you know of this angel who visited them?

Why did Manoah think they should surely die?

In what way did Manoah's wife manifest better reasoning and understanding than her husband?

Under what impulse did Samson begin to do his work of deliverance?

What is there of interest to you in the division of Lessons to Learn?

Lesson XIII—September 27, 1953

SAMSON'S DEATH

The Lesson Text

Judges 16: 21-31

21 And the Phi-lis'-tines laid hold on him, and put out his eyes; and they brought him down to Ga'-za, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison-house.

22 Howbeit the hair on his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

23 And the lords of the Phi-lis'-tines gathered them together to offer a great sacrifice unto Da'-gon their God, and to rejoice; for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.

24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hand our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, who hath slain many of us.

25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison-house; and he made sport before them. And they set him between the pillars:

26 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars where-upon the house resteth, that I may lean upon them.

27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Phi-lis'-tines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

28 And Samson called unto Je-ho'-vah, and said, O Lord Je-ho'-vah, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Phi-lis'-tines for my two eyes.

29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, and leaned upon them, the one with his right hand, and the other with his left.

30 And Samson said, Let me die with the Phi-lis'-tines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead that he slew at his death were more than they that he slew in his life.

31 Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zo'-rah and Esh'-ta-oi in the burying-place of Ma-no'-ah his father. And he judged Is'-ra-el twenty years.

Golden Text.—“O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel, he giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.” Psalm 68: 35.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Judges 16: 4-20.

Daily Bible Readings

September 21. M.	Samson's Strength (Judges 14: 5, 6)
September 22. T.	Stronger than Ropes (Judges 15: 11-14)
September 23. W.	Weakness of Samson (Judges 16: 15-21)
September 24. T.	Weakness of the Flesh (Matt. 26: 40-45)
September 25.	F. Samson and Delilah (Judges 16: 1-22)
September 26. S.	Weak May Be Strong (2 Cor. 12: 7-10)
September 27. S.	The Death of Samson (Judges 16: 28-31)

TIME.—1120 B.C.

PLACE.—Gaza.

PERSONS.—Samson and the Philistines.

Golden Text Explained

1. Reasons Why Jehovah Is Terrible.

The word terrible in our text is to be taken in the sense of awe-inspiring. In our common use of the term it means that which excites terror or dread, that which is frightful or horrible, but neither of these meanings can be given the word here because in this verse it applies to God, and God can in no sense of the term be called frightful or horrible. But God does often excite us to reverential awe and respect. By using the two preceding verses of this Psalm, we see several reasons why God is said to be terrible. (1) His supreme and sovereign dominion over the universe is awe-inspiring. In verse thirty-three he is described as the one that rideth upon the heaven of heavens. Psalm 18 should be read by the student to see how God exercises his sovereignty over the earth and the heavens for the help and the blessing of those who love and serve him. (2) The voice of Jehovah is awe-inspiring. David said, "The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth, even Jehovah upon many waters. The voice of Jehovah is powerful; the voice of Jehovah is full of majesty. The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars; yea, Jehovah breaketh in pieces the cedars of Lebanon." (Psalm 29: 3-5.) When Jehovah appeared on Sinai, there were thunderings and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mountain and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud, so that when the people saw and heard, they trembled and they said unto Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Ex. 20: 19.) (3) The mighty power of God is awe-inspiring. In verse thirty-four of our context, we read, "Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the skies." The power of God is so evidently manifest in creation and preservation that none of us who think can fail to be impressed. In the springtime when life begins to come upward in the grass and in the trees, we are reminded of the power of God. But that is such a natural thing that we do not always recognize it as evidence of the power of God. The rising of the sun in the

morning is also an evidence of the power of God, which we are likely to forget. But when we see the storms, the tornadoes, we see the lightning flash across the sky and hear the thunder roll, we are impressed with the power of him who creates and governs such terrible powers. Those of us who have felt the earth tremble beneath us and have seen great buildings rock and fall because their foundation was destroyed, and those who have weathered storms on the ocean and felt the great ships quiver beneath them like a leaf in the wind, are made to appreciate more than ever the power in him who creates and governs and sustains all these things.

(4) God's wise and gracious dealings with his people in times past are awe-inspiring. God's great power and majesty as shown in the creation and preservation of nature and all its forces are awe-inspiring from one consideration, yet his patience, his longsuffering, and his wisdom and his mercy in dealing with a forgetful and sometimes rebellious people are equally awe-inspiring. None less than an all-wise, patient, and merciful heavenly Father could guide the destinies of humanity to the praise and the glory of his great and holy name.

(5) As great and awe-inspiring as these things are, they can never compare with that manifestation of his goodness and mercy when he laid aside his glory and took upon himself the nature of man. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross. (Phil. 2: 5-8.) Angels in glory catch new glimpses of the power and majesty, the mercy and love of God as he rebuilds broken lives, and makes them fit for dwelling in the skies. Surely these things are sufficient proof that our God is terrible out of his sanctuary and that God, the God of Israel, giveth strength and power unto his people.

2. **Our Response to These Awe-Inspiring Manifestations of God.** The Psalmist stood with reverential awe, able only to say, "Blessed be God." This is a psalm of praise and one in which one reason after another is

given why we should praise God. Statements selected at random through the Psalms will illustrate this. "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name . . . exult ye before him . . . blessed be the Lord who daily beareth our burden . . . bless ye God in the congregations . . . sing unto God ye kingdoms of the earth; oh sing praises unto the Lord." In this connection, a number of the Psalms of praise, such as Psalms 146 through

150, should be read to give the student an idea of the multiplicity of things for which we are obligated to praise the Lord. If there is one who has difficulty in finding things for which to praise the Lord, or if he finds it difficult to summon the proper words in which to express his praise, he will be benefited immeasurably by the reading of the Psalms of praise written by David.

Introduction

Between the last lesson regarding the birth of Samson and this lesson regarding his death, we have a number of interesting incidences in the life of Samson, wherein God moved him to begin the deliverance of his people from the Philistines. His strength was first manifested by his tearing a lion with his bare hands as he would have torn a young goat. Next, when he failed to get the girl he wished for his wife, he caught three hundred foxes and turned them tail to tail, tied firebrands between them, and turned them loose in the fields of standing grain burning the grain of the Philistines. In the next place we see him slaying one thousand men with the jawbone of an ass. Again, his enemies found him in the city of Gaza and laid in wait at the gate of the city to take him prisoner as he would leave in the morning. But Samson arose at midnight and pulled the gateposts up and carried them on his shoulders to the top of the mountain that is before Hebron. The incident for which he is best known is that in which he made love to Delilah. She was a woman who lived in the valley of Sorek. Of the location of this place nothing is known certainly. Some suppose it to be situated near Gaza, since this

is the city to which Samson was taken when he was captured in the home of Delilah in the valley of Sorek. Delilah was offered the handsome bribe of eleven hundred pieces of silver to betray Samson into the hands of the Philistines. A piece of silver was worth from about fifty to sixty cents, so she got around \$600 to betray Samson into their hands. Samson told her various things to do which would render him helpless, but each time he defended himself and disappointed Delilah. But finally, as happens to all who tamper with temptation, he told her that if his hair should be shaven from his head he would be as weak as other men. Delilah knew that he had told her all that was in his heart, so she sent for the Philistine lords and told them to bring their money with them. She then made him sleep upon her knees and shaved off the locks of hair from his head. She began to afflict him, and the record says his strength went from him. Then she called for the lords of the Philistines to come, and Samson arose and shook himself as he had done before, expecting to protect himself. But the record says, "He knew not that Jehovah was departed from him."

Exposition of the Text

I. Samson's Punishment (Verses 21, 22)

The Philistines . . . put out his eyes. This was a common punishment of the times. When Korah and his fellow rebels were called to come before Moses, he asked why he had been called for and asked if his eyes were to be put out. (Num. 16: 14.) And when Zedekiah, the last king of the

southern kingdom of Judah, was taken prisoner by the king of Babylon, his eyes were put out, and he was bound in fetters. (2 Kings 25: 7.) Many times a red-hot iron was used to put out the eyes of men.

They brought him down to Gaza. Gaza seems to have been the principal city of the Philistines at that time. It was the most southwestern

point on the road between Palestine and Egypt. For this reason it had a continuous existence from the very earliest times even unto the time of our Lord and the apostles.

Bound him with fetters of brass. These Philistines who had seen him pick up the gates of the city and carry them to the top of the hill, and who had seen him snap new ropes as if they had been threads, were not taking any chances that his strength might return, so they bound him with fetters of brass.

He did grind in the prison-house. This was the work of slaves to grind feed for the Philistines. They made Samson a slave and put him to doing the most degrading of tasks.

Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again. Adam Clarke supposes that Samson, being ashamed of his folly and his sin, renewed his Nazirite vow when he became sensible of the fact that his power was returning with the growing of his hair. However, verse twenty-eight of our text seems to suggest that his strength came to him in answer to prayer at the time he needed it.

II. Samson's Humiliation (Verses 23-27)

The lords of the Philistines gathered them together. This gathering was for the purpose of making a sacrifice unto Dagon their god and to rejoice over the fact that they had captured their enemy Samson. Dagon was their national god. The word Dagon means fish, and their god had the body of a fish, but the head, breast, and hands of a human being. Coins are still in existence with this emblem stamped upon them.

Our god hath delivered Samson into our hand. This undoubtedly added to the humiliation of Samson. He realized that he, by his folly and sin, had given an opportunity to the enemies of Jehovah to blaspheme his worthy name and to exalt their heathen god above Jehovah.

When the people saw him, they praised their god. When the people passed by Samson at the mill grinding, they made such remarks as is here expressed. And every time he heard them say that their god Dagon had delivered Samson into their hands in spite of all the efforts of

Jehovah to prevent his capture, he realized that he had given his enemies an opportunity to blaspheme his God.

Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. This was on the day when the people gathered for their sacrifice unto Dagon. They called for him out of the prison-house and had him to entertain them.

Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house resteth. This is Samson's request of the lad who held him. This lad held him by the hand to guide him to a place of rest after his exertions. Knowing something of the foundation of the building under which he was resting, he asked the lad to allow him to feel the pillars upon which the house rested, so that he might lean upon them. The lad, of course, granted the request, thinking that Samson wished to rest by leaning against the pillars.

Now the house was full of men and women. Among these were all the lords of the Philistines. And it is said that there were three thousand men and women upon the roof. How many men and women were in other portions of the building, of course, cannot be estimated. But there must have been quite a number, since it is said that Samson slew more people in his death than he did during his lifetime.

III. Samson's Death (Verses 28-31)

And Samson called unto Jehovah. This is Samson's prayer for strength, and he said, "Remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." It was commendable in Samson to pray to God, but we could wish that his prayer had been different from what it was. In the first place, it is a somewhat selfish prayer. He prayed to be avenged for his two eyes. It seems that he was more interested in getting vengeance for himself than he was in his sin of bringing God's name into ill repute. He had given his enemies opportunity to blaspheme the worthy name of Jehovah, but he is more interested in afflicting his enemies because they had afflicted him than he is in restoring the good name of Jehovah among them.

Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. Saying this, he bowed himself with all his might and pulled the pillars from under the building, which caused the house to fall upon the lords and upon all that were within the house. Samson tried to make correction in his dying hour for the mistakes of a lifetime. While he accomplished more of his mission in delivering Israel from the Philistines in that hour than he had during his lifetime, yet the correction which he made in that hour was not sufficient to atone for the mistakes and follies of his lifetime. While the stories of the unusual strength of Samson, and the sometimes ludicrous ways he used it, is of interest to young people, yet the thought should ever be held before them that Samson was not a good character, and that he is not to be admired for his standard of morals. God used him as best he could for the accomplishment of his

purposes, yet God does not endorse his standard of morals or the spiritual plane on which he lived.

His brethren . . . took him, . . . and buried him. There is no mention of other children of Samson's parents. So the word brethren here may simply mean his kinsmen. Though there was enmity between Israel and the Philistines, we may suppose that the Philistines were so busy burying their dead and lamenting over them that they made no objection to these people of Israel taking and burying Samson.

He judged Israel twenty years. From what we learn of the habits of Samson, it is difficult to conceive of him holding the office and doing the work of the judge over a nation of people. It is difficult to see that Samson did any more than execute the judgment of God on the enemies of Israel. It is perhaps in this sense that the word judge is used with reference to him.

Lessons to Learn

1. *Those who are called of God and qualified to serve him should feel the responsibility of living like God.* In the person of Jesus, God has shown us how to live. Those of us who are called to serve him should strive to live like him.

2. *Great endowments, whether physical or mental, bring great responsibilities with them.* Samson had a great physical endowment. He should have used it constantly and

wisely for the accomplishment of God's purposes. As it was, he used it for his personal gratification.

3. *In Samson we learn again that we reap what we sow.* Samson sowed to the lusts of the flesh and his reaping was in kind. He suffered in the flesh. We cannot indulge in the lusts of the flesh without bringing sorrow and suffering. In this connection the student should read Eccles. 11: 9, 10.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the Golden Text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text

What does the word "terrible" mean in our text?

What is said of the sovereign dominion of Jehovah over the universe?

What is said of the voice of Jehovah?

What is said of the strength and power of Jehovah?

Can you show how God's wise and gracious dealings are awe-inspiring?

What is the greatest awe-inspiring manifestation of God?

What should be our response to these awe-inspiring manifestations of God?

Introduction

How was Samson's strength first manifested?

What did Samson do when he failed to get the wife he wanted?

How did he slay a thousand men on one occasion?

What did he do with the gates of a city?

How much was Delilah offered to betray Samson?

Tell how Delilah got the truth from Samson?

What did Jehovah do when Samson's hair was cut?

Samson's Punishment

What was the first punishment given Samson?

What other Bible characters suffered the same punishment?

To what city did they take Samson?
 How did they make certain Samson would
 stay with them?
 What work was Samson given to do?
 What is your opinion of the cause of the
 return of his strength?

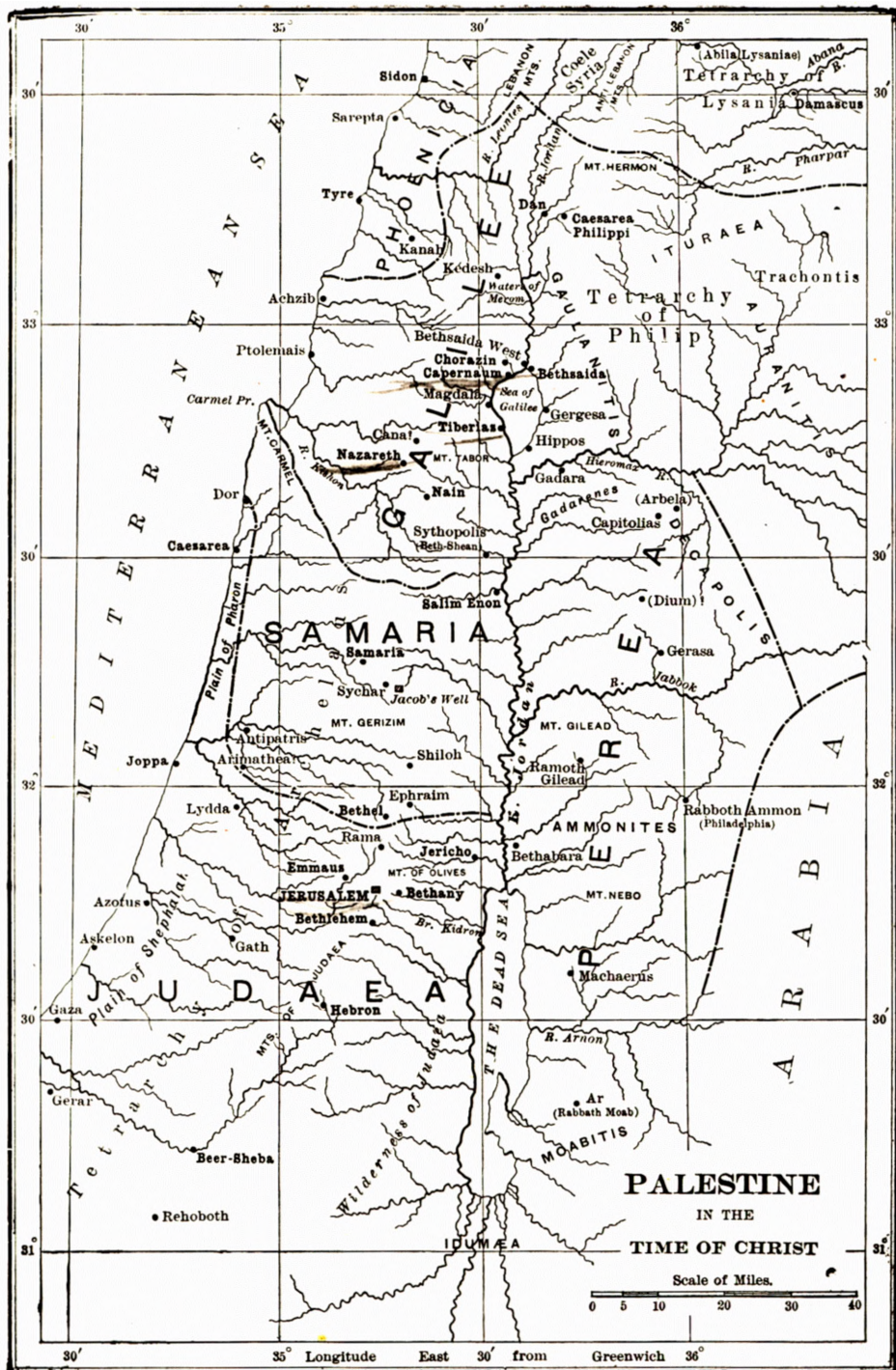
Samson's Humiliation

For what did the lords of the Philistines
 gather?
 What was the name of the Philistines'
 god?
 What made Samson realize that he had
 dishonored Jehovah?
 Why did the people call for Samson?
 What request did Samson make of his
 keepers?

What is said of the number of Philistines
 gathered at this time?

Samson's Death

For what did Samson pray?
 Why did he wish to regain his strength?
 Wherein is the selfishness of Samson's
 prayer?
 What is said of Samson's accomplishments
 in death as compared to those of his
 life?
 Is Samson a good character to hold up
 before young people as their example?
 Who buried Samson?
 How long did Samson judge Israel?
 What is there of interest to you in the
 division of Lessons to Learn?



FOURTH QUARTER

SERMON ON THE MOUNT AND OTHER DISCOURSES OF JESUS

Aim.—To study the discourses of Jesus, and to apply them to our own lives.

Lesson I—October 4, 1953

THE BEATITUDES

The Lesson Text

Matt. 5: 1-12

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up in the mountain: and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying,

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed art the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.

10 Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye when *men* shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.

Golden Text.—*"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors for their works follow with them."* (Rev. 14: 13.)

Devotional Reading.—Psalm 1

Daily Bible Readings

September 28. M.....The Blessed Man Described (Psalm 1: 1-6)
 September 29. T.....The Blessed Man Chosen (Psalm 65: 1-4)
 September 30. W.....Blessedness Promised (Prov. 10: 1-10)
 October 1. T.....Blessed Are Justice-keepers (Psalm 106: 1-5)
 October 2. F.....Blessed to Fear the Lord (Psalm 128: 1-6)
 October 3. S.....Blessed to Die in the Lord (Rev. 14: 1-13)
 October 4. S.....Blessed to Read the Bible (Rev. 1: 1-3)

Time.—A.D. 27.

Place.—A mountain in Galilee, perhaps near the Sea of Galilee.

Persons.—Jesus, his disciples, and the great multitude.

Golden Text Explained

1. Blessed Are the Dead. John says that the language of the golden text was spoken from heaven. He said, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead." Then in the verse following he said he saw one sitting on a cloud, "like unto a son of man," suggesting that it was Jesus Christ who was doing

the speaking. The word "blessed" means happy, so our Lord is on record as saying that the dead are happy. But we raise the question, Are all who die happy? From the teaching of the scripture, as well as our golden text, we know that not all the dead are happy or in a state of blessedness. The language of our

text limits this blessedness. For it says blessed are the dead *who die in the Lord*. This suggests that there are some who die not in the Lord, and our text does not say that they are happy, (a) Since some die in the Lord and others do not, we raise the question, how do people die in the Lord? First, an individual must be in the Lord before he can die in the Lord. The only way one can be in the Lord is through obedience to the gospel of Christ. To be in the Lord or in Christ simply means to be in that relationship with Christ where he is our Saviour, our Redeemer, our King, and our High Priest. We often read in the New Testament of blessings in Christ. We are told that all spiritual blessings are in Christ. (Eph. 1: 3.) Salvation is in Christ. (2 Tim. 2:

10.) Redemption is in Christ. (Eph. 1: 7.) We are new creatures in Christ. (2 Cor. 5: 17.) We are children of God in Christ. (Gal. 3: 26.) Paul tells us that we are baptized into Christ. (Rom. 6: 3; Gal. 3: 27.) This baptism, must, of course, be preceded by a genuine faith in Jesus as the Christ the Son of the living God. (Acts 8: 37; Rom. 9: 9, 10.) Next, it is preceded by genuine repentance. People must repent or turn from their sins before they can be baptized into Christ. (Acts 2: 38.) Next, one must confess Jesus as Christ the Lord and their Saviour before they can be baptized into Christ. The Ethiopian eunuch asked to be baptized, and the inspired preacher said he might be baptized if he believed that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and the man replied that he believed. Then the inspired preacher baptized him. (Acts 8: 36-38.) Baptism preceded by these things brings one into the Lord where he may die a happy death, (b) Our text suggests that only those who die in the Lord are happy. This implies that those who do not die in the Lord are unhappy. The Scriptures furnish abundant evidence of the truth of this implication. In Matt. 7 Jesus pictures some in the day of judgment who fail to meet his approval. They are told to depart from him because they had worked iniquity. Those who depart from Jesus in that day go to a place of punish-

ment. In Matt. 25, in the picture of the last judgment, it is said that those who depart from him go into eternal fire, which was prepared for the devil and for his angels, and in verse 46 it is called eternal punishment. These are people who fail to die in the Lord. In Gal. 5: 19-21 Paul names the works of the flesh, and says that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God, while in Rev. 21: 8 John names many of the same sins and says those guilty of such will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. From this we conclude that those who fail to enter heaven go into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. Only those who are in Christ and die in Christ can go to heaven. Consequently, those who fail to die in the Lord will be turned away from the Lord to spend eternity in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

2. **They May Rest from Their Labors.** This part of our text gives a reason why those who die in the Lord are happy. The apostle Paul is a fine example of one who would be happy in death because he could rest from his labors. He said he was in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ which was very far better. (Phil. 1: 23, 24.) In 2 Cor. 11: 22-28 Paul recounts some of the sufferings he had endured in order to preach the gospel and to serve the Lord. After laboring so long in the face of such persecution, death was looked upon by Paul as a relief. He would be relieved of his sorrows and his suffering and would be privileged to go on to be with Christ, to enjoy with him the fruits of his labors. There are three things which help us to realize the blessedness of dying in the Lord,

(a) Age. When people grow old and weak, they fail in their enjoyment of the things of this world and turn their minds to things of the other world, and usually look to death as a relief from this weakness and inability to enjoy the things about them, (b) Suffering helps to divorce us from the world and the love of the world. This suffering may be physical. Many people who have endured physical sufferings have longed and prayed for release from the sufferings of the

body that they might go on to be at rest. The suffering of persecution comes in this class, and in the case of Paul, helped him *to* divorce himself from the world and to long for release from such sorrow and suffering. (c) Spiritual growth and development. It is possible for us to cultivate the appreciation and enjoyment of heavenly things to such a degree that we will long to leave this world with its hindrances to our enjoyment of spiritual things to go on to heaven where there will be no interference with our enjoyment of heavenly things.

3. **Their Works Follow with Them.** Our text has under consideration that one in the Lord who walks not after the flesh but after the spirit. (Rom. 8:

1-4.) That one in the Lord who walks after the Spirit will not be embarrassed by his works following with him in the judgment. But, an individual who, having been baptized into Christ, walks after the flesh and does the things of the flesh, will be embarrassed by his works in the judgment. Paul tells us 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. (2 Cor. 5: 10.) This is another reason why we ought to be careful about our works in this life, for they follow us after our death into the judgment.

Introduction

The sermon on the mount is the greatest sermon of all time. It was preached near the beginning of the ministry of our Lord. Jesus did not have to grow in his ability to preach. This should suggest that he was not a mere human being unaided by the heavenly Father. Young men today may study many years in colleges, universities, and theological seminaries and they may know all about the mechanics of building and delivering sermons, but without much practice they do not become great preachers. Their first efforts at preaching are lacking in organization, content, and the power to move people. But this sermon, in the early part of the ministry of our Lord, is lacking in neither of these essential elements of a great sermon.

The place where this sermon was preached cannot be positively identified. It was somewhere in the vicinity of Capernaum, and the hill pointed out by many is on the road between Nazareth and Tiberius. It is commonly called the Horns of Hattin. The hill is high enough that it could be called a mountain, and there is a

level place of sufficient size to accommodate the multitude of people who followed Jesus and heard him on this occasion.

The content of the sermon on the mount is of unusual interest. We may sum up the content by saying that it deals with the nature of the kingdom of God. (a) Jesus attempted to correct the popular Jewish conception of the kingdom. The Jews expected a temporal, national kingdom. Jesus attempted to teach them that it was not a worldly kingdom but a heavenly kingdom. (b) Jesus contrasted the kingdom of God with the system of Moses and made an effort to get the Jews to see that the kingdom of God was not simply a new patch on the old garment of Judaism, (c) Jesus contrasted the spirit of the kingdom with the hypocrisy of the Pharisees of his day. He made an effort to get the Jews to see the ugliness of insincerity and hypocrisy as practiced by the Pharisees, and to see the beauty of humility and lowliness and gentleness and purity, as practiced by the Lord and those who followed him.

Exposition of the Text

I. Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit

(Verse 3)

The word blessed means happy. The word poor here indicates those that are absolutely dependent upon others. To be poor in spirit is to have an humble opinion of ourselves; to be

sensible that we are sinners, and have no righteousness of our own; to be willing to be saved only by the rich grace and mercy of God; to be willing to be where God places us, to bear what he lays upon us, to go where he bids us, and to die when he

commands; to be willing to be in his hands, and to feel that we deserve no favor from him. It is opposed to pride, and vanity, and ambition. (Barnes.) The reason the poor in spirit are happy is stated in these words, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Poverty, as to material wealth, does not insure our entrance to heaven, but poverty in spirit does assure us of an entrance into heaven. Material poverty often causes one to turn to the Lord for help and thus contributes to his final happiness. But being poor in spirit assures us a place in the kingdom here and in heaven hereafter.

II. Blessed Are They That Mourn (Verse 4)

This is not to be taken as a guarantee of comfort to those who mourn over worldly sorrows. There are some who mourn over the loss of wealth. Others mourn over the loss of position and power. Jesus does not guarantee to comfort all such.

