

1911

Bible Lessons



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

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 8, No. 2
April, May, June,
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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

Volume 8

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THEME FOR SECOND QUARTER, 1976

In this quarter we are continuing to study the last days of Jesus while here on earth. As we study, let us think of the great cost of our salvation. Jesus took the punishment for our sins, and as we accept Him as our Saviour, we can be ready to meet the Lord. Also, we are serving a living Christ. He arose from the grave and is sitting on the right hand of God interceding for us. Praise God!

The last seven lessons of this quarter will be in the book of Galatians. The Galatians were doubtless converted under the labors of Paul (see Acts 16:6; 28:23). False teachers invaded the congregation, so Paul endeavors to bring them back from the errors of these false teachers. He admonished them to "walk worthy of the vocation" to which they were called.

—Sis. Marie Miles

APRIL 4, 1976

JESUS, THE MESSIAH, TRIED AND CONDEMNED

Mark 14:53-64

Mark 14:53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

Memory Verse: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. Acts 8:33.

Central Thought: The religious leaders of the Jews held a mock trial and condemned Jesus unjustly, illegally, and unrighteously to death because of their envy and jealousy against Him.

LESSON BACKGROUND

From the garden of Gethsemane where the multitude arrested Jesus, He is now taken to the high priest who was to preside over the Jewish Sanhedrin, the Jews' court of justice. It is no doubt after midnight now, up into the very early hours of the morning. As the trial went on that night, down below on a lower story sits one who is anxiously waiting the outcome of the trial. It is Peter, who had previously declared that he would go to prison and to death for his Lord. He sits warming himself by the fire with the servants and maids of the high priest. Doubtless by now, the eastern skies are beginning to glow as the morning advances. Then suddenly it happens. One of the maids looks upon Peter and says, "Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth." This Peter denies and then retreats to the porch. The maid approaches him again with the accusation: "This is one of them!" Again Peter denies the charge. Once more the charge is brought forward as his Galilean speech betrays him. This time he cursed and swore saying, "I know not this man of whom ye speak." Already the cock has crowed, and now it crows the second time. Memory awakens Peter to something Jesus said a few hours before and he begins to weep bitterly.

Since the Jews are not the ruling civil power, they must pressure Pilate, the Roman governor, into condemning Jesus. This they are successful in doing. It is very doubtless that Pilate would have been able to have quenched the violence of the throng that stood before him, thirsty for the blood of this just Man. It is for certain that Pilate was in a very close

place. He was warned by his wife to leave the case alone because of things she suffered in a dream about Jesus. He could find no fault with the Man Jesus, but was helpless before the rabble. He finally decided to give Jesus a chance and offered to the people the release of a prisoner. This was no doubt a gesture of good will from the Romans toward the Jews at the time of their religious feast. He hoped that they would desire Jesus to be released to them, but no. It was Barabbas, a murderer, that they wanted released. They wanted Jesus to be slain. Seeing he could get no farther with the matter, Pilate called for water, and turned the case to the will of the Jews. He washed his hands of the whole affair (so he thought) and delivered the Lord Jesus to be led away to the crucifixion hill of Calvary. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the chief reason for the Jews' trial of Jesus? 2. Could you call the trial of Jesus a fair one? 3. How can a man be so religious, and yet be able to condemn an innocent Man? 4. Why would the Jews be offended at Jesus' claiming to be the Son of God? 5. How responsible are these Jews going to be in the day of judgment?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Let us consider the root of the cause why Jesus was rejected by the religious leaders of His day. It seemed that from the very first He created an offense to them, and all along the course of His ministry they were continually opposing Him at almost every angle.

At Nazareth, He was rejected of His own townspeople because of their despising of Him as one of their own people, the son of a carpenter. Theirs was a scornful and critical attitude, filled with unbelief. Later, the Pharisees criticized Him for eating with the publicans and sinners. When He cast out devils, they accused Him of doing so by the prince of devils. They later began to find fault with how He dealt with the sabbath. The disciples picking corn, and Jesus healing on the sabbath day was very much an offense to them. Although Jesus defended His position with sound words of wisdom, they were still offended. He later offended them farther when he crossed their tradition of hand-washing, reproving them with the truth, that it is not what cometh from without that defiles a man, but that which cometh from within. He rebuked them

later when they came seeking from Him a sign from Heaven. He called them a wicked and adulterous generation.

The Pharisees then began to question Him in many areas of truth, seeking to trick Him into uttering error. The question of adultery, the woman taken in the act of adultery, the blind man who washed in the pool at Siloam, the question of tribute, the parable of the vineyard — all these were gathering momentum to the desire of the Jews that He be taken from their midst. The eyes of these people were blinded by tradition, pride, and jealousy. Christ was a stone of stumbling to them. Although they professed highly to be the chosen people of God, their hearts were filled with wickedness. Then at the last, when He made the visit to the temple and cast out them that sold therein, they became very earnest in their desire to have Him destroyed. Jesus knew that He was coming to a nation whose hearts were much like those of ancient Israel, only much worse. Thus from one offense to the next, the indignation of the leaders of Israel increased until it reached the fury that drove them to try Him, condemn Him, and deliver Him to the Roman governor for the death of the cross.

—L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The world hates the spirit of Christ even today. Does the child of God who lives a spirit-filled life receive justice in this world today? Just as Jesus did not receive justice, neither do we. Notice that the High priest, the supreme court of Israel, which is called the Sanhedrin, the rulers of the false religious groups, and the majority of the people had condemned Jesus to death even before the mock trial had transpired. All they were wanting to do was to go through some sort of a form and try to make it look a little better. They could not justify to their own people the arraignment of a Jew before a Roman tribunal, unless that Jew should first have been condemned and excommunicated by themselves as a breaker of the Mosaic Law. Hence the necessity for the pretended trial. It was hurried on with indecent haste, conducted in the dead of the night with the omission of many legal forms. They had false evidence which had been prepared by the judges themselves. We notice that, as usual, falsehoods are never consistent but truth is. When the high priest saw that his plot had failed, he himself, in trying to condemn Jesus, resorted to the most unusual and unjust method by himself convicting Jesus out of His own mouth (verses 61-64).

One man of God had worked at a place for fifteen years but because he would not enter into the gambling and drinking with the fellows, they began to find fault and plotted against him with the higher-ups until he was discharged. He was innocent, but the spirit of Christ in him did not receive justice in this world. We need not to expect it, but God will take care of us if we will keep our hearts right before Him. —M. Miles

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

“Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God.” Mark 15:43.

The Sanhedrin of Jerusalem consisted of seventy members, of whom twenty-four were the heads of the Priesthood, twenty-four were the heads of the tribes of Israel, representing the laity, and twenty-two were Scribes learned in the law. Joseph was no doubt one of the noble representatives of the people; and, as such, shared in the functions of government and was conversant with those sacred Scriptures which formed the basis of the Jewish commonwealth.

Arimathea is thought to have been situated on the fertile plain of Sharon, where probably Joseph's property lay. He also possessed an estate in Jerusalem — possibly a house in the city — certainly in the outskirts. Josephus tells that the Holy City was in those days thickly surrounded by groves and gardens; shady retreats in the heat from the crowded streets of the metropolis. Here, under the shade of trees and umbrageous shrubs, we may think of this honourable counsellor as refreshing his spirit in peaceful meditations by day and night, when his public duties permitted his repose. The garden was large enough to require a gardener, so we read in St. John; and in some retired portion of it, at the place where the boundary rock rose from the soil, Joseph had excavated a new tomb for himself in which he would lie down in his death-sleep, when the labours of life were ended. How little can he have dreamed that this tomb of his was to be consecrated by the descent of angels, and by the mighty power of God, in raising up, on the third day, the destroyed temple of the body of Him who should be God manifest in the flesh, who should make His life a sin offering, yet prolonged His days by a marvellous resurrection!

Joseph was an honourable counsellor, but we are told by St. John that he was only a secret disciple of Jesus till the hour of His death. Like Nicodemus, the other rich man who began with a nocturnal visit to the Son of God, he grew bolder when

the crisis arrived. Timidity is the common sin and weakness of rich men in the upper classes. It required heroic resolution to go against the superstition and fanaticism of the upper mob of souls whose opinion in spiritual matters is seldom of greater value than that of the lower. "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?" was regarded as a decisive argument against Jesus Christ by the common people, although, as in this case, the vulgar considerations which determine upperclass opinion in religion, are as ignoble as any which can sway the violence of their inferiors. Let us, then, honour to the world's end both Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus; their memories are as fragrant as the precious spices which they brought with fine linen for the entombment of their Lord. The courageous avowel of Truth in the hour of its crucifixion, deserves to be crowned along with Truth in the hour of its triumph.

—E. White, "Christian World Pulpit", Vol. XXX

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APRIL 11, 1976

UPON THE CROSS OF CALVARY

John 19:17-19,23,24; Matt. 27:39,40
Luke 23:39-43; 15:37,38; Mark 15:37,38

John 19:17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

Matt. 27:39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

Luke 23:39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Mark 15:37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

Memory Verse: But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Gal. 6:14.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ was nailed to a Roman cross, suffering the scorn of those looking on and the loss of all earthly possessions, forgiving the penitent thief, and He died for the atonement of the sins of all the world.

Word Definitions: The hill where Jesus was crucified was called the place of a skull. In the Hebrew it was called **Golgotha**, in the Greek, it was called **Cranium**, and in the Latin, it was called **Calvary**. The word **crucify** means to be hung or nailed to a cross. A **malefactor** is an evil-doer, or criminal.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Since the Jews did not have authority to put Christ to death, the Roman governor was pressured into giving Him over into their hands. It was prophesied of Jesus' death on the cross in Psalms 22:16, when it stated that His hands and feet were pierced. Jesus had also prophesied that He would be lifted up from the earth. It is evident that the Roman soldiers did the actual execution, but the Jews were responsible for getting it done. Many stories of this solemn scene of Calvary have been written, many songs about it have been sung, and many artists have endeavored to portray it. But none of these can reach the depth of the heart like that divine revelation of

the Holy Spirit through the avenue of the account given of the gospels. It was God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge that sent Jesus to the cross. It was God's only way of escape for sin-laden mankind. Isaiah wrote long before: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." Christ was taking your and my place, bearing the guilt and condemnation that we justly should have borne. This is the background of this awful scene—the woeful condition of the human soul defiled and degraded by sin and transgression. This is the ultimate and supreme price that must be paid to redeem man from separation from God and death. Besides the kind and merciful forgiveness to the thief, Jesus also uttered these words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and "It is finished; Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." He also made provision for the care of His mother, Mary, committing her to the care of his beloved disciple, John. When all things were fulfilled, our Saviour gave up the ghost. But as He left this earthen temple, attendants in the Jewish temple witnessed the great veil that hung over the holy place being rent in twain from top to bottom. Great darkness was over the earth. Jesus was placed on the cross at the third hour. That would be to us 9:00 a. m. on a Friday morning. At the sixth hour, a great darkness came over the earth. The sun was darkened and continued until the ninth hour. This would be about 3:00 p. m. Jesus died at that time, and a great earthquake rent the rocks and opened many graves. Words fail to describe the depths of that awful scene. The Son of God was dying, and all nature seemed affected. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS: 1. Three men hung on the cross and died. Why was One remembered down through the following years? 2. How did this one Man's life and words affect people, history, and God? 3. How were the Scriptures fulfilled that were written hundreds of years before about this Man? 4. How were the people who were around Jesus when He died affected by His life and death? 5. How have Jesus' life, words, and death affected your life?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

"Borne away in mind and spirit to the solemn, awful scene of Mount Calvary's sacred summit, where we see the crimson stream flowing from the side of Jesus, who has washed us

snowy white; Here we seem in awe to compass round the reeking cross tonight." D. S. Warner.

