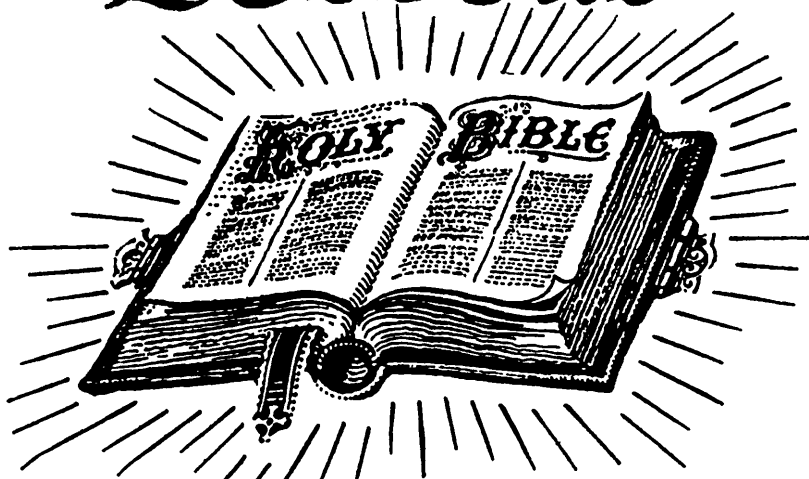


1820

Bible Lessons



**"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED" II Cor. 3:18**

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 4, No. 3
July, Aug., Sept.,
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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

Vol. 4

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THEME FOR THIRD QUARTER, 1972



We are continuing the study of the Book of John, which was written by the one whose name it bears. John is supposed to have been about 25 years old when he started following our Lord and Saviour. He is thought to be the only Apostle who died a natural death, and lived to be about one hundred years old. "Most probably this epistle was written at Ephesus about the year of eighty-six A. D." (Clarke's Commentary.)

In this quarter, we note the Jews' rising opposition to Jesus and His teachings. They conspired together to kill Him. Those proud, self-righteous rulers closed their eyes to the Light and were given up to still greater blindness than before. The judgment hour will open the eyes of many but that will be too late. Jesus longed for their salvation. He did greater miracles and finally raised Lazarus from the dead, trusting that they would see and acknowledge the power of God in Him, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

The last nine chapters of John tell about the last week of our Lord here on earth. In this quarter, we will study what happened on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday before His crucifixion.

—Sis. A. Marie Miles

July 2, 1972

MARKS OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

John 8:20-23; 28-36

John 8:20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Memory Verse: And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8:32.

Central Thought: True freedom in all spheres can come in one way only and that is by the Truth, which is Christ.

Word Definition: "Lifted up, is a common mode of expression, among the Jewish writers, for to die or to be killed." (Clarke's Commentary.) Freedom means: quality or state of being free as, liberation from slavery, or of freedom from guilt or condemnation.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson are words spoken in the treasury of the temple. The treasury is also called the court of the women. In this court were thirteen chests. "In the thirteenth only the women were permitted to put their offerings."—Lightfoot. Probably the other twelve were placed there for offerings in reference to the twelve tribes of Israel. At other times our Lord sat in this court to teach the people, which is mentioned in the Bible.

Verse 21. "Ye shall seek me." When the Roman armies come against you, (which came to pass according to the prophecy of Jesus after His death) ye shall in vain seek for the help of the Messiah (Jesus), whom you reject and will crucify shortly.

Verse 22. "Ye are from beneath." You are altogether earthly, sensual and devilish. You are like your father, the devil, whose servants you are. The Jews verified this character in murdering the innocent Lord Jesus and afterwards to escape famine, etc., put an end to their own lives.

Verse 33. "We were never in bondage to any man." In reading Bible history of their fathers, we find it full of recitals of their servitude. They served as slaves in Egypt, in Chaldea, under the Persians, under the Macedonians and they were even at that time under the Roman government. This is a false statement that they made but this proves they were speaking under the influence of the spirit of the devil, whose servants they were.

Verse 30. "Many believed on him." We find that "the sun that hardens the clay, softens the wax." As it is today, the gospel hardens those who reject it and it becomes death to their souls, but to those who receive it, the gospel brings eternal life.

The servant is not in the family nor has any right to the inheritance. But the son, the legitimate son, can make any servant free or give him any part of the inheritance as he may please. Christ is the Son of God and He can free anyone who seeks Him from the bondage of sin and give them an inheritance. The mark of true discipleship is the continuing in Christ after being freed from sin. The true disciple is marked by his obedience to the words of Jesus. He has joy and is active in telling others about Christ and promoting the kingdom of God. In the home the women are gentle, helping others, seeking to bring the wanderers back to the fold and caring for their families.

Lesson References: 2 Cor. 3:2; Gal. 2:20; Gal. 3:28; Gal. 5:13, 14.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where and to whom did Jesus speak the words of our lesson? 2. How can we be "from above" and not "from beneath" or of this world? 3. Discuss how we can be like Christ and "do always those things that please" our Father, God. 4. How can we be a "servant of sin"? 5. Discuss the word freedom as used in today's events. Discuss true freedom of the soul in Christ, and from whom are we free and how?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

Freedom is a much abused word and idea today. We hear about freedom marches and the freedom promoters. It is forgotten that there cannot for any created being be absolute freedom within the circle of created things. Freedom is more or less controlled or conditioned in the material and other spheres. We know that even in social and political spheres, freedom is limited. The kind of liberty claimed by communists, socialists or anarchists is not freedom. We do know that political, religious, social and individual freedoms are glorious and in their place and measure, are to be desired.

There is only One who is absolutely free and that is God. He is so because He is absolutely perfect and is the Creator. Sin cannot dwell within Him and the devil cannot influence, nor have any power, over His will and action. Then to be in God, we can be absolutely free in our souls. Only through Christ, who is the mediator between us and God, can we obtain this freedom. Even though a child of God may be bound to certain limitations while on this earth, his soul can be free in Christ. This is the freedom that Jesus was pointing out to the Jews and also to you and me. Through truth, which is Christ, we can be liberated from the bondage of the devil. To receive this freedom, we must be willing to yield up our wills to the will of God. At first sight, this might seem to be the laying aside of freedom, but in reality it is our truest freedom. Only by doing this can our hearts and lives be in harmony with the purpose of our creation, or eternal purpose of Him who formed us for His glory. In willingly rejecting sin and willingly turning to God, we are set at liberty from the bondage of the devil and sin. We can then move in accordance with the divine laws of our being and be in favor with our Maker. Those who "continue in my [Jesus'] word, then are ye my disciples indeed." We are then in Christ. We are "from above." Those who are from beneath and the world are full of pride, hypocrisy, irreligious, hatred of light, malice against truth, and have obstinate unbelief in their hearts.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It is a hard thing for folks to realize that the first man that anyone falls in bondage to is himself! Man was designed to recognize and honor God in first place in his heart. God was able to fill that place in the beginning, and man was blessed by it. But when man defiled himself with sin, then God could no longer associate Himself as closely with a fallen man and remain pure Himself. When God withdrew from man's heart, man automatically took up the reins, and began to direct his

own way. As a result, the most important one to each individual becomes himself, and so he begins to cultivate his own wants and desires. Human desire is to please the flesh. The Scripture catalogs the scope of sin under these three headings: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. All of these are dedicated to the fulfillment of fleshly desire.

Man will please himself at the expense of God's will. There is only one logical reason for this kind of behavior, and that is that man would rather please himself than to please God. God's children are in obedience to Him, and His will for them is first in their hearts and also in their lives. To know the place God should and wants to fill in our hearts and lives and then refuse to allow Him that privilege becomes sin. Sin is a captivating sort of thing that knows no satisfaction. Folks declare, "I am free to do as I please," which is true, but know this: to follow the will of the flesh is to walk in sin. No man can be self-willed and yet please God. This is the bondage from which Jesus sought to free men when He was here; His mission is yet the same today. Man's ways always lead into sin. There are only two masters. Jesus said we would either hate the one and love the other, else we would hold to the one and despise the other.

—C. W. Wilson

A REPEAL GIRL (Do you know her?)

Once I was an innocent, beautiful, virtuous, religious, ambitious girl. I went to school and had lofty ideals of doing big things in life. I hoped some day to have a good husband and a happy home. I loved my church; I believed my Bible; I went to Sunday School; and was inspired to help the needy. I was much loved and admired by many friends.

Then from other folks whom I thought to be my friends too, I caught the "Repeal Fever." I cut my hair, wore shorts and slacks, shortened my skirts, made up my eyes, lips and polished my fingernails. I was made to believe that my happiness depended on my being "with it" and that only popularity, pleasure and a sporty life were ideal; and was told that "everybody was doing it."

After hearing the cigarette "ads" on the radio, seeing them on TV and in the magazines and on the billboard; and watching my so-called friends indulging, I, too, was influenced to smoke, and got a great "kick" out of sitting in public places, puffing in other people's faces.

Having lost my desire to go to church or to be with the church folk, I went with the crowds to the dance halls, the bars and the cocktail rooms. I soon became brazen enough to

call for a drink at the bar. Soon I learned to gamble; played the races, and had many after-midnight dates.

Now I have had my fling. I have been a "modern girl." I have had my "personal liberty." My virtue is gone; my religion is gone; my old time good friends are gone; my pride and holy ideals are gone. Here I am, an ugly, blear-eyed, blotch-faced, cigarette-stinking, half-crazed drunken sot. I've repealed everything that was good, noble, refined, beautiful, moral and spiritual in my life.

The few friends I have are as miserable as I. My body is diseased; my heart broken; my noble ideals crushed; my motherly instincts dead; my good family name disgraced; my character ruined; my ambition gone; and my soul is damned forever. My past is evil; my present is hell; and my future dark. Here I am waiting for death to end it all for I am nothing now but just a Repeal Girl.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6.

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:9, 10.

July 9, 1972

WHO IS YOUR FATHER?

John 8:38, 41, 42, 44; 1 John 2:22, Rev. 21:8, Romans 8:14, 15; John 8:48, 49, 56-59

John 8:38 I speak that which I have seen of my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. [the devil]

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

1 John 2:22 [John said] Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is anti-Christ, that denieth the Father and the Son.

Rev. 21:8 [John heard a voice, saying] But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Rom. 8:14 [Paul said] For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

John 8:48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil: but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Memory Verse: The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Romans 8:16.

Central Thought: The development of intellect and culture has done nothing to destroy the power of the devil over mankind. Only through belief and obedience to Christ can we become a son of God.

Word Definition: Father means "to be the father of; to beget." Beginning means "the start, origin, a point in space or time at which a thing begins." Abode means "abiding place;

dwelling." Abba is a Syriac word which means "filial affection and respect." Parental tenderness seems to have been meant by our Lord in Mark 14:36 when He said, "Abba, Father" and complete submission to His Father.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Verse 41. "We are not born of fornication." The Jews were boasting that they did not have idolatrous blood in their veins but were Hebrews of the Hebrews. Phil. 3:5. They were God's chosen people, they claimed, and did not worship images. Jesus stated that the fact that they had no spiritual affinity with Him showed that this supposition could not be entertained.

We do not know where the devil came from, neither do we know where God came from. The Bible does not tell us. The devil never dwelt in God's presence nor in heaven. Heaven is a holy place and sin never has been nor ever can be there. We must rightly divide the written word of God. Some try to piece together a story that the devil fell out of heaven after having a desire to be great. They refer to Isaiah chapter 14, but in reading the context you will note that it is speaking of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon (verse 4), who was proud and lifted up. In Luke 10:18, Jesus is speaking of the power that the devil had over people through the exalted place that he had in their hearts which was conquered through Jesus Christ's death, resurrection and ascension. Write us about a book on this subject, titled "Was The Devil Ever In Heaven?"

"The history of Simon Magus reminds us that the people of Samaria, from the least to the greatest, had been for a long time under the influence of his sorceries (Acts 8:9); and it is probable that there is a special connection in the words here, 'Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.' " Hom. Com. The Jews no doubt had heard of Jesus' journey through Samaria and the Jews hated the Samaritans.

Note the rising hatred of the formalist Jews and the ruling classes in Jerusalem. All their measures against Jesus had been in vain. Now they are resorting to violence. We also note that their hatred rested on a hatred of truth. Truth has a faithful ally in a person's conscience, which demands obedience to truth. Witnesses to Christ and His power were all around them. But with the Jews, it was as with Voltaire (the vowed infidel), who said, "If on the market-place of Paris, before the eyes of a thousand men—and my own also—a miracle were to occur, I should much rather doubt the two thousand and two eyes than believe it." This is the sin of unbelief. The true spring of hate is from "the carnal mind." Romans 8:7. The foundation of this is the love of self and sin. These are the foes within man against Christ.