(a) Those who weep over personal sins may find consolation in Christ.

(b) We may mourn over the sins of those about us. It is said that Lot was sore distressed by the lascivious deeds of the wicked. (2 Pet. 2: 7.)

(c) We may mourn over the condition of the church. Paul often expressed his anxiety for the churches which he had established. (2 Cor. 11: 28; Gal. 4: 19.) The reason why those that mourn should be happy is that they find comfort in Christ. If they mourn over their own sins, they can find salvation in Christ. If they mourn over the sins of others, they may find comfort in the fact that Jesus died for all and that the gospel is preached to all and has power to save all. If they mourn over the condition of the church, they may find comfort in the fact that God reigns through Christ and that right will finally triumph.

III. Blessed Are the Meek (Verse 5)

Meekness is patience in the endurance of injuries with the belief that God will vindicate us and with the attitude that we are willing to wait for God to vindicate us. Both Jesus and Paul set fine examples of meekness or patience in the endurance of suffering, willing to wait the Father's

good time to vindicate them. Some look upon meekness as cowardice or the surrender of our rights to others, but it takes more courage to be meek than it does to fight for our rights. The meek are said to be happy because they shall inherit the earth. Brother McGarvey says they may inherit the earth in two ways. "1. They shall enjoy it more fully while in it. 2. They shall finally, as part of the triumphant church, possess and enjoy it."

IV. Blessed Are They That Hunger and Thirst After Righteousness (Verse 6)

Those that hunger and thirst for righteousness are happy. Hunger and thirst are common and constantly recurring feelings and desires. Hunger and thirst imply (a) man's recognition of his need of righteousness; (b) God's willingness and ability to fill our needs. God would not place hunger for food in man without giving him food to satisfy that hunger. Neither would God give man the ability to hunger for righteousness unless he intended to give man that for which he hungered. The word righteousness here simply means the right relationship with God and our fellow man. The reason why these are to be happy is found in the fact that Jesus assures us that this hunger and thirst shall be completely satisfied.

V. Blessed Are the Merciful (Verse 7)

Meekness is a passive virtue, but mercy is active. The meek will bear and endure things, but the merciful will be active in their attitude to exercise mercy and the proper concern for those who are in need. The merciful are said to be happy because they shall obtain mercy. Throughout the scripture we are told that the unmerciful shall be shown no mercy, while those who have been merciful toward their fellow man shall be shown mercy when God deals with them. (Matt. 18: 23-35.)

VI. Blessed Are the Pure in Heart (Verse 8)

The pure in heart are those whose desires and motives and intentions are pure. The heart is the spring or source out of which the life flows. If the heart is kept pure, the life will

be pure. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4: 23.) The pure in heart are happy because it is they who shall see God, since the heart is the source of life. If the heart is pure, the life will be pure; and those who live pure lives are ready for association and communion with God.

VII. Blessed Are the Peacemakers (Verse 9)

A peacemaker is one who is actively engaged in bringing peace and calm and quiet in his family, in his community, and his nation. He is one who had rather suffer injury than to inflict injury upon others. He had rather settle difficulties through prayer than through force. The reason why the peacemaker is to be happy is the fact that he shall be called

the son of God. This means that he has the nature of God, that he looks at things the way God looks at things, that he acts like God would act if he were in our place.

VIII. Blessed Are They That Have Been Persecuted (Verse 10)

In these verses Jesus tells us to rejoice in our sufferings for him. This reminds us of James' admonition. "Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations." (James 1: 2.) Peter gives us the same admonition when he tells us to rejoice in our sufferings for the Lord, but let none of us suffer as an evildoer or a meddler in other men's matters. "But if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." (1 Pet. 4: 12-16.)

Lessons to Learn

1. *The nature of the kingdom of heaven is far different from the nature of worldly kingdoms, consequently the character of the subjects of the kingdom of heaven must differ from the character of the kingdoms of this world.* The views and the ideals of citizens of the kingdom of heaven must be so different from those of the world that the world often ridicules and persecutes the citizens of the kingdom of heaven on account of these views.

2. *Jesus exemplified every one of these principles in our lesson today in his life.* He showed us how to put

these principles into practice. He also showed us that a man could live by these principles and be successful. He might be despised and rejected by men, but he would be honored and at last received by the God of heaven. And to live so as to be received by the Lord into heaven is to live successfully.

3. *Contrast the life called blessed by our Lord and the blessed or fortunate life by the standards of the world.* According to the world, happiness consists of wealth and honor, and power, but according to Jesus it consists of being like him.

Questions for the Class

What is the subject of this lesson?
Repeat the golden text from memory.
Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

Who is the author of the language of our text?

What is the meaning of the word blessed?
Name and discuss the four steps necessary to bring one into the Lord.
Give proof that those who do not die in the Lord are unhappy.

Discuss Paul as an example of those who rest from their labors.

Name and discuss three things which help us to realize the blessedness of dying in the Lord.

Which of the three do you consider the highest motive and most pleasing to the Lord?

What connection is there between our works here and our happiness in the day of judgment?

Introduction

What does the sermon on the mount suggest with reference to the ability of Jesus to preach?

What three elements of a great sermon are conspicuous in this sermon?

What do you know of the place where the sermon was delivered?

Name and discuss three things Jesus taught in this sermon with reference to the nature of the kingdom of God.

Exposition of the Text

What is the meaning of the term, poor in spirit, as used in our text?

Give and discuss the reason why the poor in spirit are happy.

Is there any connection between material poverty and this blessedness?

Does Jesus promise happiness to those who mourn over all types of sorrow?

Name and discuss three things over which people may mourn and expect to find comfort.

In what can we find comfort from each of these three causes of mourning?

What is meekness, and who gave us fine examples of meekness?

Can you distinguish between meekness and cowardice?

Discuss two reasons given why the meek are blessed.

What two things are implied by hungering and thirsting after righteousness?

What does the word righteousness mean in this text?

State the reason why those who hunger and thirst are happy.

Contrast the words meekness and merciful as used in our text.

Why are the merciful said to be happy?

What is meant by purity of heart?

Why should we be careful of the condition of our heart?

Why are the pure in heart said to be happy?

Who are the peacemakers?

Why is the peacemaker said to be happy?

How does Jesus connect persecution with happiness?

What does James say on the subject?

Give Peter's teaching on this subject.

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson II—October 11, 1953

THE OLD LAW AND THE NEW LIFE

The Lesson Text

Matt. 5: 17-30

17 Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Phar'-i-sees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21 Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Ra'-ca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire.

23 If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there re-

memberest that thy brother hath aught against thee,

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art with him in the way; lest haply the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou have paid the last farthing.

27 Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body go into hell.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil."* (Matt. 5: 17.)

DEVOTIONAL HEADING.—Matt. 5: 31-38.

Daily Bible Readings

October 5. M.....	Law Added to the Cross (Col. 1: 14-17)
October 6. T.....	Obedience Required (Matt. 7: 15-28)
October 7. W.....	Pharisees' Righteousness (Luke 18: 9-14)
October 8. T.....	Attitude Toward Others (Rom. 12: 9-21)
October 9. F.....	Loving One's Enemies (Luke 6: 27-38)
October 10. S.....	Righteousness in the Kingdom (Matt. 5: 17-30)
October 11. S.....	Acceptable Worship (John 4: 19-26)

Time.—A.D. 27.

Place.—On a mountain near Capernaum.

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

Golden Text Explained

1. The Purpose of Christ's Coming Stated Negatively. Jesus said he did not come to destroy the law or the prophets. The expression, "the law and the prophets," was used sometimes to describe the entire Old Testament. In Luke 24: 27 Luke said of Jesus that, "Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Here the term, Moses and the prophets, is used to mean all the Scriptures. Sometimes the Old Testament Scriptures were divided into three divisions. In Luke 24: 44 we read this, "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. Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the Scriptures." Here we have the three divisions, the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms, used in apposition to the word Scriptures, showing that these three divisions include all that the Jews accepted as Scriptures. Since Jesus had taught and was, in this sermon, about to teach some things contrary to the law of Moses and some things which were more strict than was the law of Moses, he thought wise to preface these teachings by this statement that he did not come to destroy the law. It was wise thus to preface his teaching that people might not misunderstand the purpose of his teaching. Some think that Jesus meant that he would not destroy the law until he had fulfilled it, and that when he had fulfilled it, he would then destroy it; but such is not true. Jesus did not come to destroy the law, and he

did not ever destroy the law. To destroy the law means two things. First, to abrogate its statutes, and second, to prevent the fulfillment of its types. The law was composed of statutes binding upon the people of that day and of types foreshadowing Christ and the church. Jesus did abrogate the statutes of the law, but he did not, during his life, nor after his death through his apostles, prevent the fulfillment of even the least and most insignificant of the types and shadows of the law. These statutes of the old law were in their nature moral, ceremonial, and judicial. Some have the idea that only the ceremonial and the judicial statutes were abrogated and taken out of the way. But it is best to say that all the law—moral, ceremonial, and judicial—was abrogated, taken out of our way, and such moral principles as were eternal in nature were inclined in the new covenant, not because they were a part of the law of Moses, but because they were moral in their nature, and no righteous law could be enacted without including them. But, since they rest now upon the authority of Christ, and not upon the authority of Moses, they are a part of the new law and not a part of the old law brought over into the new.

2. Purpose of Christ's Coming Stated Positively. Jesus said that he came to fulfill the law and the prophets. The only way Jesus could destroy the prophets would be to prevent the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning himself and the kingdom of God. But to do this would have been to act contrary to his purpose in coming to the earth. Hence, he did not come to destroy the prophets but to fulfill them, and in fulfilling

them, he carried out their predictions concerning himself and the kingdom of God. He fulfilled the law, he fulfilled the types in the law, which had reference to himself and to the church. This was his purpose for coming into the world. Some of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerned Jesus personally. Some of them concerned his work in the church and the salvation of souls in the church and in heaven. It was his mission to fulfill personally those prophecies that referred to himself and, through the administration of the affairs of the church, to fulfill those prophecies which had reference to the church and its mission in the world.

3. **Illustration of Fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets.** The four gospels abound with statements that Jesus did this or that, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. His birth was

fulfillment of prophecy. His caring for the poor, healing the sick, raising the dead were in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. His death on the cross between two thieves, his burial in a rich man's tomb, and his resurrection were all subjects of Old Testament prophecy. The book of Hebrews abounds with fulfillments of the types of the Old Testament. The holy place in the tabernacle was a type of the church. The most holy place was a type of heaven. The offering of the blood of animals was a type of the offering of the blood of Christ, and the burning of the flesh of an animal outside the gate was a type of the suffering of Christ without the gate. (Heb. 13: 11, 12.) The student may multiply examples of types of the Old Testament being fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Introduction

The writer of Hebrews tells us that Jesus came to establish a new and a better covenant because he found fault with the old covenant. (Heb. 8: 7, 8.) The old covenant, the law, was perfect for the purpose for which it was given. But it was only a national and a temporal law and consequently was not adequate for a universal and a spiritual law. In our lesson today Jesus draws some contrasts between the law of Moses and the law of the kingdom, showing the superiority of the law of the kingdom, the new covenant, over the law of Moses, the old covenant. Six times in the fifth chapter of Matthew, Jesus says, "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old times," meaning by that the old law, that certain things were true, "but I say unto you." He first recites what the law teaches, then he contrasts his teaching with that. Each time he points out the inadequacy of the law and shows the

superiority of the new covenant. Some contend that Jesus was contrasting his teaching with the Pharisaic perversions of the old law and not the true teaching of the law of Moses. But this contention falls down when we consider the fact that Jesus quotes word for word the statement of Moses concerning divorce in Matt. 5: 31. In this passage Jesus quotes from Deut. 34: 1, 3 and then gives his teaching in his own words. The law of Moses was a state law and as such governed the actions of the people. Both the purpose and the nature of the law of Moses demanded that it govern only the actions of the people and not the thoughts, and purposes, and intents of the heart. But the law of Jesus is a spiritual law. It is not a state law and goes beyond the actions and reaches in the heart and governs the thoughts, and purposes, and intents of the heart.

Exposition of the Text

I. Jesus Teaches Respect for Law (Verses 17-20)

Till heaven and earth pass away.

This is our Lord's way of saying that the law is indestructible, that it cannot be destroyed. Luke states it in this way. "But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for

one tittle of the law to fall." (Luke 16: 17.)

One jot or one tittle. The jot or "yod" was the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet and stands for our letter "i." The tittle was a horn-shaped character placed over a certain portion of a letter which deter-

minded its meaning. Brother McGarvey says, "To put it in English we distinguish the letter 'c' from the letter 'e' by the little inside of the letter." This whole expression is proverbial in its nature and simply means the very smallest fraction of a thing. Hence, Jesus is saying that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for the smallest, most minute detail of the law to fail of its fulfillment.

Till all things be accomplished. This suggests that the law would pass away so far as its authority is concerned when its statutes and its types have been fulfilled. But the passing away of the law is not to be construed as the destruction of the law.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments. Jesus teaches respect for the law first in the fact that it is indestructible. Now in the second place he teaches respect for the law by saying that one who breaks one of the least commandments and teaches men to do so shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But the individual who obeys the commandments of the law and teaches others to do so shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Those who pass upon the demands of the law and determine whether the demands are reasonable or unreasonable are little in the sight of Jesus as the head of the kingdom. Those who humbly accept the demands of the law of the Lord and obey them and teach others to be obedient to them are great and outstanding characters in the kingdom.

Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees were noted for their keeping of the law in its most minute detail. They were scrupulously righteous, especially with reference to the outward demands of the law. They were the standard of righteousness in their day, and when Jesus said that his disciples must exceed them in their righteousness he was putting the standard high. Our righteousness exceeds their righteousness not in the outward performance in the word of the law but in the attitude and disposition of the heart out of which these actions spring.

II. The Law Against Murder (Verses 21-26.)

Thou shalt not kill. This is the sixth of the ten commandments. (Ex. 20: 13; Deut. 5: 17.) The Jewish conception of this was that the individual who killed would be in danger of the judgment. The manslayer could flee to the city of refuge and remain there in safety until his trial. (Num. 35.)

But I say unto you. Jesus speaks as one having authority and warns them against even being angry with their brother. Jesus gives three degrees of offense in the sin of anger. They are (1) anger unexpressed; (2) anger expressed in abusive language; (3) anger expressed in bitter, reproachful language. For these degrees of sin there are three corresponding degrees of punishment. (1) the judgment; (2) the council; (3) the hell of fire. The judgment referred to a court of seven men, appointed by the law, while the council referred to what we commonly call the Sanhedrin, which was the highest tribunal of the Jews. The third degree of punishment for the third degree of offense for the sin of anger, according to Jesus, is beyond the jurisdiction of man and is punished by the hell of fire. John said, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3: 15.) Paul warns us against allowing anger to cause us to sin and tells us we should not allow our anger to continue with us overnight. (Eph. 4: 26.) And James tells us to be slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. (James 1: 19, 20.)

Leave there thy gift before the altar, The consequence of the sin of anger is such that Jesus recommends that we leave even our most solemn periods of worship to go and be reconciled to our brother.

Agree with thine adversary quickly. In the time of our Lord it was the business of the plaintiff to apprehend and bring before the court the defendant. Jesus pictures here one who has done his neighbor a wrong and is conscious of his guilt. When the plaintiff comes for him, Jesus advises him to agree with his adver-

sary, the one who would bring him into court. This is a continuation of the lesson on making right the wrongs we have done our neighbor and being reconciled to him lest we be accused before the judge. In this language Jesus teaches that those who commit the sin of anger against their brethren will not be held guiltless by the Lord, but will be required to suffer punishment for violation of the sixth commandment, a commandment against murder.

III. The Law Against Adultery

(Verses 27-30)

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

This is the seventh of the ten commandments. (Ex. 20: 14; Deut. 5: 18.) Since the law of Moses was the state law for the Jews, and since it is impossible for the state to determine the thoughts and intents and purposes of the heart, it would be impossible for us to apply this commandment to anything more than the outward overt acts of men. Hence, we say that the law of Moses simply forbade the overt act of adultery.

But I say unto you. Here again Jesus emphasizes his authority by saying that he says something contrary to or more correctly in addition to the law of Moses. He then says that, if a man looks wantonly upon a woman to stir his lusts, he is already guilty of adultery in his heart. Jesus knew that sin originates in the thoughts, purposes, and desires of the heart. He thus seeks to regulate the thoughts and desires of the heart so as to prevent sin in its inception. James said, "Each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death." (James 1: 13-15.) The student should study Mark 7: 1-23 in this connection. Both our young people and their parents need plain teaching on this point today. They need to know that petting, necking, dancing, and frequenting public bathing pools and beaches

cause them to be guilty of this sin. Certainly not everyone guilty of these things is automatically guilty of this sin of adultery. But, these practices and frequenting such places where they are carried on cultivate the attitude that makes this sin possible. Another thing they need to know is that they will not long be guilty of this sin until they will be guilty of the sin of the overt act of adultery itself. Sins of the heart will soon find expression in sins of the body.

If thy right eye causeth thee to stumble. Some think that Jesus means to teach here that we are literally to pluck out our right eye if we cannot look upon a woman without lusting after her and to cut off our right hand if we cannot keep from handling her in an unchaste manner. But such an interpretation is childish. After we pluck out the right eye, the left would still look as wantonly and lustfully as the right ever did and the left hand would handle them as unchastely as the right ever handled them. Therefore our disease would not be cured by the remedy suggested. The right eye and the right hand represent the dearest possessions that we have, so Jesus teaches that we should be willing to sacrifice our dearest possessions in order to live right and to be ready to meet God in the judgment. Paul teaches the same lesson when he says, "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry." (Col. 3: 5.) Jesus teaches us that it is better for us to lose this dearest possession while here on earth, go through life without it, and be saved in heaven than to retain and enjoy this dearest possession while living here on this earth and be cast into hell for all eternity. "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" (Matt. 16: 26.)

Lessons to Learn

1. *Jesus himself recognized the binding authority of the law.* He was himself subject to the law of the Father, and it was his meet to do the

will of his Father who sent him. If Jesus was subject to the law of his day, we certainly ought to feel bound to obey the law of God in our day.

2. *Anger is a common sin and one which any of us may commit almost without thought.* Since the one guilty of anger will be dealt with as a murderer and since anger is such a common sin, we ought to be the more diligent in searching our hearts to see whether or not we are guilty.

3. *Since one may become guilty of adultery by engaging in unchaste thoughts and desires, and since there*

are so many situations in life where we may be caused to entertain such thoughts, we should be extremely careful to guard our hearts lest we be guilty of such thought. There is such freedom, and frankness, and intimacy between boys and girls, men and women of our generation that we are the more in danger of indulging in such thoughts as Jesus here forbids.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

What expression did the Jews use to refer to the entire Old Testament?

Why did Jesus wish the people to know that he did not come to destroy the law?

What would be necessary for Jesus to do to destroy the law?

Name and illustrate three kinds of statutes in the law of Moses.

Is it correct to say that the moral statutes in the law of Moses are still binding on us?

What did Jesus say was the purpose of his coming?

How did Jesus fulfill those prophecies which concern the kingdom of heaven?

Name some of the prophecies which concern him personally.

What book of the New Testament abounds with fulfillments of types of the Old Testament?

Introduction

Why did Jesus come to establish a new covenant?

What method did Jesus use to show the superiority of the new covenant over the old?

How do we know that Jesus was not contrasting his covenant with the Pharisaic perversions of the old law?

Why could not the law of Moses regulate the thoughts and purposes of the heart?

Jesus Teaches Respect for Law

In what words did Jesus teach the indestructibility of the law of God?

What is meant by the jot? and by the tittle?

Is the passing away of the law in this text the same as the destruction of the law?

In what two ways does Jesus teach respect for the law?

Whom does Jesus class as least in the kingdom?

For what were the scribes and Pharisees noted?

How can our righteousness exceed that of the Pharisees?

The Law Against Murder

What did the law of Moses teach about manslaughter?

Give three degrees of offense in the sin of anger and the three corresponding degrees of punishment.

How does the third degree of punishment differ from the other two?

What did John teach about murderers?

What does Paul teach with reference to anger?

Why does James tell us to be slow to wrath?

How does Jesus teach the importance of being reconciled to our brother?

What does Jesus advise with reference to our adversary?

The Law Against Adultery

How does the teaching of Jesus differ from that of the law of Moses on the subject of adultery?

What does James teach of the origin and growth of sin in the individual?

What common practices of today cause people to violate this teaching?

Why is the sin of the heart so dangerous?

Does Jesus recommend the physical mutilation of our body to overcome sin?

What did Jesus mean by plucking out the eye or cutting off the hand?

In what words did Paul teach the same lesson?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson III—October 18, 1953

HYPOCRISY AND SINCERITY

The Lesson Text

Matt. 6: 1-8, 16-18

1 Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

2 When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may

have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

5 And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

7 And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gen'tiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face;

18 That thou be not seen of men to fast, but of thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall recompense thee.

Golden Text.—*"Fear Jehovah, and serve him in sincerity and in truth."* (Josh. 24: 14.)

Devotional Reading.—Matt. 6: 19-34.

Daily Bible Readings

October 12. M..... Hypocrisy Condemned (Matt. 23: 1-12)
 October 13. T..... Woes Pronounced Against Hypocrites (Matt. 23: 13-37)
 October 14. W..... Vain Repetitions Forbidden (Matt. 6: 5-8)
 October 15. T..... The Disciples' Prayer (Matt. 6: 9-15)
 October 16. F..... Fasting Described by Isaiah (Isa. 58: 1-7)
 October 17. S..... Sincerity Commanded (Phil. 1: 3-11)
 October 18. S..... Judging Others Forbidden (Luke 6: 27-38)

Time.—A.D. 27.

Place.—On a mountain near Capernaum.

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

Golden Text Explained

1. Fear Jehovah. Our text is taken from Joshua's farewell address to the Jews. He called all the people together in Shechem and there reminded them of the goodness of God toward them and of their inclination to forsake God and serve other gods. It was on this occasion when he called upon them to make the choice whether they would serve Jehovah, who had delivered them from Egyptian bondage and brought them into a land that flowed with milk and honey, or whether they would serve the gods which their fathers served beyond the river and the gods of the Amorites, in whose land they then dwelt. His parting admonition is well summed up in the words of our text to fear Jehovah and serve him in sincerity and in truth. The word fear

is used in the sense of respect and reverence. Certainly God does not want us to be afraid of him as we would be afraid of a monster, but he wants us to respect his authority and to reverence his holy word. People who do not fear God are unwise. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments." (Psalm 111: 10.) The fear of Jehovah keeps people from going into sin. When Paul had described the condition of the Jewish world and said that there were none righteous, no not one, he summed the whole matter up by saying, "There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. 3: 10-18.) Psalm 112 outlines the blessings which come to the man that fears Jehovah. "Blessed is the

man that feareth Jehovah, that delighteth greatly in his commandments." (a) His seed shall be mighty upon the earth; (b) wealth and riches are in his house; (c) he shall maintain his cause in judgment; (d) he shall never be moved; (e) he shall not be afraid of evil tidings; (f) his heart is established, he shall not be afraid. We are told in Psalm 147: 11, "Jehovah taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his loving-kindness." In Prov. 10: 27 we are told, "The fear of Jehovah prolongeth days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened." The Holy Spirit, through Mary the mother of Jesus, said, "And his mercy is unto generations and generations on them that fear him." (Luke 1: 50.) With the use of a good concordance the student may find many other blessings promised to people who fear Jehovah. No wonder then that Joshua exhorted the people of his day to fear Jehovah. What the world needs today is a genuine healthy fear of Jehovah.

2. Serve Jehovah. Proper reverence for God's holy name and respect for his authority will cause people to serve him. Service is the outward expression of the reverence which one has in his heart for the authority of God. (a) In order for an act which we perform to be an act of service to God, it must be authorized by the Lord. Any act which we perform of our own devising and on our own authority is a human device and not an act of service to God. Paul tells us, "Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Col. 3: 17.) To do a thing in the name of Christ is to do it by the authority of Christ. So, every deed of service which we perform as acceptable to God must be authorized by Jesus Christ, (b) In

order for our deeds to be accepted as service to God they must be unselfish. Any deed which we perform from selfish motives is a deed of service to ourselves and not to God. That which we do unselfishly for the honor and glory of God, if authorized by Jesus Christ, is an act of service to God.

3. **In Sincerity and in Truth.** This describes the spirit or disposition in which we are to fear and serve Jehovah. Our word sincere comes from two Latin words which mean *without wax*. Hence, the word sincere means that there is not a thin coating or veneer on the outside to deceive people as to our real nature inside. It means that we are all the way through alike. Of the ten tribes who were carried away into Assyrian captivity, it is said, "They feared Jehovah, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away." (2 Kings 17: 33.) Their fear of Jehovah was not sincere. If they had been sincere in their fear, they would have served Jehovah, but they served the gods of the nations among whom they lived. It is easy for us today to fear God with our lips, especially in public, but in private to serve the lusts and passions of our flesh. Joshua, knowing the inclination of humanity to be thus divided in their affections, exhorted his people to fear Jehovah and serve him sincerely and in truth. Jesus taught the same lesson when he said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4: 24.) To worship in spirit means that we shall be sincere, that our worship will come from the heart, and to worship in truth means that we will worship as directed by the word of truth.

Introduction

One of the outstanding sins of the time of our Lord was insincerity in both worship and service. Formality and ceremonialism make good soil for the cultivation of hypocrisy and insincerity. Much of the Jews' religion of that day consisted of formality. Paul warned Timothy against men who held a form of godliness but had denied the power thereof.

(2 Tim. 3: 5.) The Pharisees went so far as to maintain that the correct form of worship was all that was necessary. Our Catholic friends today insist that certain forms and ceremonies are valid and acceptable regardless of the disposition or character of the one performing the service. Humanity is inclined to drift toward formalism; hence, the necessi-

ty for studying the teaching of Jesus on the question of hypocrisy and sincerity. People who attend church only on Sunday morning, who never take any part in the various programs of activity of the church, are very much in danger of becoming formal and insincere in their worship. The proper fear of Jehovah will lead us to be actively engaged in his service. Those who never have time to do

church work or to attend services of the church during the week show signs of a lack of interest in the work of the Lord, and lack of the proper fear of Jehovah. Hence, their attendance on Sunday morning may be attributed, not to the fear of Jehovah, but either to habit or to the fear of going to hell if they do not take the Lord's supper.

Exposition of the Text

I. Sincerity in Giving: Alms (Verses 1-4)

Do not *your righteousness before men*. The first verse of our text states a general principle, that we are not to do our righteous deeds before men to be seen of them. The balance of the chapter specifies certain deeds of righteousness which we are to do sincerely. The giving of alms, praying, fasting, and laying up treasures in heaven are all deeds of righteousness which we are not to do before men to be seen of them. The reason Jesus assigns for our not doing our righteousness to be seen of men is that we will have no reward from our Father in heaven. God does not reward deeds of righteousness which are done primarily to be seen of men.