As we behold our dear Saviour lifted up above the earth on the cross, we are reminded that it was for our sins that they nailed Him there. If we look at it in the eyes of the human alone, we see sorrow, tragedy, grief, and despair. We see a young man in the prime of life having His young and useful life quenched out without mercy. How could God allow such to be? See how the people prevail against Him. And yet He uses none of that great power that raised the dead and healed the sick to retaliate any harm. For Himself, that Holy One who hangs there affords no ease of pain or comfort. But hark! hear what is spoken from those parched lips to that one who begs for mercy hanging beside Him. "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise!" Here is a bright ray of hope. "Paradise." That sounds so restful and safe from harm and evil, does it not? But now we hear Him cry out with a loud voice as death strikes that mortal weakened frame. "It is finished!" What is finished? The great work of God and the plan of salvation for the souls of men are complete. The suffering is nearly past, and the triumph is begun. It is with a great joy that He has come to this moment. The sound of derision from the throng is fading away. "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." As a mortal, He has done His work. The rest lies in the blessed Hands of that wise and faithful God who has been watching this awful scene. Mortals appear to have triumphed. The One who crossed their schemes and foolish ways is gone now. They are rid of the "imposter" who would not conform to their traditions. Yes, it is finished. It is a work to last for all time and eternity, the salvation of all who believe and follow Him.

—L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Three men died, but only One is worthy of remembrance. The other two are remembered because of their relationship to the One in the center. History is divided "before" and "after" by this Man that hung there (B. C. and A. D.). The fact that a man died on the cross is not what interests the world or affects history, but it is because of who the Man was that died on that cross. Why is this Man, who was so great, yet so lowly, so innocent, yet counted as wicked, of such great importance? It is because of who He is and why He died. The world, at that time, tried to ignore the fact that He was the Son of God and

they tried to do away with Him and forget Him, yet He still lives in the minds of nearly the whole world today. Many will not love Him nor acknowledge Him as their Saviour, but still they unconsciously use His Name in vain.

No man has been so devoutly loved as Jesus. No one has been written about more than Jesus. Poets, saints, and innocent children glowingly proclaim His greatness, beauty, and love. Praises arise from the hearts of the redeemed, ascend to the portals of glory, and rebound on other redeemed souls. Glorious things have been proclaimed about our Saviour, Lord and Redeemer. Words cannot express the depths of the love that is in the hearts of those who have been saved from their sins and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Only by faith can we partly understand all that the cross means to God. Faith makes us know that "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 5:18. By faith we accept Christ's punishment as the punishment for our sins and then we know that ours have been forgiven. This faith brings such a peace and joy to our souls because the burden of our sins has been rolled away. Praise our God to whom all praise, glory, and honor is due!

—Sis. Marie Miles

CRUCIFIXION

Crucifixion properly means the act of nailing or tying to a cross. The cross was made of two beams, either crossing at the top at right angles, like a T, or in the middle of their length like an X. There was besides a piece on the center of the transverse beam to which the accusation or statement of the crime was attached, and a piece of wood which projected from the middle, on which the person sat, as on a sort of saddle; and by which the whole body was supported. This punishment was the most dreadful of all others, both for the shame and pain of it: and so scandalous, that it was inflicted as the last mark of detestation, upon the vilest of the people. It was the punishment of robbers and murderers, provided they were slaves; but if they were free, it was thought too infamous a punishment for such, let their crimes be what they might.

The body of the criminal was fastened to the upright beam by nailing or tying the feet to it, and on the transverse piece by nailing and sometimes tying the hands to it. As the hands and feet were the grand instruments of motion, they were provided with a greater quantity of nerves; and the nerves in

those places, especially the hands, are peculiarly sensible. Now as the nerves are the instruments of all sensation or feeling, wounds in the parts where they abound must be peculiarly painful; especially when inflicted with such rude instruments as large nails, forced through the places by the violence of a hammer; thus tearing asunder the nervous fibrillar, delicate tendons, and small bones of those parts. This punishment will appear dreadful enough, when it is considered, that the person was permitted to hang (the whole weight of his body being borne up by his nailed hands and the projecting piece which passed between the thighs) till he perished through agony and lack of food. Some, we are informed have lived three whole days in this state. It is true that, in some cases, there was a kind of mercy shown to the sufferer, which will appear sufficiently horrid, when it is known that it consisted in breaking the bones of their legs and thighs to pieces with a large hammer, in order to put them the sooner out of pain! Such a coup de grace as this, could only spring from those tender mercies of the wicked, which God represents as cruelty itself. Some were permitted to hang on the cross, till eaten up by birds of prey, which often began to tear them before life was extinct. —Clarke's Commentary

APRIL 18, 1976

"HE IS NOT HERE, HE IS RISEN!"

Mark 16:1-8; 1 Cor. 15:20,51,52,55-57

Mark 16:1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away; for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

1 Cor. 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Memory Verse: For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. Rom. 14:9.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ of Nazareth arose from the dead on the first day of the week. Through His resurrection is afforded power and life that will enable every soul who believes to be raised from the dead state of sin to a life above sin, and also it assures hope of being raised from the grave unto eternal life.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus Christ has suffered death upon a Roman cross. They took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a borrowed tomb. It was to be just borrowed, because He was not to stay there but for a little while. So many make strife and issue concerning just how long Jesus was in the tomb. Such is needless striving. We know that He died and that He was laid in a tomb. It was even as Jesus had forewarned His disciples. They were weeping and the world was rejoicing. The Jewish leaders were triumphant in their feeling that they had rid themselves of the trouble-maker. That He would come alive again was not in their thoughts. While they were rejoicing and gloating over their victory, the disciples were huddled in sad groups behind closed doors for fear of being arrested by the Jews. A few lowly women who could not get Jesus from

their hearts and thoughts, had decided to go to the tomb and anoint His body with sweet spices. The others lingered behind in different places—a disappointed and perplexed lot of people they were. It was into this darkness that the light of Heaven did gloriously shine. Suddenly the joyful sound was declared: "He is risen!" As the truth began to dawn upon their saddened hearts, and they slowly began to realize that such was true, their hearts became wild with joy. This they had not anticipated, but now they remembered what He had said before. All the puzzles began to take shape into reality. Oh, the joy of those disciples! It was a joy that would never depart from them. As they beheld their risen Lord, their hearts were overwhelmed with gladness and joy. Thus with this joy, after being anointed with the Holy Ghost, they were inspired to go forth into all the world with the glad gospel. Thank God, it has come down to us. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS: 1. What were the women expecting to see when they went to the tomb that morning? 2. Why did they not look forward to and expect Christ to be resurrected? 3. What does Christ being raised from the dead mean to those who have died in the faith? 4. What does it mean to us who are yet living? 5. What was the sting of death, and what was the victory of the grave?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

We find ourselves failing to find words that will adequately describe the joy and wonder that fills our souls because of the truth of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. We would not dare to count ourselves among the number who doubt this corner-stone of the Christian faith, so beyond all controversy we accept it as the Truth, and rejoice that we can receive the great and glorious benefits that the resurrection has brought to us. We must believe the witnesses that have declared to us through their written testimony that Jesus did arise from the grave triumphant, and that He has ascended up on high. We were not privileged to behold this wonder of wonders, but we can accept the testimony of those who did witness it.

There is undeniable evidence and testimony from the lives of many souls who have found victory over sin and have found a new life. It is all attributed to faith and obedience to this risen Christ. It is the power of an endless life working within the very heart and affections of men that has brought such a wonderful change in their lives. It is because Jesus lived. It is

because He conquered death and the grave. It is because He lived to die no more. He lives, not in bodily shape in this material world where unholy eyes could behold. But rather, He lives on high, up far above all heavens, at the right hand of God. He lives as King, not of this present world, but as the Prince of the world to come, the King of Glory. But as He lives, He has contact and power with those who are in this world and who are steadfast believers in Him. It is even as the poet, Whittier, said: "No fable old, nor mythic lore, nor dreams of bards and seers; No dead fact stranded on the shore of the oblivious years; — But warm, sweet, tender, even yet a present help is He, and faith has still its Olivet, and love its Galilee. The healing of His seamless dress is by our beds of pain; We touch Him in life's throng and press, and we are whole again. Through Him the first fond prayers are said, our lips of childhood frame; The last low whispers of our dead are burdened with His name." How true it is that He lives — only those who have sought, found, and know Him, really understand. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Those of today, who have joined the Easter parade and have vied with others about who could have the nicest and latest in the style of clothes, have lost the joy that the resurrected Saviour brings to the humble soul. Many things can hide from us the real joy that Jesus came to bring. Troubles can make one forget the many promises that our Lord and Saviour gave to us. Just as the women, who on that early morning of the first day of the week were deep in sorrow and had forgotten the many promises that Jesus had made about His death on the cross and His resurrection, just in the same way we can walk that same path. And even in our depths of trouble, we can look ahead and wonder how the next great problem will be rolled away. But Jesus takes note of our troubles. He will be there to help us if we will just keep seeking after Him just as the women did that morning. If they had known about His great power and had the faith they should have had, they would never have worried about the stone being rolled away. We, too, must have faith that God can and will roll away the great stones in our life. God will make a way somehow. Just as someone said, "God can do everything but fail." He will not fail His trusting children. We must hold our faith in a resurrected, living Saviour.

Oh, the joy that fills our souls when we think of our resurrection from the grave. Death is only a gateway into the heavenly realms. Because our Lord arose from the grave, just so we will arise. It is all a mystery and only with the eye of faith can we see it. It's a miracle, but we are serving a God of miracles. The grave and death have lost their sting. The body is put under the soil and goes back to dust, but on that resurrection morning it will arise — not in its former corruptible state, but we will have put on an incorruptible body — an immortal body in which the child of God will live in Heaven in eternity with our resurrected Saviour.

Jesus will not set foot on this earth again. When He comes in the clouds of glory, He comes to take the saints home and will be a Judge to those who rejected Him. The Word of God says, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Rev. 1:7. —M. Miles

THREE MINUTES TO GO

The brainwashing had been going on for weeks, up to fourteen hours a day — forty-eight hours straight on one occasion. Yet the man held his ground. He would not yield.

The place: a Communist prison camp in China. The time: in the early 1950's. And the man: a radiant Chinese Christian.

Finally, after repeated grilling, mockery, and torture, the Christian told his oppressors: "You are wasting your time, sirs. My faith is rooted deeper than any torture you might inflict upon me. It is rooted eternally in God's Son, Jesus Christ."

Furious, the Communist indoctrinator slapped him across the face and screamed, "Drop to your knees! Drop to your knees and pray! Because in three minutes, we're going to put a bullet through your head!"