—M. Miles

Lesson References: Gal. 4:1-9; Gen. 3:1-13; Heb. 2:15; 2 Cor. 5:5.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who are the two fathers that are discussed in our lesson? 2. Discuss how children are in mannerisms like their parents. Compare this to the acts of those who are children of God and children of the devil. 3. What proof in our lesson do we have that the Jews were obeying their father? 4. What does our lesson tell us about the devil? 5. How can a person be freed from the power of the devil?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

We often hear the remark that God would not send His children to hell. That is true. But who are God's children? How did we become the children of our earthly father? We were born into the family. We were then heirs of his family. Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." We had a natural birth but we must have a spiritual birth to become God's children. Jesus plainly said, "If God were your Father, ye would love me." If we love Jesus He has told us we would "keep his commandments." Our lesson says if we are the "sons of God," we will be "led by the Spirit of God." There is an inner desire and love which was planted by God when we confessed and turned away from sin and the power of the devil over us, that motivates our lives. We are in constant communion with good and the Spirit of God. The Word of God that the child of God studies becomes a guide and a part of his inner thoughts. Just as Jesus was in constant communion with His Father and did those things pleasing in His sight, the child of God is the same.

On the other hand, there are those who have yielded to the devil. They, like the Jews, have rejected Jesus and His teachings. They are of their father, the devil. They are constantly receiving impulses to all kinds of evil works from their father. They let their minds dwell upon evil reports, lustful hearings and readings, and selfish desires which motivate them. As they turn away from truth, it turns to hatred. How sad! The devil governs his household. Of which father are you?

Jesus came to free us from the clutches of the devil. Each person has been given a free-will choice as to whom they want to serve. We can be delivered from the "spirit of bondage" and we can become a child of God. Our souls can cry out, "Abba, Father."

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Here is a lesson that deals with the very basic fundamentals of Christianity. What is it that determines a man's true condition of heart? Is it the profession he makes with his mouth? All too often what an individual pictures himself to be in his own eyes and what he really is are far removed from each other. Man is not able to obtain a true evaluation of himself without the assistance of the Word and Spirit of God. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "I am the light of the world." He came to make known to us what God wanted men to be and to provide the means whereby men might become what God wanted them to be. When men loudly proclaim that they are sons of God, and yet there proceeds forth from their lives a steady flow of envy, hatred, malice, strife, selfishness, and greed, how can much confidence be placed in their profession?

What a contrast that is to the heart and life which is given to God. Out of it will flow love and good will, humility and meekness, honesty and truth. These two examples are obviously the result of the influence of two different masters. Both are proclaiming the same testimony and affirming sonship to God, but which one will really convince the hearers? When the characteristics of Satan begin to manifest themselves in a man's life, his loud profession won't be able to cover for these characteristics. Jesus recognized and identified them exactly for what they were and told them plainly to their faces, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

Nothing short of a work in the heart can change that condition. If a man wants to change with all his heart, and will seek God in repentance, there is mercy and forgiveness waiting at the throne of grace.

—C. W. Wilson

CHRIST—or COMMUNISM?

I have lived behind the Iron Curtain. What I write, I write from experience. I speak on behalf of our friends in Christ behind that Iron Curtain, and at the same time utter a word of warning about the dangers that could confront this freedom-loving land of America. The religion of the Anti-christ is arising with great power. The Church of the Living God needs to be awakened to the reality of the danger. I am opposed—heart, soul, and body—to the forces of godlessness because I know that they are the enemies of our God and our Saviour. I have been here only a few months in America, but already I have seen, as I have seen in my own country, the

same godless force slowly and insidiously creeping like a snake, trying to crawl its way into this land of the free.

It is bad enough to view the blight of Europe from afar; but to realize that Communism is right on your own door-step should fill each one of you with a deep concern. I am sure that no one wishes to exchange the glory of the Stars and Stripes for the blood-stained hammer and sickle. Your country is the stronghold of freedom, and it is my belief that if this stronghold were to be destroyed, the world would enter an age darker than the Middle Ages.

There is a great issue at stake. It is Christ or Anti-Christ. Do not underestimate the power of Communism. Do not be taken in by their so-called ideals. Communism is compromising only until the day arises when it will summon its godless forces in the all-out battle against the Church of Christ. The Cross and the hammer and sickle cannot march hand in hand.

I have met so many Communists in Europe and in my conversation with them I asked them the question, "If the Communist lands of Russia and behind the Iron Curtain are so wonderful, why is it that millions escape from their borders?" Also, "If life is a paradise in those godless lands, why is there a need for an Iron Curtain?" Surely, the Iron Curtain is erected for only one purpose, and that is to keep people from escaping. I know for a fact that if the Iron Curtain were lifted, you would find millions crossing from the godless lands of the East to the liberty-loving lands of the West; while only a handful would take the risk of going eastward to the lands behind the Iron Curtain.

—Name withheld.

July 16, 1972

ADVERSITY RESULTED IN BLESSING

John 9:1-13, 16

John 9:1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

Memory Verse: For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. Luke 1:49.

Central Thought: While it is recognized that much of the terrible suffering in the world is the direct consequence of gross sinfulness, yet it is also clear that much of the world's suffering is often intended as a trial of the faith and patience of the saints.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus left the temple, where the Jews were going to stone Him, and probably, which was according to His custom, went to the mount of Olives. The next day was the Sabbath and Jesus met the blind man sitting in a public place asking for alms.

"The doctrine of the transmigration of souls appears to have been an article in the creed of the Pharisees, and it was pretty general both among the Greeks and the Asiatics. . . .

(Some) believed the souls of men were sent into other bodies for the punishment of some sins that they had committed in a pre-existent state. This seems to be the foundation of the disciple's question to our Lord. . . . (They believed that) blindness is a punishment for having killed his mother: but this person, they say, before his new birth, will suffer many years' torment in hell." (Clarke) This is surely an erroneous teaching and is not according to scripture. The Bible says that the righteous judgments of God will be rendered "to every man according to his deeds." Romans 2:5, 6, 16.

"Siloam was a fountain under the walls of Jerusalem toward the east, between the city and the brook Kidron. . . . Its waters were collected in a great reservoir for the use of the city; and a stream from it supplied the pool of Bethesda." (Clarke's Commentary)

It was about six months after this miracle that our Lord was crucified.

The making of the clay was considered work by the Jews on the Sabbath day.

Let us note the growing hostility against our Lord and Saviour.

This is the sixth miracle recorded by John in his book.

Lesson References: Acts 28:4; John 11:9; Isaiah 40:6; Isaiah 35:5.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did this blind man's affliction bring a blessing to him and others? 2. What did Jesus mean when He said He must work while it was day? 3. After Jesus left this world who was then the light of the world? 4. In what way did obedience to the words of Jesus bring a blessing to the blind man? 5. Can you tell more about "a man called Jesus"? What does He mean to you in your life?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

This poor man was known by others to be hopelessly born blind from birth. But thank God he met the Saviour one day as he sat in darkness, not only physically but spiritually. Our Saviour, who is the Light of the world, is our great High Priest. Jesus, who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," looked with pity and compassion upon this blind man. This man was a chosen vessel, through which "the works of God should be made manifest." No doubt, this man had been an outcast of his family and others. Sitting in darkness from his birth he knew very little of what went on in the world. His life had been a life of seclusion in one sense. Yet God had

a purpose in it all. No doubt the talk about Jesus and His mighty works were uppermost in his mind. He needed desperately to meet this Jesus. We do not know what all went on in his mind nor the prayers that he might have prayed. We only see the results of his firmness in his testimony to the Pharisees, after he was healed.

Did the blind man doubt he could find the pool? Did he hesitate to be seen with clay blotches upon his eyes? No, but he went, washed and came seeing. Praise our God from whom all blessings flow! Obedience brought results. His joy knew no bounds. He had met the Saviour. He had been touched. His faith took in healing. His soul was touched. Now he believed in Jesus. Oh, the sweetness of his healing and the blessings that followed his adversity! Can there be some hidden sweetness in your pain? There was in the blind man's suffering. God looked at His only Son and it is said, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him." Isa. 53:10. But of the results of this bruising it is said, "He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Jesus is now sitting at the right hand of God. Do you know that there is a pain that will give cause for rejoicing? Have faith in God and be willing to trust His wisdom as well as His power. —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Into every man's life somewhere along the journey there comes a visit from the Son of God. How do we know this? He said, "I am the light of the world. By me if any man enter in he shall be saved." And again, "There is none other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved." No man will be able to face God in the judgment and declare, "I am not saved because I never had a chance." The Word declares that HE is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world! What is the first thing light does when it enters the heart? It makes a man know that he is a sinner and lost before God. Of what good would that information be without a means of escape? That is exactly what man fell into from the garden. He knew he was out of God's pleasure and unless God would have special mercy upon him he would be lost. God saw that plight and began to make provision for a deliverance. He looked forward to a time when He would sacrifice His own Son to deliver sinful man. They of old looked forward to that offering that God made and we of later time look back to Him as the perfect sacrifice and atonement for our sins. Without Him there is no hope for anyone. With Him there is hope for everyone. No other one has offered to humanity what the Son of God has, nor had the impact on

civilization in general that He has. Every man comes into the world with some quality or characteristic that God can use to touch his life, make Himself known and offer an opportunity for deliverance. If the individual accepts, he can be saved. If he refuses, he will be lost. The man in the lesson accepted and the Lord wonderfully blessed him. The multitudes about were rejecting for themselves, and did not want to see anyone else receive the blessing of salvation. How sad!

—C. W. Wilson

ADVERSITY CONTRIBUTES TO SUCCESS

The bee-keeper tells us that the queen bee lays her eggs in tiny hexagonal cells of wax which have been marvelously prepared for this purpose. Just enough honey is stored in each cell to supply the needs of the tiny bee until it is time for him to emerge into the open. Then follows a great struggle to get through the wax to the outside. It is the strait gate for the bee, so difficult that in the agony of his exit, the bee rubs off the membrane which binds his wings. To emerge into the world without this struggle is to be unable to fly and it is to the bee, a death warrant, for the others will at once sting him to death. Have you been congratulating yourself on having an easy time? Beware lest, like the bees, you lose your wing power and perish miserably in the dust!

BESSIE SEES HER DUTY

Bessie had been pondering over what she could do to be doing something for the Lord. One day the proposition came for her to go to THE GOSPEL TRUMPET office to work. Oh! She wasn't expecting this. How could she leave her precious mother. Many of her cherished hopes for the future arose before her. Her plan, to do all she could for her mother in her declining years, came up before her; and as she thought of it she became very sad. She remembered that she had consecrated to do anything the Lord might require of her, but she did not see how she could do this. For many days Bessie bore this heavy burden; and, not being strong, she began to fail in health. The course of the disease was rapid, and in a few weeks she was not only confined to her bed, but seemingly very near death. When her father suggested consulting a doctor, Bessie said, "I know that God will heal me, if for the best; and, if not, I would rather die." And she added mentally, "I would rather die than to leave home."

Bessie at last became so low that she could not be left alone day or night. As her mother sat beside her one day, holding her hand, she said, "I believe, dear, that God wants to heal you and use you for Himself. I feel like asking our

elder, Sister Smith, to come and anoint you with oil according to James 5:14, 15. I am sure God will heal you."

Sister Smith was brought as soon as possible. Bessie appeared to be resigned to die, but when Sister Smith asked her, "My dear, if God heals you, are you willing to leave your father, mother, and home to preach the gospel?"—Bessie very emphatically interrupted, "No, I will never preach!"

"Ah! there is the point in your consecration that you have not reached," replied Sister Smith. "You must be willing to do anything that will bring the most honor to God's name, and to work where He can get the most glory out of your service. It may be the Lord will never require you to preach; but He wants the willingness on your part, just as much as if He wanted to make a minister of you."

After some time, Bessie answered that she would be willing to do anything that she knew God required.

Sister Smith then said, "Now I feel that everything is out of the way, and we can ask God to heal you." As she applied the oil and called earnestly upon God, there seemed to be a heavenly atmosphere filling the room. Bessie felt a soothing sensation passing through her body; and when the prayer was ended, she felt perfectly well, though exceedingly weak. Her strength soon returned, however, and it was not long until the Lord plainly told her that He wanted her at THE GOSPEL TRUMPET office. She remembered her consecration and felt willing in her heart to obey; but she shrank from telling her parents. One day Mrs. Worthington said, "Bessie, I believe that God wants you at THE GOSPEL TRUMPET office and that He has used your sickness to show you your duty." Looking up through eyes filled with tears, Bessie related all that God had revealed to her. A great calm then came into her soul.

Embracing the first opportunity, Bessie told her father of her plans and begged his approval upon them; but his reply nearly crushed her.

"Bessie," said her father, "if you must leave us, you may go; but I have one thing to say and I mean it. If you go, you can never return; for your going is heartless indeed. I cannot see why you should choose to go from your comfortable home and those who love you so dearly, and leave your mother, who so needs your help."

"Father, Father!" exclaimed Bessie, "Oh, don't talk that way! You know how much I love you all. You know I never wanted to leave home before; and if you won't let me return, what shall I do?"

As she stood there before her father almost broken-hearted, a sweet voice whispered, "I will be with thee; be not afraid." The words sounded like music in her soul and reminded her

of her recent decision to obey the Lord at any cost; and she said quietly:

"Well, Father, if you refuse to let me return home, it will have to be that way; but I must obey the Lord, and He has called me into His service."

"Very well," he answered, "but remember my words," and he left her.

Seeking her mother, Bessie told her of the interview and of her father's refusal to allow her to return home. For a moment they stood looking at one another; and then, with great tears filling her eyes, her mother said:

"Remember the words of Jesus, 'There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.' Dear child, I know your dutiful nature, and how you long to obey your parents; but the Bible says to obey them in the Lord."