When therefore thou doest alms. We use the word charity today instead of alms. Jesus treats this subject both negatively and positively. On the negative side he says we are not to sound a trumpet before us as do the hypocrites in order that we may attract attention and have the glory of men. There is no evidence that the Jews practiced the actual sounding of a trumpet to attract the attention of the people. The word was used figuratively. We use about the same expression when we speak of a man blowing his own horn.

As the hypocrites do in the synagogues. Our word hypocrite is from a theatrical term. It meant one who acted the part of another or spoke not his own sentiments, but the sentiments of another. "It means here, and in the New Testament generally, those who *dissemble* or hide their real sentiments, and assume or express other feelings than their own—those who, for purposes of ostenta-

tion, gain, or applause, put on the appearance of religion." (Barnes.)

They have received their reward. Jesus says that when people do things to be seen of men, and they are seen of men, they have their reward. That simply means that they did the act to be seen of men and, when they are seen of men, they get out of it all they expected to get out of it. In the first verse he said they have no reward from their Father in heaven. They get their reward from men.

Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. Jesus now preached the matter of almsgiving positively. He tells his disciples that they are to do their alms in secret, and the Father who seeth in secret will recompense them openly. Some people have taken this verse too literally and have gone to great efforts to keep others from knowing of the good which they do, but Jesus does not mean to teach in this passage that it is sinful for us to allow people to see our good works. "Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 5: 16.) The same Lord who said, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth," said, "Let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works." Hence, it is not sinful for men to see us doing our good, but it is sinful for us to do our good works simply and solely to be seen of men. Some people refuse to sign a promise or a pledge to give a certain amount of money during the year on the ground that Jesus said that we are not to let our left hand know what our right hand does. Some hold this position simply because they misunderstand the teaching of Jesus. Others

hide behind this verse because they do not wish to give as liberally as they should. They would be ashamed to sign a pledge for a dollar a week when everyone knows they are able to give ten dollars a week to the Lord's work. If their left hand ever found out how little their right hand does, it would wither for shame.

II. Sincerity in Prayer (Verses 5-6c;

When ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites. Here again Jesus warns against the formality of the hypocrite. He said they loved to stand and pray in the synagogue and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Some miss the point here and think that Jesus condemned standing for prayer, and as further proof they cite Luke 18: 11, where the Pharisee stood and prayed an unacceptable prayer. However, they should read Luke 18: 13, where it is said in the same connection that the Publican stood and prayed an acceptable prayer. Furthermore, in Mark 11: 25 we read, "And whosoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one; that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." In this passage Jesus speaks of an acceptable prayer being prayed while standing, so Jesus does not condemn the hypocrites for standing and praying but for the fact that they loved to stand and pray where they could be seen of men. The Jews had certain hours of prayer, and when those hours came they stopped whatever they were doing and prayed. These hypocrites loved to be in public places at the time of prayer so they could be seen of men to pray. They made it convenient on the street and around large assemblies of men. The word synagogue here most likely simply means in assembly and not the place of worship usually referred to as a synagogue.

When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber. Jesus is regulating our private devotions. This is not to be construed to mean that we are never to pray in public, for other passages of Scripture deal with public prayers. (1 Cor. 14: 15-17; 1 Tim. 2: 1, 2; Acts 20: 36.) "Over the porch, or entrance of the house, there

was frequently a small room of the size of the porch, raised a story above the rest of the house, expressly appropriated for the place of retirement. Here, in secrecy and solitude, the pious Jew might offer his prayer unseen by any but the searcher of hearts." (Barnes.) Jesus not only taught but he practiced private prayers. He withdrew from the multitude and even from his disciples to spend the night in prayer. To find a secret place he often went to the mountain. Someone has said that apostasy begins at the closet door. When people fail to engage in private prayer, the life is not what it ought to be. People who can go for days and for weeks without communion with the Father are estranged from the Father and will soon be in a state of apostasy.

Use not vain repetitions. Though Jesus tells us we are not heard for our much speaking, he does not mean to discourage long prayers. He himself spent whole nights in prayer. Though he discourages vain repetitions, he does not mean that we should not pray the same prayer over and over. He himself prayed the same prayer in Gethsemane three times. He commended the widow who repeated her request until the judge granted it, and uses that as an example for our repeating our prayers often. (Luke 18: 1-8.) The thing which Jesus condemns here is vain repetition. The hypocrites repeated their requests simply that they might prolong their prayers. They had the idea that long prayers would make a better impression on the public. They were not concerned about getting what they asked for and were not interested in whether God heard them pray or not. Their interest was being heard of men.

Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of. The purpose of our prayer is not to inform God of our needs, for he knows our need before we ask. He knows our needs better than we know them. The purpose of prayer is to cultivate our sense of dependence upon God and to put us in a better mood or frame of mind to receive the things we need.

III. Sincerity in Fasting (Verses 16-18)

Moreover when ye fast. Again Jesus warned his disciples not to follow the example of the hypocrites. He describes them in their fasting as being of a sad countenance. Also of disfiguring their faces so that men may know they are fasting. Again he says they have their reward. That is, they are seen of men. They did their fasting in order to be seen of men. They were seen of men and consequently had all the reward that they would ever get for fasting.

Anoint thy head, and wash thy face. Anointing of the head with oil was a common practice in the East in the time of our Lord and still is today. The washing of the face was, of course, common practice. So Jesus simply said that his disciples

should do as they ordinarily did when they fasted. They were not to do anything peculiar or unusual, which would call the attention of men to the fact that they were fasting. Jesus did not command his disciples to fast, but since fasting is an aid to prayer and meditation, his disciples often fast. In times of sorrow and great religious excitement, it is common for people to fast now. Since fasting, like prayer, is an act of worship toward God, it is to be done not with the purpose of show, but for the purpose of approaching God; hence, it was not to be done primarily to be seen of men, but for the effect it would have upon God. God who sees us without any show or ostentation will be attracted by our simple fasting, and he will reward us openly.

Lessons to Learn

1. *Jesus does not, in this lesson, command his disciples to give alms.* But those who learn of him from his teaching and his examples will naturally wish to give alms. One cannot be selfish and be like Jesus.

2. *It is as natural for the Christian to pray as it is for men to commune with their friends.* Prayer is communion with God. The child of God will as naturally turn to his Father for help as the little child will turn to its earthly parent for help. Those

who never pray do not realize their need of help, their dependence upon God, nor the vastness of God's wealth and strength which are made available to them through prayer.

3. *Not many people take their religion seriously enough to practice fasting except when driven to it through great sorrow or suffering.* If the church wishes to attract a multitude of people, they should advertise a feast instead of a fast.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

From what great address is our golden text taken?

What great choice did Joshua call upon the people to make in this address?

What is the meaning of the word fear in this text?

To what did Paul attribute the lack of righteousness among the Jews?

Name and discuss several of the blessings which are promised to those who fear Jehovah?

What does the fear of Jehovah have to do with the length of our life?

What two attributes cause people to serve Jehovah?

When are our activities classed as service to Jehovah?

In what spirit or disposition are we to serve Jehovah?

What is the meaning of the word sincere?

Give an example of people being insincere in their fear of Jehovah.

What two essential characteristics does Jesus demand in our worship today?

Introduction

What two things make good soil for hypocrisy and insincerity?

Toward what sin is humanity inclined to drift?

What religious groups today place too much importance on ceremonies?

What practice among the churches of Christ show a tendency to drift toward formalism?

Sincerity in Giving Alms

What general principle does Jesus state with reference to righteousness?

Of what did Jesus accuse the Pharisees when they gave alms?

What is the meaning of the word hypocrite?

What reward is received by the hypocrite?

Does Jesus teach that it is wrong for us to allow people to see us doing good?

Do we violate this teaching of Jesus when we sign a promise or a pledge to contribute a certain amount annually to the church?

Sincerity in Prayer

What did Jesus accuse the hypocrites of loving to do?

Did Jesus mean to teach us the proper posture in prayer?

What custom made it easy for the hypocrite to be in a public place for prayer?

Is praying in public authorized by Jesus and the apostles?

What did Jesus teach with reference to private prayer?

Where does apostasy usually begin?

What did Jesus teach with reference to repetition in prayer?

Why did the hypocrites repeat their prayers?

What is said in our lesson about the purpose of prayers?

Sincerity in Fasting

Describe the custom of the hypocrites in fasting.

What did Jesus teach his disciples to do when they fasted?

Does Jesus command us to fast?

At what times are we inclined to fast?

Is there any reward for us when we fast?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson IV—October 25, 1953

CENSORIOUS JUDGMENTS CONDEMNED

The Lesson Text

Matt. 7: 1-12

1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you.

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

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam is in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you.

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

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

9 Or what man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone;

10 Or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets."* (Matt. 7: 12.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 6: 37-49.

Daily Bible Readings

October 19. M..... The Golden Rule of Life (Matt. 7: 12)
 October 20. T..... Christian Duties Required (Rom. 12: 9-21)
 October 21. W..... Judgment and Mercy (John 8: 2-11)
 October 22. T..... God's Goodness Illustrated (Matt. 7: 7-11)
 October 23. F..... God's Immutable Promises (Heb. 10: 19-25)
 October 24. S..... Wise Counsel (Prov. 2: 1-8)
 October 25. S..... The Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 16-26)

Time.—A.D. 27.

Place.—On a mountain near Capernaum.

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

Golden Text Explained

1. Nature of the Rule. Our text has been called the golden rule of life. Sages of all ages have thought along this line and have expressed their thoughts in various ways, but none of them ever gave a clear, definite, positive expression such as Jesus gave. "The great sages Socrates, Buddha, Confucius, and Hillel each groped after this truth, but they stated it thus: "Do not do to others what you would not have done to you"; thus making it a rule of not doing rather than of doing. With reference to the nature of this rule, we may say (a) it is fair. No rule of life can be popular unless it is obviously and eminently fair. This rule says for us to do unto others as we would have others do unto us. We set our own measure of fair treatment. If we wish to be treated fairly we must treat others fairly. If we wish to be treated mercifully, we must treat others mercifully. You do not set the standard of treatment for me, nor do I set the standard of treatment for you. Each one of us sets the standard of treatment for himself, hence, an eminently fair rule, (b) It is a clear rule. The rule is not involved in technical, legal language. It is clear and definite. We do not need a lawyer to interpret it for us. The uneducated can read it and determine what it means, (c) It is practicable. Some rules of life are not only involved and technical statements but are highly impracticable, but this rule of life is highly practicable. The rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the strong and the weak alike can practice this rule. It can be practiced in religion, in politics, in society, in business, and in pleasure. There is no realm of life or activity in which it cannot be practiced.

2. The Breadth of the Rule, (a) All things. The very first words of this rule of life indicate its breadth and inclusiveness. It refers to all things. By this is meant everything in life, every activity in all the realms of ac-

tivity in life are to be brought under this rule, (b) Whatsoever. It seems that the first statement "all things" would have been sufficient, but our Saviour adds this word *whatsoever* to emphasize the fact that his rule is to apply to every activity of life, (c) Men. Jesus did not limit this rule to your family or to the church or to the people in your neighborhood with whom you are best acquainted, but he simply used the general term men. Jesus taught that if we love and do good only to them who love us, we are no better than the publican or the heathen. So, we are to love and do good unto all men, even to those who hate and despise us. So, he extends the area of this golden rule not only to those who love us but to all men whether they love us or hate us, whether they do good to us or persecute us. (d) This rule is the sum of the law and the prophets. Jesus says, "For this is the law and the prophets." By this he means that, if we practice this golden rule, we will obey all that the law and the prophets demand and teach us with reference to our treatment of our neighbors.

3. Application of the Rule, (a) In the family. If the husband would apply this rule in his association with his wife, he would never treat her harshly or unkindly. He would never take advantage of the fact that he is the head of the wife to abuse her or mistreat her in any way. If the husband would deal with the wife as he wishes the wife to deal with him, he would never take liberties with other women which he would not want his wife to take with other men. If the wife would apply this rule in dealing with her husband, she would never nag or scold or blame him for lack of conveniences which it is not within his power to afford. If parents would apply this rule in dealing with their children, they would never be harsh and unkind, but firm in their dealings with them. They would provide for their welfare materially and

spiritually, and if children would obey this rule of life, they would obey their parents, be thoughtful of their welfare and happiness. In fact, if every member of the family would follow this rule of life, the home would be a little bit of heaven on earth, (b) In the community. Following the golden rule would cause each citizen in the community to look out for the welfare of every other citizen in the community. If all of us practiced this golden rule, there would be no disputes over land boundaries, no troubles about trespassing on the neighbors' rights, and no quarrels about unnecessary noise or disturbance in the neighborhood at night. The landlord would be kind to his tenant, and the tenant would be prompt with his payment of rent. The merchant would get only a fair margin of profit on his goods, and the purchaser would pay his bills

on time. The doctor and the lawyer would charge only a reasonable fee for their services, and the clients would pay cheerfully and without criticism, (c) In the church. Applying the golden rule in the affairs of the church would do away with much of the criticism that we hear made of elders, preachers, and deacons. There would be no jealousy between preachers and song leaders. No elders would be determined to have their own way and rule or ruin the church, if they would apply the golden rule. The deacons of a church would not get together and conspire to bring pressure to force the elders to do something they wished to have done if they practiced the golden rule. Application of the golden rule would iron out all the difficulties, the friction that exists in your congregation. Why not suggest that it be practiced?

Introduction

Teaching about censorious judgments is always needed, but it seems that it was especially needed by the Jews. They believed that they were selected by God as a nation because of their superiority to other nations of the world. They believed they were going to be saved because they were descendants of Abraham, and that other nations had no chance to be saved. They were race conscious. They believed themselves to be a superior race. They thought they enjoyed the favor of God in an especial way. They looked upon the Gentiles and even the Samaritans as dogs, and would have no social or religious communion with them. They refused to give a person credit for what he was or for what he did. If he was a Samaritan, that was enough to condemn him. If he was a Greek, that was sufficient against him to condemn him. Their own faults and failings, regardless of how malignant they were, were as nothing in their sight as compared to the fact that a man was a Greek or a Samaritan. Hence, they easily overlooked their great faults and refused to recognize the good that was in other people. Paul dealt with this prob-

lem in the second and third chapters of Romans. He said, "Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, who-soever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practise the same things." He taught then that God is no respecter of persons, but that the man that hears the law and does it is justified before God and not the man who claims his descent from Abraham. We today can get a lesson from this attitude of the Jews. Sometimes brethren think that because they are members of the church of Christ they are going to heaven regardless of whether they serve the Lord faithfully. Sometimes we are inclined to criticize our religious neighbors for mistakes which are no greater than mistakes among us. Mistakes are not to be condoned in anybody, much less justified, but a mistake in our religious neighbor is no bigger and no more serious than the same mistake by a brother in the church. We must not appear self-righteous and overlook the mistakes that are within while severely criticizing and censuring the mistakes that are without.

Exposition of the Text

I. Jesus Teaches on Judging (Verses 1-5)

Judge not, that ye be not judged. The same Lord who said, "Judge not," also said, "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7: 24.) Hence, we must conclude that Jesus does not condemn any and every kind of judgment, (a) Jesus does not condemn judgment by civil courts. In Romans 13 Paul tells us to be subject unto the higher powers and to be in obedience to them and pay taxes to them. In

1 Tim. 2: 1-3 Paul tells us to pray for kings and for all in high places. Again in Tit. 3: 1 Paul says we are to be in subjection to rulers and to authority, to be obedient and ready unto every good work. Hence, the Scriptures recognize the right of men to rule and to sit as judges over us. (b) Personal opinions and conclusions with reference to the action and the character of people is inevitable and is recognized by the Lord and his apostles. We are to know people by their fruits. This is a type of judgment which we cannot escape. (Matt. 7: 15-18.) John formed such an opinion of Diotrophes, who loved to have the preeminence among the church members and warned his brethren with reference to him. Paul judged those who caused faction and division in the church, and told Titus to refuse a factious man after the second admonition. (Tit. 3: 10, 11.) It would be necessary for one to pass judgment on another as to whether he was factious or not before he could apply this rule. Such judgment is authorized, (c) It becomes the duty of the church to judge its membership. In 1 Cor. 5: 12 Paul says that we judge them that are within. In 2 Thess. 3: 6, 14 Paul makes it the duty of the church to withdraw from those who walk disorderly and that obey not his teaching by his epistle. In order to obey this, the church must first judge an individual to be disorderly, and such judgment is authorized.

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged. This suggests that there is a type of judgment which we ought not to object to having

passed upon us and which we may pass upon others. It also suggests that there is a type of judgment which we would not wish to have passed upon us and consequently should refrain from passing upon others. This statement is true from two points of view, (a) The judgment which we exercise toward others we may expect others to exercise toward us. If we are kind and merciful toward our fellow men, the world will so treat us; but if we are unkind and unmerciful, the world will give us that kind of treatment, (b) If we are unkind and unmerciful with our fellow man, God will show no mercy to us in the last judgment. In this connection the reader should study Matt. 6: 14, 15 and Matt. 18: 23-35.

Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye. This suggests something of the type of judgment which our Lord is condemning in this lesson. Those who have faults in their own lives are condemning and censuring those who have smaller faults in their lives. Jesus pictures a man with a large stick or log in his eye trying to get a splinter out of the eye of his fellow man. He says that we should first get the big piece of timber out of our eye so that we can see clearly to get the little splinter out of our brother's eye. This simply means that we are to rid ourselves of our own faults before we try to correct others of their faults. However, there is the possibility of making an over application of this principle. Some contend that we have no right to criticize others unless we ourselves are perfect. This would make it impossible for anyone to reprove or rebuke or correct anyone else, for none of us are perfect. Along this line Paul says, "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." (Gal. 6: 1.) Paul did not say, let him that is perfect restore the fallen, but he said let him that is spiritual restore the fallen one. Furthermore, it should be noticed that Jesus did not forbid the man with the mote in his eye

criticizing the man with the beam in his eye. Jesus condemned the man with the beam in his eye for judging the man with the mote in his eye.

Thou hypocrite. This suggests that Jesus is dealing with the kind of critic that has his faults and knows he has his faults but overlooks them while taking care of the faults in others. Jesus tells all such to clean up their own lives, correct their own faults, and then they may see clearly to help others.

II. Jesus Limits His Teaching Against Judging (Verse 6)

If this verse has a connection with the preceding verses, it must be considered as a limitation to the teaching about judging given there. In order to keep from casting that which is holy to the dogs or casting pearls before swine, we must be free to judge who are like dogs and who are like swine. Hence, such judgment would obviously be allowed under the teaching of our Lord on that subject. The phrases of this sentence should be transposed so as to give a clear meaning in the following way. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs lest they turn and rend you. Neither cast your pearls before swine lest they trample them under their feet." Brother McGarvey's comment on this verse is especially good. It follows. "The connection here is not obvious. This saying, however, appears to be a limitation of the law against judging. The Christian must not be censoriously judicial, but he should be discriminately judicious. He must know dogs and swine when he sees them, and must not treat them as priests and kings, the fit objects for the bestowal of holy food and goodly garments. Dogs and swine were unclean animals. The former were usually undomesticated and were often fierce. In the East they are still the self-appointed scavengers of the street. The latter were undomesticated among the Jews, and hence are spoken of as wild and liable to attack man. Meats connected with the sacrificial service of the altar were holy. Even unclean men were not permitted to eat of them, much less unclean brutes. What was left after the priests and

clean persons had eaten was to be burned with fire. (Lev. 6: 24-30; 7: 15-21.) To give holy things to dogs was to profane them. We are here forbidden, then, to use any religious office, work or ordinance, in such a manner as to degrade or profane it. Saloons ought not to be opened with prayer nor ought adulterous marriages be performed by a man of God. To give pearls to swine is to press the claims of the gospel upon those who despise it until they persecute you for annoying them with it. When such men are known, they are to be avoided. Jesus acted on this principle in refusing to answer the Pharisees, and the apostles did the same in turning to the Gentiles when the Jewish hearers would begin to contradict and blaspheme."

III. Jesus Teaches on Prayer (Verses 7-12)

Ask, and it shall be given you. If there is intended to be a connection between the teaching of Jesus on prayer and his teaching on censorious judgment, it would be that we are naturally inclined to judge harshly. Therefore, we would feel the need of wisdom and of kindness and mercy in our judgment. The source of wisdom and of all the good graces is God. Hence, we would need to pray to God that we might not be guilty of the censorious judgment which Jesus condemns. It has been suggested that the three verbs here, ask, seek, and knock, tend toward a climax. Adam Clarke says, "These three words include the ideas of *want*, *loss*, and *earnestness*. Ask: turn beggar at the door of mercy; thou art destitute of all spiritual good, and it is God alone who can give it to thee; and thou hast no claim but what his mercy has given thee on itself. Seek: thou hast lost thy God, thy paradise, thy soul. . . . Knock: be in earnest—be importunate: eternity is at hand! and, if thou die in thy sins, where God is thou shalt never come. Ask with confidence and humility. Seek with care and application. Knock with earnestness and perseverance."

Or *what man is there of you.* In this section Jesus uses a form of argument known as analogy. "It is as

sumed that the paternal feeling which prompts us to give good things to our children is in a still higher degree in God with reference to his children; and hence it is argued that he will much more give good things to those who ask him. Since it is Jesus who assumes the likeness on which the argument rests, we may rely on the correctness of the reasoning but we must be cautious how we derive arguments of our own from the analogy between God's attributes and the corresponding characteristics of man.

For example, this attribute of paternal feeling has been employed to disprove the reality of the eternal punishment with which God himself threatens the sinner, because the paternal feeling in man would prevent him from so punishing his own children. The fallacy in the argument consists in assuming that the feeling in question must work the same results in every particular in God that it does in man. But Revelation teaches that such is not the case." (McGarvey.)

Lessons to Learn

1. *Dealing in harsh, unkind judgment is a most expensive pleasure.* When we begin to reap what we have sown, we will pay a dear price for the pleasure of judging others.

2. *We should be slow in deciding that men are dogs or swine and unworthy of having the gospel preached to them.* When Paul was about to be killed by the Jews in Jerusalem, he asked leave of the chief captain to preach the gospel to them. He did not consider them as swine and un-

worthy of the gospel. Read Acts 22.

3. *Parents who love their children will care for the children according to their ability and the need of the children.* So Jesus reasons that our heavenly Father will take care of his children according to the needs of the children and the ability of God. Since God's ability is unlimited, his care for us can be limited only by our own needs and by our readiness to receive his blessings.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

How have the great sages of the past stated this rule?

Discuss the fairness of this rule.

What can be said of the clarity of the rule?

What do you know of the practicality of the rule?

Discuss the breadth of the application of this rule.

What is the relation of this rule to the law and the prophets?

Discuss the application of this rule (a) in the family; (b) in the community; (c) in the church.

Introduction

Why was the lesson on censorious judgment needed especially by the Jews?

How did Paul deal with this problem of judging in the Roman letter?

Discuss the possibility of our making the same mistakes Jesus criticized the Jews for making.

Jesus Teaches on Judging

Does Jesus condemn all kinds of judgment?

Name and discuss three kinds of judgment authorized by the Scriptures.

What determines the type of judgment we receive both from the world and from the Lord in the last day?

What is the lesson taught by the mote and the beam?

How can this principle of getting rid of the beam be over applied?

Did Jesus forbid the man with the mote in his eye criticizing the man with the beam?

Jesus Limits His Teaching Against Judging

In the mention of dogs and swine, how does Jesus make one type of judging necessary?

Can you give examples from the life of Jesus and Paul where they refused to cast their pearls before swine?

Jesus Teaches on Prayer

What does Jesus recommend to us when we are inclined to judge harshly?

Who is the source of wisdom and all Christian graces?

What three things are suggested by the words ask, seek, and knock?

How does Jesus use the form of argument known as analogy?

Can you illustrate how this form of argument has been used to teach falsehood? if

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson V—November 1, 1953

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE

The Lesson Text

Matt. 7: 13-28

13 Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby.

14 For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it.

15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.

16 By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day,

Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock.

26 And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching:

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him"* (1 John 2: 4.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—James 1: 19-27.

Daily Bible Readings

October 26. M..... The Strait and Narrow Way (Matt. 7: 13-20)

October 27. T..... Warnings Against False Teachers (1 Tim. 4: 1-4)

October 28. W..... Test for All Teachers (1 John 4: 1-6)

October 29. T..... Warnings Against Evil Influence (Rom. 14: 13-23)

October 30. F..... Wise and Unwise Builders (Matt. 7: 24-27)

October 31. S..... Fate of Non-fruit Bearing Trees (John 15: 1-10)

Nov. 1. S. Must Do the Commandments (1 John 2: 1-5)

TIME.—A.D. 27.

PLACE.—A mountain near Capernaum.

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

Golden Text Explained

1. Condition of Those Who Know Not God. To know God means more than simply to know there is a God.

(a) To know God means that we shall know something of the character of God. We should know of his holi-

ness. We should know something of his power and goodness. We should know something of the justice of God and of the love of God. We should know something of God's presence among us and of his willingness to bless us. (b) To know God, we must know something of his dealings with mankind in the past. We cannot really know his love and patience until we see how he dealt lovingly and patiently with his people of old.

(c) We cannot really know God until we have known him by experience. Our religious neighbors have made their mistakes in talking about their experiences of grace, their experience with God. But we should not allow their mistakes to keep us from realizing that there is some truth in the thought of an experience with God. We experience the love of God when we are converted to Christ and forgiven of our sins and adopted into God's family. We experience the goodness of God when we enjoy our daily bread provided by him. We experience the communion and fellowship of God in our periods of prayer and public worship. These are real experiences and we should recognize the value of them in forming our character. Those who know not God have no definite conceptions of his love and mercy, his patience and goodness. They have not experienced his love and his mercy in the forgiveness of their sins, nor have they recognized him and his goodness in the gift of their daily bread and good health. Paul describes them in these words, "Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods." (Gal. 4: 8.) A similar description is given in Eph. 2: 11-18. Again, Paul describes them in these words, "They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Tit. 1: 16.) From these passages we learn that those who do not know God are (a) in bondage to the world, loving the world and the things of the world; (b) they are separated or alienated from God; (c) they have no promise of eternal life, they are without hope in this world; (d) they are charac-

terized as abominable and disobedient; (e) they are said to be reprobate with reference to every good work.