While the indoctrinator, an armed guard and 50 more of the man's fellow prisoners looked on, he did as he was told.

"Lord," the man began to pray, "I thank Thee for the peace that is within my heart. I thank Thee for the faith which makes it possible for me to believe that, in spite of my oppressors, my heavenly Father sits upon His throne, able at any moment to silence forever the lips of these who blaspheme His name, at this moment. Thou art able to prove

Thy power to these two men. Thou art able to show Thyself to be God. In a moment, Thy power could strike these men dead, and —”

But he didn't get to finish his prayer; for gasping with pain, the two Communists — indoctrinator and guard — fell simultaneously to the floor. In a few hours, both of them were dead.

The Christian was set free and, at last report some years ago, continued to live un-molested in his home, with his wife and children. No communist had dared go near his door.

... You too, reader, may one day be required to stand before Communists or other godless men to confess your faith in Christ — at the threat of your life. You may lose your life for your stand, as have thousands of other heroic Christians.

But be sure of this: God has not been taken by surprise. Eternal happiness, in the presence of the Saviour, awaits each believer, no matter what earthly life holds in store for him. Today may seem to belong to the power of darkness, but tomorrow always belongs to God!

The above incident was personally witness by the Rev. Leslie Millen, long a CIM missionary in China, during his own imprisonment by the Communists. —Ken Anderson

APRIL 25, 1976

DOUBT NOT, BUT BELIEVE

John 20:11-18; 26-31

John 20:11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, said unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou has laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus said unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rab-bo-ni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

26 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

31 But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Memory Verse: Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. John 20:29b.

Central Thought: There is joy and peace in believing.

Word Definitions: Believe means to take as true, real, to have confidence in another person, to have trust, and to have faith (Web. Dict.). Rabboni means "my teacher" which was a term of reverence and respect. Touch me not in the Greek means "cling to me not." Jesus seemed to imply that she must have a different conception of Him from that time on and she was to commune with a risen Christ, and He gave her a work to do.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Peter and John had come and gone. Their hearts were broken when Jesus was crucified and put in the tomb, but now someone had stolen His body. Mary had been there early in the morning and found the stone door removed. She had rushed to summon Peter and John. Now they had left but she could not leave. She is heart-broken and in a state of bewilderment. She wanders all over the garden and ends up back at the tomb. In her grief, she bends down again and looks in the tomb. The angels speak to her and she is so distraught in her

mind that she answers them as if they were mortals like herself. She burst out in her grief and cried, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him!" Then she begins her search again of the garden. Jesus took note of her tears and grief, and He asked Mary, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She did not recognize Him as she looked at Him through her tears in a half-distracted manner. But when He spoke her name, the tone in which it was spoken pierced through to her inner senses. She had heard that tone of love before. (Memories live on in our hearts.) Memory brought back to her, through that spoken word, her Teacher, the Saviour, the Lord Himself! She flung herself at His feet.

In the evening of this same day (which was Sunday), Jesus appeared to the disciples. All were there except Thomas. Oh how happy they were to see the Lord. He showed them His hands, His side and from these wounds flowed joy to the disciples. It was the sense of joy because they knew His work was finished and completed. They were glad because He was their living Saviour. He had triumphed over sin and death. "Because I live, ye shall live also." These words no doubt came rushing back to their minds and brought much joy. Again, they may have thought of His words, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Oh, the joy of the disciples proceeded from a spiritual sight of Jesus. What does your joy flow from? Does it flow from riches, from friends, or self-accomplishments? Oh, seek a sight of Jesus. Seek His joy — a joy that will not pass away. Look at Him as a crucified, risen Saviour! Look away from all and look to Jesus. Looking to Him will bring true happiness, true joy — a joy that the world cannot give.

—M. Miles

QUESTIONS: 1. Can a person in deep grief look at things in a true light? Notice how Mary addressed the angels. 2. How does Jesus take note of our sorrows and griefs today? 3. Does our memory of the tones of spoken words bring back to us joy and sometimes sadness? 4. Notice in verse 17 the words "my." 5. What kind of man would you say Thomas was and how did Jesus deal with him? 6. How are we blessed today?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

How gentle Jesus was in dealing with His disciples and those around Him at His death and resurrection. Jesus said, "I

am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10. Believing in Christ's name still brings life into the soul and makes man a new creature. It was for this purpose that the wonderful life of Jesus was manifested. Faith in a risen Saviour brings hope, joy, and trust. All of this was far from Thomas. For him, all he could see was a dead Christ. Thomas seemed to be a man who was a practical, matter-of-fact, common-sense person. He did not have any idea of grasping anything supernatural. He had forgotten how several days before he had joined in with the other disciples in saying, "Let us go with Him and defend Him and if we cannot save Him, let us die with Him." Now when his Master died at the hands of His enemies, he mourned deeply for his dead Lord. When Thomas heard of Jesus appearing to the disciples, he shook his head sadly and said that he could not believe unless he had personally put his hands in His side and also touched the nail prints in His hands. Thomas had not forsaken his Lord. His memory of the One whom he loved was strong. But it had not ended right and he was in a state of despair. Jesus fully understood all about Thomas. On another first day of the week, which was Sunday, the disciples met again. Thomas had been persuaded to meet with them. Jesus appeared unto them and said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." Oh, what glorious words! What depths of joy are in them of belief in a risen Saviour, from one who had been brought back from the jaws of despair and faithlessness. New hope sprang up in his soul. A joy flooded him and now life took on a new meaning. And dear ones, today we are blessed in a greater way than Thomas. Jesus said, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Oh, what joy there is in believing! What peace floods our souls as we revel in the greatness of being forgiven of our sins and being filled with the Holy Spirit. There is a blessedness that the world cannot give as we anchor our faith in a living, risen Saviour. There is great joy in believing.

—Sis. M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible [unbelievable] with you that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26:8. Thus

addressed Paul to Agrippa and the chief captains with the principal men of the city of Caesarea. When in Athens Paul preached on Mars hill, and when he mentioned Jesus being raised from the dead, "some mocked, and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter." Acts 17:32. The tidings of a risen Saviour, the Conqueror of Death and the Grave seemed unbelievable to those people. It appeared to be a fanciful tale rather than an actuality. To get right down to it, even today, it is still beyond the comprehension of so many. When it gets beyond the glimmering spark of this present life, man's hopes and beliefs go out with it.

But this is the core, the foundation, the very essence of the gospel of Christianity, a truth so solid and undeniable regardless of how hard it is for man to believe. To believe it from the heart means salvation and life. To deny it and doubt it means death and damnation. A person must do one or the other. The disciples could not believe it for joy. They actually did not have an evil heart of unbelief, but it was so wonderful that they dared not hope that such could be. But they were soon persuaded. Even at the one meeting where they met at a place appointed them in Galilee, "when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted." Matt. 28:17. No matter how much proof He gave, it seems that there was always room found in the heart to doubt it. If there was that much temptation for them to doubt the risen Christ in His actual presence, how much more likely for people to doubt today. Man believes generally what he wants to believe. After the news was broadcast across the globe of the astronauts landing and stepping foot on the moon, I heard from the lips of some that they would not believe it. I said, "Well, they showed it on television." But the answer was still negative, "No, it was not real, they were acting it out." These people did not believe this, and nothing could be said at that time that could persuade them. Some are this way about believing the gospel. They do not want to believe it. But there are those who were behind the venture to the moon with all their heart who rejoiced and believed when they saw it portrayed to them. There are those who doubt the gospel, but it is those who care not for it anyway. But for the soul who is seeking the way of the Lord and earnestly pressing forth to salvation, the message of a resurrected Christ, although it is hard to believe, comes as light and knowledge from Heaven.

—L. Busbee

PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

You remember the story of the engineer of the Brooklyn bridge. During its building he was injured. For many long months he was shut up in his room. His gifted wife shared his toils, and carried his plans to the workmen. At last the great bridge was completed. Then the invalid architect asked to see it. They put him upon a cot, and carried him to the bridge. They placed him where he could see the magnificent structure in all its beauty. There he lay, in his helplessness, intently scanning the work of his genius. He marked the great cables, the massive piers, the mighty anchorages which fettered it to the earth. His critical eye ran over every beam, every girder, every chord, every rod. He noted every detail carried out precisely as he had dreamed it in his dreams, and wrought it out in his plans and specifications. And then as the joy of achievement filled his soul, as he saw and realized that it was finished exactly as he had designed it; in an ecstasy of delight he cried out: "It's just like the plan; *it's just like the plan.*"

Some day we shall stand up in the glory world and looking up into His face cry out: "O God, I thank Thee that Thou didst turn me aside from my wilful and perverse way, to Thy loving and perfect one. I thank Thee that Thou didst ever lead me to yield my humble life to Thee. I thank Thee that as I, day by day, walked the simple pathway of service, Thou didst let me gather up, one by one, the golden threads of Thy great purpose for my life. I thank Thee, as, like a tiny trail creeping its way up some great mountain side, that pathway of life has gone on in darkness and light, storm and shadow, weakness and tears, failures and faltering, Thou hast at last brought me to its destined end. And now that I see my finished life, no longer 'through a glass darkly' but in the face to face splendor of Thine own glory, I thank Thee, O God, I thank Thee that, it's just like the plan; *it's just like the plan.*" J. M.

(Important notice to teachers: For us to know how many copies of the Bible lessons to print, it is necessary that you have your order for the next quarter in this office no later than June 1, 1976. The first Sunday of the next quarter is July 4, 1976. Please submit your order now.)

MAY 2, 1976
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Luke 24:13-16; 25-34

Luke 24:13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone farther.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and broke, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

Memory Verse: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" Luke 24:26.

Central Thought: Looking at things from a fleshly, earthly standpoint will cause our eyes to be holden, so that we will not be able to recognize Christ when He comes near.