"I will obey God," said Bessie quietly; and she began at once to prepare to leave home. The morning of departure came! As Bessie picked up her last bundle, the door opened, and her father, stepping in quickly, caught her in his arms. "O my child," he sobbed, "will you forgive me and come back as soon as the Lord will let you? I didn't mean what I said; but it is so hard to give you up. If you need anything, write to me at once and let me know about it, won't you?" and he tenderly kissed her. Bessie's heart was filled with joy, and she said that he could expect her home just as soon as the Lord would let her come.

Very few words were spoken on the way to town, and after a long ride Bessie found herself on the train headed for a new future.

—True Experience

July 23, 1972

BLINDNESS AND ENLIGHTENMENT PORTRAYED

John 9:24-28, 31-41

John 9:24 Then again called they [the Jews] the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

31 [The blind man said] Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

35 Jesus heard that they cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

Memory Verse: Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Hebrews 3:12.

Central Thought: All those who perish must perish self-condemned, their actions attesting that it was in their power to have obtained salvation and that it was their sin to have missed it.

Word Definition: "Heareth not sinners." This would mean men who are hardened and impenitent or wicked men. A worshipper would be a devout, pious man.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Jews would not believe that the man, whom they had many witnesses to the fact that he was blind, but now could see, was healed by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. They called his parents, but because of fear of the Jews and being put out of the synagogue they said, "He is of age; ask him. We do know that he is our son and was born blind." The Jews closed their eyes to the mighty works of God.

It was a terrible punishment, in the days of Jesus, for people to be cast out of the synagogue or to be excommunicated. "There were three degrees of excommunication. The first excluded the person under the ban for a short period from religious privileges. The second extended for a longer period, and was much more severe in that it debarred the person banned even from social intercourse for the time. The third was almost a virtual cutting off from Israel of the person excommunicated. Perhaps the meaning here is simply that they thrust the man violently out of the place of assembly. Those who were trying him might not have full power to excommunicate him." Hom. Com.

In this miracle this judgment here spoken of was effected when Christ said, "For judgment am I come," etc. For just as Moses of old divided Egypt in such a fashion that in all the parts of it inhabited by the Egyptians there was darkness, whilst the Israelites rejoiced in the day; thus at the same time when Jesus Christ enlightened the man born blind, He blinded the Pharisees, who were the wise and prudent of the Jewish people. This is a judgment which is daily renewed among us.

Notice four qualities of the man who was healed of blindness in his testimony. His testimony was sincere, noble, convincing and steadfast. Many yield in face of the least difficulty, and permit their faith to become disturbed. Notice that he said, "One thing I know." He was assured of the fact that "If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." His mind was open to the truth and when it came he eagerly accepted it. He was like Anna and Simeon in the temple when they saw Jesus. (Luke 2:25, 38). He was like Nathanael who at once rejoiced in the light when it appeared. (Luke 1:49). Some of the Jews rejected Jesus and thus hardened their hearts but others waited for a revelation of truth and when they saw, they rejoiced.

Lesson References: 1 John 1:4-9; Matthew 4:13, 17.

QUESTIONS:

1. What proof did the Jews have that the blind man was healed and why didn't they believe it? 2. What proof do we

have today that there is a God but why are there those who teach that God is dead? 3. Discuss the different ways a person can have spiritual blindness. 4. Discuss the firmness of the man's testimony who was healed. 5. Who found the man that was "cast out" by the Jews, and compare that love shown then to how Jesus cares for us today.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

There surely is a reason why people will not believe in God nor His power when they can see the manifestations of it all around us. Even scientists agree that they come to a point in their searchings that they can't explain. Why can't they say that God created this or that or that there is a God? Some do of course but many do not believe to the salvation of their souls.

In our lesson we see spiritual blindness to the fact that Jesus healed the blind man. If they agreed that Jesus healed they would have to admit Him to be the Son of God. This they refused to accept so they refused to admit that Jesus had healed the man who was born blind but now he could see.

There is a variety of terms in the Scriptures on spiritual blindness. There is a blindness which is sin. This is a voluntary blindness. These are those who have light sufficient for some knowledge of God but cease to believe in God because they will not subject themselves to Him and His Word. By reason of their pride they refuse to see their faults or sins and also desire others to applaud their weaknesses. They make their will opposed to divine will. To enjoy their sensual and evil ways they reject truth.

There is a blindness that comes from ignorance. The Jews crucified Christ because they knew Him not. But this is not excusable. They could have known Him. Today many refuse to listen and therefore are not enlightened. This kind of blindness is caused by sin.

There is another blindness that is the effect of sin. When God makes men blind spiritually it is one of the penalties God attaches to sin. This is a most terrible punishment God can inflict. We read in 2 Thess. 2:10, "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." We should tremble at the thought that there is a sin, perhaps, which God has marked as the limit of His forbearance, or of His grace. What is this sin? I know not what it would be in your life. But let us keep a love for truth and be honest with our souls and selves before God.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I wonder what would have been the result had the man who had been blind decided that the rulers of the synagogue were correct and that he had no right to be accepting deliverance on the Sabbath day? Do you suppose it would have happened that his blindness would have overtaken him again? Such could very well have been the case, for it is a well established fact that when folks turn their backs on the mercy of the Lord and cleave instead to some other influence, they lose their blessing. This man was of sound mind and willing to accept the facts as they were, regardless of what the learned men of the synagogue presented to him. He assessed the situation and arrived at his own conclusions, and then had the courage to uphold his convictions in the face of those who opposed him. He received the usual treatment that results from such encounters, that is, he was cast out by those of influence. This has been the sad experience of many an honest Christian all down through the ages when one was willing to stand for the right in the face of popularly accepted error. If that was all there was to the story it would be difficult indeed to understand why and how folks could have continued on under the pressure, but the remainder of the story explains this. When Jesus heard that the man had been cast out, He immediately set out to find him. He knew just exactly what to say, and how to say it in such a way as to convince the man all the more and thus lead him into a greater blessing. He now possessed not only the gift, but also the giver. This same principle holds true today! If we honor Him, He will confess us before His Father. If we deny Him, He will also deny us before the Father. It is a foolish thing to deny the Lord in order to please someone of influence. —C. W. Wilson

BLIND EYE HEALED—A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

In 1949 I began to lose the sight in my right eye. The school notified my parents that I had better get medical attention. My parents were trusting the Lord for it. I finally had to drop out of school and do my studies at home.

Sis. Ruth Murphey, Bro. and Sis. Souder and my folks gathered at our place one night to pray. They had an inspiration that the Lord would heal me. Sis. Souder asked my father if he was "sitting on a fence," not knowing which way to go, as he realized I could blame him if I grew up blind. When he said they would trust the Lord no matter if I did go blind, they had prayer and the Lord witnessed my healing to them.

One thing I would mention here is that in order to get help from God, we can't be a fence straddler. We have to trust Him even if it comes to the worst.

Well, the authorities said either my parents would take me to a clinic in Oklahoma City, or they would take me away from them. So I was taken to the clinic. When it looks like the Lord has answered prayer sometimes things get worse. At the clinic, they began treating me. My left eye hadn't bothered me up to this time and it began to go bad. The doctor admitted that there wasn't anything he could do. He said there was no hope for my eyes. At this time in my right eye I couldn't see anything but milky white objects a few feet in front of me, barely discerning human forms. After a week my father came and got me. A few months later in July, 1949 my folks had prayer and felt like it was time for God to work. They took my eye patch off, which I couldn't stand to be without before, and from that day I began to heal. I went back to school in the fall and they checked my eyes. They said my eyes were as good as ever. Praise God for my eyes! Don't tell me God doesn't heal anymore like He used to.

This may be doubted by some and ridiculed by others. If so, they can contact the above named people for references.

I want to thank God for opening my spiritual eyes. I once was blind in sin. I couldn't see the riches of God. But now through His abundant mercies I can see the glorious beauties of salvation.

—Tom Melot

July 30, 1972

FALSE AND TRUE SHEPHERDS

John 10:1-4, 11, 12; Acts 20:28-30; John 10:9, 10, 16.

John 10:1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

Acts 20:28 [Paul warns elders] Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

John 10:9 I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Memory Verse: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 1 John 4:1.

Central Thought: The Chief Shepherd will cause you to know the voice of Him speaking through His shepherds (elders) and an hireling (false prophets) you will not follow.

Word Definition: " 'He that is an hireling' " or, as my old MS Bible reads it, 'the marchaunt, (merchant) he who makes merchandise of men's souls; bartering them, and his own too, for filthy lucre.' " Clarke's Com. Sheep, "the flock of my pasture are men, and I am your God." Ezekiel 34:31. Good Shepherd is a figure of Christ, who is the Chief Shepherd. Hireling is a figure of the inner spirit of false shepherds. The wolf is that power seeking to destroy men's souls.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Jews hired shepherds to take care of their flocks, or they cared for them. Naturally those who cared for their

own felt more interest in the preservation of their flocks than the hireling shepherd could possibly feel.

"It was customary in the East for shepherds to bring their flocks at night into a stone enclosure, the entrance, to which was under the care of a guardian or door-keeper, who kept watch, fully armed, to repel beasts of prey, and to keep out thieves. In the morning each flock was delivered to its shepherd." Hom. Com.

In John 10:16 is the complete parable of the sheep-fold. Verses 1-21 contain Jesus' discourse on false and true leaders and teachers in reference to Christ, under the allegoric parable of the fold and the good shepherd. The enmity of the Pharisees displayed toward Jesus after the miracle of healing the man born blind leads to the assertion of chapter 9:39, "Are we blind also?" The "light of the world, the good shepherd," and "the door" which leads into the sheepfold are all to be understood as meaning Jesus Christ. Jesus was trying through these means to help the unbelieving Jews and the self-sufficient Pharisees, who imagined that they saw clearly while being blind, to understand that he was about to form His Church, which would include the believing Gentiles, and only those who believed on Him and heard His voice.

Jesus was speaking to the Jews. The "other sheep" that He referred to meant the Gentiles, who, through Him, would hear the gospel and be brought into the fold. —M. Miles

Lesson References: Heb. 5:4; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 2:18; Col. 2:8; Eph. 4:14; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 Pet. 2:25; Matt. 7:15; Ezek. 34:8-10.

QUESTIONS:

1. How are some in the world today trying to get to heaven or in the church of God "some other way" and what did Jesus call them? 2. What relationship is there between the Chief Shepherd and His sheep? 3. Discuss the stranger and the hireling who tries to lead the sheep, and their tactics. 4. Who is the wolf and "grievous wolves" that the sheep need to be watchful of? 5. What did Jesus mean when He said He came to "give life and that they might have it more abundantly"?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

Jesus is the door to the Church of God. Only those who come in at the door are of His sheepfold. There is no use trying to get into the church any other way than through the door. Sometimes men say that they are going to open the door of the church and take in the new members. It's only a man-made organization that the members enter. It's not in-

to the Church of God. Jesus died on the cross for the salvation of those who will confess and forsake their sins. Through Jesus, the door, they can be saved. Jesus has proved His love to us. He laid down His life for His sheep. How precious is the thought that He knows each one by his name. He knows your name and mine. When one is saved he enters into the Church of God through the door, Jesus Christ. His name is written in the Book of Life. This brings great rejoicing to the redeemed soul. Jesus has told us. "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:20. In man-made organizations they can take names off of their records, but they can't touch God's records. The Bible tells us that "Who-soever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." Ex. 32:33. God knows the heart and can read men's thoughts and motives. How precious to know that the righteous Judge keeps the records. It's so important that our names be registered in heaven. In the judgment day those records will be opened. We read in the Bible, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:12, 15.

We need to be on our guard because the devil will try to deceive every soul that he can. There are many false preachers in the world. The Bible says, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." 2 Cor. 11:13.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The sheep are the members of the flocks. Each one is required by the Word to be in touch with the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ. He taught plainly in the Scriptures that all were to be filled with the Holy Ghost, and that the Holy Ghost given from above, would lead them into all truth. His mission and purpose was to direct the lives of God's people, for without Him and His leading, men will go astray. The Scriptures say it is not in man to direct his own steps in the way everlasting. God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, gave special gifts and callings to individuals among His people, and so long as they perform under the unction of the Holy Spirit they are a wonderful blessing to the flock. But remember this: God's man will never proclaim nor demonstrate himself as an overlord over God's people and begin to "pressure" and "drive" them. The true shepherd goes before and leads. The herds-

man goes behind and drives. True shepherds will give their all for God's cause and His flock. The hireling is not willing to do very much without some kind of remuneration. Cut off, or limit, his recompense and his labor will dwindle accordingly. The true shepherd will look to his God, who sent him, for all his needs, and his labor will be performed as though his pay were the very best. The other laborer will be seeking to "pry open" men's pocketbooks to keep their efforts going. Sometimes they achieve amazing success.

But here is a startling thought: God places the responsibility squarely upon the shoulders of each one of His sheep to be able to discern the difference and follow the proper path. That is why He wanted each one filled with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit will never lead astray. Men may fail or deviate, but the Holy Ghost, never.

—C. W. Wilson

WHO IS IN HEAVEN?