2. **False Claims Detected.** Our text deals with the individual who claims to know God. Is it possible for us to determine whether an individual is true or false in making this claim? According to our text, his obedience or disobedience to the commandments of God will make clear whether his claim is true or false. If he is keeping the commandments of God, his claim to know God is proved to be true. But if he is disobeying the commandments of God, his claim to know God is false. The first and greatest commandment of all is that we love God with our whole heart, soul, and mind. (Matt. 22: 37, 38.) Jesus tells us that if we love him we will keep his commandments. (John 14: 15.) The individual who neglects or refuses to keep the commandments of God betrays the fact that he does not love God. John tells us, "He that loveth not knoweth not God." (1 John 4: 8.) So the individual who says he knows God but does not prove his love for God by his obedience has not told the truth. Again, John tells us, "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither knoweth him." (1 John 3: 6.) The word sinneth here is in the present tense and suggests the idea of continuing to sin. The individual that continues to sin does not know God. This is in harmony with our text which says that man who claims to know God and keepeth not his commandments is a liar. The phrase, "keepeth not his commandments," is equal to the thought suggested here of continuing to sin. The word keepeth is in the present tense and suggests that one continues to fail to keep the commandments of God. So, it means the same as one who continues to sin. John tells us, "and hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." (1 John 2: 3.) So it is easy to determine whether we or anyone else knows God. If an individual is obedient to God, he knows God. If an individual is disobedient to God, living in continual disobedience, he does not know God.

3. **Identifying Ourselves.** Our text says that if a man says he knows God

and yet lives in disobedience, that man is a Liar. John has been called the apostle of love, but he uses some of the strongest language used in all the New Testament. See 1 John 6-10; 2: 22 and 4: 20 for similar statements. John makes his statements stronger by adding that the truth is not in a man who claims to know God but refuses to keep his commandments. He makes the same statement about the devil saying, "There is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof." (John 8: 44.) So when John says that there is no truth in the man who claims to know God

and refuses to keep his commandments, he identifies that individual with the devil. This truth should strike with peculiar force the following characters, (a) The individual who claims to know God but refuses to be baptized in obedience to him.

(b) The individual who claims to know God but refuses to be faithful to attend religious worship, (c) The individual who claims to know God but refuses to give of his money for gospel purposes, (d) The individual who claims to know God but refuses to give thanks for his food at his table. This principle can be applied in many other ways, but space forbids more.

Introduction

In the conclusion of the sermon on the mount, Jesus felt the necessity of warning his disciples with reference to some things. First, he warns them against taking the easy way of following the majority of people. We are constantly in danger of being drawn, attracted, influenced by what the majority of the people think and do. Hence, Jesus warns his disciples that the majority of the people of the world will be traveling in the direction opposite to heaven. Next, Jesus warned them against false teachers and counterfeit religions. The genuine is always more valuable and more difficult to obtain than the counterfeit. In religion the counterfeit is attractive because it is the easier way, not demanding this self-denial and sacrifice that the genuine

demands. Hence, he warns his disciples against being lured away into counterfeit religions by these false teachers. Jesus enforces his teaching along this line by warning them of the judgment to come. Those who have accepted the genuine will be safe in the judgment, but those who have been satisfied with the counterfeit will be found wanting in the judgment. There was never a time in the history of the world when counterfeit religions were more available and attractive than the present time. So it behooves us to study the word of God and acquaint ourselves with the identifying marks of the genuine religion of Jesus Christ, and it also behooves us to pay whatever price necessary to accept and practice the genuine religion of Jesus Christ.

Exposition of the Text

I. The Narrow Gate and the Broad Way (Verses 13, 14)

Enter ye in by the narrow gate.

Jesus pictures life as a road with a gate opening into it. This road leads to a city. He pictures the difficult gate leading into a narrow way which goes to the city of *life*. Then he pictures a broad gate which opens into a broad road and leads to the city of *destruction*. The gate which admits us into the road that leads to life is said to be narrow, (a) It is narrow because we have nothing to say about how we will enter that

road. Only the Lord determines what an individual must do to become a Christian. Man has made the mistake of trying to determine for himself what he must do to be a Christian.

(b) That gate is narrow because it demands self-denial and sacrifice. Man must decide to give up the world before he can enter that gate. The gate is too narrow for him to take his worldly ambitions and his love of the world and the things of the world with him through the gate.

(c) That gate is narrow because the things Jesus demands us to do to be

saved are contrary to the wisdom of man. Jesus demands that we believe in him as the Son of God and the Saviour of our souls. He demands that we repent or turn away from our sins. He demands that we confess him before the world, and that we be buried with him in baptism and be raised to walk in the newness of life. Man does not see the necessity of these, especially baptism. He sees no reasonable or scientific connection between being baptized and receiving the remission of his sins. Hence, the majority of men refuse to be baptized.

And straitened the way, that leadeth unto life. The word straitened means narrow and difficult. Hence, the way that leads to life is a difficult way. (a) It is difficult because it demands sacrifice. It demands sacrifice of time and of money. It demands self-denial, that we deny ourselves ungodliness and worldly lusts.

(b) It is straitened or difficult because it demands continued activity on our part. The Lord demands that we live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present life. (Tit. 2: 12-14.) Paul says that we are to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. (1 Cor. 15: 58.) The lazy, the careless, and the indifferent are not to be found on this difficult road. Those who are unwilling to accept responsibilities in the church and who refuse to do church work through the week are not found traveling this difficult road.

(c) It is a difficult road because it is the road of holiness. Those who love the world and the things of the world and who cultivate an appetite for and appreciation of things that are worldly are not found on this road. But those who cultivate holiness, who set their affection on things above, those who have their hope and trust set in God, they are in this straitened way.

Wide is the gate, and broad is the way. The gate that admits us to the broad way is wide because every man can enter it in his own way by doing his own will, by fulfilling the lusts and desires of his flesh. And the road into which this gate opens is broad because every man can live his own way, follow his own inclinations, satisfy his own desires.

He can have his own religion. He can worship as he pleases. He can do whatever he thinks is good and right. He can accept responsibilities if he wishes, but if he does not desire to be bothered with duties, he can leave them off, just go along doing as he pleases. That is the broad way.

Many are they that enter. Jesus said that many enter the broad way that leads to destruction, but few enter the difficult way that leads to life. This was not an optimistic view, but it was a true view of the situation. Man has always been inclined to live by his own will, to satisfy his own desires. Only a few have been willing to give up self and recognize their dependence upon God, and live like God wants people to live.

II. Warning Against False Prophets

(Verses 15-23)

Beware of false prophets. The word prophet means one who speaks for another. The priest speaks for people unto God. The prophet speaks to people for God. A false prophet is one who speaks a message which God has not authorized him to speak. To come in sheep's clothing is to make the appearance of an honest and faithful teacher. Since the wolf is known for his ability to deceive and destroy, these false prophets are spoken of as being ravening wolves.

By their fruits ye shall know them. Jesus tells us that a good tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can an evil tree bear good fruit. So a true teacher of the word cannot produce a corrupt character, nor can a false teacher produce a good character. True gospel teaching will not produce a sinner, nor will false doctrines produce a Christian. We can detect these ravening wolves first by their doctrine and next by their practice. If they preach contrary to the revealed word of God, they are false. If they practice in their everyday life or their worship things contrary to the teaching of the word of God, they are false.

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down. This is the end to which false teachers and those who follow their teaching shall come.

Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord. Here Jesus teaches that

it is not enough for an individual to be religious. One may be devoutly pious and active in doing the things he thinks right, the things that please him, but if he is not actively engaged in doing the things that please the Lord, he is not approved by the Lord, and will not stand in the judgment. Jesus says it is the one who does the will of the Father in heaven who will be permitted to enter heaven. This makes it necessary that we should study to know the will of the Father and that we should be diligent in performing the will of the Father as long as we live in this world.

Many will say to me in that day. Jesus represents many as claiming a right to enter heaven who in reality have no right to go there. They claim that they have prophesied in his name, they have cast out devils, and they have done many mighty works. But Jesus says he will say that he never knew them. The word knew is to be taken in the sense of approved. Jesus did not approve of their activities simply because their activities were not in harmony with the will of the Father in heaven. Those who do the will of the Father will have no need to argue their case in the judgment, but those who have done what they thought the Lord would be pleased to accept, which will argue with Jesus in the day of judgment that they ought to be allowed to enter, but it is they who will be told to depart because they worked iniquity.

III. The Wise and Foolish Builders

(Verses 24-28)

Every one . . . that heareth . . . and doeth. In this paragraph we are taught that he is wise who both hears and obeys the word of the Lord. It is not enough to hear. Neither is

it enough simply to believe the teaching of the Lord. One must hear, believe, and obey the word of the Lord in order to be wise in the sight of Jesus. This teaching should give consolation to our young people in college and university who are ridiculed for their faith in and their obedience to Jesus Christ. Their professors tell them that they are foolish for believing the Bible and for living as the Bible directs. Jesus says they are wise to do so. The fact that Jesus is the greatest teacher that ever lived should encourage these young people to take his word in preference to that of their college professor.

For it was founded upon the rock. Those who hear and obey the teaching of Jesus are building their character upon a solid foundation. The storms of life will be unable to move them, and they will stand in the day of judgment.

And great was the fall thereof. This is what Jesus had to say of the individual who hears but does not obey his word. When the trials of life and the test of the judgment come, that individual will fail like a house fails when the storm comes and it has no foundation but sand. Jesus also comments upon the greatness of the loss. Only one soul under consideration, and yet he said great was the fall thereof. The loss was great because

(a) there was much value involved. A soul is worth more than all the world. One soul lost is a great loss.

(b) The loss was great because it is eternal. When one fails to obey the word of God and falls on account of that disobedience in the judgment, he cannot come back and build again. That loss is for all eternity, (c) The fall of the disobedient is great because he misses great joys of heaven and endures great pain in hell.

Lessons to Learn

1. *Each individual has a choice to make.* He must choose whether he will enter in at the narrow gate and travel the strait way to life or he must choose to enter in at the broad gate and travel the way that leads to destruction.

2. *Each one is in danger of being led away by false teachers.* Consequently, each one is obligated to study the Bible for himself and determine what is right and to practice what he finds to be right.

3. *Each one is obligated to choose*

whether he will build on the rock or upon the sand. This lesson might well have been called a lesson of obli-

gation. We are obligated to come to know God and to live for God if we expect to live with God in eternity.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

Name and discuss some of the characteristics of God with which we should be familiar.

Why is it necessary for us to know something of God's dealings with mankind in the past?

Can we gain a knowledge of God through experience?

Name and discuss several characteristics of them who know not God.

How can we determine whether or not a person loves God?

What application can you make of this rule with reference to the denominational world?

What application can be made of this principle with reference to unfaithful brethren?

What relationship is there between Satan and this kind of liar John mentions in our text?

What types of persons should pay special attention to this teaching?

Introduction

How does Jesus warn us with reference to following the majority of people?

What lesson is suggested with reference to the genuine and the counterfeit in religion?

What do you know with reference to the prevalence of the counterfeit religion today?

The Narrow Gate and the Broad Way

To what two cities do the two ways of life lead?

Give and discuss three reasons why the way that leads to life is called narrow.

Give and discuss three reasons why the way that leads to life is difficult.

Why are the gate and road which lead to destruction said to be wide?

What is said of the comparative numbers which travel these two ways of life?

Warning Against False Prophets

What is the meaning of the word prophet?

How does the work of a prophet differ from that of a priest?

What is meant by one coming in sheep's clothing?

Why are false prophets called ravening wolves?

How can we detect and expose false prophets?

How did Jesus picture the end to which false prophets come?

According to Jesus, who will be approved in the judgment of the last day?

Does the fact that a man dies believing he is going to heaven actually prove that he will be accepted?

The Wise and Foolish Builders

Who is the wise person in the sight of Jesus?

How can young people in college and university get consolation from this lesson?

Who are founded upon the solid rock?

Who is the foolish man and to what end does he come?

Discuss three reasons why the loss of the foolish man is so great.

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson VI—November 8, 1953

THE TWELVE SENT FORTH

The Lesson Text

Matt. 10: 5-15

5 These twelve Je'-sus sent forth, and charged them, saying, Go not into *any* way of the oéñ-tUes, and enter not into any city of the Sa-mar'-i-tans:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Is'-ra-el.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: freely ye received, freely give.

9 Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses;

10 No wallet for *your* journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the laborer is worthy of his food.

11 And into whatsoever city or village ye shall enter, search out who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go forth.

12 And as ye enter into the house, salute it.

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, as

ye go forth out of that house or that city, shake off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sod'-om and Go-mor'-rah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."* (Matt. 10: 40.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 10: 16-23.

Daily Bible Readings

November	2. M.....	The Twelve Apostles Selected (Matt. 10: 1-4)
November	3. T.....	The Limited Commission (Matt. 10: 5-16)
November	4. W.....	The Apostles Encouraged (Matt. 10: 24-33)
November	5. T.....	The Twelve Cautioned (Matt. 10: 16-23)
November	6. F.....	The Need of Servants (John 4: 34-38)
November	7. S.....	The Great Commission (Matt. 28: 16-20)
November	8. S.....	Heralds of Salvation (Isa. 52: 7-12)

TIME.—A.D. 27.

PLACE.—Somewhere in Galilee.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his twelve apostles.

Golden Text Explained

1. How to Receive or Reject God.

(a) When one receives the word, the teaching, of an apostle or prophet, that one receives that apostle or prophet. But when one rejects the word, the teaching, of an apostle or a prophet, that one rejects that apostle or prophet. The church at Thessalonica received the apostle Paul wholeheartedly. He writes to them in these words, "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." (1 Thess. 2: 13.) From this we learn that they received Paul's message, and received it not simply as his word but as the word of God. They received him as the messenger of God. This expression is found in Paul's letter to the Galatians 4: 14, "But ye received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." So in receiving his message, they had received him as an apostle and messenger from God. Now we have an example of an apostle being rejected. "I wrote somewhat unto the church; but Diotrophes, who loveth to have the preeminence among

them, receiveth us not." (3 John 9.)

Notice that John says he wrote unto the church. Notice also he says that Diotrophes receiveth us not. Obviously Diotrophes refused to accept the teaching of John. Hence, John says he received him not; that is, he rejected him as an apostle when he refused to abide by John's teaching.

(b) To receive the apostles and their teachings is to receive Christ who sent them. And to reject the apostles and their teaching is to reject the Christ that sent them. When sending his apostles out, Jesus said, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me." (Luke 10: 16.) Again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me." (John 13: 20.) So there is no such thing as believing and receiving Jesus Christ while one refuses to believe what his apostles have taught. Some are inclined to look upon the writings of the apostles as simply the decisions and positions of the apostles themselves, but in these verses we learn that the apostles were sent with a message, and they were given the Holy Spirit to direct the deliverance of that message, and whenever an individual re-

jects the teaching of that apostle, he rejects not only the apostle himself but the Lord Jesus who sent that apostle. So, refusing to believe or to abide by the teaching of the apostles as preserved for us in the New Testament is a most serious sin. (c) Receiving Christ is receiving the Father who sent him, and rejecting Christ is rejecting the Father who sent him. In Luke 10: 16 we read, "He that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me." In John 13: 20 we read, "He that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." In John 12: 44-50 we find a lengthy statement of Jesus on this subject. The gist of it is that Jesus came from the Father, not with a message of his own, but with a message from the Father, and that he was under commandment to speak what the Father had given him. So the individual that would reject that message would not merely be rejecting Jesus Christ but would be rejecting the Father that sent Jesus. We see then that the word of God originated with the Father himself. He gave that word to Jesus, and Jesus taught the word unto his apostles. He then gave them the Holy Spirit to guide them in their teaching of that word. And the apostles taught that word by mouth and by writing, and the writing of that word which Jesus got from the Father and gave to the apostles is preserved for us in the New Testament. If, today, we reject that word, refuse to obey it, we have rejected Jesus Christ and God the Father.

2. Application of This Principle.

John teaches this principle in these words, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.) The teaching of Christ is given us by the apostles and preserved in the book we call the New Testament. Now Jesus says if we go beyond this teaching, that is, if we do things as acts of worship and service which are

not contained in this teaching in the New Testament, we have not God. This simply means that we have rejected God. But the individual that abides in the teaching, that is, the one who receives and obeys the teaching as preserved in the New Testament, the same hath both the Father and the Son. The one who has received the teaching preserved in the New Testament has received the Son and has received the Father, (a) This can be illustrated in the case of baptism. There are those who see no sense in baptism, hence, they refuse to be baptized. They have rejected the teaching of the apostles, consequently, have rejected Jesus Christ and God the Father. There is no such thing as receiving God and his Son Jesus Christ and at the same time refusing to be baptized in obedience to his teaching. Others see no need in being immersed in water. They think that sprinkling water on them should be sufficient. But this is contrary to the teaching of God through the Son through the apostles as preserved in the New Testament, which tells us that we are to be buried and raised in baptism. (Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12.) The individual, therefore, who insists on having his own way contrary to the way revealed in the Scriptures, has not only rejected the Scriptures but has rejected the apostles and Jesus who sent them and the Father who sent Jesus, (b) Those who insist on using mechanical instruments of music in their worship have violated this principle and have rejected God. Search the New Testament as they will, they are not able to find the use of such instruments authorized by Jesus Christ through his apostles. But using them in spite of the lack of authority for it is doing their own will and going beyond the teaching of Christ. He that goes beyond the teaching of Christ has not God. This simply means he has rejected God, who sent Christ, who sent the apostles to reveal the will of God.

Introduction

In the verses preceding our lesson (Matt. 9: 35-38) we learn that Jesus walked round about the cities and

villages in Galilee, and he saw the condition of the multitudes and was moved with compassion over them

because they were distressed and scattered as sheep not having a shepherd. Jesus often compared people to sheep and said he was the great shepherd to lead them and to feed them. There are three things which Jesus was moved to do by this distressing condition of the people, (a) Mark tells us that when he saw them as sheep without a shepherd, "He began to teach them many things." (Mark 6: 34.) There is nothing that people need more than they need to be taught the word of God. And Jesus began to correct the distressing situation by teaching them the will of the Father. If we are going to be like Jesus, we will teach people the will of God. (b) Jesus prayed and taught his disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send forth reapers into the harvest to save the people. He changes the picture here and instead of looking upon the people as sheep, he looks upon them as grain already ripe for the harvest and some of it falling. Hence, the need for immediate action. That need is always upon us, for there are many who are going into eternity every day, many of them without ever hearing

the word of God simply because we have not taken it to them. There are some who do not believe in prayer. They say they believe in action. Some one has stated it in these words, we should pray as if everything depended on God, and we should work as if everything depended on us. (c) Jesus sent his apostles out two by two to preach to the people. Jesus not only prayed about the matter, and he not only did something personally in the way of teaching them himself, but he sent others that they might reach yet more and more people. Some of us are not capable of teaching people, but we can send those who are capable of teaching. Some of us are able to teach, but we can reach only a few people, and, in addition to the ones we reach, we can send the gospel by other teachers to many other people. Let us keep busy teaching all the people we can personally, then let us send others as they are willing and capable to go, Let us pray that people will receive the message and that yet more and more workers may be added to save the grain before it falls.

Exposition of the Text

I. The Workers and Their Message

(Verses 5-7)

These twelve Jesus sent forth. The student that cannot now repeat the names of the twelve apostles from memory should memorize them in this lesson. In the three verses preceding our lesson text their names are given. They can easily be memorized in groups of four. The first group has Peter, Andrew, James, and John. The second group has Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew. The third group of four has James, Thaddaeus, Simon, and Judas Iscariot. This grouping of the apostles is maintained in every list given by inspiration. Their order may be shifted within the group, but never is one name shifted from one group to another. Hence, to learn them in groups of four makes it easy for us to remember them. It is common information that all these men, with the exception of Judas, were from Galilee. (Acts 2: 7.) Judas

lived in Judea in the city of Kirioth. In fact his name Iscariot means *man of Kirioth*.

Go not into any way of the Gentiles. Since the kingdom had not yet come, this work was in preparation for the coming of the kingdom. It was like the work of John the Baptist, simply calling the apostate Jews back into fellowship and communion with God so that Jesus might have material out of which to build his kingdom.

Enter not into any city of the Samaritans. The rise of the Samaritans and the growing enmity between them and the Jews are interesting studies. It all began with the death of Solomon. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, came to the throne and acted unwisely so that the ten tribes pulled off and established the kingdom of Israel to the north of Judea. That kingdom lasted about two hundred fifty years and then was carried away into Assyrian captivity, but some

Jews were left in the land. The Assyrians brought some of their own people and planted them in this country. The Assyrians married with the Jews who were left there, thus producing a mongrel race. The kingdom of Judah lasted one hundred thirty-five years longer and went into Babylonian captivity. They were in captivity seventy years and returned under Cyrus. When they began to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, the Samaritans wanted to have a part with them, but Nehemiah and Ezra refused to allow them to have any part. This widened the breach already made by the fact that they were mixed in their marriages. The Samaritans built a temple on Mount Gerizim, and there they maintained their worship. They received law-breakers from Judea and harbored every enemy of the Jews who came to them. This widened the breach between them. Such conditions continued until the time of Jesus, when we read that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. (John 4: 9.) Since the work of Jesus and his apostles at that time was under a limited commission and only in preparation for the establishment of the kingdom, Jesus directed his apostles not to preach this gospel of preparation to the Samaritans.

Go *rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. Though the Samaritans claimed descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, yet they are never referred to as of the house of Israel. (John 4: 12.) The term lost sheep denotes the condition of the Jews to whom this gospel of preparation was preached. They were in a state of apostasy.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Daniel had said, "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." (Dan. 2: 44.) When Jesus first came into Galilee, he said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1: 15.) Daniel predicted the establishment of the kingdom within the

time of certain kings. Jesus came and said the time is fulfilled, the kingdom is at hand. Yet there are those who say that Jesus was disappointed in his rejection of the Jews and failed to establish the kingdom, but that he will establish the kingdom at his second coming. If that be true, Jesus did not tell the truth when he said the time for establishment of the kingdom was at hand. The expression at hand means imminent, impending, about to occur. Hence, in the days of John the Baptist and of Jesus, the kingdom was imminent, it was about to be established. In Col. 1: 13 we find Paul speaking of people being delivered out of the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love. In Heb. 12:

28 we read, "Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe." This kingdom that cannot be shaken is obviously the kingdom mentioned in Daniel which shall never be destroyed and will stand forever. In Rev. 1: 9 John refers to himself as the brother and partaker with those to whom he wrote in the tribulation and the kingdom. Hence, John was in the kingdom. In Daniel's day, the establishment of the kingdom was in the future. In the days of John the Baptist, Jesus, and his twelve apostles, the time was fulfilled, and the establishment of the kingdom was at hand. In the days of Paul and of John, the kingdom was in existence. People were being translated into it and were partakers one with another of the joys of the kingdom.

II. Work and Support of the Apostles (Verses 8-10)

Heal the sick, raise the dead. In verse one we read that Jesus gave his apostles "authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and all manner of sickness." This power was not given to them primarily for the alleviation of human suffering. The primary purpose was for the confirmation of the word. "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the

signs that followed." (Mark 16: 20.) The writer of the Hebrews says that the gospel "was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold power, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." (Heb. 2: 3, 4.) This power was given the apostles directly by the Lord and later enabled these apostles to lay hands on others and give them the power to work miracles. By reading Acts 8: 14-24 the reader will learn that these apostles had power to lay hands on people and give them the power to work miracles, but the people on whom the apostles laid hands did not have the power to lay hands on others and give them that power. So when the apostles were all dead there were none to give the power to work miracles. And when all on whom an apostle had laid hands had died, there was none able to work miracles. Hence, miracles ceased at most with the generation following the apostles.

Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses. It must be remembered that these apostles were going on a short mission, they were going among friends. They had powers to make friends, and the laborer was worthy of his hire. Hence, they made no special preparation to furnish themselves with extra clothing or with extra money for their keep during the journey. The laborer was worthy of his hire. They were going among a people given to hospitality, and consequently there was no special need for special preparation for that journey.

III. Reception of the Workers (Verses 11-15)

Into whatsoever city or village ye shall enter. These apostles were being sent on an important mission and time was an important element in that mission. "The ceremonies and forms with which a guest was received were tedious and time-consuming vanities, while the mission of the apostles required haste." (McGarvey.) They therefore were to find a house that was worthy to receive them, and there they were to abide while in that community. They

were not to be moving about from house to house within any given city, for to do so would place a question on their character and their conduct. This, too, was on account of the customs of the East. When a stranger went into a city and made a contact with a family, he was the guest of that family as long as he remained in the city or as long as his conduct was becoming. So if the apostles were to move about from one place to the other, it would give rise to a question with reference to their conduct.

If the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it. On entering a house they were to salute that house. Such salutation was given by saying, "Peace to this house." If the family received the visitor in a worthy manner, the peace for which the visitor prayed rested upon the family; but if the family did not receive the visitor in a worthy manner, the peace for which the visitor prayed came to the visitor himself and not to the family.

Shake off the dust of your feet. This is what Jesus told the apostles to do to an unworthy house. If a family refused to receive the apostles in a worthy manner, they were to stand in the door or gate and shake the dust of their feet off as a testimony against the people of that house. This, too, is a custom known and practiced only by peoples of the East.

It shall be more tolerable for . . . Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment. Thus we see how serious a thing it is to reject the message of gospel preachers authorized by Jesus Christ. We have learned in our golden text that to reject the gospel is to reject the apostle who preaches it; to reject the apostle is to reject Christ who sent him; and to reject Christ is to reject the Father who sent him. So we can understand why it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for the individual who refuses to receive the apostles of Jesus Christ. From this passage we learn that it will be more tolerable for some in judgment than for others. (Matt. 11: 21-24; Matt. 12: 38-44.) The people of our Lord's day had greater opportunities than the peo-

pie of Sodom and Gomorrah; hence, their responsibilities were greater and their condemnation greater for rejecting the message and neglecting their opportunities to be saved. How much greater are our opportunities who live in the full light of the gos-

pel, and consequently how much more fearful our responsibilities and how much more terrible the consequences of neglecting the salvation offered us for rejecting the message of the apostles concerning this salvation.

Lessons to Learn

1. *Jesus called, taught, and qualified his workers before he sent them out on a mission.* From this we should learn something of the importance of qualifying ourselves for doing the work of the Lord.

2. *These apostles went out to preach the gospel depending on the providence of God to support them.* God did not fail them, they did not suffer. All who do the will of the Lord will be cared for. It is right for churches to assume the financial responsibility of caring for the workers, but it is

not right for workers to refuse to preach the gospel until they are assured that support.

3. *"It is not a small matter to reject an offer of heaven.* A palace, a throne, a rich earthly inheritance, might be rejected and, compared with rejecting the gospel, it would be a trifle. But life eternal is not like thrones, and gold, and palaces. This lost, all is lost. The gospel rejected, all is gone nor hope nor happiness awaits him that hath spurned this offer." (Barnes.)

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

How does one receive or reject an apostle or prophet?

Show how Paul's reception at Thessalonica illustrates this principle.

Show how Diotrefes rejected the apostle John.

How does one receive or reject Jesus Christ?

Show how one who refuses to accept the teaching of the New Testament rejects God the Father.

What is meant by going beyond the teaching of Christ?

Show how this principle is applied in the case of baptism and the use of mechanical instruments in worship.