Word Definitions: Furlong — it is calculated that 10 furlongs equal one mile. Threescore furlongs, the distance from Jerusalem to Emmaus, would equal about 6 miles. **Their eyes were holden** — they were not allowed to recognize the divine Visitor.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The report has come to these two men that the tomb has been found empty. Some of the women have reported seeing a vision of angels saying that Christ is alive. But how could this be? They saw that He was laid in the tomb, dead as all mortal men can be. No, it did not tally up. Yet, what could the report of the women mean? Thus they reasoned and discussed the strange events of the day together. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it." Yes, there was One who was listening to their conversation that day as they trudged slowly along. Jesus, who was risen from the dead that early morning hour, has power over the elements. He can appear and disappear. He can go through walls, doors, and obstructions; He can traverse space and distance in the twinkling of an eye. So He makes His quiet approach to these two men, casually yet earnestly, inquiring concerning the anxious conversation that they are engaged in. One of them was named Cleopas. Some have thought that the other one was possibly Luke. Luke is the only one who goes into a lengthy, detailed account of this. Mark mentioned it briefly in his gospel. Emmaus being about 6 miles distance from Jerusalem, it was perhaps a 2 hour walk at a slow even pace. Think of the message that Jesus preached to them that day. Their hearts were burning within them, even though they realized not who was speaking. Think of the road of life that we are all traveling. There is One who seeks to walk with us, to comfort and guide us on our journey. Pause for a moment at the scene of these two men reaching their destination that night. "He made as though He would have gone farther." Jesus did desire to go in and tarry with them, but He wanted to be personally invited. Is this not true even now? Then think of the joy when it dawned upon their wondering hearts just who this Person was! Back to Jerusalem they went that same night at a much faster pace than they had traveled before! There are so many precious lessons in this. —L. Busbee

QUESTION: 1. What was the subject of the conversation of these two men as they walked along the road that day? 2. Why were they troubled and sad? 3. Were they perplexed? 4. Who came and started walking with them? 5. Why were they not able to recognize Him? 6. How did He answer their wondering thoughts? 7. How many scriptures in the Old Testament could you make mention of that perhaps Jesus used in His discourse? 8. Why did Jesus make as though He would go farther? 9. Why did Jesus wait until he was breaking bread before He revealed Himself to them? 10. What was their reaction?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

A most touching and sacred scene is before us in our lesson today. These were real people of long ago who shared this blessed experience of having Christ revealed to them. Their minds were bewildered and troubled as they started out on foot toward the little village of Emmaus about 6 miles west and a little north. As they walked, they talked together concerning the sad and unexplainable happenings of the past few days. It is good to talk things over with someone close to one's heart. What a great benefit this is! It is good to speak, and it is good to listen. Communion and fellowship are great indispensable blessings upon the human race. Their minds were endeavoring to fathom out a reason and an explanation for all the recent events that had transpired.

Suddenly in the middle of their conversation a Voice spoke. Turning about, they saw this Stranger come up, perhaps behind them. Their eyes were holden, so that they did not realize who He was. Is this not true with us sometimes? We fail to see the Lord in things that come our way. We fail to realize that the trials and battles of life are the work of God upon our soul. Jesus began to communicate with them, questioning them of the evident sorrow and perplexity of their minds. When they revealed what was bothering them, He rebuked them. They could not grasp the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That was their problem. Did you know that if we could grasp more into our very souls of the truth and reality and glory of Christ's resurrection, many of our problems would dissolve? Doubt, fear, anxiety, and melancholy are the fruits of unbelief. "O fools and slow of heart to believe!" Unbelief is keeping many, many souls out of the kingdom of God. It tripped up Israel in the olden time, and it is still taking its toll of souls today.

Beginning at Moses and the prophets, Jesus began to expound and open up all the Scriptures concerning Himself. Oh, what a message that was! I would love to have had the privilege of hearing it, wouldn't you? I am sure that the many inspiring prophecies in the book of Psalms were mentioned also. Think of the many places Isaiah makes mention of the coming Christ. Are you acquainted with them? You should be. If you have failed to grasp knowledge of these divine prophecies concerning Christ, you are missing the very life-stream of the Bible. It is a study that is well worth your time.

As the shades of evening began to creep over the land, they entered the village of Emmaus. Can you imagine what happened? See the Stranger begin to say farewell and take His leave as if to go farther up the road. See these two disciples constraining Him to tarry with them through the night. Do you do this with the Lord? Remember that He comes not except there is a warm invitation. Are we opening our hearts to Him daily? See Him now enter their humble dwelling. A simple meal is prepared as usually such will be at such a time. See the Stranger take some bread and break it and bless it. Look at the astonished joy upon the faces of these two disciples! Look at it increase when they see Him disappear! "Did not our hearts burn within us?" Oh, yes, they knew that there was something unusual, but they could not make it out. It is all plain to them now. See them hurry up from the table and prepare for a swift journey back to Jerusalem. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the scriptures?" Oh, there is nothing like the burning of the fire of the Holy Spirit within one's soul as they read or hear the precious Word of God. It is truly life and breath to the soul. It's what keeps it alive. It's the food that nourishes and causes spiritual life to grow. How precious are the promises of God! They come to one in times of trouble and what a glorious uplift they bring. When a person is in trouble, all he needs to do is to get his Bible and read it and it will be an uplift and bring comfort and solace. There is no book like the Bible. You might read a book and it's not so interesting if you read it again, even a few months or years later, unless it is based on or has a lot of God's Word in it. But oh, the precious Bible is different. It

was written under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

“While I was musing the fire burned.” Psa. 39:3. While a person is in meditation on the Word of God, the fire of the Holy Spirit begins to burn within one’s heart. Oh, how precious it is! I think of Jeremiah who said, “I will not make mention of him, [God] nor speak anymore in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.” Jer. 20:9. He just had to speak for the Lord. It was like a fire burning in his soul. He couldn’t keep still. Oh, How precious is God’s Word! It is like a well of water springing up in one’s soul.

—Sis. Marie Miles

BEWARE OF SHORT-CUTS

We recall a summer day in Switzerland. A number of us were crossing a great glacier. The path was narrow and winding. Presently we came to a point where the guide, instead of continuing straight ahead, made a sharp, sudden detour to the right. Of course all of us followed his lead — that is, all but one man. He was evidently annoyed at the detour and resolved to take a short-cut. So he started straight ahead instead of following in the pathway. Immediately the guide rushed back, grasped him by the collar, and with no gentle hand dragged him back. Then, without a word, he pointed to a patch of snow upon which the man was about to tread. Instead of being a sure foothold for his steps, it was a mere crust of snow covering a great crevasse opening into the very bowels of the glacier. Had he trodden upon it he would have gone down to an unspeakable death into the heart of the great glacier. The short-cut would have ended in appalling disaster.

A similar peril besets the believer’s walk. Sometimes our Guide seems too slow for us. Haste of spirit; eagerness for results; counsel of well-meaning friends; seeming delay of God to lead us onward — these things and others of a kind, tempt us to take short-cuts toward desired ends. But like the man on the glacier, we make a mistake which may end in disaster. At times God does indeed seem to lead us by devious and roundabout paths. But it pays us far better to make detours with Him than to take short-cuts without Him. —J. M.

MAY 9, 1976

JESUS ASCENDS TO HEAVEN

Matt. 28:16,18-20; 1 Cor. 15:5-7; Acts 1:3-11

Matt. 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

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

1 Cor. 15:5 And that he was seen of Cephas then of the twelve:

6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

Acts 1:3 To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up to heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Memory Verse: Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb. 12:2.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ's ascension was a verification of His resurrection, Messiahship, divinity, and authority as a Teacher, having said before the crucifixion that the Son of man should ascend up to where He had been before. (John 6:62)

Word Definition: Mount of Olives was about a Sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem. A Sabbath day's journey "is 15 furlongs, which is two English miles."

LESSON BACKGROUND

The precious Saviour had come to the end of His ministry in person on this earth. After His resurrection He saw His disciples at intervals. We will notice that the writer of the book of Acts verifies the accounts of the gospel writers of Jesus' words and ascension. Then later, the Apostle Paul again speaks of Jesus' work here on earth after His resurrection, and before His ascension.

Jesus' resurrection was demonstrated by many "proofs" and "infallible signs." He was seen by many witnesses and they heard Him speak "of things concerning the kingdom of God." They were invited to touch Him, to satisfy themselves that He was not a spirit but was clothed with "flesh and blood." (Luke 24:39; John 20:27). With their own eyes they saw Him "taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight." What a glorious Saviour we are serving and what a certainty we have in our souls that all of God's promises will be fulfilled.

—M. Miles

QUESTIONS: 1. What "infallible proofs" do we have of Jesus' resurrection, appearance to the disciples, and His

ascension? 2. What power does Jesus have and to whom does He give it? 3. What command did Jesus give before His ascension, and should it be carried out only if people will hear and believe? 4. Before one can work for God, what do they have to have? 5. Did Jesus answer the disciples question, or did He leave it for the Holy Spirit to answer it for them? 6. How will Jesus come again and what will He be to us? Will he be our Saviour or our Judge?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

People's last words are very weighty and not soon forgotten. The last words of Jesus are very weighty. Not only were they spoken to those present but they were spoken to all who are the disciples of Jesus, through redemption. First, we notice that Jesus affirms that He has "all power in heaven and earth." He has power over all evil spirits, over all opposing powers to His commands, and over all the conditions or hindrances that might try to stop His purposes being carried out. Then we notice that He gives a specific command to be carried out. Notice that there are no qualifications to this command, but Jesus said, "Go . . . and teach all nations." Mark records His words as being, "Go ye therefore into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature . . . He that believeth... shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." (chapt. 16:15,16) Jesus did not say to stop preaching, teaching or living for Him if people would not believe. It's our duty to see that they hear. Jesus knew that some would believe and that some would not. It seems that we are in the time when very few will believe but we still must go and we still must tell them. That is the command of Jesus Christ. Those who will not believe will have to give an account to God. Oh, for more workers for the Lord. Are we doing all we can to obey Jesus' last command? Are there those in the world who are saying with the Psalmist, "no man cared for my soul"? (Psa. 142:4) Are we failing? Are we asking for a greater vision of the value of a soul and a vision of the work of the Lord? "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Prov. 29:18) We each one have a place to fill. Can we do a little more?

Notice that Jesus didn't want them to go forth until they were "endued with power from on high," or filled with the Holy Spirit. They could not fill the place nor face the persecutions unless they had power from God. Notice how Peter faced persecutions after he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Before this time, he even let a little maid cause him to

deny Christ. Jesus had previously taught them that the work of the Holy Spirit was to: "Bring all things to their remembrance," to "guide you into all truth," to "give them power over all the power of the enemy," to "reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John 15:26; 16:7-13).

Notice that the disciples were very concerned about their nation being freed from the Roman government. Jesus did not answer their question, but left it for the Holy Spirit to correct their mistaken notions.

The Scriptures leave unpainted anything unusual about the path of His upward flight. It is only stated that a cloud received Him out of their sight. He "maketh the clouds his chariot." Psa. 104:3. "He passed through the heavens," (Heb. 4:14; 1 Pet. 3:22) and He "took his seat at the right hand of God." (Col. 3:1) The angels helped the disciples to bring their thoughts back to their duty and reminded them that He would come again in like manner, not to be their Saviour, but He will be their Judge. (2 Tim. 4:1). —Sis. M. Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

From the Psalms comes prophecies of Christ's ascension. The 68th Psalm is a song of victory for Israel. It is a parallel counter-part with the song of Deborah and Barak in Judges 5, when they rejoiced over the victory against Sisera. But this 68th Psalm is prophetic, pointing toward the triumph of Christ over sin, death, and the grave. The 18th verse is the central part of the prophecy which says: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Paul quoted this in his Ephesian letter. "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." It was Christ's divine power to pass into the Heavens, wrought by His resurrection from the dead, that put the climax on the great work of salvation. Christ must ascend to Heaven and from that exalted position wield the rod of His strength. Thus He led captivity captive. He broke the power of the influence that held in bondage the hearts and lives of men.