John Wesley once, in the visions of the night, found himself, as he thought, at the gates of hell. He knocked and asked who were within. "Are there any Roman Catholics here?" he asked. "Yes," was the answer, "a great many." "Any Church of England men?" "Yes, a great many." "Any Presbyterians?" "Yes, a great many." "Any Independents?" "Yes, a great many." "Any Baptists?" "Yes, a great many." "Any Wesleyans here?" "Yes, a great many." Disappointed and dismayed, especially at the last reply, he turned his steps upward and found himself at the gates of paradise, and here he repeated the same questions. "Any Wesleyans here?" "No." "Any Independents?" "No." "Any Presbyterians?" "No." "Any Church of England men?" "No." "Any Roman Catholics?" "No." "Any Baptists?" "No." "Whom have you here, then?" he asked in astonishment. "We know nothing here," was the reply, "of those names you have mentioned. The only name of which we know anything here is 'Christian.' We all are Christians here; and of these we have a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues."

August 6, 1972

OBEDIENT CHRISTIANS HAVE ETERNAL SECURITY

John 10:22-42.

John 10:22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.
(26)

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not; the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me;

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

30 I and my Father are one.

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

39 Therefore they sought again to take him; but he escaped out of their hand,

40a And went away again beyond Jordan.

42 And many believed on him there.

Memory Verse: My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. John 10:29.

Central Thought: Don't trust the theology of today. Have a genuine experience with God by having a mutual recognition and mutual activity by following or obeying His words.

Word Definition: Eternal means, "without beginning or end. That which is eternal is necessarily unchangeable, existing at all times without change." Webster's Dic. Immortality

according to 1 Cor. 15:54 is put on at the time of the resurrection of the body and has a beginning. **Eternal Life:** "God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath [eternal] life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not [eternal] life." 1 John 5:11, 12. If we lose the Son we lose eternal life. "They follow me, and I give unto them eternal life." John 10:27, 28.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have some precious verses between our lesson today and last Sunday's. Jesus affirms that He voluntarily laid down His life for our sins. "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." verse 18. Jesus did not have to go to the cross but His love for us caused Him to be willing.

The Jews were divided in their thoughts concerning Jesus. Some said He had a devil and others said, "Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" This was one of the signs that the One who was to come and would be the Messiah would open blind eyes. Jesus was the first to open blind eyes.

In verses 40 and 41, we read that the people beyond Jordan where John baptized said of Jesus, "John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true." Jesus highly honored John the Baptist. It's not doing miracles that causes one to be highly esteemed by Jesus. Oh, that "meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Pet. 3:4. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." etc. "What doth the Lord require of thee?" Miracles? "To do justly," etc. Micah 6:8.

The feast of dedication "commemorated the re-dedication of the temple and the renewing of the altar by Judas Maccabaeus after their profanation by Antiochus Epiphanes. It was called 'Lights' from a later custom of illuminating the city and temple." Smith's Dic. This lasted about eight days and was accompanied by great festivities beginning about Dec. 20. In the winter times Jesus walked the portico of Solomon, a subterranean passage which lead into the sanctuary.

Lesson References: 1 John 5:11, 12; John 8:51; 1 John 2:24, 25; Heb. 12:15.

QUESTIONS:

1. When do you receive eternal life? 2. If eternal life is when you receive Jesus, (God's Son in whom is eternal life) then when do you lose eternal life? (1 John 5:11, 12). 3. Our lesson says those who are known by Jesus and "follow" Him have eternal life. (verse 27). What security does one have who

continues to follow Jesus and keep His Words? 4. Give scriptures to refute the false teaching of "once saved always saved," or as they call it "eternal security." 5. What did the Jews want to do to Jesus and what for? 6. Did some believe on Him?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

There is a false teaching which is prominent in the world today and most sectarians believe it. They call it "eternal security" or "once saved always saved." It's grievous to know that many today are believing this false theory. This is a case of the "blind leading the blind and they both fall in the ditch." But sad to say that both will never make heaven their home and their torments will be grievous because they did not "rightly divide" the scriptures or obey them. God has given us His Word. We need to study it and not listen to false teacher's explanations. They do not have a real experience with God and therefore do not have grace to live without sinning. They want to excuse themselves and twist the scriptures to fit their case. "Therefore, thou art inexcusable, O man. . . . But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." Rom. 2:1a, 2.

When one is "born again" he has an experience. This experience has a beginning. Within itself it has a beginning. But we truly have "eternal life" because we have the Eternal Son. But this experience can be terminated. It began with a voluntary act and can be terminated with a voluntary act of disobedience. We are all free moral agents. We never fellowship with the Eternal Son, which is eternal life, when we disobey or quit following and obeying His Words. We find this fact made clear in John 8:31, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." Jesus said, "Whoso believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." "Believeth" is the present indefinite tense of the verb "believe." "It differs from the aorist or historic tense (Greek) which is used elsewhere, as in John 8:31, which reads: 'believed on Him.'" To have believed is the beginning of the Christian life. It is past or historic tense. When you believed you got saved. To continue believing i.e., whosoever believeth—is the necessary relationship to be maintained with the Son in order to keep saved. In John 3:15 the text reads: "Whosoever believeth (that is, continues believing) hath eternal life."

Nowhere in the Bible do we read that there is such a person as a sinning Christian. Some want to separate verses 28 and 29 from verse 27. Eternal life is given to those who

"follow" Christ. And as long as a person follows Christ he can never be lost. Jesus spoke of His disciples, "They have kept MY word." John 17:6. Read 1 John 2:24, 25. If one fails to continue obeying the Words of Jesus he forfeits eternal life. There is a "sin unto death" a brother may possibly commit. Read 1 John 5:16.

I read about a girl who once asked a minister if a person could be lost after having once been saved. On being assured that she could not, she committed suicide. How sad! Will Christ go with one to the dance halls, beer parlors, gambling halls, the corrupted movies, etc.? We must follow Christ. We leave Him when we go the ways of the world and commit sin.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

As we noticed in a previous lesson, the man who was born blind and was healed by the Savior had no difficulty recognizing in Him One who was sent from God. He even stated the basis for his conclusions, and pointed out that never in all history had such works been done by anyone except he be sent from God. Why was it that others who saw the same works, heard the same words and were exposed to the same events, were not able to arrive at the same conclusion? The difference was not on the outside, but on the inside. The condition of the heart was different. One was open, honest, and receptive to the truth, the others were already predisposed and set in their minds and hearts, and unwilling to accept or make room for anything else. Nothing the Savior could have said or done from a human standpoint could have convinced them of His divine nature, for they were determined not to believe. Have you ever known of a situation where someone was at fault, but because of the embarrassment and all that it would cause if the truth were known, everyone connected with it agreed to uphold another story rather than let the truth be known? All evidence points toward the truth but everyone involved declares something else. They will give lengthy reasoning and invent a most logical explanation for a "cover up," but no where will they admit what evidence indicates is truth.

Do you remember the U-2 flights over Russia? One of the aircraft was actually shot down, the pilot captured and the plane itself with all its scientific equipment taken, yet in the face of all that, our Government stoutly declared they had nothing to do with it and were ignorant of its activity. So overwhelming was the evidence until they finally had to back up and admit the truth. How many more cases are there

where evidence is not so overwhelming that are "bluffed" right on through? Individuals practice just such things as well as groups and movements and even Governments. When a heart is set to deny the truth because it is not what it wants to hear and will not admit it if it does hear, then no evidence presented will convince that heart. If a change is made it will have to come from within for there is where the trouble is in the first place.

—C. W. Wilson

"KIDS" OR CHILDREN

Do you call your children "kids"? Kids are goats and they are very offensive animals. The information Bureau of Washington, D. C. gives the following information. "The colloquial term 'kid' applied to a child, originated in the word 'kid' which name is applied to a young goat. . . ."

There is not any Scripture where a child is called a "kid." Matthew 19:14 declares, "Suffer little children (not "kids") and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3 exhorts, "Except ye be converted and become as little children (not little goats) ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Some children may act like goats in some respects. Human nature is depraved from birth, but until children are old enough to recognize this fact they are counted as innocent (lambs if you please). Lack of wisdom on the part of the parents many times causes the child to grow in deceitfulness. Here is a good example. The mother exclaims, "Don't let me catch you doing that." So, the child is taught to practice his misdeeds under cover. Help us, Lord!

It is estimated that in recent years an expert in handling goats has learned to overcome most of the animal's bad manners until in commercial value a goat is about equal with a sheep, but they cannot make a sheep out of a goat. So it is in the training of children. The knowledge to guide and train children requires strict obedience to God. When they reach the age of accountability their only hope is the blood of Jesus. If they have been trained to obey their parents they will yield to the Lord quicker. If they are not taught obedience they often reject the Lord and He counts them as goats.

In Matt. 25:32, 33, we read, "And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right side, but the goats on the left." Hear the awful doom that is pronounced on the goats (left siders): verse 41 reads, "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." In verse 46, the left siders will go away into everlasting punishment.

Be careful what you call your children if you want to see them saved.

The information Bureau in Washington, D. C. has been consulted. Statistics from a book on goat raising has been mentioned. Webster's New Peerless Dictionary has been used, but best of all God's own Holy Word has proven the point. This is the final exhortation. Beloved, give this your prayerful attention.

—J. Adkins

August 13, 1972

BELIEVE AND SEE THE GLORY OF GOD

John 11:28b, 32-45

John 11:28b She [Martha] went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

Memory Verse: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. John 11:25.

Central Thought: If we will believe we will see the glory of God here in this life, on the resurrection day and in eternity.

Word Definition: "Fallen asleep"—Death does not dissolve friendships to the good. The soul lives on in paradise. Cave was an excavation in the rock in the hillside. The sepulchre had a stone covering the entrance into the grave. Grave-clothes were: "long strips of linen, a few inches in breadth, with which the body and limbs of the dead were swathed, and especially those who were embalmed, that the aromatics might be kept in contact with the flesh."

LESSON BACKGROUND

The enmity of the Jewish rulers in Jerusalem caused Jesus to go for a time from the city. He was in Perea and great multitudes followed Him there. He healed the sick both physically and spiritually. (Matt. 19:1; Mark 10:1).

There was a home where Jesus was lovingly and willingly received. Only Lazarus and his two sisters, Martha and Mary lived there. Martha was the mistress of the house. Mary was quiet and very thoughtful. In one of their problems Jesus showed Martha that there was a devotion which was higher than that even of hospitable entertainment. Martha seemed to see the justice of Jesus' words. Luke 10:38-42. (It was Mary who had anointed Jesus' feet with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair.) But now sorrow had come to this home. They sent word to Jesus from their town in Bethany, which possibly was two day's journey of walking to where Jesus was, that Lazarus was sick, the one "thou lovest." Jesus said, "This sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified." Jesus did not go at

once but waited for two days and then said to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea again." They reminded Him that of late the Jews sought to stone Him. He did not fear the Jews but said, "Our friend, Lazarus sleepeth but I go, that I may awake him out of his sleep." When the disciples did not understand, He plainly told them, "Lazarus is dead. I am glad I was not there for your sakes to the intent ye may believe."

We notice Thomas' unbelief by saying to the disciples, "Let us go also, that we may die with him." He felt that the Jews would surely stone Him to death this time, since He had barely escaped the last time from them. Remember Thomas is the one who later refused to believe that Jesus had arisen from the grave unless he put his hand in the nail prints.

Many came from Jerusalem to Bethany to comfort the sisters since it was about two miles away. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming she went out to meet Him but Mary sat still in the house. Martha told Jesus if He had been there her brother would not have died.

This is the seventh miracle of Jesus recorded by John.

"Jesus wept," is the shortest verse in the Bible.

Jesus waited two days before He went to Bethany. In His wisdom, does He not wait to answer our prayers? Can we trust His wisdom as well as His power?

Lesson References: 1 Cor. 15:12-24, 51-58; Rom. 12:15; Hebrews 4:15.

QUESTIONS:

1. Tell something about the background of our printed scripture lesson. 2. Discuss our memory verse which is Jesus' words to Martha. 3. What kind of body will we have in the resurrection day? 4. How was Jesus affected concerning Lazarus' death? Is He touched today concerning our needs? (Heb. 4:15). 5. What caused Martha to see the glory of God? 6. Lazarus needed a second loosening before he was free. Can you compare that with our justification and sanctification?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

With holy awe we think about one of the greatest miracles, yet what we call great is what we know is impossible with men. Our faith makes us to know that all things are possible with our God. There is not one shadow of doubt with us but we believe that Jesus caused Lazarus to come back to life. Faith caused Martha and Mary to see the glory of God. Faith today will let us see the glory of God manifested. To me

the greatest miracle is for a person to be "born again" and become a "new creature in Christ Jesus, old things pass away and all things become new." That is only done through the resurrecting power of God. It is a manifestation of the glory of God. The entrance of the Holy Spirit into the clean heart and dwelling there is another manifestation of the glory of God. The power to live a life without sin and be faithful to God in this wicked world is another manifestation of the glory of God. Faith brings this to pass. Jesus told Martha, "If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God." She believed and gave permission for them to take away the stone although it had been four days since Lazarus had died. Jesus longed for the Jews to have faith and believe also. He prayed first so the people who stood by might believe that God had sent Him. God longs for people today to believe so they can see the glory of God in their lives.