Introduction

To what animal did Jesus compare the people of his day?

What other figure of speech did Jesus use to teach the urgency of saving the lost?

Discuss three things Jesus was moved to do when he saw the distressing condition of the people.

Do the present activities of the brotherhood reflect this teaching?

What is the congregation where you worship doing in these matters?

The Workers and Their Message

Can you name the twelve apostles?

What is peculiar about the grouping of these twelve names?

From what section of Palestine were eleven of these apostles?

What was the purpose of the apostles on this limited commission?

Can you state briefly the historical facts connected with the rise of the Samaritans?

Why were the Jews spoken of as the lost sheep of the house of Israel?

What did Jesus, John the Baptist, and the disciples of Jesus preach with reference to the kingdom?

What did Daniel have to say about the kingdom?

What scriptural proof do we have that the kingdom was in existence in the days of the apostles?

Work and Support of the Apostles

What authority was given the apostles at this time?

What was the primary purpose of this authority?

Can you prove from the Scriptures that no one possesses this authority today?

From what source was the apostles to derive their support?

Upon what principle did Jesus base this instruction?

Reception of the Workers

What instructions were they given about selecting a place to stay in a city?

What did he say about them moving from one house to another within the city?

In what manner did they salute a house when entering it?

What was to be done to the house which refused to receive them?

What is said of the consequence to a house which refused to receive these workers?

By what standard of judgment can the people of Christ's day be judged worthy of greater punishment than the people of Sodom and Gomorrah?

In the light of this principle, what about our responsibility in this life as compared with those to whom Jesus spoke?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson VII—November 15, 1953

CHRIST S WITNESS TO JOHN

The Lesson Text

Matt. 11: 2-15

2 Now when John heard in the prison the works of the Christ, he sent by his disciples

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?

4 And Je'-sus answered and said unto them, Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see:

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them.

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

7 And as these went their way, Je'-sus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went **ye** out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft **raiment**? Behold, they that wear soft **raiment** are in kings' houses.

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

10 This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Bap'-tist: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Bap'-tist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

14 And if ye are willing to receive **it**, this is E-li'-jah, that is to come.

15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Yea and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways.*” (Luke 1: 76.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 14: 1-12.

Daily Bible Readings

November 9. M.....	John Witnesses for Himself (Matt. 11: 2-6)
November 10. T.....	Divine Sonship of Jesus (Matt. 11: 25-30)
November 11. W.....	Work of John the Baptist (Matt. 3: 1-12)
November 12. T.....	Baptism of Jesus by John (Matt. 3: 15-17)
November 13. F.....	John's Work Predicted (Mal. 4: 1-6)
November 14. S.....	Death of John the Baptist (Matt. 14: 1-12)
November 15. S.....	The Great Invitation (Matt. 11: 28-30)

TIME.—A.D. 27.

PLACE.—Somewhere in Galilee.

PERSONS.—Jesus, some disciples of John, and the multitude.

Golden Text Explained

1. **John's Position.** Our text is the language of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. It was spoken on the occasion when John was circumcised and given his name. The tongue of Zacharias had been bound since the time the promise was made to him

that he and Elisabeth should have a son. (Luke 1: 20.) Zacharias praised God for raising up a horn of salvation in the house of David and for bringing salvation from their enemies and from the hand of all that hated them and showing mercy to-

ward the fathers and remembering his holy covenant which he had made with Abraham their father. Only two verses are devoted to his son John, but in these he speaks of the position and the work of John. John was to have an exalted position in life, for he was to be the prophet of the Most High God. A prophet is one who speaks for God unto men. (1 Cor. 14: 3.) Since the days of Malachi, about four hundred years, neither angel nor prophet had brought a message from heaven to the Jews. Now a son was given to Zacharias and Elisabeth, of whom it is said he shall be the prophet of the Most High. Of him the angels said some things when his birth was announced which will help us to understand the exalted position which John was to occupy, (a) Thou shalt have joy and gladness. This refers to Zacharias as the father of John. John was to be a son that would bring joy and gladness to his parents. This, of course, was on account of both his character and his work, (b) Many shall rejoice at his birth. John was to be a son in whom not only his parents could rejoice because of his character and work, but who would bring gladness to many people. So long had the people gone without a message from heaven through an inspired prophet that they should rejoice at the birth of one who was to speak to them for God. (c) He shall be great in the sight of the Lord. Many of us are more concerned about being great in the sight of men than we are about being great in the sight of the Lord, but John was to live such a life and perform his work in such a manner that he would be counted great in the sight of the Lord. And we see this prediction fulfilled in the language of Jesus, "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." (d) He shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. This is still the language of the angel who promised a son to Zacharias and Elisabeth. The angel thought that abstinence from intoxicating liquors was of sufficient importance as a qualification of the servant of God that he made mention of the fact when talking of the quali-

fications of John the Baptist. This should suggest to our preachers, elders, deacons, and teachers in the Sunday school that, if they wish to be great in the sight of the Lord and be a good example for those whom they teach and influence, they should leave off all intoxicating liquors, (e) He shall be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. "To be filled with the Holy Spirit implies having the soul influenced in all its powers, with the illuminating, strengthening, and sanctifying energy of the spirit." These things outlined with reference to the character of John are found in Luke 1: 13-15.

2. **John's Work.** According to our text, John's work was to go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways, and to give knowledge and salvation unto his people in the remission of their sins. The coming of John to prepare the way of the Lord was in fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy which reads, "Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple." (Mal. 3: 1.) Isaiah also predicted it in these words, "The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain; and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it." (Isa. 40: 3-5.) This is symbolic language in which the work of John is described. In Luke 1: 16, 17 we have his work described to us in terms which we can understand, (a) Many of the children of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord their God. John came preaching repentance. This means turning to God, and multitudes of people were influenced by him to turn from sin unto God. (b) He shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah. Elijah was a plain spoken prophet, one who rebuked kings. So John the Baptist was a plain man, lived in the desert, ate locusts and wild honey, and wore

a leathern girdle and clothes made of camel's hair. He rebuked King Herod and his wife, and so fulfilled the prophecy that he was to do his work in the spirit and power of Elijah. (c) To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. "By a very expressive figure of speech, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the patriarchs, are represented here as having their hearts alienated from the Jews, their children, because of their unbelief and disobedience; but that the Baptist should so far succeed in converting them to the Lord

their God that these holy men should again look upon them with delight, and acknowledge them for their children." (Adam Clarke.) (d) To make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him. It was the primary purpose of the work of John the Baptist. His preaching of repentance was that he might prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. How well John did his work may be seen in the fact that Jesus selected his disciples and many of his apostles from among John's converts.

Introduction

At the time of our lesson John the Baptist was in prison. It might be well for us to learn something about the persons and the circumstances connected with this imprisonment of John. In Matt. 14: 1 we learn that Herod the tetrarch put John in prison for publicly rebuking him for living with Herodias. The word tetrarch means a ruler of a fourth part of a territory. However, later it came to signify the governor or ruler of any province that was subject to the Roman emperor. This Herod was known as Herod Antipas, and he reigned over Galilee and Perea. Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great. Herodias, the woman with whom he was living, was a granddaughter of Herod the Great. "She was first married to Herod Philip, by

whom she had a daughter, Salome, probably the one that danced and pleased Herod. Josephus says that this marriage of Herod Antipas and Herodias took place while he was on a journey to Rome. He stopped at his brother's; fell in love with his wife; agreed to put away his own wife, the daughter of Aretas, king of Petraea; and Herodias agreed to leave her own husband and live with him. They were living, therefore, in adultery; and John, in faithfulness, though at the risk of his life, had reproved them for their crimes. Herod was guilty of two crimes in this act: first adultery, as she was the wife of another man; second, of incest, as she was a near relation, and such marriages were expressly forbidden. (Lev. 18: 16.)" (Barnes.)

Exposition of the Text

I. John Questions Jesus (Verses 2, 3)

Now when John heard in the prison. Just when John was put in prison, we have no way of knowing. However, we do know that Jesus had preached for a while in Galilee, and that he came from Galilee into Judea near where John was baptizing in Aenon. (John 3: 22-30.) Then in John 4: 1-4 we learn that Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was making and baptizing more disciples than John. So he left Judea and went again into Galilee. It was at this time that John said of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3: 30.) So John, at this time, understood that his was

a diminishing ministry and that the ministry of Jesus must increase.

Art thou he that cometh. This is the question which John sent his disciples to ask of Jesus. Commentators disagree on why John sent his disciples to ask Jesus this question. Some think that he did it solely for the good of his disciples, that they might have their faith in Jesus as the promised Messiah strengthened and increased. Others think that John's faith wavered in Jesus as the promised Messiah and that he asked the question for the sake of his own faith. Brother McGarvey gives the following explanation. "But the plain, unmistakable inference of the

text is that John's faith wavered. The Bible does not represent the saints as free from imperfection. It does not say that inspiration is omniscience, or that visions and miracles removed doubts. It took two miracles to persuade Gideon; Moses harbored distrust (Ex. 3 and 4), and was guilty of unbelief (Num. 20: 12); Elijah despaired of God's power (1 Kings 19: 4-10); Jeremiah was slow of belief, and in his despondency cursed the day of his birth (Jer. 20: 7; 14-18). But the most instructive parallel is that of Simon Peter, who witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus, beheld the glory of God and heard the voice of the Father (Matt. 17: 1-6); yea sank below the Baptist, and denied his Lord with cursing; and no man has ever thought it at all incredible that he should do so. The trial of John's faith, though not so clearly depicted as that of Peter, was perhaps equally searching. His wild, free life was now curbed by the irksome tedium of confinement. His expectations were not fulfilled. The unfruitful tree had not been cut down, the grain had not been winnowed, nor the chaff burned, nor could he see any visible tendency toward these results. Moreover, he held no communion with the private life of Jesus, and entered not into the sanctuary of his Lord's thoughts. The inquiry itself, too, should be noted. It is not, are you what I declare you to be; but, being all of that, are you the one who should come, or must we look for another? John, no doubt, shared with all the Jews the idea that the Messiah was to set up an earthly kingdom, and seeing in Jesus none of the spirit of such a king, he seemed to have questioned whether Jesus was to be the finality, or whether he was to be, like himself, a forerunner, preparing the way for the ultimate Messiah. He did not grasp the thought that Jesus was both Alpha and Omega; that Jesus, the lowly servant of humanity, by service and sacrifice is evermore preparing the way for Jesus the king."

II. Jesus Answers John (Verses 4-6)

Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see. Jesus did not give John and his disciples a direct answer.

He simply said for them to tell John the things they could see and hear, and then he went about his work of giving sight to the blind and causing the lame to walk, cleansing the lepers and causing the deaf to hear. This kind of an answer would cause John to think of the prophecies concerning their Messiah. He would think of such passages as Isa. 35: 3-10. In this place it is said, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing." He would also think of Isa. 42: 7, where it was prophesied that the Messiah would "open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." With these and many other like prophecies John no doubt was familiar, and since Jesus was able to do these things, which the prophecies said the Messiah would do, his wavering faith in Jesus as the Messiah would be strengthened. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Messiah and his work was that the poor had the gospel preached to them. In the beginning of his ministry Jesus stood up in the synagogue in Nazareth and read from the prophecy of Isaiah the following: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4: 18, 19.) God has always been a friend of the poor, and no man has ever been able to mistreat them without suffering the vengeance of God. Jesus, the Son of God, was particularly friendly toward the poor. He was careful to give them special attention. No wonder then he gave as a distinguishing characteristic of the Messiah's ministry the fact that the gospel was preached to the poor. Our churches, today, especially large city churches, should give heed to this thought. If

Jesus, the Son of God, was especially mindful of the poor, so ought we to be today. We should see to it that the poor have a special welcome at our services. There is a tendency to give attention to and assign responsibilities to those who are able to dress equal with the average people of the world. Those who are not able to dress well are not given positions of song leaders and teachers. Mission meetings are held and new church buildings are built, not in the poorer districts of the cities, but in districts where the middle to upper classes live. There is definitely a tendency among us, in many sections of the country, in this direction, and it should be corrected.

III. Jesus' Estimate of John and His Work (Verses 7-15)

What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? By a series of questions Jesus brings out the character of John, whom the people went out in the wilderness to see. He was no reed shaken by the wind. He was no man clothed in soft raiment, but he was a tower of strength, a man steadfast in his purpose, willing to suffer for his conviction. He would not be vacillating and retract his statement about Herod in order that he might exchange his place in the prison for a place in the palace. No one ever thought of John as a vacillating, backslapping, compromising preacher, but he was one who had convictions, expressed those convictions, and stood by them regardless of the consequence. Such are needed in the pulpits of the land today.

Yea, . . . and much more than a prophet. Jesus does not mean to say that John was not a prophet and even more than a prophet. Isaiah and others foretold the coming of the Messiah as did John. Only John was given the exalted privilege of being the forerunner of the Messiah and preparing material for him. In this he was more than any of the prophets in the Old Testament.

He that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. Jesus

testifies to the greatness of John as a prophet when he said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." This places John at the top of the list of all the prophets from the beginning until his time. True greatness does not consist in the ability that we have or in the way that we exercise it. Nor does true greatness consist of any relationship which we may have with men of our time or of the past, but true greatness consists of our relation with and our association with Jesus Christ. John was greater than all the other prophets not because the things he uttered were more true, but because of his nearer relationship with Jesus Christ. But in this verse Jesus tells us that the least in the kingdom is greater than John. That is not because we have more ability than John or because we can do more or better work than John, but it is because of our nearer relationship with Jesus Christ. "The least born of the Holy Spirit (John 1: 12, 13; 3 and 5) is greater than the greatest born of women. They are greater in station, privilege and knowledge. The dispensations rise like lofty steps, and the lowest that stand upon the New Testament dispensation are lifted above the tallest who rest upon the dispensation of Moses." (McGarvey.)

The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by force. Since John began to preach that the kingdom was at hand, people had been flocking to him and to Jesus that they might enter the kingdom. Their conception of the kingdom was that of a temporal one which should throw off the yoke of Rome, set them free, and make them rulers of the world. When Jesus said that men of violence take it by force, he meant simply that people with preconceived ideas of what the kingdom was and what it would accomplish were attempting to take over and run the affairs of the kingdom to accomplish their own selfish material purposes.

All the prophets and the law prophesied until John. The expression, the law and the prophets, included all the Old Testament. These writings furnished people with all the information they had about the kingdom of God or God's reign upon the earth. But when John came, he proclaimed the near advent of the kingdom and called upon people to repent in order

that they might be ready for the kingdom. It was an advance step in the bringing in of the kingdom of God on earth. In Luke 16: 16, the order of these two statements is reversed and makes the matter clear. The law and prophets were until John. And from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached and every man entereth violently into it.

Lessons to Learn

1. *Serving a term in prison for doing one's duty to God and his fellow man is more honorable than sitting on the king's throne, living in sin.*

2. *People can get a better idea of what we really are by what we are doing than they can by what we say.* Jesus told John's disciples simply to tell John what he was doing. He preferred to give him this kind of an answer to simply telling John that he was the Messiah.

3. *If true greatness is found in our relation to Jesus Christ, we may conclude that the importance of the work that we do is measured by its relation with the work that Jesus wishes to have accomplished.* By this rule the preaching of the gospel and the care of the poor are the greatest works in the world, and those who are engaged in these works are the greatest servants in the world.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?
Repeat the golden text from memory.
Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

Who uttered the language of our text?
How long had it been since God had spoken to his people either through an angel or a prophet?
Name and discuss five things which the angel said with reference to the character and work of John the Baptist.
What two Old Testament prophets foretold the coming and the work of John?
How is John's name connected with that of Elijah?
What is meant by turning the hearts of the fathers to the children?
In what words is the primary work of John stated?

Introduction

Where was John the Baptist at the time of our lesson?
Relate briefly the circumstances connected with John's imprisonment.
What do you know of the persons connected with John's imprisonment?
What can be said of the courage of John in condemning Herod and his wife.

John Questions Jesus

Did Jesus begin his active ministry before John was imprisoned?
What evidence do we have that John understood that Jesus was to have a greater ministry than his?
What question did John send his disciples to ask Jesus?

Did John ask this question for the sake of his disciples only or did his own faith waver?

What other great men of God wavered in their faith and loyalty?
If John's faith wavered, what do you think was the cause of his trouble?

Jesus Answers John

Did Jesus give a direct answer to John's question?
Of what prophecies was John reminded by the answer which Jesus gave?
How did the poor figure in the answer which Jesus gave to John?
What lesson may we learn from this statement about the poor?

Jesus' Estimate of John and His Work

What figures of speech did Jesus use in his questions to describe the character of John?
In what sense was John more than a prophet?
According to Jesus, how does John rank with other men?
What is said of his greatness as compared with one in the kingdom of heaven?
Why is one in the kingdom greater than John?
In what sense did the kingdom of heaven suffer violence?
How did men of violence take it by force?
How much is included in the term, the law and the prophets?
Were the law and the prophets abrogated at the time John came?
In what sense did John's teaching replace the law and the prophets?
What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson VIII—November 22, 1953

WARNING AND INVITATION

The Lesson Text

Matt. 11: 20-30

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.

21 Woe unto thee, Cho-ra'-zin! woe unto thee, Beth-sa'-i-da! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Si'-don which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Si'-don in the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Ca-per'-na-um, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Ha'-des: for if the mighty works had been done in Sod'-om which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sod'-om in the day of judgment, than for thee.

25 At that season Je'-sus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes:

26 Yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight.

27 All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal *him*.

28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“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.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Heb. 10: 26-29.

Daily Bible Readings

November 16. M.....Offer of Mercy (Ezek. 33: 10-16)
 November 17. T.....Call to Repentance (Isa. 55: 1-13)
 November 18. W.....The Gracious Invitation (Matt. 11: 25-30)
 November 19. T.....Worldly Wise Not Interested (1 Cor. 1: 18-30)
 November 20. F.....Some Refused the Teaching of Christ (Matt. 11: 16-24)
 November 21. S.....Greatness of the King (Psalm 145: 1-13)
 November 22. S.....The Judgment Scene (Matt. 25: 31-46)

TIME.—A.D. 27.

PLACE.—In Galilee, perhaps Capernaum.

PERSONS.—Jesus and the multitudes.

Golden Text Explained

1. **The Goodness of God.** The goodness of God has been and continues to be manifested toward us in so many ways that it is impossible for us to list them all. But a few of the outstanding manifestations of his goodness are worthy of our consideration. (a) God has given us a being

in the world. Man did not of his own volition come into the world. God created man and surrounded him with the things that are calculated to make him happy provided he uses them aright. Though we personally were not brought into the world by direct creation, yet we were as de-

pendent upon the goodness of God as was Adam when he was brought into the world by creation, (b) We have been preserved in good health by the power of God as a manifestation of his goodness toward us. He upholds all things by the word of his power. (Heb. 1: 3.) In him all things consist. (Col. 1: 17.) He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. James 1: 17.) Our daily bread, the water we drink, and even the air that we breathe are manifestations of the goodness of God toward his creatures,

(c) But the supreme manifestation of the goodness of God is seen in the gift of his Son to die for sinners. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3: 16.) "Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4: 10.) And Paul tells us in Rom. 5: 10, "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son. much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." (d) The love of God for all eternity will be manifested toward us in the provision that he makes for our eternal life and the care that he takes of those who have loved and served him here. Jesus says that he is preparing a place for us, that where he is, there we may be also. (John 14: 1-4.) In the last two chapters of Revelation we are given a description of the heavenly city in which we will be privileged to spend eternity. No one can read those chapters without being impressed with the love and the goodness of God manifested toward those who love and serve him while they live in this world.

2. **The Severity of God.** (a) God is infinitely good and infinitely severe. God is infinite in all of his attributes and characteristics. God's justice and severity against sin were manifested when he banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden on account of their sin. (b) The severity of God against sin was manifested when he destroyed the world of Noah's day by a flood. Peter uses three things to illustrate the severity of God against sin. They are: first, that he

spared not the angels when they sinned but thrust them down to hell; second, that he destroyed the world with the flood; and third, that he turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes. (2 Pet. 2: 4-6.)

(c) As the crucifixion is the supreme manifestation of God's love and goodness, so it is likewise the manifestation of God's justice and severity against sin. The heinousness and malignity of sin are emphasized by the length to which God went in order to overcome sin and destroy the author of sin. (d) Perhaps the deepest impression that mankind gets of God's severity against sin is in connection with his punishment of sin in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. (Rev. 21: 8.) Again John said he saw the dead, both the small and the great, stand before God, and the books were opened and another book was opened, which was the book of life, and the dead were judged out of the things written in the books, and if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire, this is the second death. (Rev. 20: 11-15.) Infidels and skeptics have doubted God's word on this point, believing such punishment to be contrary to the nature of God. But it is also contrary to the nature of God to lie about these matters. God has said that he will punish the disobedient in a lake that burns with fire and brimstone. That statement is either true or false. We believe that God is true, that he cannot be false. Hence, though we may not be able to harmonize it with his nature to love and be compassionate and merciful, yet the statement must still be true. The truth of the matter is that God is merciful and patient and longsuffering with those who love him and are submissive to his will. But he is severe in his treatment of those who do not love him, but despise his word and the authority of his Christ, and who live in disobedience to him.

3. **God's Goodness and Severity Conditional.** Our text says that the severity of God comes toward them that fall. God was not severe upon the angels until they fell. His severity would never have been manifested toward the antediluvian world had they not been sinful. Only the im-

moral and inhuman practices of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah caused them to be the subjects of the severity of God. And no one will be punished in that lake that burns with fire and brimstone unless he lives in disobedience. God gives man the right to choose between a life of obedience or disobedience, and gives him every inducement and every assistance to live in harmony with his will; but if, in spite of the goodness of God, man persists in disobedience, he brings the severity of God upon himself. Our text says that God's goodness was manifested toward those to whom the statement was directed, the church at Rome, and the Gentiles in general, provided they would continue in his goodness. So the goodness of God, like the severity of God, is enjoyed

upon condition. A special manifestation of the goodness of God to which Paul refers in our golden text is that the Gentiles were grafted into the grace and mercy of God in the place of the disobedient Jews. They are likened unto branches of trees. The natural branches, the Jews, were broken off so that the Gentiles, the unnatural branches, might be grafted in. Lest they should boast about it Paul said, "glory not over the branches: but if thou gloriest, it is not thou that bearest the root, but the root, thee.....Be not high minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee." (Rom. 11: 18-21.) So we continue to enjoy the spiritual goodness of God only so long as we continue to be faithful and submissive to him.

Introduction

Two things that stand out most prominently in the Bible are the warnings of God against our living in sin and his pressing invitations for us to turn away from sin and to come to him that we may live. It is true of the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. In 2 Chron. 36: 15 we read, "And Jehovah, the God of their fathers, sent to them by his messengers, rising up early and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place." These messengers were sent with messages of warning. The books of the prophets are filled with warnings from God through his prophets to his people lest they should continue in their sins and be destroyed. The fact that these people paid no attention to their warnings only aggravated their guilt and caused their punishment to be all the more severe. And in the New Testament we find Jesus sitting on the hill over against Jerusalem saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the

prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23: 37.) The apostle Paul warns us that Jesus is coming again, and that when he comes he will take vengeance on them that do not obey the gospel and will destroy them with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. But he will come for his saints, that he may take them to rest from their labors, that they may be joint heirs with him of all the glories and the beauties of heaven. (2 Thess. 1: 7-10; Rom. 8: 16-18.) Rarely does God issue a warning that he does not accompany that warning with a warm and pressing invitation for the people to turn away from sin, to turn to him that they may enjoy the salvation he graciously offers them in Christ. Such is true of the warnings and invitation of our lesson text today.

Exposition of the Text

I. Jesus Warns the People of His Day (Verses 20-24)

Then began he to upbraid the cities. These cities had been highly favored for two reasons. In the first place,

Jesus performed more miracles in these cities than he did in other cities. Next, he made his home in Capernaum and consequently was often in this district of the country. These

greater blessings brought upon them greater responsibilities and consequently heavier condemnation for their lack of response.

Woe *unto thee, Chorazin*. The ruins of Chorazin have been discovered about two miles from Capernaum on the northwest bank of the Sea of Galilee. There is no record in the New Testament of a miracle worked at this place. However, the statement of Jesus here proves that many miracles were worked there. Bethsaida seems to have been a suburb of Capernaum and was the home town of Peter and Andrew. (John 1: 44.)

If the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon. Tyre and Sidon were two Phoenician cities northwest of Jerusalem. They were about twenty miles apart. They were known for their extensive commerce, for their luxury and iniquity. It was humiliating to the Jews for Jesus to tell them that, if these wicked Gentile cities had witnessed the miracles that had been performed in these Jewish cities, these Gentile cities would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.

It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment. Here again we learn that opportunities have something to do with responsibilities. The greater our opportunities, the greater our responsibilities are, and the greater our opportunities and responsibilities are, the greater condemnation we have in judgment if we allow them to slip by unused. The wonderful and unparalleled opportunities of our age lay us under exceedingly heavy responsibilities. And the individual who does not accept these responsibilities seriously and discharge his duty diligently will find himself unable to answer God in the day of judgment.

Capernaum . . . shalt go down unto Hades. Capernaum was the principal city on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Through its streets poured the overland commerce between Egypt and the East. Not only did it hold a favorite spot financially and commercially, but spiritually. For Jesus made his home there and in and around Capernaum. The greater part of his Galilean ministry occurred there, and many of his outstanding

miracles were performed in and around Capernaum. It was not far from that city that Jesus preached his famous sermon on the mount. On account of his presence there and the work and teaching he did in and around the city, he spoke of the city as being exalted unto heaven. Though, in the minds of the people of Capernaum, their exaltation was based upon other premises.

Thou shalt go down unto Hades. Instead of being exalted to the very heavens as they expected to be, Jesus said that their end was to be brought into utter desolation and ruin. Brother McGarvey says "Yet the uncertain sites of these cities are marked only by ruins, and present to the traveler who searches among rank weeds for their weather-worn stones the tokens of God's displeasure against the people who once dwelt there. In less than thirty years these three cities were destroyed. Sin destroys cities and nations, and permanent temporal prosperity depends upon righteousness."

If the mighty works had been done in Sodom. It seems that Jesus could find no evil city of his day with which to compare the utter ruin and desolation to which Capernaum would come. So he reaches back in history even to the wicked Sodom for a comparison. It must have been humiliating to the Jews of Capernaum to think that Jesus affirmed that, if the people of Sodom had had the opportunities which the people of Capernaum enjoyed, they would have made better use of those opportunities than the people of Capernaum made. From these verses we should learn the following lessons, (a) That there is to be a day of judgment in which the people of all nations of all times will be gathered. The people of Sodom will be in the judgment with the people which Jesus taught, so will the people of Tyre and Sidon. If the reader will turn to Matt. 12: 39-42, he will see that other cities such as Nineveh and those who lived in the time of Solomon will be in the day of judgment with the generation to which Jesus spoke, (b) That everyone who hears the gospel is laid under heavier obligations than he would have been had he not heard

the gospel, (c) That among those who stand in the judgment, there will be degrees not only of responsibility, but of condemnation. The condemnation people will receive in judgment will be in keeping with their opportunities and the way they accepted their responsibilities and discharged their duties. It will be more tolerable for some in the day of judgment than for others.