Another precious Psalm pointing forward to Christ's ascension is Psalm 24. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the bless-

ing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? The answer: none but Jesus Christ. No other living mortal could meet the qualifications stated out here. All mankind had fallen under the blight of sin and defilement. Only Jesus could ascend the hill of the Lord. The last four verses of this Psalm are thrilling as well as inspiring. It can be none other scene but that as Christ approaches the Heavens and the right Hand of God. Mortal eyes did not behold this. A cloud received Him out of the sight of man. But prophecy gives us a first hand view of this glorious scene. I am persuaded that a host of angels escorted Christ as He neared the Heavenly fields of glory. As they approached the gates of splendor, their mighty cries burst forth in everlasting song: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in!" As if in answer to this, eternal voices from within responded with this query: "Who is this King of glory?" Note the answer: "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." Yes, this King of glory that seeks entrance to the portals of glory is the Lord strong and mighty in battle. He has conquered death, sin, and the grave. He fought old Satan on his own ground, and defeated him and all of his hosts. He fought the battle through to be able to give us His victory. Again the cry goes up: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." Again the response from within: "Who is this King of glory?" And once more from the multitude of angels this glorious refrain: "The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

Psalm 47:5,8 is another song of triumph. "God is gone up with a shout. . . . God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness." In Psalm 110 we find another prophecy of Jesus, one that is quoted in the New Testament about 5 times. "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The Lord (Almighty God) said this to the Lord (Christ). Christ was destined to sit at the right Hand of the throne of the Majesty in the Heavens. This is His great reward for submitting to the will of the Father and becoming sin for us to save our souls. —L. Busbee .

THE PEOPLE ON MY STREET

Nada settled on the church bench. How good it was to worship the Lord and begin the week in His house!

She rejoiced in singing, "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart." She listened carefully, reading along in her Bible, as Pastor Rogers read the morning text. But when he began to speak, she sat up straighter. It was obvious he had a great burden to share with his people.

"What are you doing about the Great Commission Jesus left with His disciples? If you are His, the Commission is yours, as well. Are you witnessing to those perhaps only you can reach?"

Nada squirmed. But she was so busy.

In between the minister's pointed remarks, Nada's thoughts flew. He was certainly cutting this morning! Well, she had taken that class of junior boys and girls when no one else would take them — knocked herself out too with lesson preparation to challenge them. Still, she'd had the class three months now, and it hadn't grown in membership.

Was God asking her to do more? Had she neglected her Christian responsibilities? After all, being a full-time Christian wife and mother was pretty much of a job in itself.

"I hope we are not becoming complacent Christians," the minister said, concluding his sermon.

"Brother Rogers, you've just shattered my complacency," Nada whispered to herself.

As soon as the last piece of washing fluttered from her clothesline the next morning, Nada inventoried her neighborhood. First house on her right belonged to old Mrs. Remmers. She never saw much of her. Could she speak to her of the Lord? She felt so shy when speaking of spiritual things, especially to people who were older.

There was Mrs. Remmers now, hanging her laundry on the line. Nada's heart skipped. Maybe someday she would be old and alone too, her children grown-up and moved away, her husband gone. Oh, she mustn't think of that any more on this bright, sunny day!

"Hi, Mrs. Remmers!" she called gaily.

Mrs. Remmers turned a lined, unsmiling face in her direction. "Good morning," she said dourly.

"God save me from ever becoming sour and bitter," Nada thought silently. Of course, it seemed Mrs. Remmers didn't have much to be joyful about. She had no close family, and she hardly ever went anywhere.

"Please come in awhile!" Suddenly it seemed imperative that Mrs. Remmers accept her invitation.

Mrs. Remmers seemed actually dazed as she walked ahead of Nada into the house. Mrs. Remmers walked about, examining the house plants and exclaiming over a bit of crochet work on a table.

"I love to crochet," Nada smiled. "I guess you can call it my hobby."

"Why, it's mine, too," Mrs Remmers said, a smile lighting her face, "but I've never tried this pattern." Her eyes grew bright as they discussed the intricacies of the pattern, and Nada's heart reproached her that she had so long neglected her lonely neighbor.

"Look!" she said impulsively, "come over and have dinner with us next Sunday and get to know my family. Perhaps you'd like to go to church with us first."

Mrs. Remmers nodded. "I haven't gone much lately. I hate to go alone. Thank you. Now I'll have two things to look forward to all week."

Nada's heart ached with pity as she watched Mrs. Remmers cross the yard and go into her own house. It would be very easy to talk to her about the Lord one of these days.

Her pastor's sober words re-echoed in the quietness of the room: "This church is not having the outreach it should have."

She brought it up to the entire family at the supper table.

"I'll ask the Browns," Freddy said.

"I'll ask some of them. There's enough for both of us," said Timmy.

(to be continued)

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MAY 16, 1976

NOT TAUGHT OF MEN BUT REVEALED OF GOD

Gal. 1:1,2,6-8,11-13,15-17,22-24

Gal. 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

(33)

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you let him be accursed.

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood;

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:

23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified God in me.

Memory Verse: But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 1 Cor. 2:10.

Central Thought: The gospel of Jesus Christ that Paul preached among the nations is the only soul saving gospel in the world and it was given to him of God and not from men.

Word Definitions: **Pervert** the gospel of Christ — to turn across, transmute, or corrupt. **Let him be accursed** — to be banned or excommunicated. **Heathen** — non-Jews. The same Greek rendering.

LESSON BACKGROUND

For the remaining lessons in this quarter we will study the epistle of Paul to the Galatians. We find that Paul is sharply and clearly reproving the people in this writing for listening to those who advocated the Mosaic law and its customs as necessary for salvation. Galatia was an area in Asia. Two of the chief cities where the gospel was preached were Iconium and

Lystra. Lystra was the place, you remember, where the impotent man was healed and the people called the apostles gods and would have made sacrifice to them. God worked mightily in those places, but the work of the gospel was strongly opposed by the Jews. At Lystra, they evil affected the people to stone Paul. At Iconium, also, they stirred the people against the brethren. And here we will find in Paul's letter to them, that the Jews were still zealously affecting the believing brethren, seeking to draw them back under the law and its system.

Paul endeavors to instruct and explain to these brethren the difference between the law and the grace of Christ. Many clear, definite truths are set forth. How encouraging it is to our hearts to know that we are saved by grace through faith, and not by the works of the law. The Epistle to the Galatians has been a great blessing to the ages since. Martin Luther wrote a commentary on this epistle, setting forth the doctrine of justification by faith. His commentary was so widely published and read, that it helped to establish and preserve the German language, as well as bring to light the truth.

In our first lesson Paul makes it clear that what he taught these brethren was a revelation of God and not something that he was taught of man. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS: 1. Why were the Galatian brethren moved from the gospel? 2. Why would anyone pervert the gospel of Christ? 3. How serious is it to preach another gospel? 4. How could God be glorified in a great way by saving someone such as Paul? 5. Why did Paul not confer with flesh and blood? 6. What did the churches hear about Paul?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It is worthy to note in the first of our lesson that Paul expressed his apostleship as not being of men or by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him (Jesus) from the dead. This was the thing that made Paul positive beyond all doubt that the gospel he preached was not of man. It was the message of Christ being raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. This kind of message, this kind of life and power, so far exceeded the influence and benefit of the law of Moses and the ordinances that Israel followed after from the past. It so far superceded the value and worth of the old carnal commandments that Paul marveled that these Galatian brethren had been moved from their freedom in Christ to the

law system. Farther on in this epistle he goes into a lengthy and thorough explanation of the change that has taken place from the old way to the new.

He was in a good position to speak of these things, because, as he testifies here, he was tangled up in the law of Moses himself. He was so persuaded that the followers of Jesus were wrong in departing from the law system, that it drove him into a frenzy of zeal to completely exterminate the Christians from the land. He was in gross ignorance and blinded by tradition. But he was sincere, and doing his best for what he believed was right and in the will of God. God was merciful and His grace was more abundant in revealing to Paul the error of his way. Paul's blinded eyes were opened and the reality of what he was doing dawned upon his soul when he met Christ on the Damascus road.

He makes it clear in this epistle that what he was preaching was not something that the Church itself or the apostles that were before him had communicated unto him. It was by direct revelation of God that he preached this soul-saving gospel. He had the message given to him first-hand from God. He made it clear that after this revelations, he did not go up to Jerusalem, but rather went into Arabia. It is believed that he spent some time in that area in solitude, praying and searching the Scriptures. He was unknown by the churches (or congregations) in Judaea. But the report that was given to them concerning this man brought great joy to their hearts. Great comfort was theirs to know that the one who was causing them great sorrow and persecution was transformed now to the faith of Christ and was preaching the gospel, too. Paul's testimony of the grace of God in Christ was one of the greatest witnesses of the truth of the gospel that ever has been. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Often we hear a declaration of something that is supposed to be truth from the Word of God and then the added positive statement that it has to be true because Doctor so and so said it. Or a person will say that they wouldn't dispute anyone's word on the Bible who had studied it and had received a degree from a theology seminary. This is a false conception that so many have today of those who are teaching the Word of God. The false idea that "God is dead," which a few years ago swept through the land, came from some of those same false preacher who had D. D. behind their names. It was an

infiltration of Communists preachers that have taken over in this country.

Many times adversaries of the truth, when they have nothing to say in reason against the doctrine itself, cast reproach on those who preach it, and question their call and authority to preach, so they may at least indirectly reflect upon the doctrine. The true call to preach comes from God and it is without intervention from the church. The one who is called must have an experience with God and the infallible knowledge of the truth of the gospel, and this not wholly by the help of human means, or by private study, but mainly by immediate inspiration from the Spirit of God. Paul shows that the gospel was not taught him of man; and this he saith, not to depress human learning, but that he may face his adversaries who alleged that he had the knowledge of the gospel by ordinary instruction from men only, and so was no apostle.

"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." We know that only the preaching of the true gospel will work a complete work in the hearts of mankind. Man's ideas or false teachings will never bring true satisfaction to a soul. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Rom. 10:15. Yet that same person is a target for the devil. But a God-called and filled minister of the gospel will have grace to face the oppressions of the devil. —Sis. M. Miles

THE PEOPLE ON MY STREET

(continued from last lesson)

"Are those the children who come over to play so much?" Nada asked her children.

"Yeah," Freddy nodded, "they live in that little house at the end of the block. There's eight of them."

"Their clothes are awful ragged," Timmy said. "I hope no one stares at them when they come."

The Browns would be her next stop, Nada promised herself. As she walked past the well-kept homes the next day, she noted they ended abruptly at the Brown's little paint-peeled gray house. "Imagine ten people packed into that tiny place," she marveled as she stood at the door, waiting for Mrs. Brown to answer her knock.

A wan-looking woman came to the door and shook her head as if she sensed Nada was an agent of some sort. "I'm Nada Gentry, your neighbor up the block," Nada said quickly.

"Oh, come in," Mrs. Brown invited with a look of surprise.

The room was clean, but barely furnished.

"I came to invite your children to Sunday School — you and Mr. Brown too, of course," Nada said, finding it a bit easier this time than the day before, when she'd brought the subject up to Mrs. Remmers.

"Why it's awfully nice of you to care," Mrs. Brown said gratefully. "I've been wanting the children to go, but we just never got started, and it seems like someone is always having a cold or something. We can't dress very fancy, and maybe the two youngest boys can't come until they get some better clothes——"

"I believe they're just a bit smaller than my Freddy and Timmy, so if you'll accept some they've outgrown——"

Mrs. Brown nodded. "We're not proud about accepting help. Maybe someday we'll be in a position to help someone else."