Jesus is the "first-fruits of them that slept." 1 Corinthians 15:20-23. He is the first one to come forth with a glorified body or immortal body. Lazarus came forth in his natural body. The hope of the saints of God is that they will come forth in the great resurrection day with an immortal body and be with Christ in eternity. That is our "house not made with hands" which we are looking forward to. By faith we will see the glory of God in eternity. —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is a deep, deep study into the reaction of the Savior from the time He received news Lazarus was sick until he was brought forth. According to John 10:40, Jesus was abiding beyond Jordan at the place where John had baptized. Immediately upon receiving the news that Lazarus was sick, He announced that the sickness was not unto death, but that the Lord might be glorified. The news said only that Lazarus was sick, and according to the text it was Jesus who informed the disciples that Lazarus was dead! Yet, in spite of all this, He waited two days before He went to them, and found that Lazarus had indeed been dead four days already.

Now, knowing what we know Jesus knew, how would we have expected Him to act when He came? If we had a complete assurance that all was to be well, and that God was going to restore completely, we would, no doubt, have rushed in shouting victory, and asserting with positive declaration that all sorrow and sadness were out of order and the work of the devil, for God had spoken to us. Jesus did not react that way at all. His mission then, even as it is now, is to help us bear our load. We need not expect Him to take it

all and leave us free-hearted and empty-handed. He will bear that which we are unable to carry. Which of the two following relationships would produce the closest relationship between two individuals: If you started out with a heavy load and someone strong and able came along, took the load from your shoulders and deposited it where you were going, then went on his way; or if someone found you laboring under a heavy load, stepped in and shouldered a portion of your load and walked with you step by step, hour after hour, mile after long weary mile, suffering the heat of the day, the toil of the road, sharing the perplexities and problems met, always faithful, always true, always dependable, always ready to accept what you are unable to bear, until finally you reach the goal? This is why Jesus didn't just sweep away all their emotions, griefs, and fears, and then perform His miracle. Instead, He entered right into their sorrow, was touched with their grief, wept with them in their bereavement, took part of the load which was so heavy for them to bear, upon Himself, and shared with them their trouble. Oh, dear Christian friend, the important thing is not the load; it is the relationship the load will help us establish with Him who came to help us bear the load we are called upon to carry. All along the way we come to know and appreciate Him better until at last we reach our goal in heaven. —C. W. Wilson

A FRIEND IN NEED

Nothing can be more disheartening than to be left without a companion in the hour of need. A Welsh minister was on one occasion in Breconshire on a tour. He had to cross the "Black Mountain," and being a stranger he had some horror of the journey and a dislike for even the mountain's name. A man accidentally joined him at the commencement, and his society and conversation smoothed and shortened the way; but greatly to the minister's disappointment, at the foot of the mountain his companion bade him good afternoon, and turned another way, and left him to go across alone.

We all have blacker mountains than the Black Mountain in Breconshire to go over. God grant that when our "feet stumble on the dark mountains," and while "we look for light," He may not turn it into the shadow of death and make it gross darkness, but may we be led through all the darkness into the ineffable light. May we turn to God's Word and there find comfort. God has said, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Prov. 18:24. How wonderful that we can know that Jesus is that Friend. He has promised to "never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly

say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Heb. 13:5, 6. Jesus will not turn and leave us when we reach the mountains in our lives. He will "make a way in the mountains."

JESUS COMFORTS

"O Thou that dry'st the mourner's tear!

How dark this world would be,
If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to Thee!

"But Thou wilt heal the broken heart,
Which, like the plants that throw
Their fragrance from the wounded part,
Breathes sweetness out of woe.

"Then sorrow, touch'd by Thee, grows bright
With more than rapture's ray,
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We could not see by day."

THE MASTER CALLETH

A married pair in our city had piously made an agreement with each other that when it was evident that one of them was dying the other should not conceal the nearness of the danger, but should say, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." Oh no, it is not dying to go forth to God! As Jesus asked for the grave of Lazarus, saying, "Where have ye laid him?" so during thy whole life the Saviour inquires concerning all conditions and places where thou art, and dost comfort thee even though thy outward man should perish. He will also concern Himself with thy last resting-place, and will write thereon: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption." Let each of us pray in the Spirit:

"When Thou shalt raise the dead
On the great Judgment Day,
Touch with Thine outstretched hand
The grave where rests my clay,
And let Thy voice be heard
Even in my silent tomb;
My body glorified
Bring to its heavenly home."

August 20, 1972

MARY ANOINTS JESUS

John 11:49-52; John 12:1-11

John 11:49 And one of them, [Chief priests and Pharisees in counsel] named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

51 And this spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

John 12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served; but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone; against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there; and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

Memory Verse: Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Matthew 25:40b.

Central Thought: The fragrance from Mary's deed reaches also to us, teaching us the true spirit of devotion and consecrated service to our Lord and Saviour.

Word Definition: Three hundred pence or denarii. "The denarius was the chief Roman silver coin, and was worth about 15 to 17 cents." Smith's Bible Dic. Bag was "a purse, script, chest or coffer which was provided to carry those pious donations by which they were supported." Clarke's Com.

Word Pronunciation: Caiaphas—Cai-a-phas (Ki-a-fas).

LESSON BACKGROUND

A crisis had arrived and the Pharisees and Sadducees joined in an unholy league against God's holy child, Jesus. The miracle of the healing of the blind man and now Lazarus, whom they knew well, had been raised from the dead. This struck at one of the fundamental teachings of the Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. (To remember their teachings, think of the word "sad," which is a part of their name. It is sad to teach there will not be a resurrection.)

The Jewish leaders were in council. They were perplexed. They could not deny Christ's miracles. Fear gripped them. Fear that Jesus would attract a large band of followers and the Roman ruler would step in to disperse it and tell the present rulers that they were incapable of exerting any proper authority. They also feared their temple and city would be destroyed. Some, no doubt, shrank from consenting to extreme measures to get rid of Jesus but there was one man among them who was evil. Caiaphas, who was the son-in-law of Annas, was high priest that year. By the law of Moses the office of high priest was for life and it must be a son in the lineage of Aaron. At this time the Romans and Herod put down and raised up whom they pleased. According to Josephus, the historian, Caiaphas was high priest about nine years. As this evil man listened to their discussion he said, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us," etc. (verse 50). In other words, "You are just talking at random and not according to reason. You should get rid

of one man instead of letting him live and we all perish." Even though he was wicked God guided his tongue that, contrary to his intention, he pronounced a priestly prophecy of the death of Jesus Christ. (Note that verses 51 and 52 are the words of John.) When men act in direct opposition to God's council, the very evils which they expect thereby to avoid will come upon them. Because they put Jesus to death the Romans burned and razed their temple to the ground and put a final period to their political existence at that time. See Matthew 22:7.

Notice the character of Judas. He stole from the common bag used by Jesus and the disciples.

Jesus had left Bethany because the Jews from the day of their council sought to take Jesus to kill him. They gave commandment that if anyone knew where He was they should tell them. It was about two months later that He returned to Bethany.

"Ecclesiastical history informs us that Lazarus was thirty years old when he was raised from the dead and lived thirty years after Christ's ascension." (Wesley)

Matthew and Mark say that this feast was given in the house of Simon, the leper, which does not occur elsewhere.

In an earlier period of our Lord's ministry, a similar scene was enacted but it was a different woman than Mary. (Luke 8:37, 38).

This supper in Bethany was given on the Sabbath or Saturday, (six days before the Passover).

Lesson References: 1 John 2:2; Acts 13:47; John 11:2; 1 Timothy 6:9, 10; Caiaphas—John 18:14, 28.

QUESTIONS:

1. Can that which has been planned by evil men be turned to good in God's hand? 2. Discuss Caiaphas and his plans, also what the writer, (John) said. 3. Jesus had been gone, because the Jews had taken counsel together to take Him and put Him to death. At the supper how did Mary show her pent up love and devotion to Jesus? 4. Discuss ways that we today can show our devotion and love to Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer. 5. What was the reaction to Mary's deed? 6. What is the reaction many times today to our deeds of service and love to Jesus?

"Perish policy and cunning!

Perish all that fears the light!

Whether losing, whether winning,

Trust in God and do the right."

—MacLeod

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

The acts of spiritual devotion and sacrifices, made to help others and rescue souls from sin, are looked upon with scorn by the worldly minded. The gulf is great today just as it was when Mary showed her love and devotion to Jesus side by side with hatred, and the hypocrisy of Judas. Here on earth they may seem to be together, and may be misjudged, such as: the hatred counted prudence, the free-handed devotion waste, and bodily sacrifices as lack of good judgment. But this is the same gulf that separates heaven and hell.

Jesus had left the neighborhood, thus giving Mary no opportunity to show her affection and gratitude to Him. When she saw Him sitting at the table with her brother, Lazarus, in health and vigor, love welled up in her heart. How could she show Him her love? Words seemed so empty. Gifts also seemed not the answer to the deep love filling her heart. She possessed some perfume of great worth. Approaching her Master, she broke it and poured it on His head and anointed His feet. This was in the east "an ordinary mark of honour." (Psa. 23:5). But she went farther and humbly wiped His feet with her hair. Even though it was unconsciously done she had anointed the great Kingly Priest after the order of Melchisedec. It was a beginning of His embalming, a preparation for the supreme act of His self-sacrificing and redeeming love. The house was filled with the odour of the ointment. The fragrance of that love has gone forth beyond that house. We cannot imitate Mary's act of love and devotion by doing what she did, but we may manifest the same love and do homage to Him in other ways. There are many acts of service especially designed to honour Him. "As ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," are the words of Jesus. (Matthew 25:40). What is spent in honouring Christ can never be termed, "waste." What is given to help in getting the gospel to souls is profitable and needful. May God help us to have a deeper love for the poor and for eternity-bound souls is my prayer.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It seems a little strange to us, perhaps, that the processes usually performed after death, should be carried out prior to death, as in the lesson. But the Savior seemed to place His approval on the proceeding, for He submitted Himself to the act, and defended Mary in her action. His declaration was that, "Against the day of my burying hath she kept this." This opens up a vast wealth of truth for our consideration.

Mary did not anoint a dead Christ. Neither do you and I worship a dead Savior. Yet it was His death that made atonement for us, as well as for Mary. So necessary is it that we not forget, nor neglect, the supreme price that He paid for us, that He gave to us a special ordinance to keep our hearts reminded of our need of His sacrifice. He said as oft as we eat the bread of His body and drink the cup of His blood, to do it in remembrance of Him. 1 Cor. 11:24, 25.

He was alive—in the physical—when Mary broke the precious ointment, and poured out upon Him the contents that filled the house with its fragrance. He is still alive today—in the spirit—which gives to you and to me the privilege and opportunity of breaking upon Him that “container” of the praise of our lips, and the overflowing love and gratitude and appreciation of our hearts that will fill the whole temple in which He dwells, with its fragrance. Our lives can radiate to all we meet along life’s journey the sweet odor of a temple where Christ is Lord and King, and where sweet praise and honor and gratitude is flowing continually because we love Him with all our hearts. He is our all in all, the lily of the valley, the bright and morning star, and, as the poet expressed it, the fairest of ten thousand to my soul. Oh, how we desire to have our hearts a pleasant place for the Lord to dwell in, where adoration and praise and honor and glory are always flowing out upon Him from the depth of our innermost being. We were made able to do that when He died for us.

—C. W. Wilson

SMOKING FLAX

We first saw her as she clung frantically to the top rail of a massive bridge. Sixty feet below swirled the waters of a mighty river. In one swift moment we realized that imminent tragedy overhung the bosom of that Texas stream. The brakes screamed as our car came to a sudden stop. Joe was the first to reach her, catching her just as she was in the act of making the fatal leap. Other hands quickly pulled her from her dizzy perch. Like a thing inanimate, she slumped to the floorway of the bridge,

There she lay, a slender girl of twenty, palid of face and pathetic in her loveliness. Swift but awkward hands soon revived her and gently placed her in the car. We drove back to the town nearby, where in a friendly little cafe we administered a hot drink and a bowl of soup. Presently she smiled and jokingly chided us for our rash rescue. “What a fool I’ve been, but I wonder if you men were not foolish in preventing me from carrying out my plan,” then bitterly she concluded

by saying, "I am sure society would have been better off, had you not interfered."

Under the spell of the warm food she eventually unfolded her story. It was the old story of the moth and the flame, and the closed door to the creature with a broken wing. I will give you the high points of the story as I now recall them.

It goes back to the economic cataclysm that shook the foundations of our social structure a few years back. Before the storm that left so many of our people homeless, she was a member of a happy farm family. For years there had been good crops, fair prices, plenty of food, a family car and happy school days. Then the crash, depression, drought and the relief rolls. The family was broken up as various members were forced to go out and search for individual work. She finally landed a job as a waitress in a small-town cafe. Soon thereafter the villain entered. He was nice looking, wore good clothes, flashed an occasional roll of money and drove a flashy car. He rushed her as only modern youth can. There were trips to the nearby city, to the movies and Saturday night dances. The fast-moving courtship soon culminated one night with a short service in a minister's home. The next day in another town they rented a small apartment, where she settled down as a happy bride, secure in her hopes for the future. She worked, she planned, she sang and laughed at doubts and fears. Then came the day when she sensed the presence of unseen hands that were reaching out to destroy her little nest. Her lover was using too many hours away from home that rightfully belonged to her. He was becoming moody, irritable and listless in his affections. Too often gossip reached her ears about another woman in her husband's life. One night she called for a showdown. It came when he confessed that there was a new and great romance in his heart. She left him the next day and never appeared in court when he sued for divorce.