II. The Nature and Plans of God Known Only Through Revelation (Verses 25-27)

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. It is good for brethren who lead in public prayers to study the prayers which Jesus prayed to his Father. They might learn first of all how to address God. Jesus addressed him in very simple terms such as Father, Holy Father, etc. Some brethren today use a long string of high-sounding adjectives and phrases to describe the Father. This is a stilted and unnatural and unscriptural form of address for humble children to use in their approach to the Father. Others use sweet endearing terms such as one might be expected to use when talking to his sweetheart. All such forms of address are unnatural, unscriptural, and out of place, when people approach the throne of God.

Thou didst hide these things from the wise. The wise, the proud, and the rich of those great cities of his day rejected his message and despised him as the messenger, but the poor, the humble, and the needy heard him gladly. God did not use physical means to hide the truth from any nor did he use unfair means to reveal such unto the poor and the humble. It was rather that God chose to reveal a plan, the nature of which was such that it was objectionable to the wise and the rich and was acceptable to the poor and the humble. Jesus said he had revealed these things unto the babes. By babes it is meant those who are dependent, those who realize their dependency and in child-like trust accept the things that are revealed to them.

No one knoweth the Son, save the Father. If Jesus were a mere human being, this statement could not be

accepted as truth. Only because of the fact that he was both human and divine can this statement be accepted as truth. Theologians have wrangled for centuries over the nature of Christ, some have belittled his humanity, while others have belittled his divinity, but this statement should set them all at rest for all time, for none knoweth the Son except the Father.

Neither doth any know the Father, save the Son. Here again Jesus utters a blasphemous statement if he is not divine. In this statement he claims to know, to comprehend fully, the Father. Only an infinite mind can comprehend an infinite Father.

He to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Here Jesus says that no one can know the Father except the Son and the ones to whom Jesus wills to reveal the Father. We have only a partial revelation of the nature and character of God and are incapable of understanding fully these matters. Only in eternity will we get a fuller view and understanding of the nature and character of God. We are led to believe that angels are continuing to see new and deeper impressions of the power and the wisdom and the majesty of God. (Eph. 3: 10, 11; 1 Pet. 1: 12.) If this be true, how can we expect to know all about God in this life or the first day we arrive in heaven?

III. The Great Invitation (Verses 28-30)

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden. Again Jesus speaks of unwarranted presumption if he is not more than human. It would be all out of place for me to invite people to come unto me and expect to receive rest from their worries and their burdens of life. Only God himself can issue such an invitation without exercising unlimited presumption. The labor mentioned here is that fight against sin, that uneven fight which we wage against the enemy of souls if we wage the battle in our own strength. The heavy load here is the load of sorrow and of suffering and of guilt which sinners cannot bear alone. And the rest which he promises is the forgiveness

of our sins, the lightening of our burdens, and going along with us to help us in our fight against our enemy.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. The yoke is used in a figurative sense. It has been used in the Bible as an emblem of bondage and of afflictions. Sometimes the commandments of God are referred to as a yoke, and in Acts 15: 10 and Gal. 5: 1 the legal ceremonies of the law of Moses are referred to as a yoke. Peter said the law was a yoke which neither they nor their fathers could bear. Perhaps by the word yoke here Jesus means the responsibilities of discipleship. He emphasizes the fact that when we take his yoke upon us we learn of him. One cannot be a disciple of the Lord without learn-

ing of him, for the word disciple means a learner.

1 am meek and lowly in heart. Jesus wants them to take his yoke upon them; but, though the word yoke suggests harshness and hard work, he wants them to know he is meek, not harsh; he is lowly, not proud and haughty and hard on those who serve him. Instead of finding him a hard and harsh taskmaster, he assures them that they will find rest unto their souls. For he adds, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Though he expects people to accept responsibilities, they are not unreasonable. He expects no more than people are able to do. Consequently, all can do all that the Lord expects of him.

Lessons to Learn

1. *It is a fact that the judgment will be more tolerable for some than for others, but let not any disobedient person take encouragement from this fact to continue in his sins, for the most tolerable position in hell will be uncomfortable beyond our power to imagine.*

2. *We are indebted to Jesus for a revelation of the Father.* He said to his disciples, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Hence, he is

a revelation of the Father. We are eternally obligated to him and should be everlastingly grateful for his revelation of the Father.

3. *It is a source of gratitude and thanksgiving that in spite of our sins Jesus invites us to come unto him. Though he knows we will continue to sin occasionally as long as we live, he still invites us to come to him and assures us that he will deal gently and mercifully with us.*

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of the lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

Name and discuss four ways in which the goodness of God is manifested towards us.

Which of these do you consider to be the supreme manifestation of God's goodness?

Name and discuss four ways in which the severity of God is manifested against sin.

What objection have infidels against the teaching of eternal punishment as a manifestation of God's severity?

State the general conditions on which the goodness and severity of God are manifested.

Give the gist of Paul's teaching with reference to the goodness of God manifested to the Gentiles and the severity of God manifested toward the Jews.

Introduction

What two things are mentioned in our lesson as standing out most prominently in the Bible?

Give an illustration from each of the testaments.

What does Paul say of the severity of God in punishing the disobedient in the day of judgment?

Jesus Warns the People of His Day

What cities did Jesus upbraid?

For what reason did he upbraid them?

What cities did he say would fare better in the judgment than these cities in which he taught?

In what way was Capernaum specially favored?

State and discuss three lessons we should learn from the experiences of these cities.

The Nature and Plans of God Known Only Through Revelation

What is said in our lesson of terms in which we should address God?

How did Jesus address his Father on this occasion?

For what did Jesus give thanks to the Father?

What things were hidden from the wise but revealed to the poor and humble?

What means did God use to hide these things from the proud?

What statement in our text suggests the divinity of Jesus?

To whom are we indebted for our present understanding of the nature of God?

The Great Invitation

What does the invitation of Jesus imply with reference to his nature?

From what does he offer to give us relief?

On what condition does he offer this relief?

To what various things is the word yoke used in the Bible to refer?

What reason does Jesus give to encourage us to take his yoke upon us?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson IX—November 29, 1953

PICTURES OF THE KINGDOM

The Lesson Text

Matt. 13: 31-33, 44-52

31 Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is less than all seeds; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened.

44 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls:

46 And having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away.

49 So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

51 Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea.

52 And he said unto them. Therefore every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world."* (Matt. 13: 35.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 13: 34, 35.

Daily Bible Readings

November 23. M.....Reason for the Parables (Matt. 13: 10-17)
 November 24. T.....Sowing the Seed of the Kingdom (Matt. 13: 1-9)
 November 25. W.....A Parable Explained (Matt. 13: 18-23)
 November 26. T.....Reaping in Joy (Psalm 126: 1-6)
 November 27. F.....The Certain Harvest (Eccles. 11: 1-8)
 November 28. S.....The Kingdom a Treasure (Matt. 13: 44-46)
 November 29. S.....The Parable of the Tares (Matt. 13: 24-30)

TIME.—A.D. 27.

PLACE.—By the Sea of Galilee.

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

Golden Text Explained

1. **Jesus Fulfilling Prophecy.** Our text says that Jesus spoke in parables that he might fulfill prophecy concerning his teaching. In the verses preceding our text, it is said that Jesus spake in parables, and without a parable he spake not to them. This statement, of course, can refer only to what he said on this particular occasion, for much of the teaching of the Lord was in plain unparabolic language. The prophecy referred to in our text is a statement of a very obscure prophet. The prophecy is taken from Psalm 78: 2, 3, and is said to be the words of Asaph. In 2 Chron. 29: 30 Asaph is called a seer, while in 1 Chron. 25: 2 he is referred to as a prophet. The statement of Asaph in Psalm 78 is as follows: "I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us." Asaph's use of the word parable is different from that of our Lord, yet it has the fundamental idea of a parable in it. Our English word parable is a translation of a Greek word which literally means "to throw alongside of." One thing is thrown along the side of another thing so that we may better understand. Something with which we are unacquainted is thrown along by the side of that with which we are acquainted, so we may learn that with which we were unacquainted. Asaph said he would take the sayings which they had heard from their fathers and place them along the side of the conditions and experiences of people of his day and draw lessons from them for their benefit. So he took the experiences of the fathers and from them drew lessons for the people of his day. This is in harmony with the general meaning of the word parable. But where Asaph said he would utter things which they had heard and known, and their fathers had told them, Jesus says I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world. In the parables of Jesus we may expect to find things revealed which were not formerly known by humanity.

2. **Reasons for Speaking in Parables.** (a) The primary reason for

speaking in parables was to teach things not known. In our text Jesus said he would open his mouth in parables and utter things hidden from the foundation of the world. The meaning of the word parable, as discussed above, indicates the use of something with which people are acquainted in order to teach them something with which they are not acquainted. Hence, the very meaning and the primary use of the word suggests that teaching was the main object of the parable, (b) While the parable was used to reveal truth to some, it was also used to conceal truth from some. When the disciples asked Jesus why he spoke in parables, he answered. "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." (Matt. 13: 11-13.) In the beginning of our Lord's ministry he did not use parables in his teaching, but when considerable opposition was aroused on account of unbelief and disobedience of the people, it became necessary for Jesus to use parables. Those who were interested in his teaching could, by a reasonable amount of searching, arrive at the truth he intended to teach. But those who were not interested in his teaching would not understand his lesson, and so would not have their animosity increased. So concealing the truth in parables served two purposes. First, it did not needlessly antagonize his unbelieving hearers; and second, it did not increase the opposition and persecution to himself, (c) Another purpose of parables was for the revelation of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 13: 11.) A mystery is not something beyond the ability to comprehend, but a mystery is something which cannot be known except through revelation. Salvation from sin through the atoning death of Christ could not have been learned through philosophy or science. It

could be known only as revealed through Jesus Christ. This truth has always been humiliating to the learned, and for that reason, is rejected by the majority of learned people of all times. "For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the dis-

cerning will I bring to nought. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 1: 18-21.)

Introduction

Our lesson topic Pictures of the Kingdom is a very apt expression. The parables of Jesus do give us some very clear pictures of the kingdom in its inception and development in spite of its enemies and its final victory. The parables of the mustard seed and the leaven give us a picture of the small beginning of the kingdom as well as the quiet steady growth of the kingdom. The prophet of old pictured the kingdom as a little stone cut out of the mountain, but growing in size as it went along. (Dan. 2.) So Jesus uses parables which would suggest this small beginning but a quiet steady growth until it had covered the whole world. Next, the parable of the sower gives us a picture of the means used for the extension of the kingdom. The seed of the kingdom is the word of God and those who sow the seed are the teachers and preachers of the word of God. From this we learn the lesson that without the teaching of the word of God, there can be no extending of the borders of the kingdom. New citizens of the kingdom are made by teaching the word of the kingdom. New territory for the kingdom is acquired through the use of the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. (Eph. 6: 18.) The parables of the tares teach-

es us a lesson about the relationship of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven with the world. We learn that the kingdom has an enemy, and that this enemy is sowing seed similar to the good seed. We learn also from this parable that the kingdom of God was established and continued to exist and operate while the kingdom of Satan is in existence. Those who think that the kingdom has not been established, and that when it is established, the wicked will all be destroyed, and the kingdom will exist in a time of perfect peace and calm and quiet, fail to understand this parable of the tares. Next, from the parable of the tares and the parable of the net, we learn that the kingdom will exist until the end of the world. Our premillennial friends think that the kingdom will not begin to exist until the end of the world. But these parables show that the kingdom is now in existence and that it is meeting and overcoming opposition and it will last until the end of the world when the good will be saved and the bad will be gathered and destroyed. So these parables give us pictures of the kingdom from its establishment to the very end of the world.

Exposition of the Text

I. Parable of the Mustard Seed

(Verses 31, 32)

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed. Jesus says that the mustard seed was the least of all seeds, meaning those which were planted in the garden and for garden use, but that it grew to be the largest of the herbs. We are told that mus-

tard plants grew to the height of ten feet in Palestine, (a) This may well illustrate the growth of the kingdom. As suggested above, the kingdom had a small beginning but has spread over the whole world and will continue to grow and develop until it has won the victory over evil, (b) This may well illustrate the growth of grace

and piety in the individual soul. The kingdom has a small beginning in each individual at the time of his conversion, but through proper study, application, and exercise, the kingdom may come to possess the whole individual. Leading the Christian life is not so much a question of how much of the kingdom one possesses, but rather how much of the individual the kingdom possesses and controls. When one first becomes a Christian, the kingdom may be said to possess only a small "beachhead" in the soul, but as the individual grows and develops spiritually, the kingdom spreads within that soul and finally possesses and controls the soul in its entirety.

II. The Parable of the Leaven (Verse 33)

The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven. Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven, in one respect, is like leaven which was placed in meal and caused all the meal to be leavened.

(a) This parable gives us a picture of the growth of the kingdom in the world. The kingdom did not begin with a great display and show of might and power. The kingdom of heaven did not raise and equip a mighty army to extend its boundaries. It did its work quietly, not with the use of force but of moral persuasion.

(b) This parable of the leaven also pictures the growth of the kingdom in the individual's soul. It works quietly but thoroughly until it influences and governs all the faculties of the soul. We must not miss the lesson that, as leaven changes all the meal about it into its own nature, the kingdom of heaven changes all about it into its own nature. Whether we view this as giving a picture of the kingdom in the world or in individual souls, this work of changing about it into its own nature is true. The kingdom of heaven has influenced mightily the kingdoms of the world socially, politically, and economically. The Christian in a community will influence the people of that community socially, religiously, and otherwise, and that influence will tend to make the people of the community like the Christian.

III. Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Verse 44)

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field. Not having safety deposit vaults in the time of our Lord to keep their valuables in, men commonly hid them in their fields. Sudden death of the one who hid the treasure would make possible the situation which Jesus uses in this parable. He represents a man as finding such a treasure in a field. The man who finds it takes it and hides it again to be sure no one else will know of its whereabouts. He then makes his arrangements to buy the field. He sells all the property he has, raises sufficient money to purchase the field which holds the treasure. This, of course, was a dishonest transaction. Jesus does not vindicate the action of the man. He simply takes the earnestness and the diligence of the man and recommends that to us in obtaining the treasures of the kingdom. The kingdom of heaven, with its beauty, its values, its glories, is hidden from the people of the world but when their attention is called to it, and they have found it, Jesus teaches by this parable that they are to sacrifice everything which they now have and enjoy which would prevent them from possessing and enjoying the kingdom. He presents the kingdom as worth eminently more than the world which they now possess, and that they will be wise to give up the world and all its pleasures and possess the kingdom with all its blessings and privileges.

IV. The Parable of Goodly Pearls (Verses 45, 46)

The kingdom of heaven is like unto ... a merchant seeking goodly pearls.

This parable teaches somewhat the same lesson as the preceding parable. However, it differs in the fact that it presents this merchant as seeking the goodly pearls. In the preceding parable, the treasure was found by accident. Jesus represents the kingdom as being worth our searching for it, seeking after it. The people of Berea were commended because they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether Paul was preaching the

truth. (Acts 17: 11.) This was one way of seeking after, searching for the kingdom. The merchant is represented as finding a pearl of great price. So Jesus tells us that, if we seek, we shall find. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. This merchant sold all that he had and bought the one pearl of great price. So we are to give up all that we may follow Jesus, and Jesus assures us that no one will make sacrifice for him and for the gospel that shall not be rewarded a hundred-fold in this life and in the world to come eternal life. (Mark 10: 30.)

V'. The Parable of the Net (Verses 47-50)

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net. Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is like a fish net. When lowered into the sea, it gathers in every kind. Being under water, the bad cannot be sorted from the good as it is dragged along, but when it is pulled out upon the shore, then men sit down and sort out the good from the bad. So the kingdom of heaven attracts both the good and the bad, the sincere and the insincere. It is impossible for men to know the hearts, and consequently we cannot make full separation. We are taught that by their fruits we may know them, and when men walk outwardly contrary to the teachings of the gospel, we are to withdraw fellowship from them. (2 Thess. 3: 6, 14: 1 Cor. 5.) But, no: being able to judge of the sincerity of those who observe the forms of Christianity, we must wait until the judgment, when the Lord himself through his angels will discover all the insincerity and will punish it accordingly.

So shall it be in the end of the world. Jesus never lets us forget that there is to be a great judgment at the end of the world. There are some who think that all the judg-

ment we will have is in this world, but in Matt. 25 Jesus represents himself as coming a second time and conducting a judgment in which the good will be rewarded and the wicked will be sent into eternal punishment. We should not lose sight of the fact either that the kingdom of heaven is in existence, according to this parable, before the end of the world, and continues until the judgment at the end of the world.

Shall cast them into the furnace of fire. Jesus mixes the parable and its application. Fish were not usually taken out of the net and cast into a furnace of fire, but he represents the evil men in the kingdom as being taken out of the kingdom and cast into the fires of hell.

VI. Disciples Are Like a Householder (Verses 51, 52)

Every scribe who hath been made a disciple... is like unto ... a householder. Disciples, whether they have formerly been scribes or not, bring forth their treasures new and old, to serve those who come unto him. Jesus asked his disciples if they had understood these parables. They replied that they did understand them. He then teaches them the necessity of using this knowledge which they had. As the householder brings forth his supplies, new and old, to serve those who come to him, so we who understand the teaching of the kingdom must put that knowledge to use. Some things we have known for a long time. Some things we have recently learned. But, whether we had known them long or learned them recently, we are obligated to use them, and woe be unto that disciple who refuses or neglects to use the knowledge he has of the kingdom, for the development of his own soul and for the salvation and sanctification of other souls.

Lessons to Learn

1. *The kingdom usually has a small beginning in every community.* Let us not be discouraged at a small beginning. Time, hard work, right living, and the blessing of the Lord have

won in countless communities, and will win in yours.

2. *Jesus teaches the value of the kingdom in the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price.*

Though we would not deny his teaching as to the value of the kingdom, yet in actual life, by our carelessness and indifference, we often value the trifling and insignificant things of the world above the kingdom.

3. *The parable of the net teaches us that some will be taken out at the end of the world and burned.* Paul

says, "Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves." (2 Cor. 13: 5.) The blessedness of heaven and the intolerable punishment of hell make it doubly important that we try ourselves continually to keep ourselves in the faith so that we be not among those that shall be taken out.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

To the words of what prophet does our golden text refer?

What is the meaning of the word parable?

How does the statement of Jesus differ from that made by the prophet Asaph?

Name and discuss three reasons for speaking in parables.

Why would Jesus wish to conceal the truth from some?

What is the meaning of the word mystery?

What great mystery is learned only through revelation of Jesus Christ.

Introduction

What parables give us a picture of the beginning and steady growth of the kingdom?

What Old Testament prophet predicted the kingdom would have a small beginning?

What picture does the parable of the sower give us concerning the kingdom?

What lessons do we learn from the parable of the tares?

Which parables teach of the continuance of the kingdom until the end of the world?

Parable of the Mustard Seed

What is said of the size of the mustard seed and the plant it produces?

What lesson does this teach with reference to the growth of the kingdom?

What lesson does this teach with reference to the growth of piety and grace in the individual?

The Parable of the Leaven

What lesson does Jesus teach in the parable of the leaven with reference to the growth of the kingdom in the world?

What lesson is taught in this parable with reference to both the kingdom and the individual soul?

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

From what you know of ancient customs was the setting of this parable true to life?

Was the man's transaction legal and honest, and does Jesus mean to vindicate the action of the man?

State the central lesson which Jesus intended to teach in this parable.

The Parable of Goodly Pearls

In what way is this parable similar to that of the hidden treasure?

In what respect does this parable differ from the parable of the hidden treasure?

State the central lesson which Jesus taught in this parable.

The Parable of the Net

In what respect is the kingdom of heaven like unto a net?

Does this parable teach that we cannot disfellowship the disorderly?

What does this parable teach with reference to the end of the world and the judgment?

What does this parable teach with reference to the existence of the kingdom before the end of this world?

According to this parable, how are the wicked to be punished?

Disciples Are Like a Householder

In what respect is a disciple like a householder?

What is taught in this section as to our responsibility for teaching the truth which we have learned?

What is there of interest in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson X—December 6, 1953

JESUS AND CHILDREN

The Lesson Text

Matt. 18: 1-14

1 In that hour came the disciples child, and set him in the midst of unto Je'-sus, saying, Who then is them,

greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 3 And said, Verily I say unto you,

2 And he called to him a little Except ye turn, and become as little

children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me:

6 But whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and *that* he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.

7 Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh!

8 And if thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two

feet to be cast into the eternal fire.

9 And if thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to cast into the hell of fire.

10 See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.

12 How think ye? if any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go unto the mountains, and seek that which goeth astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

Golden Text.—*"But Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven."* (Matt 19: 14.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Mark 10: 13-16.

Daily Bible Readings

November 30. M..... The Spirit of a Child (Matt. 18: 1-6)
 December 1. T..... The Worth of a Child (Matt. 18: 7-14)
 December 2. W..... Protecting the Child (Ex. 2: 1-10)
 December 3. T..... Streets Made Safe for Children (Zech. 8: 1-8)
 December 4. F. Christ Blessing Little Children (Mark 10: 13-16)
 December 5. S..... A Perfect Model for Children (Luke 2: 41-52)
 December 6. S..... The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2: 8-16)

TIME.—A.D. 28.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

PERSONS:—Jesus, his disciples, and the children.

Golden Text Explained

1. Jesus Interested in Children. The incident of Jesus blessing the children follows immediately after his teaching on marriage and divorce. It was fitting that he should give attention to children, the fruit of that union which he had so courageously defended. There are a number of reasons which Jesus may have had for giving attention to children at this time, (a) The innocence, purity, and implicit trust were in sharp contrast with the insincerity, impurity, and unbelief of the average Jew, with

which Jesus had to deal. Day after day he dealt with the scribe, the lawyer, and the Pharisee, as they strove to catch him in his words, that they might persecute him. He had to be on the alert at all times lest he say something which they could construe as a violation of the law of Moses and accuse him before the people. The childlikeness of Jesus and his natural innocence would appeal to the children and attract them to him, and he would find comfort in their simplicity and innocence, (b) Jesus

was interested in children because he realized that soon they would be eligible to become subjects of his kingdom, and if he could incline them in the direction of his kingdom, he would contribute to their welfare. Parents are told to "provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6: 4.) Those who neglect to give their children proper training sin grievously against the children. But a good many parents are like the disciples on the occasion of our text. The disciples thought that Jesus had no time for the children and was not interested in them. So parents sometimes think that children have no place in the program of the church. They fail to teach them at home, and fail to take them to the teaching services of the church, that they may be taught, (c) Jesus was interested in the children because they furnished him with an example from which he could teach his disciples what they ought to be.

2. **Elements of Childlikeness.** In our text Jesus teaches that the kingdom of heaven is composed of those who are like children. This, of course, means people who are in some respects like children. There are some respects in which we ought not to be like children. Paul said, "Brethren, be not children in mind: yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men." (1 Cor. 14: 20.) Men and women are supposed to mature mentally the same as they mature physically. Yet, some seem never to grow up mentally. They still look at things and respond to situations and circumstances just like they did when they were children. However, there are several ways in which children set an example for citizens of the kingdom, (a) We should have the faith and trust of a little child. As a child trusts its parents implic-

itly and believes everything they say, so we ought to have that same faith in God and implicit trust in him to care for us. This would do away with worry. Children do not worry about where their next meal is coming from. They do not worry about clothing for the winter. They trust their parents for such. Jesus teaches that the subjects of his kingdom should trust him for all their needs, (b) Purity of mind. We, as subjects of the kingdom, should so discipline our minds that we would be free from all impure desires and motives. The child is lacking in those experiences which defile and pollute the mind. The Christian should so discipline his mind as to drive out the memories of such experiences. They should keep their mind so full of the heavenly things that there will be no room for the worldly things, (c) Children, though they may become angry, soon recover and will play together again as if nothing had happened. Citizens of the kingdom should so discipline themselves that they seldom become angry with each other; but should they do so, they should forgive as children do, and soon work together again. This is Paul's lesson from the quotation above, that in malice we should be babes. Children do not harbor malice. Christians must not harbor malice, (d) Children are inquisitive and anxious to learn more of life. So citizens of the kingdom of heaven should be inquisitive. They should have searching minds, eager to learn more of God and God's ways, (e) Children are inclined to imitate older people. So children of God are to imitate that which is good. They are to be imitators of Christ and the saints of old who suffered and labored for the establishment and the growth of the kingdom in so many parts of the world.

Introduction

Ambition—greed for power and position—is an ugly, soul-destroying sin, but the kingdom of heaven has been plagued with such sins since the days of its preparation. It was such ambition among the disciples

that caused Jesus to call the children to him and use them to teach a lesson of humility. It would seem that this would have been sufficient to stop these disciples from committing this sin in connection with the king-

dom, but such is not true. Later in their experiences, James and John sent their mother, Salome, to Jesus with the request that when the kingdom was established, one of them was to be on his right hand, and the other on his left. That means they were requesting the two best positions in the kingdom. At that time Jesus said, "Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among

you shall be your servant." (Matt. 20: 25, 26.) The organization of the kingdom of heaven is such as to discourage pride, ambition, and the desire for eminence, and to encourage humility, unselfishness and cooperation. The super organization of the Roman Catholic church and the great religious denominations about us is such as encourages pride, ambition, and lordship in the hearts of men. Their great ones or exalted ones exercise authority over those in lower positions. Jesus said it shall not be so in the kingdom of heaven.

Exposition of the Text

I. Jesus Rebukes Ambition (Verses

1-6)

Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? These disciples expected Jesus to establish a worldly kingdom, and they expected to have places of prominence in the organization and government of that kingdom. In the parallel passage, Luke 9: 46-50, we learn the disciples had not come out openly with this dispute, that they were "reasoning of their heart." Jesus brought the question out into the open by asking them, "What were ye reasoning on the way?" They were ashamed that they had been disputing with one another about who would be the greatest, and so he had to pull the subject out of them for discussion.

Except ye turn, and become as little children. The King James version has the words, *be converted*, instead of *turn*. The use of this expression, "be converted," in this number and a number of other passages has given rise to some serious misunderstanding of scripture. People have been led to think that in conversion they are wholly passive instead of active. The translators translated a verb in the active voice by a verb in the passive voice. This they did because the majority of them were Calvinistic in their theology, and believed man to be wholly passive in becoming a child of God.