They would too, Nada reflected as she walked homeward. If all the Brown family accepted Christ, what a lot of witnesses they would make! She was excited and full of joy as she walked down the street.

Humming to herself, she was about to turn in at her own yard again, when she heard a sob. Who would be crying on such a beautiful morning. The sound came from the direction of the pink trailer house.

A girl with drenched velvety brown eyes came to the door. She did not even try to hide her tears, and Nada put her arm around her, saying, "I'm your neighbor across the way."

"I've seen you going past," the girl nodded. "You sort of remind me of my big sister."

"Well, maybe I can sort of take her place while you live here," Nada said cheerily. "You are new in town, aren't you?"

"I'll say!" the girl said fervently. "I don't know a soul. Bob and I have been married only two months. He's gone on his job all day and sometimes he has to go out of town, and I'm scared to death. You can't imagine how this trailer squeaks and groans at night! And I'm so lonely, I could just bawl. In fact, that's what I was just doing when you knocked."

"Well, you just come over and visit us whenever you feel that way," Nada said. Seeing the girl's eyes begin to shine, she added, "And we'd certainly welcome you to our church, too."

The girl looked interested. "Thanks, but that's the only day we have together, and Bob is usually so tired, he likes to stay at home."

"Well, right now you are coming home and having lunch with me," Nada said firmly. "I take it that Bob is out of town again?" At the girl's nod, she piloted her firmly out of the door. She was thinking of the wonderful group of young married couples at the church. She would have some of them over for dinner and invite her young trailer neighbors.

As the young girl chatted happily, her pretty, young face alight, Nada's thought was one of thanks that her complacency had been quite shattered! —Sel.

MAY 23, 1976

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST AND ALIVE WITH HIM

Gal. 2:9-21

Gal. 2:9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen and they unto the circumcision [Jews].

10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; in-somuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ,

and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of Sin? God forbid.

18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Memory Verse: For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. Rom. 10:12.

Central Thought: Since the distinction between the Jew and the Gentile was of the flesh, being crucified with Christ disannuls this middle wall of partition, and through His risen life the soul is exalted to a plane of holy faith and divine love.

Word Definitions: **Dissemble:** to act hypocritically with or in pretense. **Dissimulation:** acting under a feigned part, hypocrisy. **Frustrate:** to set aside; to lightly esteem, neutralize, disannul, bring to naught.

LESSON BACKGROUND

It is rather difficult to bring together Paul's account of his going up to Jerusalem in this chapter and associate it with the account of Paul's conversion and the aftermath as recorded in Acts by Luke. There is a time element involved that is not clearly shown which will no doubt answer for some of the vagueness of the account. But it is clearly stated that Paul journeyed up to Jerusalem the second time to communicate with the apostles about the gospel message that he was ministering to the Gentiles. Here is where the problem developed. The Gentiles, who were being converted by the preaching of Paul and others, had not been circumcised. The believing Jews had not yet turned loose of the importance of this ancient token of the covenant God made with Abraham and his seed. They were persuaded that it was still in

force. It seems that Paul called these false brethren who were invading upon the liberty of the new-born souls who had found the life of Christ. Circumcision became a big issue. It had invaded upon this Galatian work also. That, along with all the rest of the law of Moses, was bringing their happy souls into bondage, a yoke that had become so burdensome and heavy to the fathers of the past.

Paul had to be very strong and persuaded by the Holy Ghost as to what course to take. Many of the believers were still under the influence of the dead letter of the law. Even Peter, one of the twelve disciples of Christ, fell a prey to the spirit of hypocrisy to a certain extent, as Paul states here. He had been dealt with by the Lord, but it seems that it took someone like Paul to really show up the fact that the barrier and difference between the Jew and the Gentile existed no more in the mind of God. Peter realized that the Gentiles were entitled to the Gospel, but held in reserve a moral respect to those of the circumcision. This wrought havoc in the work, and an uproar of hypocrisy. Paul saw that such was not right, and God gave him love, grace, and courage to spell it out. It was not that he was against Peter, but he was endeavoring to lead the people in the Truth of the Gospel. It was a difficult time for the Church. Ages and ages of tradition had to be dissolved, and it could not be done in one day. How merciful the Lord was and patient with those who were endeavoring to serve Him. The rite of circumcision that was instituted by God to Abraham was to be laid aside. This holy token of the covenant of Abraham becomes now a means of the glory of the flesh. The cross of Christ has brought it to an end. But in the minds of the people it had a tendency to linger and assert itself. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS: 1. What caused the brethren to give Paul the right hand of fellowship? 2. To whom was Paul's burden of the gospel toward? 3. Why did Peter withdraw from eating with the Gentiles when the Jews came around? 4. How did Paul feel about this? Why? 5. How can we frustrate the grace of God today?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It seems that it was a difficult thing for the Church back in Paul's day to get hold of the fact that the old law system was being put down to be replaced by a better testament. But Paul had been able to grasp this wonderful truth. How needful it is

for us to seek to have a wise and understanding heart! Think of the error and darkness that infests the human mind! It is like a veil that hangs over the human heart. It blinds the spiritual eyes and dulls the hearing. But such a veil can be taken away if one can but turn from the outward and dim, and gaze even now on the presence of Him. It was the desire of Paul to persuade these brethren who had been beguiled by advocates of clinging to Moses. It was his burden to help them to see that the difference in the Jew and the Greek, the difference between the bond and the free, and even the difference between the male and the female was no more in the sight of God, as far as His grace and salvation were concerned.

When Paul said that he was crucified with Christ, it meant many things to him. The law of Moses (regardless of how important it was at one time to him) had faded before the light and the life of the risen Christ. The resurrection from the dead became a goal sought for and desired far above all that the law could ever afford. If Christ had not risen, all the keeping of the law would fall short of the eternal prize. But now that Christ has conquered death and the grave and brought life and immortality to light, the law is no longer needed. The life of Christ and the gracious law He upheld wrought a perfect work in the heart. Christ died to the law in the sense that He fulfilled the curse of the law and bore its punishment. When we are crucified with Christ, this means that we are dead to the world and all the righteousness of merely keeping carnal commandments. It is a law of life. It is not that we do and live, but it is that we live and do.

The law and the keeping of the law did not produce true righteousness. If it did, there was no need for a Saviour to be born. But it turns out, according to Paul's own testimony, that the righteousness of the law is a self-righteousness that is, according to Isaiah 64, but filthy rags. Filthy rags are not even worth trying to clean, but rather, they must be destroyed. The Christ who comes and takes up His personal abode in the human heart fulfills far beyond what just the keeping of the ten commandments ever could do. Paul knew that to try to seek righteousness by the law would be frustrating the grace of God. This he would not do. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Paul is an example of boldness. I do not believe that his boldness in admonishing Peter was without the love of God. He did not rashly use a blustering manner of speech in

his reproof, but Paul had to reprove such outward unseemingly behavior on the part of Peter. We also notice that Paul reproved Peter to his face. He didn't use the common practice of backbiting, whispering, and tale-bearing, whereby every other person but the one at fault knows all about the failure, but Paul went boldly to Peter and told him how he felt.

Also we are made to know that any person can be tempted. Peter was supposed to be an Apostle, yet, in a moment of off-guard persuasion, he yielded to being led away from his first actions. He used his Christian liberty at first in eating things forbidden by the ceremonial law and then when "certain Jews" came, he separated himself from the Gentiles. Not only did it affect him, but his act influenced others to do the same. A bad example is contagious. It behooves each of us to be moved by the Word of God and not be moved by man. We can only follow man when we see him following the Word of God. The Spirit and the Word agree. If a man tells you something and says that the Lord showed him thus and so, but if it doesn't agree with the Word of God it is false.

It means something to be "crucified with Christ." Oh, it must be only Christ living in our souls and then it will be Christ lived out in our lives. We love Christ because He first loved us and gave Himself for us. So the life that we are living must be the life of Christ. —Sis. M. Miles

RUSSIAN NIGHTMARE

When my 73-year-old mother, dressed like a Russian peasant in a dark blue-flowered dress, stepped off the huge jet airliner at Idlewild Airport, I could scarcely believe it. She trembled all over as I tenderly embraced her for the first time in 24 years.

Smiling as tears streamed down her wrinkled cheeks, she said, "Thank God, Son, He has spared my life and before I die, once more I will see my children, I am so glad, so glad."

Later that day as we flew to my home in Indianapolis, Ind., she said, "Hold my hand, Son, so I know you are here. I am so afraid I will wake up and find it is a dream." Then she kept repeating, "Thank You, Lord."

Even after her visa had been approved, Russian Secret Police tried to dissuade her from leaving Russia, saying the Americans would poison her on the plane flight and she would never reach the United States alive. Consequently, she ate

nothing on the trans-Atlantic trip and was shaking from weakness upon her arrival.

Now, in San Francisco, where her family grew up, the long nightmare of family separation and imprisonment in Soviet and Siberian concentration camps is beginning to fade.

Soon after my father's exile in 1931, my three American-born brothers were released and returned to America in response to a U. S. government demand. So that left Mother, Hope, age 9, Timothy, age 4, and me in Odessa in a damp basement room with badly cracked walls and dirt floor. On one miserably cold, dark night in March 1933, Mother had gone to bed sick. After midnight a loud knock at the door awakened us. Three Secret Police officers entered, and one of them shouted, "Citizen Katherine Voronaeff, you are under arrest."

Mother hurriedly dressed. My little brother and sister awoke and began to cry as they saw the police ripping out the linings of our clothes and mattresses, and confiscating our personal letters, Bibles, hymnals, and other books. I can still see my mother standing in the middle of that awful room, with graying hair, lips trembling on her sweet, pale face, and her bright eyes filled with tears. Heartbroken, Timothy and Hope sobbed a last loving good-bye as our dear mother was dragged away to prison.

This was the horrid beginning of Mother's 24-year imprisonment in Russia and Siberia. There was no court trial. For 15 months she suffered cruel persecution and unimaginable torture in the Odessa prison. Why? Because she had committed some terrible crime? No. Only because she would rather suffer in prison — or die, if need be — than give up her faith in Jesus Christ or incriminate her dear Christian friends. Her ruptured, dislocated internal organs and severe indigestion testify to the brutality of the terrible beatings she received. If she cooperated, they offered her better food, but threatened to shoot her if she did not plead guilty. Mother would not serve two masters — the atheistic Communist state and God. She would rather suffer than become an informer for the godless Secret Police!

Finally, without a court hearing, the police handed down their verdict which could not be appealed: Sentenced to hard labor in Siberia!

Soon afterward, with Hope and Timothy, I fled Russia under Police gunfire and miraculously escaped to Poland, later joining our brothers in the United States to become American citizens.

As ten years dragged slowly by, we received no word from Mother, and wondered if she was dead. Then came a letter from a mutual friend, telling us that she was still alive. She and 40 other prisoners had been herded like cattle into a box-car, and had slept on wooden tiers along the walls for nearly a month before reaching the complex of concentration camps at Karaganda, Siberia. She watched many die en route from hunger, disease, and exposure.