Once again she was adrift in search of work. Only one job was open, that of waitress in a beer tavern. She loathed the work, but she was down to her last dime and the job meant food, clothes and shelter. She planned to stay until another and better job showed up. But the hounds of fate were on her trail. One rainy night a drunken brawl broke loose in the tavern. A knife was drawn, a gun flashed, a woman screamed and the girl went down with a bullet in her shoulder. She was rushed to a doctor's office and given emergency treatment. Her wound was not serious and in a few weeks she was out and ready to go to work again. When she went back to the tavern another girl was working in her place and the joint keeper bluntly told her that he would not need her any more. Another closed door, and out on the street she

went in lonely search for employment. Closed doors repulsed her at every turn.

Then came the Lord's Day, when she sought His house for refuge. She entered timidly and at last sat down by three other young women. They immediately arose and sought another pew. Across the aisle she glimpsed two older women who stared at her and spoke in whispers. Her heart rebelled; she bit her lips in indignation and determined to leave the place at once. But before she could carry out her hasty resolve, the preacher arose and began reading his scripture lesson. He was reading something about a broken reed and smoking flax. The sermon that followed was about the tender Christ. The One who was so gentle and considerate of dejected humanity, that He would not so much as break a bruised reed or quench the smoking flax. Smoking flax—that was the term that defined her. She was right then the smoking flax and her little flame was almost out. Just one more gust of wintry wind and she would be gone.

Somehow she felt that this Christ alone could understand her and grant the sympathy for which her heart panted. Christ only could comfort the heart of the girl whose mother was gone. Oh, for a mother on whose breast she could sob out her story of perplexity. But Mother was gone and Christ could be both Savior and Comforter. Her mind was made up. Just as soon as the preacher would finish and give the invitation she would go down to the front and pledge her allegiance to Him who respected the smoking flax. She exulted in her resolution, a new day was about to dawn in her life.

Then the shock and another closed door. The preacher having finished his sermon, was making some announcements about finances and a church social, then raising his hands, he pronounced the benediction. The service ended, she stood there gripping the pew in front of her with trembling hands. The final blow came when she heard a woman's voice across the aisle as she commented, "There is that girl, standing there, who was shot in that old beer joint a few weeks ago. She certainly has her nerve to come out here among decent people." It was too much. She fled the church and ran until she reached the bridge where the old river ever calls and beckons to its bruised reeds.

Of course, you want to know the conclusion. Suffice it to say that the young woman is now among Christian friends. She has honorable employment and is following the Savior who rekindled the flame of the smoking flax when she thought it was forever gone.

Just here let me ask my preacher brethren this stirring question: "Brethren, was it your church or my church, that this girl of the smoking flax visited that Lord's Day?"

—Buren Sparks

August 27, 1972

HONORED, WHILE FACING DEATH

John 12:12-15, 19, 20-28, 32, 33

John 12:12 On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

Memory Verse: He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. John 12:25.

Central Thought: We need to trust in His cross and follow in His footsteps. We need to die with Him unto sin, and live with Him unto righteousness.

Word Definition: Hosanna is an Hebrew word, which signifies, Save, I beseech you. It is a form of acclamation, of blessing, or wishing one well. "Corn of wheat." The most common kinds were wheat, barley, spelt. Our Indian corn was unknown in Bible times. "Corn-crops are still reckoned at twenty-fold what was sown, and were anciently much more." Genesis 41:22. In trying to compare how the Indian corn multiplies to the growth of Christ's followers you can start with 1,200 grains on one ear of corn. How many ears to the stalk? What would a bushel of corn multiply unto? "Except a corn of wheat . . . dies."

LESSON BACKGROUND

"The next day" mentioned in our lesson should be on Sunday. Saturday was the Sabbath. The supper in Bethany was in the evening. This was the beginning of the six days of events before the cross. The last nine chapters of John are events that take place on these six days.

The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem recorded in John should be compared with the accounts found in Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-44. They, all together, give us a wonderful record of that day and the feelings of our precious Lord. The people were gathering into Jerusalem for the Passover feast. The roads were crowded with travelers. Many, no doubt, had seen His miracles or heard about Him. The ancient prophet, Zechariah (9:9) had declared that this King would come to Zion, meek and sitting on an ass. This was fulfilled as our Lord rode in and the people shouted "Hosanna." The disciples at that time did not understand this, but after Jesus arose from the grave they remembered (verse sixteen). The Pharisees looked on and said, "We have not done anything to help, behold the world is gone after him."

As Jesus rode into full view of the city of Jerusalem, He paused to weep. The people saw only the outward but Jesus saw the corruptions in people's hearts. He would have gathered them unto Himself but He said, "Ye would not" come. "Behold your place is left unto you desolate." Matthew tells us that Jesus foretold about their pending doom. Their enemies would come and lay the city to the ground and kill them and their children. Jesus added, "Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Matthew 19:41-44.

Lesson References: Luke 19:31; Psa. 72:17-19; Zechariah 9:9; 2 Cor. 9:6; Luke 9:24; Luke 23:53; Romans 5:18.

QUESTIONS:

1. How do you think Jesus felt as He rode into Jerusalem being proclaimed the King of Israel? 2. In that day, what was the opinion of the Pharisees? 3. What was Jesus' answer when He knew that the Greeks wanted to see Him? Did He mean by "His hour coming" that they could receive more help through His death? 4. Compare the corn of wheat dying to Jesus' death and the results. 5. Compare the Christian's, who are Christ's spiritual seed, dying and growth. 6. What was Jesus' prayer and who answered?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

The death of Christ is the hope of His people. The seed-corn cast into the earth dies as a seed-corn. The external wrappings and envelopes are thrown aside. But the unseen germ, hidden safely away, remains not only unharmed, but it is helped by the decay of those wrappings. Then the living portion of the plant begins to swell and push its way upward through the earth, till the warmer sunshine and refreshing rains of spring draw it from its earthly hiding-place, and it peeps above ground, an earnest of harvests yet to be reaped. So it is with our Lord. He died and was laid in the tomb; and there, in some fashion we understand not, the body became the body of His glory. He was changed and arose conqueror of death and the grave for His people, the firstfruits of them that sleep in Him—a glorious harvest of humanity rescued from death and the grave unto life eternal. Now through the power of His risen life (the germ of life eternal in the hearts of those united to Him by faith) the fields of earth are ripening to the harvest. When Jesus died, there were but a very few who followed Him. But how fruitful was that death in the coming days! Millions upon millions have risen to show forth Christ's glory. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die." We today are Christ's spiritual

seed. We must die unto sin. "He that loveth his life," etc., who keeps and hoards the external wrappings of the soul's true life shall remain unfruitful. "And he that hateth," etc., he that takes the higher, inner, spiritual life, "shall keep it unto life eternal." Praise the Lord! When believers are united with Christ in the likeness of His death (Romans 6:5) they grow up in the likeness of His spiritual life. In every believer's heart Christ lives anew. I have been crucified with Christ: and it is no longer I that liveth but Christ that liveth in me. (Gal 2:20). The believer grows up in Christ's spiritual beauty; each advance in growth sees some added grace of character. "He shall be changed into the same image." 2 Cor. 3:18. And until finally, "He shall be like him, seeing him as he is." "The blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the church." The self-sacrificing lives of His true followers will be fruitful for good in the world. What appears to be defeat in often victory; what seems to be failure is sometimes success.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The prophet of old foretold the entry into Jerusalem of the Anointed One riding on the colt, and sure enough, here He came just as the prophet said He would. But probing into the depths of the affair produces some interesting conclusions. What do we suppose was the purpose of this type of entry? Was it designed to be a morale booster for the Savior just before the cross? No, we have to reject this line of reasoning. In the first place, Christ did not receive honor of men, nor did His strength come from mortal sources. It came down from His father in heaven. If the crowd offered its applause, that was all right, if it poured out its abuse, that was still all right, Jesus was busy doing the will of His father regardless of the crowd. How much strength and fortitude could He have received from a mob who had constantly demonstrated its willingness to destroy Him? Could He have any confidence that now, all at once, it had done an about face and was willing to support Him and His father's cause? No, He was most certainly not that gullible. He heard the songs of exaltation they sang to Him, and saw the branches and garments they strewed in the way, but He also knew their wicked hearts, and that before very long this same multitude would condemn Him to death and hang Him upon the cross.

What then was the reason and purpose of this demonstration? The one that seems to satisfy the most is simply this: The prophet gave specific description of the entry, plain and clear for all to read and understand. The event was carried

out just exactly as the prophet had foretold it would be. For anyone who was honest and sincere of heart would this not be an outstanding testimony to convince of the reality that this was indeed the Christ? The entire demonstration, then, was given not for the Lord's sake, but rather that the people might behold and be convinced that this was the very Son of God. Yet in spite of all this, in just a matter of hours, they would be shouting, away with this Christ—let Him be crucified! How sad! We hear the same cry today.

—C. W. Wilson

EXALT JESUS

A clergyman passing through Reading, called on the Bro. W. B. Cadogan. "So, Mr. W.," said that great and good man, "you are in orders?" "Yes, sir, and I am frequently distressed, lest I should not discharge my office aright." "You have, sir," replied Mr. C., "but one thing to do; exalt Jesus and the promise is, 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me.' " The impression was not transient; the minister often recollected the hint with profit.

BOUNTIFUL REAPING

John 12:24; 2 Corinthians 9:6

Perry Hayden of Tecumseh, Mich., was inspired by the Lord to plant a cubic inch of wheat and keep a record of the results. This was from 1940 to 1948.

The first year, he planted an area measuring 4 ft. by 8 ft. That wheat yielded enough seed that he was able the second year to plant a piece of ground measuring 24 ft. by 60 ft. The third year, he planted 1 acre; the fourth year, 14 acres; the fifth year, 230 acres; the sixth year, 2,666 acres. The amount harvested in six years amounted to 75,000 bushels and at that time was valued at \$150,000. Had he continued the ninth year, he would have been able to plant an acreage equal to that of West Virginia; the tenth year, an acreage equal to the United States; and the thirteenth year, an acreage equal to the world.

This experiment demonstrates the great possibilities of growth on the principle of sowing and reaping. If every one who calls themselves a Christian were consecrated to be as a corn of wheat, what could not be accomplished in the world? "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die." So many are not dead, therefore cannot grow and multiply.

(Teacher, please order your lessons for the 4th quarter **AT ONCE** if you have not already done so.)

September 3, 1972

THE ORDINANCE OF FEET-WASHING

John 13:2a, 4-17.

John 13:2a And supper [preparations] being ended,

4 He [Jesus] riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had again taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Memory Verse: If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. John 13:14.

Central Thought: The ordinance of feet-washing, like the other ordinances, is to teach us a real lesson of humility and our position of equality in the church. Obedience brings blessings.

Word Definition: Ordinance (when concerning the church) means, an established rite or ceremony. Ought means, "to be bound, duty or must. Ought and should express obligation." (Webster's Dictionary).

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus teaches some wonderful truths in the unprinted portion between last Sunday's lesson and today's. It would be well to read and study it at home. Note that He pleads with the Jews to "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." (verse 35). "The children of light" are those who are wise, happy and holy. They are walking in the light that streams from Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, upon the road they have to travel in this life. The light, or truth, of Christ should dwell in and work through you and nothing be in you but spiritual light. If you do not walk in the light, deception, error and, finally, the darkness of eternal death in eternity will overtake you.

Jesus referred to Isaiah, the prophet, and his preaching. (Isaiah 53:1). Jesus did "many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him." Therefore their hearts were hardened. (Isaiah 6:9; 6:1). Some of the chief rulers believed on Him, but would not confess it because they feared they would "be put out of the synagogue; For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." (verses 37, 42, 44). But they will not escape the judgment of God. Jesus said, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (verse 48).

We are today studying the second main division of the Gospel of John. The first part was a presentation of Christ's ministry. This last part is an account of His last days. Our lesson today tells of what happened on Thursday night before His crucifixion. They prepared to eat the Passover supper, which was a feast in commemoration of the Israelite's flight from Egypt, when the death angel passed over them. Those who did not have the blood sprinkled on the doorpost suffered the death of their first-born child. The children of Israel that night stood while eating the passover lamb and were ready to leave the country when Pharaoh told them they could go. (Exodus 12:21-27).

The other gospels leave out the ordinance of feet-washing.

The Bible teaches, "Let all things be done decently and in order." 1 Cor. 14:40. The brethren wash the brethren's feet and the sisters wash the sister's feet.