Ye shall in no wise enter into the

kingdom. Jesus taught his disciples that unless they turned away from their greed, selfishness, and ambition, they would not even enter the kingdom, much less have a place of greatness in the kingdom, and the force of this lesson may be extended to us, teaching us the necessity of turning away from sin and becoming innocent, unselfish, trusting, and pure in heart like little children, that we may be subjects of the kingdom. Jesus enforces a part of this by saying, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. In this verse, Jesus not only teaches his disciples to be childlike, but to respect and receive and encourage all others who are childlike. To receive one such was, he said, equal to receiving him. Jesus often taught that the way we treat his disciples he accepts as treatment of himself. If we love them and help them, we are treating him that way: but if we despise and neglect them, we are treating Jesus that way.

Whoso shall cause one of these . . . to stumble. If we receive and encourage the childlike we receive Jesus; but, if we neglect or reject and despise those who are childlike in the kingdom, Jesus said it would have been better had a great mill-

stone been hanged about our neck that we be sunk in the depth of the sea. The way we treat our fellow citizens in the kingdom will determine whether we are saved or lost in the last great day.

II. Jesus Warns Against Offenses (Verses 7-10)

Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling. Jesus is warning us against causing others to sin. Since the soul that sinneth shall die, and the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6: 23), we see how serious it is to cause others to sin. Through our influence either by word or by example, we may cause another to do that which will damn his soul to eternal hell. Though we might be able to recover ourselves from the bad habits, and cultivate holiness and righteousness instead, that one whom we influence by word or example to form that habit might be unable to overcome it and so be lost.

If thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble. Jesus says that it is better for us to give up that which we hold most dear and enjoy heaven than to retain and enjoy that which we hold most dear and be lost in hell. In other words, he teaches that heaven is worth our making the greatest possible sacrifice to attain.

It is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt. "Men often part with some members of the body, at the discretion of the surgeon, that they may preserve the trunk, and die a little later; and yet they will not deprive themselves of a look, a touch, a small pleasure, which endangers the eternal death of the soul. It is not enough to shut the eye, or stop the hand; the one must be plucked out, and the other cut off. Neither is this enough, we must cast them both from us. Not one moment's truce with an evil passion, or a sinful appetite. If you indulge them, they will gain strength, and you will be ruined. The rabbins have a similar saying to this: 'it is better for thee to be scorched with a little fire in this world, than to be burned with

the devouring fire in the world to come.'" (Adam Clarke.)

Cast into the hell of fire. In verse nine, we have the expression, "hell of fire," while in verse eight we have the expression, "the eternal fire." Since these expressions refer to the same thing, we are forced to conclude that hell is a place of eternal fire.

In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father. As a reason for not despising even the humblest disciple in the kingdom, Jesus says their angels behold the face of his Father in heaven. From this passage many have concluded that each child of God has a guardian angel. Whether this idea is true, it is certain that angels do guard and watch for Christians. (Heb. 1: 14.) The thought is that the angel who cares for this humble child of God has free access to the Father and will represent the cause of this humble one before the throne of God. We may rest assured that God will listen to the pleadings of the angel in the behalf of the despised one.

III. Heaven's Interest in the Wanderer (Verses 12-14)

If any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray. This paragraph is another reason why we should not neglect or despise even the humblest in the kingdom. God is interested in them. Even if one in a hundred goes astray, he manifests his interest like the shepherd that goes for the one sheep that strayed away until he finds it.

He rejoiceth over it. Jesus pictures the shepherd as rejoicing over the sheep that had wandered away. He does not rejoice that the sheep has wandered away, but that he has found that which was lost. So, all heaven rejoices in the return of a sinner. Heaven does not rejoice because one has sinned, but that the sinner has turned away from sin and has returned. "Sin does not add to a man's intrinsic value in God's sight—nay, it detracts from it; but it excites in the heart of God pity, compassion,

and other tender emotions which make it extremely dangerous for those who hinder his reformation and imperil his soul by despising him." (McGarvey.)

It is not the will of your Father.

In this verse Jesus teaches that the loss of even one soul is contrary to the will of God. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should

come to repentance." (2 Pet. 3: 9.) "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2: 3, 4.) From these and other passages we learn that God does not will the destruction of one single soul, but those who refuse to be submissive to the Lord's will, who live in disobedience and disrespect for the authority of Christ, doom their own selves to an eternity of misery.

Lessons to Learn

1. *Greed for position to satisfy our pride is bad enough in the social and political world, but it is wholly inexcusable in the church.* Preachers and elders who use political tricks to obtain position and power should be detected and exposed for what they are and either converted or disfellowshipped.

2. *The fact that the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak aggravates the sin of despising the humble and lowly in the church.*

3. *If heaven manifests its interest in the wanderer by rejoicing more over the one that returns than it does over ninety and nine persons who need no repentance, we should manifest our interest in them by going in search of them, leading them back to the safety of the fold.* The human tendency is to say, "They are free, white, and twenty-one" and may do as they please, and so we allow them to drift without being concerned for their eternal welfare.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

Contrast the nature and attitude of children with that of the average Jew with which Jesus had to deal.

Did Jesus promote the interest of his kingdom when he gave attention to children?

Can we promote the welfare of the church by having an interesting program for the children?

How did Jesus use children on this occasion to teach his disciples a lesson?

In what respect should we be unlike children?

Name and discuss five ways in which we should be like children.

What great sin has plagued the church since the days of its preparation?

Which of the apostles had this ambition?

How did Jesus contrast greatness in his kingdom with greatness in worldly kingdoms?

What does the organization of the kingdom of heaven encourage in the hearts of men?

What religious organizations about us encourage pride and ambition?

Jesus Rebukes Ambition

How did Jesus know the disciples were

disputing about places of prominence in the kingdom?

Contrast the translation of this verse in our two prominent versions of the Bible.

What did Jesus demand of these disciples in order to enter the kingdom?

What did Jesus teach them to do in order to become great in the kingdom?

How did Jesus teach us to respect them who are childlike?

What is the penalty for rejecting and offending one who is childlike?

Jesus Warns Against Offenses

Discuss the seriousness of causing others to stumble.

What sacrifice does Jesus teach us to make in order to avoid stumbling?

Are we as careful to avoid spiritual danger as we are to avoid physical danger?

What proof do we have in our lesson that hell is eternal fire?

What part do angels have in caring for the children of God?

Heaven's Interest in the Wanderer

How does Jesus emphasize the interest heaven has in those gone astray?

What does our sin excite in the heart of God on our behalf?

What is the will of God with reference to our salvation?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson XI—December 13, 1953

A LESSON ON FORGIVENESS

The Lesson Text

Matt. 18: 21-35

21 Then came Peter and said to him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?

22 Je'-sus saith unto him, I say unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, who would make a reckoning with his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, that owed him ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not *wherewith* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 And the lord of that servant, being moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But that servant went out, and

found one of his fellow-servants, who owed him a hundred shillings: and he laid hold on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay what thou owest.

29 So his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay that which was due.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were exceeding sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord called him unto him, and saith to him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me:

33 Shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due.

35 So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts"* (Matt. 18: 35.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 6: 14, 15.

Daily Bible Readings

December 7. M..... The Blessedness of Forgiveness (Psalm 32: 1-7)
 December 8. T..... Christ's Example of Forgiveness (Luke 23: 33-38)
 December 9. W..... An Unforgiving Spirit (Matt. 18: 28-35)
 December 10. T..... Forgiveness and Restoration (Hosea 14: 1-9)
 December 11. F..... The Measure of Forgiveness (Matt. 18: 21-35)
 December 12. S..... A Prayer for Forgiveness (1 Kings 8: 27-34)
 December 13. S..... The Value of Love (1 Cor. 13: 1-8)

TIME.—A.D. 28.

PLACE.—Galilee, probably Capernaum.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his disciples.

Golden Text Explained

1. The Marvel of Grace in God's Forgiveness. God's forgiveness is never received by us because we deserve it. If God were to deal with

us according to justice, every one of us would be lost. He must deal with us in mercy. If it were not for the grace and mercy of God, the depths

and fullness of which are beyond our comprehension, none of us could possibly be saved. The fullness of his grace is emphasized by a number of things, (a) The enormity of our sins. At his best, man is very sinful and unworthy of the love and goodness of God. At his worst, man is depraved, ungrateful, malignantly evil, and little above the level of a brute. Yet, on account of his love and goodness, God freely and fully forgives regardless of the depth of sin to which a man has descended. The enormity of our sins is emphasized (1) because we sin against light. All of us know better than we live. We allow our evil desires to lead us to do things we know are wrong, and to neglect to do things we know we ought to do. (2) We sin against the goodness of God with which we are acquainted. In spite of the fact that God has been good to us in the past, that he has blessed us with many blessings which we do not deserve at our best, we do things that are wrong, and leave undone things that are right. (3) The enormity of our sin is emphasized by the fact that in sin we show a preference for Satan. Sin is an act of service rendered to Satan, and when we sin in preference to doing right, we show that we prefer to serve Satan rather than God. (b) The marvel of grace is seen in the price that heaven paid for our forgiveness. It was not possible for God to forgive us of our sins without Jesus dying on the cross. (Rom. 3: 25, 26.) God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. Jesus so loved the world that he was willing to suffer on Calvary that our sins might be forgiven, (c) The marvel of grace is seen in the freedom and the fullness of God's forgiveness. When Jesus wished to emphasize the fullness of the Father's forgiveness, he told the story of the prodigal son who returned with the confession of sin. The father forgave the son and refused to make him a servant but put him back in the place he occupied before he left home. God's forgiveness is so full that when the penitent returns, he occupies the place of honor which he occupied before he ever sinned. God receives and treats him as if he had

never sinned. This is forgiveness full and free. Nothing short of this is forgiveness.

2. God's Mercy Obligates Us to Forgive. (a) We are obligated by the example of God to forgive those who sin against us. God sets us an example of forgiveness not only in our own experience, but in the lives of millions of others. If we wish to be like God, to live like the Son of God, we must practice forgiveness. (b) We are obligated by the golden rule to forgive others. The golden rule tells us to treat others as we wish to be treated by them. If we wish to be forgiven when we sin, we should forgive others when they sin against us. One who is willing to be forgiven of his sins by the Lord, but is not willing to forgive others who sin against him, is not following the golden rule. (c) We are obligated to forgive in order to show our gratitude. Do we appreciate God's forgiveness of our sins? If so, we can show it by forgiving others who sin against us.

3. Mercy Does Not Obligate Us to Forgive the Impenitent (a) The impenitent does not deserve to be forgiven. The impenitent is still in sin, will repeat the sin that he has committed, and in no way deserves to be shown mercy. (b) God does not forgive the impenitent. Surely we are not expected to do more than God does. If God does not forgive the impenitent who sin against him, we are not obligated to forgive the impenitent who sin against us. (c) To forgive the impenitent would be to do him wrong. (1) We would be doing the impenitent wrong to forgive him because it would leave the evil nature unchanged. To repent means to turn away from evil, to cease to love evil. If we forgive one who has not ceased to love evil, his nature has not been changed. (2) If we forgive the impenitent we encourage and harden him in his sin. Repentance is calculated to impress one with the enormity of his sin, to make him realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin, but if we forgive one without requiring him to repent, we leave him without the proper conception of sin, and he is encouraged to live on that level. (3) It is wrong

to forgive the impenitent because it violates the public sense of justice. When the lord of the servants in our lesson forgave one of his servants, and

this servant in turn refused to forgive one of his fellow servants a small debt, it is said that his fellow servants "were exceeding sorry."

Introduction

In the verses preceding our lesson text, Jesus taught a lesson on forgiveness which should be considered in connection with our lesson. He takes up the matter of one brother sinning against another. First, he teaches that it is the duty of the offended brother to save the offending brother. There are three steps in the process of saving this brother. First, he is to go privately to the brother who has sinned against him and make an effort to get the brother to do right. If the offending brother will hear the one who is offended, and do right, the matter is to be dropped, but if the offending brother refuse to hear the offended brother, the matter is then to be taken before others. Two or three others are to be taken by the offended brother. It is possible that the offended brother will be influenced by a group more than he would be influenced by one individual; but if the offending brother will not hear this group, the matter is then to be taken to the church. This is a larger group, and the proba-

bility of the offending brother being influenced by the church is greater than being influenced by three or four; but if the offending brother refuse to hear the church, there is nothing else to be done. The offended one has no further responsibility. This procedure is not for the purpose of satisfying the desire of the offended brother for vengeance, but it is for the purpose of saving the one who has done the wrong. Too often we are prone to allow offenses to go unnoticed. We are afraid it will be considered little and childish in us if we take notice of these offenses. And it is wise to allow little unintentional slights and personal grievances to go by unnoticed; but if we allow our brother to trespass against us without following this procedure, we allow him to continue in sin, and we may be responsible for the loss of his soul. Hence, we should weigh these matters carefully and let no transgression pass which might cause our brother to lose his soul.

Exposition of the Text

I. A Question on Forgiveness (Verses 21, 22)

How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him. The Jews had a saying that they could forgive a man three times but not four times. This probably came from the passage in Amos 1: 3. "Thus saith Jehovah: For three transgressions of Damascus, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." On account of the teaching which Jesus had done on the subject of forgiveness, Peter raised the number by more than half and said, "How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?" If we were to follow the golden rule and treat others as we wish to be treated, we would soon see that three or even seven times would not begin to meet our needs or the needs of our brother,

and if Peter had thought of his own sins and his own need for forgiveness day after day, he would have set his figure considerably higher.

Until seventy times seven. The margin has "seventy times and seven." But whether the number be seventy-seven or four hundred ninety, there is no difference in the meaning. Jesus means that we are to forgive our brother just as often as he sins and turns from his sin for forgiveness. There is no limit to the mercy of God, no limit to the number of times we are forgiven by him. Hence, we are not to set a limit on the exercise of our mercy. "To keep track of four hundred ninety offenses, one would have to open a set of books with his neighbor, which would be ridiculous. Forgiveness, prayer, and charity know

no arithmetic." It has been suggested that a brother must turn from his sin and ask forgiveness before we are obligated to forgive. It should be added that we are not allowed to nurse a grudge or hold malice in our hearts for that individual until he asks for forgiveness. It is our business to love him, to do good to him, to pray for him, and try to get him to make right the wrong he has done.

II. An Example of Forgiveness (Verses 23-27)

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king. To illustrate and to enforce the teaching Jesus gave with reference to the number of times we are to forgive, he gives a parable of a king forgiving his servant. This king is represented as calling his servants that he might have a reckoning with them. One of the most frightening things in all the plan of salvation is the fact that we must answer to God for what we do. No one can contemplate his own weakness, his own sins, without fearing the judgment. Were it not for the atoning death of Christ, and the Father's willingness to accept that suffering in lieu of our punishment for our sins, none of us could abide the judgment in the great day.

One . . . that owed him ten thousand talents. The question has been raised how an ordinary servant could get so far in debt to his master. The master in this parable is a king, and undoubtedly the servant is a petty king or ruler in some province of the king's realm. However, the parable is so constructed as to picture this servant owing such a sum as would be utterly impossible for him to pay, that the Lord might represent us as utterly impossible to atone for our sins. This he did to increase our appreciation for the forgiveness of God and our conception of our need of the mercy of God. In the margin of the American Standard version, a silver talent is said to be worth about one thousand dollars of our money. Brother McGarvey estimates the silver talent to be worth sixteen hundred dollars in our money. Multiplying this by ten

thousand, we learn that this servant owed his master from ten to sixteen million dollars. If the gold talent was in mind instead of the silver talent, the amount would be multiplied some sixteen to twenty times.

He had not wherewith to pay. Since the servant did not pay his debt, his master was at liberty to put him in jail or to sell him and his entire family in order to satisfy his claim. Were it not for the death of Christ in our behalf, each one of us would be in the position of this servant. We have not wherewith to pay for our sins and iniquities.

The servant therefore fell down, and worshiped him. Realizing his serious condition, the servant did four things, (a) He fell down before him, indicating his humility and his dependence upon his master, (b) He worshiped him; that is, he showed him the respect that a servant should show his master, (c) He begged for patience, showing his confidence in his master to show mercy upon him.

(d) He promised to pay all the debt, but since the debt was so immense, it amounted to promising to give himself to his master for all his life. These four things easily find application in the conduct of one who has sinned against God and who turns to him for forgiveness.

The lord . . . forgave him the debt. Jesus represents the master of this servant as being moved with compassion, and this compassion led him to forgive the servant of that enormous debt. This pictures God being moved with compassion for us, and forgiving us all our sins.

III. Unforgiveness and Its Consequence (Verses 28-35)

Pay what thou owest. This servant of the king who had been forgiven had servants himself who owed him small sums of money. Jesus pictures a servant as owing this one a hundred shillings. The shilling is worth about seventeen cents in our money, hence, this man owed about seventeen dollars. The servant who had been forgiven the enormous sum now demands that his servant, who owes an insignificant sum, pay him or suffer the consequences. The servant had been forgiven. Now the example of

his master and the feeling of gratitude in his heart should compel him to forgive his fellow servant.

His fellow-servant fell down and besought him. Jesus represents this poor servant as making about the same speech to his master that the servant had made to the king. The situations are similar. Only the amount of money owed is different.

He . . . went and cast him into prison. This unforgiving servant acted within the limits of the law when he cast his fellow servant into prison because he could not pay the debt. But people can often be within the limits of the law of the land and be transgressing the law of God. Brethren can be within the limits of the law of the land while suing one another before the courts of the land, but they will be transgressing the law of God. (1 Cor. 6: 1-8.)

They were exceeding sorry. This is the reaction of the fellow servants of this unforgiving servant. He lost the respect and sympathy of his fellow men when he enjoyed the forgiveness of the king but refused to forgive his fellow servant.

Thou wicked servant. This is the language of the king when he learned of the action of this unforgiving servant. The king did not call him wicked because he owed him more than he could pay, but now he does

call him wicked when he refuses to forgive his fellow servant.

Shouldst not thou also have had mercy. The king reminds his servant of the example which had been set in his case and suggests that gratitude for his forgiveness should have caused him to forgive his fellow servant. Every person who enjoys the forgiveness of God but refuses to forgive his fellow man marks himself as an ingrate.

And his lord was wroth. The king now reopens the case of this unforgiving servant, is angry with him, and assesses his penalty according to the penalty which this unforgiving servant exacted of his fellow servant. So we see the way we treat our fellow man becomes the measure by which God will determine his treatment of us.

So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you. As this king treated his unforgiving servant, so our heavenly Father will treat us, if we forgive not everyone our brother from our hearts.

From your hearts. This expression means that forgiveness is not to be mere formality, not to be a matter of saying so many words, but we are to be sincere. Our forgiveness is to be the expression of the feeling of our heart for our brother.

Lessons to Learn

1. Realizing the destructiveness of sin, and the value of a soul, we should never weary in forgiving those who sin against us that their soul may be saved.

2. Since all of us have sinned and we are hopelessly unable to atone for even the least sin, we are wholly dependent upon the mercy of God to forgive us of our sins on the ac-

count of the atoning death of Jesus Christ.

3. Those who are naturally inclined to take offense and harbor malice in their hearts rather than to fully forgive those who do them wrong will have a hard time going to heaven. If you are by nature inclined to be tolerant and forgiving, you should feel extremely grateful and fortunate.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

Do you wish for God to deal with you in justice or in mercy?

What is man at his best? And at his worst?

Name and discuss three ways in which the enormity of our sins is emphasized.

What price did heaven pay for our forgiveness?

What can you say of the freedom and fullness of God's forgiveness?

Name and discuss three ways in which God's mercy obligates us to forgive others.

Give and discuss three reasons why mercy does not obligate us to forgive the impenitent.

Introduction

What did Jesus teach the offended brother to do for the offending brother?
 Discuss the three steps which Jesus tells the offended brother to take.
 What is the primary purpose of this procedure? Is it possible for one to overwork this procedure in his own self-defense?

A Question on Forgiveness

How many times did the Jews teach people to forgive the erring?
 How many times did Peter think the erring should be forgiven?
 How many times did Jesus say for us to forgive the erring?
 What should be our attitude toward the erring between the time he sins against us and the time he asks forgiveness?

An Example of Forgiveness

In what respect does Jesus say the kingdom of heaven is like this king in our text?
 What causes the average person to fear the judgment?
 What one thing takes away our fear of the judgment?
 What amount does Jesus represent the servant as owing his master?

What is there to suggest the type of servant dealt with in our text?
 What do you know of the value of the gold and silver talents?
 What did the king have a right to do with this servant who was unable to pay?
 What four things did this servant do and what is the meaning of these four things?
 What caused the king to forgive his servant?

Unforgiveness and Its Consequence

How did this forgiven servant show his ingratitude?
 Did this forgiven servant violate any law of the land in his dealing with his own servant?
 What was the reaction of the fellow servants of this unforgiving servant?
 What was the consequence of this man's unwillingness to forgive?
 What determines the standard by which we will be judged by our heavenly Father?
 What is the meaning of forgiveness from the heart?
 What is there of interest to you in Lessons to Learn?

Lesson XII—December 20, 1953

THE PRINCIPLE OF TRUE GREATNESS

The Lesson Text

Matt. 20: 17-28

17 And as Je'-sus was going up to Je-ru'-sa-lem, he took the twelve disciples apart, and on the way he said unto them,

18 Behold, we go up to Je-ru'-sa-lem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and scribes; and they shall condemn him to death,

19 And shall deliver him unto the Gen'-tiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify: and the third day he shall be raised up.

20 Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zeb'-e-dee with her sons, worshipping *him*, and asking a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wouldest thou? She saith unto him, Command that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy kingdom.

22 But Je'-sus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about

to drink? They say unto him, We are able.

23 He saith unto them, My cup indeed ye shall drink: but to sit on my right hand, and on *my* left hand, is not mine to give; but *it is for them* for whom it hath been prepared of my Father.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation concerning the two brethren.

25 But Je'-sus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the rulers of the Gen'-tiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.

26 Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister;

27 And whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“And whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant”(Matt. 20: 27.)*

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Luke 22: 24-30.

Daily Bible Readings

December 14. M.....	Christ's Standard of Greatness (Matt. 20: 17-26)
December 15. T.....	Greatest in the Kingdom (Mark 9: 33-37)
December 16. W.	Greatest Gift (Mark 12: 41-44)
December 17. T.....	Greatest Service (Luke 10: 25-37)
December 18. F.....	Greatest Value (1 Cor. 13: 9-13)
December 19. S.....	Reward of Humility (1 Peter 5: 1-7)
December 20. S.....	The Religion of Service (James 1: 19-27)

TIME.—A.D. 29.

PLACE.—Near Jericho.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, and the mother of James and John.

Golden Text Explained

1. Eminence in the Kingdom Not Based on Material Things. The world has its standard of greatness, and if men wish to appear great in the sight of the world, they must comply with the standards of the world. The kingdom of Christ has its standard of greatness, and if we wish to be great in the sight of God, we must comply with the Lord's standard of greatness. But, as usual, these two standards are contrary the one to the other. One may be eminently great in the sight of the world and yet not so much as be in the kingdom of Christ. And one may be in the kingdom of Christ and mistakenly hold to the world's standard of greatness,

(a) Eminence in the kingdom is not attained through material wealth. One may be great in the kingdom of Christ and be wealthy also, but his material wealth does not contribute to his eminence in the kingdom. If a man has amassed a great fortune, lives in a mansion, drives a fine automobile, and dresses in style, the world looks upon him as a great success. But none of these things commend a person to the Lord in the least, (b) The world includes a college or university education in its standard of greatness and sometimes brethren show partiality to, and court the favors of, those who hold high degrees. But one might get all the education possible in the arts and sciences and hold the highest degrees possible to be conferred and yet not be great in the sight of the Lord.

Neither would these things commend an individual to the Lord. If he used them properly, they would increase his ability to do good, but in themselves they would not commend him to the Lord, (c) Neither social nor political position or power will contribute to our eminence in the kingdom. The world will give special favors and honors to those who hold high positions either in the social or the political world, but their eminence in these realms does not give them the right to any eminence in the church of our Lord. Sometimes the wealthy and the educated and the socially eminent people in the community find it difficult to be under the oversight of the elders who do not so rank with them by the standards of the world. They seem to think that, on account of their wealth, their education, and their social position, they should be allowed to run the affairs of the church.

2. Eminence in the Kingdom Is Not the Eminence of Lordship. Jesus said that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and their great ones exercise authority, but it shall not be so among you. Peter said that the elders of the church who are the overseers of the church are not to lord it over the charge allotted to them. (1 Pet. 5: 2, 3.) So if a man aspires to be an elder or a bishop in the church of the Lord in order to satisfy his desire to rule over somebody, he has the wrong idea of eminence in the kingdom.

3. Eminence in the Kingdom Is Attained through Humble Service.

Our text says that those who would be first or eminent in the kingdom must become the servants of all. It should be noticed that neither rank nor position is essential to the performance of this service that makes us great in the kingdom. Some have the idea that, if they could just be an elder or a bishop in the church, they could perform a great service. Others think that, if they could be a preacher of the gospel and devote their whole time to preaching and teaching, they could render a great

service. Others think that, if they could be a song leader or a teacher of a class, they could render a great service. These positions afford opportunities for service, but they are not essential to the service that brings one to the eminence of which Jesus speaks. And one may hold one or more of these positions at the same time, and yet not attain that eminence of which our Lord speaks. Serving the Lord humbly and faithfully to the extent of our ability in whatever position we may occupy is the road to true eminence in the kingdom of the Lord.

Introduction

Perhaps every one of us enjoys attracting the attention of our fellows. And we enjoy their approval and applause for the successes we attain. This desire for attention of our fellows is closely related to the desire for leadership among those with whom we associate. This desire or ambition is not within itself sinful; but if we allow this desire to cause us to seek positions of favor and eminence at the expense of our fellows and cause us to take advantage of our fellows to attain this leadership, we have sinned. James and John were seeking a position of eminence by bringing to bear the influence of those

who were near Jesus. They were taking the short cut to position and power, and at the expense of their fellows. They were using worldly political strategy, which has no place in the kingdom of God. Sometimes preachers hold their place by the appointment of their good friends to the place of elders and deacons. This is low, cheap, political strategy and beneath the dignity of a servant of God. The road to true eminence in the kingdom of God is continued humble service to the greatest number of people possible and not through fixing the eldership so as to retain a place of eminence and leadership.

Exposition of the Text

I. Jesus Foretells His Death (Verses 17-19)

And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. Jesus had left Galilee and was coming south on the east side of the Jordan. Since the incident of healing the blind man at Jericho follows the incidents of our lesson, we conclude that the incidents of this lesson happened while Jesus was still in Perea east of Jericho. Mark tells us that at this time the people who were with him were amazed and afraid. He had told them before enough to cause them to have fearful apprehensions for his safety in Jerusalem.

The Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and scribes. We are told that Jesus took his twelve

disciples, whom he called apostles, in order that he might give them this inside information. Obviously he did not wish for all of his Galilean disciples to know the dangers ahead of him. They might have tried to keep him by force from going into Jerusalem, or they might have organized themselves to give him protection through force. Hence, he kept this information from them.