(to be continued)

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MAY 30, 1976

**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MOSAIC LAW
AND FAITH BY CHRIST**

Gal. 3:1,2,5-7,11,12,16,17,19,20,24,25,28

Gal. 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

12 And the law is not faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Memory Verse: For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Rom. 10:4.

Central Thought: The law given to Israel by the hand of Moses was not given to make people righteous. It was given to make known and bring to man an understanding of his sin. The condemnation that it brought upon the heart of man prepared him to embrace the righteousness of faith in Jesus Christ.

Word Definitions: **Bewitched:** fascinated. **Schoolmaster:** a servant whose job it was to escort the children to school; a tutor.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We did not have enough space to include every scripture of the chapter in this lesson, but have gleaned the general run of thought. It would be good if each one would secure a Bible and read this chapter thoroughly.

The believers of the Galatian Church had been bewitched by those who were clinging to Moses. The law system appealed to the flesh and the natural man. But it brought them into bondage, a thing which grieved Paul greatly. In his reasoning here, he quotes from the Old Testament seven times. These quotations are taken from the account of Abraham, of Moses, and by one of the prophets. He is founding the basis of the Christian faith somewhere else besides the law. He reaches way back to Abraham, the father of all who truly believe.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS: 1. Why did Paul call the Galatians foolish? 2. How could he say that Jesus had been set forth and crucified among them? 3. What did he mean by the expression, "the hearing of faith"? 4. What was accounted unto Abraham for righteousness? 5. How are we made the child-

ren of Abraham? 6. How was one made righteous by the law? Was this possible? 7. To how many seeds was the promise made? 8. Explain why the law is not of faith, and why a man cannot be justified by the law in God's sight. 9. How much sooner was the covenant given than the law? 10. If the law could not give righteousness, why was it added? 11. In what way was the law a mediator? In what way was the law a schoolmaster?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Of all the subjects set forth by the holy scriptures, we have one before us in this lesson that to me has been one of the most striking and important. Much confusion and error arises from a lack of understanding concerning the difference between the law and faith. As you behold in the course of God's dealings with man in these things, you cannot help but admire and praise the love and mercy and kindness of God. He has not dealt with man according to his transgressions. Before God ever brought man to account for his errors, He introduced the great and unfailing covenant of faith. This was given without any reproof or conviction for sin. For four hundred and thirty years He dealt with man according to this principle. After so long a time, it would appear that the Lord was not very anxious to show man wherein he was trespassing against his Maker. But it was not that God was not mindful of the sin of man. It was rather that He was seeking to establish the truth clearly to the heart of man that the righteousness that availed with Him was not according to the law. It was founded upon a faith, a persuasion, a firm and unshaken confidence. With this clearly established within the heart of man, sin and transgression can be dealt with successfully.

But as long as man forgets and leaves faith and endeavors to live up to a code of commandments, hoping and endeavoring to obtain righteousness thereby, the personality and presence of the Lord is hidden. God wants us to know that the righteousness that avails with Him is not ours, but His, a righteousness that is given in His love and goodness. Once that is clearly perceived by the hungry soul, great rest and joy fills his or her heart. This does not permit them to relax their zeal and purpose for the right, but it gives a foundation for the true holiness of God to be actually fulfilled and carried out to perfection.

This is a lesson that will pay great dividends to the heart that diligently considers it. It is so comforting to know that God is a God of grace. Not only does He tell us what to do, but a fulness of life and grace is freely bestowed upon us, enabling us to joyfully carry out His blessed pleasure. Do not think for one minute that the law spirit is dead. That old spirit of "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" is still very much alive. It is now, rather, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." Before you can get the job done, you have to have something to do the job with. The grace of Christ is the means of us living for God. Only through Him can we do all things. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Who hath bewitched you?" This is not confined to those in Galatia. Today, many are being bewitched by many false teachings that are going forth. False movements put on a big front. They will say, "You ought to come with us because we have thousands who are accepting our teachings, so it must be right." If you are not careful you will be bewitched or enticed by their charming personality and the crowds. Then there is the big choir and the orchestra which can play such music that will move deeply upon your emotions and soon you are convinced that it is God and you are allured into a false deception. The devil is sly and has many cunning ways to attract or allure souls into his traps. "Who hath bewitched you?" How foolish have you been? How sad it is to see souls being entrapped by the enemy of their soul. There is only one way to heaven and that is the Bible way. It is the humble way and only those who will take the humble way will get there. Jesus was not accepted by the multitudes when he came here. Many of them followed Him for the "loaves and fishes" and the miracles. They wanted His gifts but they did not want Him. It was proven to be that way because when He was taken by the rulers, they cried out for Him to be crucified. They forsook the humble Christ. Only the humble will take the crucified way in this world. So we today must ever keep in mind the Christ who was crucified.

Today, many strive to keep the Ten Commandments, but do not have power to do so. They need a change of heart. When Jesus comes in and takes possession, we can go to all the places of the world we want to, lie all we want to, steal all that we want to and do all manner of evil but the most precious thing about it all is that full salvation takes the "want to" out of

your heart. Our delight is in those things that please our God. Praise the Lord! —Sis. M. Miles

RUSSIAN NIGHTMARE

(continued from last lesson)

At Karaganda, watched day and night by guards with trained police dogs, and surrounded by deep swamps many miles from the nearest foreign country, she had no way of escape. Here, Mother lived in a tent barrack built like a corral for cattle and surrounded by barbed-wire fences.

Watery cabbage soup, dry salted fish, and black bread was the only pay she received for 12 hours of hard labor each day. At times Mother was so weak she could scarcely stand, but when she paused to rest, a guard clubbed her. While felling trees in waist-deep snow in 50 degrees below zero temperatures, many were crushed because they couldn't move fast enough, others became ill, lost fingers and toes from frostbite and gangrene, and others froze or starved to death!

Mother suffered for four years in Siberia — 16 months of the time in solitary confinement in a dark dungeon in the Fergana maximum security prison. A crack in the stone allowed a little sunshine to penetrate the darkness. Yet she didn't feel lonely — the Lord was present and she sang of His goodness. Then she spent 20 more years in several Russian prisons and concentration camps before the letter came from a mutual friend telling us that Mother had been released from prison because she was old and sick. She was living as a civilian in Odessa.

I prepared a petition in the Russian language, pleading for the release of my elderly mother. In September 1959, as I entered the lobby of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., to present this petition, whom should I meet but Premier Nikita Krushchev. For two minutes I pleaded with him face to face, but he would not accept my petition. Instead, he put his hands behind his back and motioned with his shoulder for his body guards to throw me out. They almost dragged me to the door and told me to leave my petition with the janitor outside at the service entrance.

However, upon seeing me being thrown out of the embassy, news, radio, and TV reporters surrounded me, asking questions. I told them I was pleading to see my mother before she died — whom I had not seen for 24 years. This story was reported in the news media across the nations, and I appealed to President Eisenhower, the State Department, congressmen,

and editors for help. As a result, hundreds of appeals in behalf of my mother poured into the Kremlin. All this helped. But it really was the miraculous answer to the prayers of thousands of Christians across America and Canada that caused the Iron Curtain for one moment to be lifted.

When I question Mother about those years in prison, she talks a few minutes and then bursts into tears, leaves the room to fall on her knees and weep and pray.

At times in the middle of the night, we are awakened by her screams, and find her shaking with fright and wringing wet with sweat. She is always glad to be awakened from these terrible nightmares, and thanks the Lord for setting her free.

—Paul Voronaeff

(Note: Mrs. Voronaeff is now free forever. She went to be with the Lord as the story was nearing the printing stage.)

JUNE 6, 1976

LOOSED FROM THE BONDAGE OF THE LAW

Gal. 4:1-9,13-16,19

Gal. 4:1 Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Memory Verse: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2.

Central Thought: To be under the law of Moses is to be in bondage under the elements of this present world, but Christ came to give us spiritual life as the sons of God. Instead of Paul's preaching being upheld and appreciated, he was counted by some as an enemy of the truth.

Word Definitions: Tutor: domestic manager, guardian. Governor: same as steward, overseer, agent. Adoption of sons: the placing as sons; sonship. Abba: Hebrew word for father.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is a continuation of Paul's epistle to the Galatian brethren who had been influenced by advocates of keeping of the law of Moses to depart from the gospel of faith that he had originally given to them. It is remarkable to note that as they turned from the truth, they also turned against the one who had preached to them the truth. A great change has taken place concerning the attitude of these brethren toward Paul. But instead of disowning them, Paul is entreating them in the love of Christ and endeavoring to counsel them back into the way again. To see these brethren so misled brought great travail upon Paul's heart for them. Paul was yet persuaded of the integrity of their heart, but he knew that they had been bewitched by false teaching. Thus he knew that there was still material for God to work with. It is thus in dealing with souls today. We feel a great heaviness for those who have been led away by the error of Satan. We have a great burden and desire to help them. We pray for them that God will open their eyes and make His truth known.

Paul endeavors in our lesson to show that while we were under the law, we were not mature in divine favor. We were children. But now the fulness of time is come, and God wants us to go on to perfection and attain to the fulness of His grace.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS: 1. Can you think of a sound reason for the heir differing nothing from a servant as long as he is a child? 2. What did Paul mean when he said "the fulness of time"? 3. What took place when the fulness of the time was come? 4. In what way did Christ redeem those who were under the law? 5. What would cause a man to want to be in bondage to the law? 6. What are the weak and beggarly elements that he was speaking of? 7. How did Paul seemingly become an enemy to these people? 8. What was Paul's feeling and attitude toward them?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Have you ever wondered why Jesus did not come to this earth any sooner than when He did? In our lesson we find the reason. It was not time for Him to come at any time prior to His actual coming. Mankind was not wholly prepared; the nations were not prepared. God chose to deal with men and teach them many lessons, lessons that would be preserved for the future generations to know and understand. All that was written beforehand was written for our learning and for our admonition. There were tutors and governors appropriated in the law system and in the commonwealth of literal Israel to prepare the hearts of men to receive the Christ when He came. As we look at the long history of Israel, their sorrows and joys, their failures and triumphs, successes and defeats, our hearts are filled with wonder and praise to the great, wise God who overshadowed all. It was God's plan that through literal Israel and the Mosaic law system His great and Mighty Name would be broadcast and made known in the eyes of the nations that were swiftly forming upon the earth. All this time civilization and society were shaping up for commerce and trade, travel and transportation, learning and communication. It was also shaping up in its sinful wretchedness, its darkness and vanity, its pride and folly. God viewed the nations, and weighed them in His righteous and holy balances of truth and love. When He saw that all was in the proper condition for His economy and dispensation of grace, He went forth for the salvation of the souls of men.