"The church fathers make occasional reference to it (the ordinance of feet-washing) in such terms as will warrant the belief that the church universally continued the observance of this ordinance for several hundred years after our Savior's ascension." (W. G. Schell)

Lesson References: 1 Cor. 11:2; 1 Tim. 5:10; Phil. 2:5; 1 Peter 2:21; Ought-Luke 18:1; 1 John 4:11; Happy in doing-James 1:25.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are some of the objections made by the false teachers of today in observing this ordinance? 2. What do the words, ought, should and example mean? 3. What do you feel was the purpose Jesus had in instituting this ordinance? 4. Describe the procedure in observing this ordinance. 5. What did Jesus say this obedience to His Word would bring to us?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

Many today want to discard this ordinance by saying that we do not read of the Apostles observing it. They teach that it simply means for us to perform all sorts of good things for others, or to help them to attain to inward purity. But first we must admit that Christ Himself set the example and instituted the practice. He then commanded its observance. He said, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet." The true, humble-minded child of God needs no further command than the simple knowledge that he "ought" to do a thing, or "should" do it. These are the strongest words in our language expressing moral obligation, or duty, as everyone must admit. We keep the command, "Men ought always to pray." Luke 18:1. Just because we do not have a record of the apostles observing it, we do not need to disregard our Lord's command. We know it's mentioned only in John, but must the Word of God be repeated to us over and over? The new birth is set forth clearly only in the Gospel of John during Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus; yet this doctrine is all-important. It is truly the very foundation of true Christianity. Feet-washing is mentioned when the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy regarding certain conditions under which widows should be taken under the financial care of the church and provided for. He presents some qualifications as being: she should be "well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints'

feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." 1 Timothy 5:10.

The custom of these countries was that they washed their own feet when they came into the house, but Jesus said, "Wash one another's feet." This is different. But we know that the custom of washing feet and the ordinance of feet-washing are two different things.

This is a love ordinance. It is to prove that all brothers and sisters are equal in the church. It shows humility. It shows our desire to obey our Lord and Master's command.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Unless we, as individuals, are able to elevate our vision above and beyond the one we wash, or are washed by, we will miss the entire essence of the ordinance, as well as its blessing. The procedure was not designed simply to cleanse unkempt feet; indeed, it is a duty, and a courtesy, to one another to see to it that we present ourselves as candidates to be washed in an acceptable state of cleanliness. After having made the necessary preparation as to our own cleanliness, let us approach the actual proceeding of the Ordinance. There is nothing about an external washing of the flesh with water that will add to the purity of the soul, whether it be done alone or in a group. There must be some meaning, then, beyond the actual act of washing and being washed.

Jesus set forth the act as an example, and then commanded that we should do as He had done. Let us approach the entire affair from this point of view, and see how much it changes the meaning: Today is the day set aside that I will meet the King of kings and Lord of lords, and He and I together will observe the ordinance He left for me to follow almost 2000 years ago. What a careful preparation I would make, then, to see that my personal cleanliness was not offensive! When the proper moment arrived, how eagerly I would move forward and take the vessel and gird myself with the towel, and feel myself honored and favored to bow down and bathe His blessed feet in the clear, cool water. How carefully I would wipe every trace of moisture away so that He would feel comfortable, and what a blessing it would be to feel His warm embrace and hear His expression of love to me when I had finished! Here is no humility. This is an honor. Men by the millions have eagerly fallen down at the feet of some earthly potentate and felt honored to have the privilege; how much more then should we feel honored to minister to the very Son of God!

But now comes the humiliating part. I must sit down and present my feet; poor, insignificant, unworthy me whose rightful place was to be His servant, but now here I sit and He, the Lord of all the universe, bows Himself to wash me! Oh, my Lord, how could I even be esteemed worthy of your notice, much less such attention! How little I feel, and yet how blessed to be so acutely aware that He gave me His personal attention and even declared that if He washed me not I had no part with him. We can be such a blessing one to another, but in this ordinance we become a "stand in" for the Lord, for one another. We will do well to look beyond the human.

—C. W. Wilson

NEW TESTAMENT ORDINANCES

"Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you." 1 Cor. 11:2. The apostle here praises the Corinthian church for keeping "ordinances" (plural). This is evident that he had reference to more than one ordinance. The communion supper is the only ordinance he mentions. What other ordinance, therefore, shall we number with it to form the plurality? Those who reject feet-washing would doubtless answer, Baptism. But baptism could hardly be ranked with the communion supper as an ordinance of the class described by the language employed by Paul. It would hardly be proper to say, I praise you, brethren, that ye keep baptism as I delivered it unto you, because such language is applicable only to such ordinances as are to be observed at intervals. Baptism is not of such a nature, but after it has been administered once, it is intended that the applicant live true to God forever, that it need never be repeated. Therefore, as the very nature of the ordinance of baptism prevents our including it with the ordinances mentioned in this text, what other New Testament commandment except feet-washing could be classed with the communion supper to form the plurality—"ordinances"—of which the apostle speaks? So we rightly conclude that feet-washing is denominated an ordinance in the Word of God, that it was taught by Paul to the Corinthian church, and that it was observed by them according to his instructions. Surely further scriptural evidence is not needed to convince teachable individuals that the apostolic church observed the ordinance of feet-washing.

—W. G. Schell

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The special design of this ordinance is shown in the words of Christ when commanding its observance: "This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19). If the ordinance is "in re-

membrance" of Christ, as stated, then it is not actually Christ Himself (though it symbolically represents Him in His atonement), but is a commemorative institution by which the sufferings of Christ for our sins are brought vividly before the mind, thus bringing us into closer fellowship with His sufferings and death. "For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11:26). In observing it, we do not obtain spiritual life, but we "show the Lord's death."

While the Lord's Supper is commemorative of the sufferings and death of our Lord, representing symbolically His crucified body, it also has another important signification: it represents the collective and unified body of believers in Christ. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we [saved believers] being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 Cor. 10:16, 17). —F. G. Smith

September 10, 1972

JESUS' LOVE BETRAYED

John 13:21-27, 29-31, 33-38.

John 13:21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

Memory Verse: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. John 13:34.

Central Thought: If we keep God's love fresh in our souls, we will never betray Him.

Word Definition: Betray means "to deliver to an enemy by treachery or fraud, in violation of trust; to fail; to prove faithless." (Webster's Dictionary).

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Apostle John seems to have written things that the other writers left out. So we find that the account of Jesus instituting the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is omitted although it took place at this time of our lesson when they were in the upper room. This ordinance of eating bread and drinking of the cup should be kept often. "This do in remembrance of me." Luke 22:15-21 (Read the article on "The Lord's Supper" at the end of last Sunday's lesson.)

A better account is given of Peter's conversation with Jesus about his denying Jesus in Luke 22:31-34. Jesus told Peter that He had prayed for him "that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." We should feel our dependence upon the Lord. "Let him that thinketh he

standeth take heed lest he fall." It is possible to fall. We are warned that "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them."

Living in the light of the Gospel today and having the Holy Ghost within us, we understand that it will be more tolerable for Judas in the day of judgment than for that one who falls today from a holy state. We have nothing to boast of. All we are or hope to be is given to us from God.

The Eastern posture at meals was reclining on couches, with pillows or cushions near the table. Their feet would be outward on the couch and they would rest on their left elbow, leaving their right hand free. John lay at Jesus' right with his head quite close to Jesus' breast.

"In eastern lands, where our table utensils are unknown, the meat, with the broth, is brought upon the table in a large dish, and is eaten usually by means of pieces of bread dipped into the common dish. The bread so dipped is called a "sop." It was such a piece of bread dipped in broth that Jesus gave to Judas." —Smith's Bible Dictionary.

Lesson References: (Judas' life) John 12:6; Mark 14:19-21; Luke 22:22; Matthew 27:3-10; Acts 1:25; (Lord's Supper) Luke 22:15-21; Mark 14:22-26; Matthew 26:26-30; (Peter) Matthew 26:31-35; Luke 22:31, 34.

QUESTIONS:

1. How would you feel today if one of your close friends betrayed your trust and confidence? Remember Jesus was in the flesh and was tested like we are. 2. What smaller things did Judas do before he came to the betrayal of Jesus? 3. Discuss the reasons Jesus exposed Judas that night before the group. 4. Read about Judas' end in Matthew 27:3-10. 5. What new commandment did Jesus give to the disciples and us? 6. Discuss Peter's declaration and Jesus' admonition, also how we need to watch and pray.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

O Judas, Judas! how sad thy fate. What a happy state it would be if there were only one of your kind. But your brethren, even in this present time, number to billions. The same devil is working today as in your day. No doubt, in your youth you had zeal and wanted to join the little band of Jesus' followers. You saw possibilities in Jesus' future, as you thought, here in this world. You wanted to get in on the ground foundation of His literal kingdom here in the earth, which of course was a false thought. We don't know how you

came to carry the bag, from which the needs of Jesus and His disciples were paid, but probably Jesus felt you had the ability. But the temptation became too great as time went on. Your love for gold, gold and more gold led you to steal from the bag. (John 12:6). Maybe at first you took just a little and meant to replace it but that was put off and later you took more and more. Probably the devil told you that no one knew about it or that you had taken too much and now you can't replace it. The devil's business is to lead one gently, surely and definitely deeper and deeper into pits of sin. You did not know that this would lead to suicide because it was hidden from you. So you continued to follow the devil's suggestions.

A chance was granted for you to get more gold. The rulers wanted Jesus. You dealt with them. For thirty pieces of silver you promised to deliver Him to them. From that time, you sought opportunity to betray your Lord and Saviour. (Matthew 26:14-16). The One that loved you dearly. The One through whom you had seen great miracles performed. The One who had trusted you to be one of His close companions. The One who had confided in you. Now you are betraying Him.

Judas sat at the table with the other disciples. Jesus was "troubled in spirit." He did not want the little group not to know whom had betrayed Him. So He exposed Judas, yet when He mentioned someone would betray Him, Judas with the others said, "Is it I?" (Mark 14:18-21). He tried to cover up to the last. No word of rebuke fell from Jesus' lips. Judas had given himself over to the power of the devil. ("Satan entered into him.") He had chosen the evil, and must abide in his choice. But that heart rending cry in his end of "I have sinned in that I have betrayed," came from his small beginning. The thirty pieces of silver was cast away and he filled a suicide's grave. But notice the grief this brought to Jesus as He was "troubled in spirit." It is not His will that any perish but that all come to repentance.

—M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The actual physical betrayal of the Lord is without question a thing to be greatly deplored, and one that saddens the heart, but actually it carries much greater magnitude than just one man betraying another. In the first place, Jesus was not just an ordinary man. He was the Son of God. He was not building for Himself a reputation, for He made Himself of no reputation that He might make known to humanity the nature and will of His Father. The life He lived, the principle He taught, the precepts He practiced were always those of His heavenly Father and He was faithful to carry out each and every command. The Word (What word? Why, the very

Word of God.) was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld God's glory because of it. It was not just an individual man, then, that Judas betrayed; it was, instead, these very principles of purity and holiness of Almighty God that had been refused and betrayed. It was this realization that he had betrayed everything that is pure and fine and noble and upright that brought the anguish of soul, and that produced such utter despair. Suicide is the ultimate conclusion of despair.

We are prone to regard the action of Judas as a singular occurrence, and it is true that he alone would be the only one who would ever betray the Lord in the flesh, but the betrayal of the principles and virtues of character that He stood for is being done around us all the time on every hand. Folks stoutly declare, "I would never do an awful thing like Judas did!" and yet they go right on living out the very same refusal of what Christ taught and stood for. That rejection, when practiced today, will leave a soul at the judgment bar of God in utter despair. The same destiny that overtook Judas is awaiting the soul who rejects the Lord now. It all leads to the same place where there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched! It is no less fearful to reject and thereby betray the Lord now, than it was then. What a carefulness it ought to put in our hearts to see to it that we do not betray Him in any degree along any line. To fail to observe and practice any of the Word is to betray the Lord, for He was the Word made flesh. To add our "think so's" and "feel like's" and "I don't believe's" will sum up to nothing short of betrayal, and will produce identically the same consequence at the judgment. May God help us.

—C. W. Wilson

A PRISONER SPEAKS

From behind the walls of the "World's Largest, Walled Prison," in Jackson, Michigan, a convict who has spent more than fourteen years behind bars, for crimes ranging from auto theft to armed robbery, tells the truth of what it is like to spend his teen-age years behind the walls of a prison.

"One day, I was a normal teenager, probably a lot like you. The next day, I had stepped—or leaped—across that narrow line which separates the decent people from the indecent. Without giving any thought to the subject, I violated a number of society's laws (and God's laws) subsequently got mixed up . . . and ended up in prison.

"Most prisoners eventually conceded that all the bubbles in the world aren't worth the price that society demands of, and receives from these persons who violate its statutory laws. The unfortunate thing about all of it is that such wisdom sel-

dom comes until youth, vitality and ambition have ebbed away. Listen to the voice of experience. Crime doesn't pay enough money to compensate a person for the heartaches he has to go through to serve even a single year in prison. Nobody could have made me believe this ten years ago. I didn't want to listen. I had tasted the fruits of crime and found them sweet. Foolishly, I kept reaching for more, egotistically thinking I was the one guy in the world who could get away with it." (Bitterness was the taste in the end.)

Young people, notice that he says, "I had tasted the fruits of crime and found them sweet." The Bible bears this out. "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there: and that her guests are in the depths of hell." Proverbs 9:17, 18. The devil is right there to glorify sin and crime. His spirit of false joy and thrills take over and elate the person as he partakes of the "fruits of crime." But the Bible tells the results of such deeds and one must also know that this elation, thrill and false joy will vanish like a bubble. Be wise and profit by other's experiences. Right living and God's joys bring eternal rewards to the soul here and in eternity.