They shall condemn him to death. If the reader will read the parallel accounts in Mark and Luke, he will find that Jesus foretold seven details of his experiences to be in Jerusalem. Since these were related several days before they occurred, we have proof of the divinity of Jesus. They are as follows: "(1) delivery or betrayal

by Judas; (2) condemnation; (3) delivery to the Gentiles; (4) mocking and the manner of it; (5) scourging; (6) death by crucifixion; (7) resurrection on the third day." (McGarvey.) Our Lord's purpose in announcing these things to his apostles beforehand may have been for two purposes. (a) To discourage them from entertaining any hope of a worldly kingdom and positions of power and influence in it. He knew that they had already been entertaining such ambitions and there was brewing at this time an argument which is included in our lesson text as to who would be greatest and receive the greatest honors in the kingdom. (b) Another purpose for announcing these things beforehand was to prepare them for the things which were to come that they might not be utterly crushed and discouraged by the events that were to transpire in Jerusalem.

II. A Request for Position (Verses 20-23)

Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee. The wife of Zebedee and the mother of James and John seems to have been a near relative of Jesus. If the reader will compare the three accounts of the gospels concerning the women who viewed the cross as Jesus died, he will find in Matt. 27: 56 mention of the mother of the sons of Zebedee. In Mark 15: 40 the same woman is called Salome, while in John 19: 25 the same woman is referred to as the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. This seems to be the true interpretation of these verses; and, if it is true, Salome was his aunt, and James and John were his cousins in the flesh.

Worshipping him, and asking a certain thing. The Greek word for worship here does not necessarily mean to pay divine honors to one. It may mean, and obviously does here, giving him the homage that was due one who was to be the ruler. They were offering their respects to one whom they expected to be king. They would naturally show him this respect in the best way possible, since they were approaching him to make a request for an unusual show of favor.

Mark tells us that they asked Jesus to promise to grant them whatsoever they should ask of him, thus they showed their childishness and selfishness in asking the Lord to promise to give them what they wanted before they named the request.

One on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand. Jesus had some days before promised the twelve apostles that during the period of regeneration, while he should sit on the throne of his glory, these apostles should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matt. 19: 28.) But this was not enough for Salome and her sons. They wished to have two thrones of eminence in the kingdom. They wanted the first and second places of honor in the kingdom, places exalted above the other ten apostles. No doubt they had something upon which to base their hopes for these places of honor, (a) They were the blood relatives of Jesus and as such could expect him to show them favors. (b) They had been with him on special occasions when other apostles were left behind. Peter, James, and John were the three who accompanied Jesus on special occasions as the transfiguration and later in the Garden of Gethsemane. (c) John is called that disciple whom Jesus loved. (John 13: 23.) This love of Jesus for John must have been known at this time, for it was known on the night of the betrayal.

Ye know not what ye ask. In the first place they did not know the nature of the kingdom in which they sought places of eminence. Next, they did not know the price they would have to pay for the first and second places in that kingdom. And, in the third place, they likely did not realize that such greed and selfishness were wholly out of line with the principles of the kingdom which was about to be established.

Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink? Mark adds that Jesus asked if they were able to be baptized with the baptism with which he was to be baptized. This, of course, referred to his suffering by another figure other than the cup. Jesus proceeded to suggest to them something of the price they would

have to pay in order that they might enjoy the places of eminence which they sought. They assured Jesus that they were able to drink his cup, and indeed they did drink that cup. James was beheaded by Herod not many years afterward. John was banished to the Isle of Patmos where most likely he died in exile.

For whom it hath been prepared of my Father. Jesus said they would indeed drink his cup, but to sit on his left hand and his right was not his to give. Jesus did not mean that he had not the right to administer the affairs of his kingdom, but he did mean that "they are not distributed according to caprice or favoritism, but according to the will of the Father and the rules which he has established." (McGarvey.)

III. Reaction of the Ten and the Standard of Greatness Announced (Verses 24-28)

When the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation. The word "it" in this statement refers not to what Jesus said about their drinking the cup but the request which James and John made through their mother of Jesus. The fact that all of the apostles on former occasions argued about who would be greatest in the kingdom suggests that the ten disciples also had such ambitions, but they resented the fact that James and John had beaten them to Jesus and made their request known first. It should be noticed that selfish ambition on the part of some serves well to stir up envy and jealousy in the hearts of others. It should also be noticed in this connection that Peter does not figure prominently in this contention nor does he figure prominently enough to be mentioned in the other instances of contention about who will be greatest in the kingdom. If Jesus had already given him the primacy, as our Catholic friends insist, it seems that he should have spoken in his own self-interest; or if humility would cause him not to speak up, surely someone else would have mentioned the fact that Peter already occupied the first place, and that James and John were out of their place in requesting that it be given to one of them. The truth is

that neither Peter nor the other apostles, nor Jesus himself, knew anything about what our Catholic friends call the primacy of Peter.

The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them. "Ye know that such honors are customary among nations. The kings of the earth raise their favorites to posts of trust and power—they give authority to some over others; but my kingdom is established in a different manner. All are to be on a level. The rich, the poor, the learned, the unlearned, the bond, the free, are to be equal. He will be the most distinguished that shows the most humility, the deepest sense of his unworthiness, and the most earnest desire to promote the welfare of his brethren." (Barnes.)

Not so shall it be among you. The Roman Catholic Church and many highly organized Protestant denominations suffer a severe rebuke in these words. Their great ones—popes, bishops, archbishops, and other dignitaries—exercise authority over those under them. Their organization is patterned after that of the nations of the world, and their men in high places exercise authority as absolute or as that of kings and dictators.

Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister. There is a play on words here in the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh verses with an increasing sense of importance. In verse twenty-six Jesus speaks of those who would become *great*; in verse twenty-seven he speaks of those who would be *first*. While again in verse twenty-six, he says the one who would be great must be your minister, which is our word for deacon, and in verse twenty-seven he says the one who would be first shall be your servant or slave. This suggests that whether we have desire for a moderate position or ambition for the very first position in the kingdom, we must pay the price of humble service.

The Son of man came not to be ministered unto. In speaking of himself he uses the lowly, humble term, "Son of man" instead of the term of dignity and glory "Son of God." He gives himself as an example of one who attained to true greatness

by the principles of the kingdom, the principle of humble service to others. He could have been rich, he could have lived in a mansion and had servants about him, but all these luxuries and pleasures he denied himself in order that he might set an example of humble service to others. The fact that he came not to be ministered unto but to minister should impress us with the fact that if we wish to be great in the sense that our Lord was great, we must not expect men to serve us but that we shall spend our lives in serving others.

To give his life a ransom for many. The word ransom means any price which is paid for the redemption of

captives. We are pictured as being held captive by sin. Jesus gave his life as the ransom price that we might be set free. The mystery of the atonement of Christ through his death is wrapped up in the words of this verse. Since all had sinned, and the penalty for sin is death, all were doomed to eternal death. Since neither man nor angel could atone for the least sin man ever committed, it was necessary that the Son of God himself should become man and die in man's place. The Father agrees to accept his death in lieu of our punishment so that God can be just and the justifier of those who believe in Jesus Christ. (Rom. 3: 21-26.)

Lessons to Learn

1. *Jesus came to this world that he might die.* He went to Jerusalem at the appointed time to suffer death. He said no man took his life from him. He gave his life freely that we might live.

2. *The pride of a mother was used by the ambition of her sons to ask Jesus to play favorites in his king-*

dom. We should be careful lest pride and ambition work our ruin.

3. *That limb on the tree which bears most fruit is bent down nearest to the ground.* So the individual in the kingdom who bears the most fruit and who lives the most useful life is the one who is the most humble and lowly in the kingdom.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

Name and discuss three ways in which the standard of eminence in worldly kingdoms differs from the standard of eminence in the kingdom of heaven.

Do those who have attained greatness by worldly standards find it difficult to accept humble places in the church?

Are the elders or rulers of the church necessarily the greatest in the church?

Is it right for a man to desire the office of bishop simply to satisfy his desire for eminence and authority?

What does rank or position in the church have to do with one becoming great in the kingdom?

What is the standard of true greatness in the kingdom of heaven?

Introduction

Is it right for us to enjoy the attention and applause of our fellow men?

When does this desire become wrong in us?

Show how James and John did wrong in this respect

How do preachers sometimes violate this rule in holding their positions in the church?

Jesus Foretells His Death

What was the attitude of the friends of Jesus toward him as he traveled toward Jerusalem?

Why did Jesus not want all his Galilean disciples to know the dangers ahead of him?

Name seven details which Jesus foretold concerning his death in Jerusalem.

What two purposes might Jesus have had in foretelling these things?

A Request for Position

Do you think James and John were related to Jesus?

Did James and John worship Jesus in the sense of paying him divine honors?

In what way did James and John show their selfishness and childishness?

What high positions had Jesus recently offered his twelve apostles?

On what three reasons could James and John base their hopes for special places of favor?

In what sense did James and John not know what they were asking for?

What price did Jesus suggest would have to be paid for places of eminence in the kingdom?

Did James and John pay such a price for their place in the kingdom?

How did Jesus finally answer their request?

Reaction of the Ten and the Standard
of Greatness Announced
What was the reaction of the ten to James
and John for making this request?
What did the selfish ambition of James
and John stir in the hearts of the other
ten?
What is there in this incident to prove
that Peter was not given a place of pope?
What customary national honors were to
be denied citizens of the kingdom of
heaven?

How does the Catholic church and some
Protestant denominations violate this
rule of eminence?
What is the price one must pay for true
greatness in the kingdom of heaven?
Whom does Jesus give as an example of
true greatness in the kingdom?
What is the meaning of the word ransom?
Can you state the Bible doctrine of atone-
ment as given in our lesson?
What is there of interest to you in Lessons
to Learn?

Lesson XIII—December, 27, 1953

A PICTURE OF THE FINAL JUDGMENT

The Lesson Text

Matt. 25: 31-46

31 But when the Son of man shall
come in his glory, and all the angels
with him, then shall he sit on the
throne of his glory:
32 And before him shall be gath-
ered all the nations: and he shall
separate them one from another, as
the shepherd separateth the sheep
from the goats;
33 And he shall set the sheep on
his right hand, but the goats on the
left.
34 Then shall the King say unto
them on his right hand, Come, ye
blessed of my Father, inherit the
kingdom prepared for you from the
foundation of the world:
35 For I was hungry, and ye gave
me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye
gave me drink; I was a stranger, and
ye took me in;
36 Naked, and ye clothed me; I
was sick, and ye visited me; I was in
prison, and ye came unto me.
37 Then shall the righteous an-
swer him, saying, Lord, when saw we
thee hungry, and fed thee? or
athirst, and gave thee drink?
38 And when saw we thee a
stranger, and took thee in? or naked,
and clothed thee?

39 And when saw we thee sick,
or in prison, and came unto thee?
40 And the King shall answer and
say unto them, Verily I say unto you,
Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of
these my brethren, *even* these least
ye did it unto me.
41 Then shall he say also unto
them on the left hand, Depart from
me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire
which is prepared for the devil and
his angels:
42 For I was hungry, and ye did
not give me to eat; I was thirsty, and
ye gave me no drink;
43 I was a stranger, and ye took
me not in; naked, and ye clothed me
not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited
me not.
44 Then shall they also answer,
saying, Lord, when saw we thee hun-
gry, or athirst, or a stranger, or
naked, or sick, or in prison, and did
not minister unto thee?
45 Then shall he answer them,
saying, Verily I say unto you, Inas-
much as ye did it not unto one of
these least, ye did it not unto me.
46 And these shall go away into
eternal punishment: but the righteous
into eternal life.

Golden Text.—*“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds.”* (Matt. 16: 27.)
Devotional Reading.—Rev. 20: 11-15.

Daily Bible Readings

December 21. M..... The Final Judgment (Rev. 20: 11-15)
December 22. T..... Measure of Responsibility (Luke 12: 41-48)
December 23. W..... The Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25: 14-30)

December 24. T.....	Personal Accountability (Rom. 14: 7-13)
December 25. F.....	The Mercy of God (Psalm 86: 1-7)
December 26. S.....	The Heavenly Inheritance (Rev. 21: 1-7)
December 27. S.....	Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt. 25: 1-13)

TIME.—A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples.

Golden Text Explained

1. Jesus Is Coming, (a) As proof of the fact that Jesus is coming again we have his own words, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself." (John 14: 3.) The language of our golden text as well as our lesson text is also the language of Jesus saying that he will come again, (b) The angels say he is coming again. "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven." (Acts 1: 11.) This is the language of the angels as they stood by the disciples watching Jesus as he disappeared in the clouds when he ascended to glory, (c) The apostles say that Jesus is coming again. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.) "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation." (Heb. 9: 27, 28.) (d) Jesus will come in the glory of his Father. His first coming was in humiliation. His second will be in glory. His first coming was characterized by his taking human nature, living in poverty, being despised, rejected, condemned, crucified, but his second coming will be characterized with the glory of his Father, his angels with him, and he will come as a king to judge.

2. When Jesus Will Come Again.

Ever since Jesus went away, men have been trying to determine the exact year and even the day on which he will return. All of these efforts have proved fruitless, and undoubtedly all other efforts will prove as fruitless as these. In John 6: 40 and 44, we are told that the righteous dead will be raised on the last day. In 1 Thess. 4: 16 we are told that the "dead in Christ" shall rise on the day our Lord descends from heaven. The dead in Christ are the righteous dead, the same class which is spoken of in John 6: 40 and 44. If Jesus is coming on the day the righteous dead are raised and they are to be raised on the last day, we conclude that Jesus is coming again on the last day. There cannot be any days after the last day. Since Jesus is coming on the last day, there can be no days after the day Jesus comes again. Those who believe and preach premillennialism contend that there will be a thousand years or three hundred sixty-five thousand days after the day Jesus comes again, which would be three hundred sixty-five thousand days after the last day. If there are to be a thousand years after the coming of Christ, it is obvious that Jesus will not come on the last day. If there are to be a thousand years after the righteous dead are raised, it follows that the righteous dead will not be raised on the last day. In John 5: 28, 29 we learn that the wicked will be raised the same hour of the same day the righteous are raised, so the wicked will be raised on the last day also. In John 12: 48 we learn that the wicked are to be judged on the last day. They will not be judged in their absence, hence, they will be raised from the dead and present on the last day they are to be judged.

3. Judgment at the Coming of Jesus. Our text says when the Son of man comes in the glory of his Father, *then* shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. That is equal to saying then will he sit in judgment. Paul tells us, "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 Acts 17: 31 Paul says that God "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." And again in 2 Tim. 4: 1 Paul tells us that Jesus Christ is to be the judge of both the living and the dead. In Rev. 20: 11-15 we have a description of that great judgment. In that passage as well as in our text, it is said that every man is judged according to his works, (a) We will be judged according to our works

through the week, as well as our works on Sunday. If many of us could be judged according to our works on Sunday, we would fare much better than if we are judged according to our works on every day of the week, (b) We shall be judged according to our works in society, in business, in politics, as well as our works in religion. If many of us could be judged according to our work in the church, we would stand a much better chance of being saved than if we are judged according to our works in our association with our fellow man in business and in pleasure. But we should remember that our works in every state of life will be taken into consideration in that great and awful day. This does not mean that we can merit heaven by our good works. But it does mean that doing right, doing good to others, is a condition of eternal salvation, that if we neglect to do good unto others, we shall fail to be saved.

Introduction

There has always been much speculation about the things that will transpire on the last day of time. The Bible nowhere gives us a catalog of the events of that great and final day, but scattered throughout the New Testament there are a number of things said to transpire on that day. (a) Both the righteous and the wicked will be raised on the last day. In John 6: 40-44 the wicked and the righteous will be raised in the last day. In John 5: 28, 29 he tells us that the good and the bad will be raised the same hour. If they are raised the same hour, they must be raised on the same day. Those who think that the wicked will be raised a thousand years later than the righteous must deny this statement of Jesus. Not only that, they must deny that the righteous will be raised on the last day if there are a thousand years after the day the righteous are raised, (b) Jesus is coming on the last day. We have already seen that he is coming on the day that the righteous are raised. Since the righteous will be raised on the last day, we conclude that the

coming of Jesus will be on the last day. (c) The final judgment will be on the last day. Many doubt that all people of all times will be gathered in one vast assembly for judgment. However, the Bible teaches that such is so. In Matt. 11: 20-24 we learn that the people of Tyre and Sidon and also of Sodom will be in the judgment with the generation to which Jesus talked. In Matt. 12: 41-42 we learn that the people of Nineveh and the queen of the south will be in the judgment with that generation. In 2 Thess. 1 we learn that both the good and the bad, the persecuted and the persecutors of Thessalonica will be in the judgment in the final day. Here we have six generations out of six different nations out of about two thousand years who are declared by our Lord to be together in the judgment in the day of judgment. We may safely conclude from this that all nations simply means all the people of all the times will be in the judgment, (d) The earth and the works therein shall be destroyed on the last day. In 2 Pet. 3: 10 we learn that these things are

to be on the "day of the Lord." This expression means the day the Lord comes again. We learn that the Lord will come again on the last day, the earth and the works therein shall be burned up on the last day. (e) New heavens and a new earth will be established on that day. "But, ac-

cording to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. 3: 13.) And John tells us, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more." (Rev. 21: 1.)

Exposition of the Text

I. The Coining of Jesus and the Gathering of the Nations (Verses 31-33)

When the Son of man shall come in his glory. Jesus uses the term, "the Son of man," to suggest that he will still retain his human nature when he comes in judgment. Many have the idea that Jesus retained his human nature for only the period of his life on earth, that when he went back to the Father he went back to that form in which he existed before he came to earth. (Phil. 2: 6, 7.) But that Jesus is still human as well as divine we learn from Paul's statement that the mediator between God and man is himself man. (1 Tim. 5.) And Paul tells us that God will judge the world "by the man whom he hath ordained." (Acts 17: 31.) Our lesson text says that Jesus shall come in his own glory while our golden text says that he shall come in the glory of his Father. It is called the glory of his Father because it was given him by the Father. (John 17: 1.) It is called his own glory because he possesses it, is worthy to possess it in his own right.

All *the angels with him.* The angels are said to have a part in the work of separating the wicked from the righteous (Matt. 13: 49, 50).

Then shall he sit on the throne of his glory. Many think that this verse teaches that Jesus will begin to sit on the throne of his glory at his second coming. That would mean that he is not now on his throne and that in turn would mean that we have a king with a kingdom but no throne on which to sit. Others have difficulty in seeing that Christ will sit on his own throne and God's throne at the same time. They should remember that the kingdom over which he is king is called the kingdom of God

and the kingdom of Christ. It should not be difficult, therefore, to see how the throne in that kingdom is the throne of God as well as the throne of Christ. "Christ's judgment throne is called his throne of glory because in the day that he sits upon it his glory will be exhibited to men more brightly than ever before; for in the decisions of that hour, his mercy, justice, and righteousness will most fully appear, and all the obscure things in the past administration of his government will be clear." (McGarvey.)

Before him shall be gathered all the nations. Many believe that this simply means all the nations that are on earth at the time of the second coming of Christ. But there is no indication of such limitation in the language or anywhere in the entire context. Such a conclusion has to be read into the text and that in spite of other passages as we have seen teaching to the contrary.

Shall separate . . . the sheep from the goats. Sheep are used in both the Old Testament and the New to represent the people of God. They are so used because they are an emblem of innocence, harmlessness, and submission. Goats are of somewhat opposite character to that of sheep, and consequently are well used to represent the wicked. (Ezek. 34: 17.) Jesus says the sheep shall be put upon the right hand, which denotes a place of reward and honor, but the goats shall be placed on the left hand, which is a place of dishonor. (Eccles. 10: 2.)

II. Jesus Deals with the Righteous (Verses 34-40)

Come, ye blessed of my Father. Jesus represents himself as a king welcoming those who are placed upon his right hand. They are called the

blessed of the Father, meaning that they are not to receive the blessings of God in Christ.

Inherit the kingdom prepared for you. The word kingdom here does not refer to the kingdom over which Jesus is now the king. It is simply that place which Jesus has gone to prepare for us. (John 14: 1-3.) This kingdom or place existed and was prepared in the mind and purpose of God from before the foundation of the world. God has always intended that his children should enjoy a place of glory and of peace and holiness. Notice what Paul has to say of the purpose of God before the foundation of the world in Eph. 1: 3-5 and Rom. 8: 29, 30.

For I was hungry. Jesus represents himself here as being hungry and thirsty, and these on the right side were moved with pity and gave him something to eat and drink. He represents himself as being a stranger, that is, a foreigner among these people, and they treated him kindly and were hospitable to him. He represents himself as naked and sick, and these people visited him and clothed him. He represents himself as being in prison for the sake of right and truth, and these people were not afraid nor ashamed to come and visit him while he was suffering for the right. In this passage, Jesus is represented as saying that those on the right hand will be blessed of the Father because they did these things. He does not mean that these are the only conditions of salvation, but he does mean to teach that people cannot be saved unless they are willing to do these things.

Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? Some have argued that people cannot do intelligent Christian service as is here mentioned without knowing that they serve Christ. The general lesson is clear that, when these people had so served their fellow man, they had served Jesus Christ. Paul taught the same lesson when he said, "And thus, sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, ye sin against Christ." (1 Cor. 8: 12.) And when Jesus appeared to Saul of Tarsus, he asked him why he was persecuting him. When Saul was per-

secuting the disciples, he was persecuting Jesus. (Acts 9: 4.) Notice also that Jesus says when we do these things even unto the least of his brethren, we do them unto him. This should encourage us to be as willing to serve the poor and the ignorant as well as those that are more fortunately situated.

III. Jesus Deals with the Wicked (Verses 41-46)

Depart from me, ye cursed. This is the language of Jesus the King to them upon the left hand. The righteous are called *blessed*, while those on the left hand are called the *cursed*. Both the blessings and the curses are from God.

Into the eternal fire. There has been much argument whether there will be literal fire in hell. Some contend that, since worms are spoken of as being there, they cannot endure the fire. Others say that hell is a place of outer darkness, but that fire would banish the darkness. We would do better to accept all of these terms simply as terms of punishment since for this purpose they are used by our Lord. Our Lord means to teach that hell will be as unbearable to the resurrected body as fire and brimstone and the gnawing of worms in outer darkness would be to our present physical bodies.

For I was hungry, and ye did not give me to eat. Jesus represents these as being on the left hand and as being sent into eternal fire because they had not fed the hungry nor helped those who were in need. Those who do not believe are condemned already. (John 3: 18.) Those who refuse to obey the gospel and become Christians are already condemned to eternal punishment. (2 Thess. 1: 7-10.) It is not the duty of the devil's servants and children to feed and clothe and care for the poor and needy. "For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness." (Rom. 6: 20.) In this passage of our text, Jesus contends that the people on his left hand should have cared for the poor and the needy. Since it is not the duty of the devil's children to do that, we conclude that he is not talking to the devil's children or servants, but

that these are the children of the servants of Christ, whose duty it was to feed and clothe and care for the poor and needy but who refused or neglected to do so. It is not contended that the wicked are not present in the great judgment. They are present, for all nations are gathered there, but the two divisions of the sheep and the goats, and our Lord's treatment of them, show that he was dealing only with the servants of God. Those servants who did their duty were blessed. Those servants of God who neglected or refused to do their duty were punished. It is difficult to conceive of Jesus telling a servant of the devil that he should have fed and clothed the Lord in the person of the poor.

These shall go away into eternal punishment. The word *eternal* is used to indicate both the length of the punishment of the wicked and the happiness of the righteous. If

the wicked are not punished eternally, then the righteous have no hope of being happy eternally. When consciousness ceases, punishment ceases. One may abuse a body that is unconscious, but he cannot punish an unconscious body; so, if the punishment is to be eternal, the consciousness of the wicked must be eternal. It is not to be supposed that these are the only things which are great enough to send one to the place of punishment, but it should be remembered that these sins are sufficiently serious to condemn one to eternal punishment. Some have the idea that only murder, adultery, and such like sins will cause one to be lost eternally, but in this passage Jesus teaches that failing to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, or visit the sick are sufficiently serious to condemn one to eternal punishment in a place prepared for the devil and his angels.

Lessons to Learn

1. *Paul speaks of the second coming of Jesus as a blessed hope and glorious appearing.* (Tit. 2: 13.) Reader, are you looking for the second coming of Christ as something to be hoped for, as a glorious occasion? If not, you should search your heart and life to see whether or not you are ready for his coming.

2. *Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.* We must be prepared (a) as to the proper relationship with Christ, (b) as to character.

Without both the proper relationship and the proper character an individual is unprepared to meet God.

3. *Hell is a place prepared for the devil and his angels.* It was not prepared for human beings. If any human being goes there, he will do so because he chose to go there. It will be because he chose rather to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season than to endure the sufferings of Christ.

Questions for the Class

What is the topic of this lesson?

Repeat the golden text from memory.

Give the time, place, and persons of this lesson.

Golden Text Explained

What did Jesus say of his second coming?

What did the angels say of his coming again?

What do the apostles say about the second coming of Jesus?

Contrast the first coming of Jesus with his second coming.

What proof do we have that Jesus will come on the last day?

How does premillennialism contradict the teaching that Jesus will come on the last day?

What proof do we have that the wicked will be raised the same day the righteous are raised?

Can you prove that there will be a judgment day when the Lord comes?

According to the Scriptures, who is to conduct the judgment?

Can we expect to be judged on the basis of our actions on any one day of the week?

Can we expect to be judged on our actions in any one phase or relationship of life?

Does the fact that we are to be judged by our works mean that we can merit heaven by our good works?

Introduction

Name and discuss five things which will transpire on the last day.

What effect does this teaching have on the doctrine of premillennialism?

The Coming of Jesus and the Gathering of the Nations

What evidence do we have that Jesus
is still man as well as God?

Who will be attending Jesus on his sec-
ond coming?

Is Jesus now on his throne?

Does Jesus now sit on God's throne?

Why is his throne called the throne of
his glory?

How many are included in the term "all
nations" as used in our lesson?

What terms are used to signify the right-
eous and the wicked?

Jesus Deals with the Righteous

What is the inheritance of the righteous?

On what conditions is this inheritance
bestowed?

How did these righteous serve Jesus?

How may we feed and clothe Jesus today?

Does this emphasize the importance of
being careful to do good unto the hum-
ble and insignificant?

Jesus Deals with the Wicked

What is the sentence Jesus pronounces
upon the wicked?

Name some terms used to describe hell
and tell whether you think these are
used in their literal sense.

Are the servants of the devil obligated
to feed and clothe Jesus?

What does this lesson do for the doctrine
of the impossibility of apostasy?

What does our lesson teach on the doc-
trine of eternal punishment?

What does our lesson teach as to the seri-
ousness of the sin of neglect?

What is there of interest to you in Lessons
to Learn?