This young man goes on to tell us that, "There is really much more to serving a prison term than just being locked in a cell. First, there is the loss of character, then the debasement and ridicule from society, then there is the loss of individuality and there is still more. There are the silent, unshared birthdays, the many lonely nights; nights that are sore, aching boils that are poison-filled, and erupt with the stinking pus of never-ending isolation.

"The worst hurt of all is when you get a visit from a relative or friend. Dressed in typical prison garb, you find them separated from you by inches, yet years and worlds apart. Visits are the same for all prisoners. We notice the tinges of gray in mother's hair, little indelible lines in the wife's or sweet-heart's face, little jagged streaks of red in their eyes and we know they've felt a hundred for every hour we've suffered. It twists some of us up inside.

"This is the final reward for hanging out in 'road-houses,' for drinking, for accidentally killing someone in a drag race, for acting on impulse rather than on sound reasoning.

"I have only one piece of advice teenagers, stop and think before you act irrationally. Ask yourself; Am I prepared to sacrifice all? Can I live with the loneliness, regret and heartache? If you can't, you'd better turn back before it's too late. For these will be your only companions in a prison cell."

Young people, you do not need to follow in this prisoner's steps. But you can't have the wisdom to know how, or the

power to live right in this world unless you have Jesus Christ as your Guide and Companion. Won't you become awakened to your need of God and seek Him before you land into deep sin? Sin added to sin brings remorse and finally isolation in this life and in the end, eternal damnation. —M. Miles

September 17, 1972

CHRIST OPENS HEAVEN'S HIGHWAY

John 14:1-6; Isa. 35:8-10; John 14:13-15, 19.

John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

(Read 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8.)

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Isaiah 35:8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

9 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there.

10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

John 14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

Memory Verse: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. John 14:12.

Central Thought: Jesus leads from sin to God, from earth to heaven, because He is Emmanuel—God with us. Jesus is the highway uniting earth and heaven.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In last Sunday's lesson, Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, whither goest thou?" Our first verses answer that question. He wanted them to know that He had to go to the cross to "prepare a place" for them. If He did not die, there would not be a mansion or an immortal body awaiting them in glory. We do not teach or feel that in heaven there will be houses of an earthly building. Jesus had to use terms that we could understand to convey to us that there is a glorified dwelling place for us after death. Some get carried away with their talk about mansions etc., thinking only in earthly terms. We can only describe heaven's glories through means of earth's best. But it's far, far beyond that and far beyond our greatest imaginations. But one thing we do know, we will be with our precious Lord and Saviour. Jesus comforts us and He comforted the disciples by promising them, "I will come again, that where I am, there ye may be also."

Lesson References: 2 Peter 1:13, 14 (earthly tabernacle); Acts 1:11; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17 (will come again); James 1:5; 1 John 3:22 (ask); Hebrews 9:8, 14, 15 (Christ the way.)

QUESTIONS:

1. What should we let our minds dwell upon when our hearts begin to be troubled? 2. Is there a longing in every heart for God or how to find Him whether it's acknowledged or not? 3. What answer did Jesus give to Thomas as to what way one should go to find God? 4. Through Christ's death on the cross, we have a way made to get on the highway of holiness. Who will walk there and what blessings will they receive? 5. Are the mansions that are prepared for us like earthly buildings? (Read 1 Corinthians 15:50, 53, 20-24.)

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

Man need not linger in despair. He need not long for a fulfillment to his deep inner longings. He does not need to search any farther, Christ is the answer. Christ is the way
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out of all of our troubles in this life. Christ said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Jesus took on the robe of humanity, though He was divine that through His humanity He could make a way for us to have the divine nature. Through His divinity, He becomes the end of the way. How precious are these truths. We need no longer bow to the teachings of false prophets who want us to think that by the way of nature, of moral law, or moral being, we can come to the Father and heaven. Nature's stern laws tell us of the almighty power of God, His intelligence, wisdom and order, also beauty. History has shown us that nature-religions have led men away from God. For they have come to "worship and serve the creature," etc., Romans 1:25.

Not by nature alone can we come to God. Not through the moral nature or the conscience, which is the record of the divine presence in man can we come to God or get to heaven. Does not conscience often become dulled, benumbed, disregarded, and its voice stifled? Evil can supplant truth in the conscience as the Bible lets us know that the conscience can become seared, etc. So not through moral nature alone can we come to God.

Christ is not one of the many ways to God, but He is the only way. He is the way because He is the truth and the life. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. . . . Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Ephesians 2:6: 18. Jesus went to the cross to make a way so we could get on the highway of holiness, which leads us to heaven. There we will have a mansion or immortal body awaiting us, of which "Christ is the firstfruits," to be with all the redeemed in eternity. Today the redeemed are traveling on the highway of holiness with the pure in heart. No unclean person or that one who has a lion-like nature, or has a ravenous beast nature can walk thereon. —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

God's Highway could be nothing else but a holy way, for a God who is altogether holy Himself, would not erect anything else. It would be ridiculous to assert that the way to a holy heaven is by pursuing an unholy path. If the highway is of such a nature that the unclean cannot pass over it, then something had to take place before mankind could travel it, for all men were conceived in sin, and were scarred with its blight. Now, we can see what the way was for. The highway was intended for men to travel. But men who were under the blight of sin could not even get on the highway, much less travel it.

The highway could not be changed, for nothing but a way of holiness could lead to a holy land. That left but one other possibility. The men who would travel on this highway must be made holy, and then they would be admitted on the holy way. It was for this very purpose that the blood was spilled on Calvary's mount which opened the fountain of cleansing that washes whiter than any Fullers soap could whiten. Some folks get all mixed up and decide that the water of baptism washes away sins. If water were a satisfactory cure for sin, then we needed no perfect sacrifice. By Jesus giving His Own blood to open the fountain of cleansing, He provided the way by which men could be made holy. When we repent with godly sorrow and seek His pardon with all our hearts, He puts our sins under the blood, and we are made travelers on the highway of His holiness. So long as we maintain that purity of heart and continue in His love, we may travel the highway that leads from earth to glory. To step aside and take up the old life from which we had been delivered, will remove us from the highway, for He said that no unclean thing would pass over it. Any one with sin cannot travel the Highway. —C. W. Wilson

THE HEAVENLY HOME

"Where does God live?" asks the little child. "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" cries the earnest man. We are all seeking Thy dwelling-place, Thou King of kings. We have not yet found a palace large enough to contain Thee. Some have sought Thee in the water, some in the air, some in the fire, because the water and the air and the fire are to us boundless things. Yet it is not in the boundless that Thou desirest to be found; it is in the limited, the broken, the contrite. The Heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee, but the broken and contrite heart can; it is there Thou delightest most to dwell. Thy brightest glory is not in the stars, but in the struggles of a conquering soul. Thy temple is the heart of Him whom men have called the Man of Sorrows. Thy fulness dwells in His emptiness, Thy wealth in His poverty, Thy strength in His weakness, Thy joy in His sorrow, Thy crown in His cross. Within that temple meet harmoniously the things which to the world are discords—perfection and suffering, peace and warfare, love and storm; the lion and the lamb lie down together. There would I seek Thee, O my God. Within these sacred precincts, where all things are gathered into one, where middle walls of partition are broken down, where jarring chords are blended in one symphony of praise, there would I seek and find Thee. Under the shadow of the cross, where death meets life and earth is touched by heaven, my finite soul would lose its finitude and be one with Thee; my night would vanish in

Thy day, my sorrow would melt in Thy joy, my meanness would merge in Thy majesty, my sin would be lost in Thy holiness. The veil which hides me from Thee is the shadow of my own will; when the veil of the temple shall be rent in twain I shall see the place where Thy glory dwelleth. G. Matheson

September 24, 1972

THE HOLY SPIRIT, OUR COMFORTER

John 14:16, 18, 26, 27; John 16:7-14; Acts 1:8a;

Acts 15:8, 9.

John 14:16 And I [Jesus] will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 16:7 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 depart, I will send him unto you.

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

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is 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 will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

Acts 1:8a But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses. . . .

Acts 15:8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them [Gentiles] witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

Memory Verse: Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Hebrews 13:12.

Central Thought: Christ's conquest over the kingdom of evil, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, our Comforter, is the pledge of victory for mankind.

Word Definition: Sanctify or sanctified is taken from two Latin words: "Sanctus" which means, "holy," and "facere" which means, "to make." Then it says, "to make free from sin; to set apart as holy; consecrate."

LESSON BACKGROUND

You will notice that portions speaking of the Holy Spirit or Comforter have been chosen from chapter 16 and added to the verses in the chapter that we have been studying. These verses give us a good lesson about the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a person. Notice that the personal pronoun "him" is used when the Holy Spirit is referred to. He is a part of the Trinity—God (the Father), Jesus Christ (the Son), and the Holy Spirit (the Comforter). Each has had a dispensation. The dispensation of God was up until Jesus came into the world. In our lesson, Jesus is telling the disciples that He is finishing His work or dispensation and that the Holy Spirit will come. We are now living in the last dispensation which is the Holy Spirit dispensation. Jesus said, "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven." Luke 12:10. Through the Holy Spirit's drawing power unto Christ is the only way you can be saved. If you turn against him, you are lost.

Lesson References: Psalms 51:5 (shapen in iniquity); Ephesians 2:3 (by nature children of wrath); Romans 5:12 (death or sin passed upon all men); Romans 15:16 (sanctified by Holy Ghost); Acts 2:1-12 (Comforter or Holy Spirit's event into the hearts of the disciples).

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the Trinity, and is the Holy Spirit a person?
2. Under what conditions does the Holy Spirit enter a heart?
3. What is the work of the Comforter or the Holy Spirit?
4. The disciples were afraid when Jesus was crucified and after His resurrection, He said they were "slow of heart to believe" etc., (Luke 24:25), but how did they act after the day of Pentecost when they received the Holy Spirit?
5. Do we need the Holy Spirit today?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLES' COMMENTS

Let us rejoice because God sent us a Comforter. Those who have this abiding Comforter dwelling within their hearts know what a blessing He is to them. Our lesson teaches us that the world cannot receive Him. He only comes to dwell in a heart from which sin has been cleansed. The Bible says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Romans 12:1. He is talking to brethren and those who have been made holy through confession of volitional sins and their hearts made clean by the blood of Jesus. Jesus told His disciples, "Ye are clean through the word." But they needed more. They could not receive this unless He went to the cross and there paid the penalty of sin and became a universal Saviour. Through the Holy Spirit, He could dwell within them, be with them constantly. This would be more glorious.

By going to the cross and shedding His blood, He not only forgives our volitional sins, but the Holy Spirit comes to cleanse us of that sin principle that came to us through the fall of Adam. There are two works of grace. The two works are by the blood of Jesus. Our memory verse makes us know that we are sanctified "with his own blood." There is a need of a purging within after our volitional sins are forgiven. We can't ask forgiveness for that sin principle that passed upon all men. It needs to be purged by the fire of the Holy Spirit. "The axe is laid unto the root of the tree." We need to be baptized "with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Matthew 3:10, 11. Fire purges and purifies. Praise the Lord because I know by experience what the sanctifying power of God did for me when I consecrated and laid my all upon the altar as a sacrifice. I received power in my life to live holy, and acceptable before God. I did not have to sin because the Holy Spirit gave me power over all the powers of the enemy of my soul. He brings scriptures to my remembrance to help me. He guides me into all truth. He helps me to live without sinning each day.

Honour and glory is given to Him daily, who is my all and in all. —M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I wonder if we are able to comprehend what all the Savior was saying in the lesson? Read verse 7 of John 16. "If I go not away, the comforter will not come." The plan of God was so designed that it would require the Word and the Spirit, both, in order for the plan to be complete. Jesus gave His life; it was not taken from Him against His will. He could have lived on and on, for He did nothing worthy of death. But if He had stayed, He could not possibly have reached every soul upon the earth. By His becoming the Word, it put Him in a form that could reach every man that cometh into the world. When the Word enters a man's heart, and sheds light upon his pathway, that supplies material that the Spirit can use to accomplish His work. When Jesus had finished the work He was sent to do, i. e., planted the living Word in the hearts of men, He was then free to return to His heavenly Father who had sent Him. His return to the Father was the signal to the Holy Spirit that the Word was planted, and now the work of the Spirit must begin. As men embraced the Word and received the presence of the Spirit, they went forth with a zeal and a burden to spread the good news to others. As others heard the word taught, the truth was planted in their hearts, and that gave them opening for the Holy Spirit to deal with more souls. It is this process that sent the Apostles and early Christians on missionary journeys. Anyone who contacts the truth and embraces its teaching and receives the Holy Spirit is anxious for others to hear and be saved, too. This is what spread the Word throughout the whole earth. The Holy Spirit is a blessing within Himself, so much that the plan of salvation is not complete without Him. Likewise, the plan is incomplete without the Word. God designed that by His Word and by His Spirit should men enter into the fullness of His Grace, and they are essential to each other. The Word without the Spirit is dead. The Spirit without the Word has no direction. Put them together, rightly divided, and you have the plan of salvation, perfect, complete, present, and available to whosoever is willing to open his heart's door and receive it.

—C. W. Wilson

(Teacher, have you ordered lessons for the 4th quarter of 1972?)