Thus in the light of the fulness of the time, and beholding what perfect and entire holiness was brought to pass by believing and trusting and following the Lord Jesus, Paul looked upon the law now past as something not needed any more. The tutors and governors and schoolmasters had served their good and wholesome purpose. He had nothing personally against them in their respective places. But he knew that they could not, and must not, be applied and in force now that the fulfillment of all their precepts had come. He knew that God could not reckon them as little children under the law any longer. Jesus came to give us power and authority to become the sons of God. All that came before the redemption of Christ became weak and beggarly elements to be discarded. Thus he was firm severe, and plain in his reproof to these brethren who had been allured back under that vain and useless system of the law. It is the same today. The law spirit is yet not dead, and its advocates are still loose in the earth. May God help us all to get an understanding and safeguard our souls from error in this. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Paul was an anxious teacher pleading with his pupils who were in peril. He reminds them of the strong attachment of former days. They had turned again to things that he had helped them to understand were only bondage to them. In the unprinted part of our lesson in verses 10 and 11 he says, "Ye observe days, and months, and times and years." They probably wanted to keep Saturday as the Sabbath, but when Jesus came, He arose on the first day of the week and the apostles began to meet together on that day. Jesus had said, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." This was the perpetuality of the sabbath rest which was in the hearts of those who were sons of God. But the Galatians wanted to observe days, months, and legal parts of the law, but Paul was, as he said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." (ver.11) He then tells them in verse 12, "be as I am; for I am as ye are." Though himself a Jew, Paul had assumed no airs of superiority, and did not separate himself from his Gentile brethren. He became as one of them. And Paul asks them to take the same liberty. Then he seems to be afraid that they would feel that he was hurt or held a grudge against them so he said, "ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at first." Even though he was sick or had

some kind of infirmity, which was humiliating to him, yet they were lost in the charm of the gospel message that he brought. Even if he had been an angel from heaven or Jesus Christ himself, they could not have welcomed him more rapturously. They were willing to make any sacrifice to assure him of their regard and affection. Now he pleads with them not to let those who are affecting them to lead them from the gospel. He pleads with them as a mother who is fearful of losing the affection of her own children for whom she has suffered so much.

Thus, the true minister today is deeply touched when he sees one of his flock being led astray. Ministers of the gospel are ambassadors from God and they should be listened to.

—Sis. M. Miles

THE IMPRINT OF THE BENDED KNEE

“Daily we leave imprints — God help us to leave good ones!” When problems and burdens grew too heavy he had a place he liked to go alone to pray. This Kentucky farmer would go to the lower end of the field and there under a spreading tree, he would pour out his prayers for those whom he loved, those tough, brutal, cursing sons of his.

Down in the soft dust around the tree he would bend his knees in prayer. He had been there so often that the impression of his knees had worn a groove about the tree. His sons had discovered his place of prayer and it sent them into wicked jeers of laughter. To them it was altogether untouching to see, or spy on him, at prayer. So he found more peace and comfort in slipping away from the noisy house, away from the echo of their curses, under the tree with God’s wide-open sky above him. There he could give way to his grief, and there he could throw up his arms, as Moses of old lifted up his hands for help. There, alone with God, he could pray aloud and call out to Christ the names of his sinful but beloved sons, and plead with the Holy Spirit to speak to their hearts and somehow make some impression on them. He pleaded that in some way God would use him to shine before them so that a thirst for His Christ would develop and they would be saved before it was eternally too late. It was the strength he gained from Christ that enabled him to arise above their mean, hateful tricks.

One by one they left him, to go out on sinful paths of their own choosing. One by one he pleaded with them, and tried to win them, with testimony and prayers, and by each he was

cursed and shamefully treated. Yet soft was his answer, and firm was his faith.

At last he was all alone, farming what he could without them, and going from time to time down under the old tree to pray, even yet, for the boys.

The years went by and his physical strength failed. It was harder now to get to the end of the field, but yet he went. It isn't that he didn't pray in the house; he did, but it was a place he had so often been, and he being a man of the soil, loved to be out under the open sky and surrounded by the handiwork of God.

Then, too, there was where in so many years past, and now, that he prayed so many prayers for his boys. Now that the house was quiet, his prayers went on the same with undying hope that his God would somehow come to be their God, and his Saviour their cherished own — as he bent in the accustomed place under the old tree.

And so he lived alone, yet not alone, for Christ was always with him, his Master and his Keeper. But one morning the little old man didn't come down under the tree to pray. Oh, no; his soul went some place better — to Christ, the Owner of it.

Only his body that once housed his soul remained, and closed were the eyes that would weep no more. Then his sons came home one by one from here, from there, to view his cold form in its casket. Where were the sneers, and the laughs, and the curses they had so often hurled upon him? They did not curse him now. They rose up and called him blessed. "He was a good man, he was a godly father," and so forth. These were their statements now.

So they buried his body, but they could not lay away its influence.

They gathered around the farmhouse for the last time, and one of them suggested before leaving that they all take a walk around the farm for old-time's sake, and explore it after all these years away. So they did. From time to time, as they walked around, they would say, "Remember this," or "Here's where this happened."

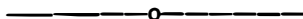
At length they came to the old tree. "Look," said one of them. "Look at the groove worn around the tree! Do—you know what that is?"

"Yes," said another; "it's—it's—it's—the imprint of his banded knees."

Another said, "Here he came to pray for us. This is something I'll see all the days of my life. Remember how we treated him?" Each of the boys had something to say, and one bent and put his hands down against the still-fresh dusty knee imprints that spoke of his father's last visit there, and the lines of his hardened face seemed to soften, and tears flowed, tears he was not ashamed of.

I don't know all the details to tell you, but I do know that nearly all of these men accepted the Lord, and found in Him joy unspeakable, for truly Christ can save to the uttermost all that come unto Him. The Holy Spirit talking to their hearts, and the memory of the imprint of the bended knees, convicted them, and those who yielded repented, asked and willingly received, by the Blood of Christ, salvation.

I wish I could have said all of them were saved, but not all of them were, but it was a large family of boys and most of them got saved. —Mrs. Lloyd H. Doutrich



JUNE 13, 1976
THE TWO JERUSALEMS
Gal. 4:21-31; 5:1,6

Gal. 4:21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

28 Now we, brethren as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Memory Verse: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. Rom. 2:29.

Central Thought: The Mosaic law system, along with the praise of literal Jerusalem, is cast out from God's inheritance before the glory of the Heavenly Jerusalem and the Spirit of life that is in Jesus Christ.

Word Definitions: **Bondmaid:** refers to Hagar, the Egyptian slave girl who served Abraham and Sarah. **Free-woman:** Sarah, Abraham's lawful wife. **Allegory:** that which is adaptable to another meaning. **Gendereth:** reproducing or regenerating; bringing forth or bearing in birth; to beget. **Agar:** Hagar, used as a type of the law of Sinai. **Answereth to:** is on the same level with; corresponds to.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We are going farther with Paul into the study of the difference between the law of Moses and the faith of Jesus Christ. For the foundation of his thought, Paul reaches again to the life of Abraham. Here we see the scene of the two sons of Abraham: Ishmael, born of the Egyptian slave girl, Hagar, and Isaac, born of his wife, Sarah. He makes a clear distinction between the two, saying that the child of Hagar was born after the flesh, while Isaac, was born of Sarah through faith by the promise of God. The birth of Hagar's son demanded the employment of no faith on the part of her or Abraham. In fact, the whole set up that brought about Abraham's taking Hagar to wife was on an unbelief basis. This was not according to the plan of God. God's plan was not to set forth the royal seed in this manner. It was not that God had ill-will toward Hagar and her son, for it is plain, according to scripture, that he cared for them and made provision for their welfare. But He would

not have it associated with His divine plan. Thus, when the two sons were growing up and friction came between them, God instructed Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away. Isaac was born of Sarah and Abraham, both of whom were past the natural child-producing stage. He was brought forth on the strength of their faith.

It was this principle that Paul used to apply to the two covenants. He called them an allegory. He put the bondmaid on the level with the Mosaic law. The law was not of faith. He also carried it farther and included the literal Jerusalem, the capital of Jewish commonwealth, as on that same level of the flesh, and not of faith. On the other hand, he associated Sarah, the New Covenant of Christ, and the New Jerusalem all together. The New Covenant is that which the Holy Spirit, through the grace and love of Jesus, writes on the believer's heart. The New Jerusalem is the Church of God, purchased with His own blood.

You will notice that in reference to the Jerusalem which is above, Paul quotes from Isaiah 54:1. The manner in which he applies this prophecy is a key that can unlock the true application of many, many old testament scriptures. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS: 1. Tell the background story of our lesson about Abraham and Sarah and Hagar and her son, Ishmael. (Gen. 16:2,15; 21:2,8-14). 2. Which one is the allegory that the Apostle Paul says is the covenant of bondage? 3. Discuss the phrase in verse 25 which says, "Jerusalem which now is," and its relation to false teaching today concerning the literal Jerusalem. 4. Discuss the covenant of grace and the "New Jerusalem" which came "down from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21:2.) 5. How is this Jerusalem the "mother of us all"? 6. How are the children of the free or Spirit being persecuted by those under the fleshly and man-made religious groups today? 7. How can those who are saved and free become under bondage again to the world, etc.?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

In our lesson we find that people who cling to the old law of Moses for righteousness are on the same level with Ishmael and his mother, Hagar, the bondmaid of Abraham. This mother and her son were cast out of the inheritance of the faithful. Another serious thing is that the "Jerusalem which now is," and is in bondage with her children, are on that same

rejected level. This will be hard for those who are carried away with the current of belief today. Many false prophets across our land are speculating much on the future of literal Israel. A good look at our lesson and a willingness to be taught of the truth contained therein, will knock the props out from under such a foolish notion. Jerusalem that now is over in Palestine is no longer the holy city. Regardless of how much fleshly minded men speculate and twist the scriptures to paint a pretty picture for that spot of the globe, they are blind to the fact that Jerusalem literally means no more to God than Tokyo, or Moscow, or London, or New York City. God is not interested in literal cities! Nor is He speculating on any particular nation. A Jew literally is a Jew no longer. The true Jew is the born again Christian, led by the Holy Spirit!

Jerusalem which is above is the the mother of all who are saved and washed in the blood of Jesus and partakers of the Heavenly birth. We have been begotten unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ. We have been raised up above this material world and the strife and vanity of its inhabitants. We are born again by the word of God and not of corruptible seed. We are members of Christ's body and our citizenship is in heaven. We have been quickened and raised up to sit together with Christ in the heavenly places. This makes us a part of the Heavenly Jerusalem. This is the same Jerusalem John saw descending out of Heaven from God.

Not enough can be said about this. When Paul mentioned the Jerusalem which is above as being the mother of us all, he quotes from Isaiah. Here the barren is told to rejoice, for the desolate has more children than the married wife. Isa. 54:1. Tying this in with our lesson, we conclude that the desolate, who has the most children, has no boasting over the barren. Despite how capable of bearing children, she is still desolate and rejected. The married wife is the one who receives the inheritance, and not only so, but she also, through faith, can be granted strength to conceive and bear children after all. This is an important truth, and can be readily applied to what we have on hand today. Just because a church or movement is able to sway the masses and gain popularity and converts, is no sign that such is of God. In fact, it might be a sign to the contrary, and very often is. When you trace down the Bible-road of history and behold how many barren women are mentioned in a special way as receiving special favor from God and eventually the desire of their hearts, it causes us to take notice of this barren state. In other words, God desires us to

realize how barren we are in ourselves. He wants us to get our eyes on Him, as our husband. The question we should ask ourselves is, "Am I really in the faith, or am I really a child of God?" The matter of bringing forth converts is not nearly as important as being what God wants us to be. God can help us, not we ourselves. The whole Bible bears this out.

—L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Apostle Paul was writing to the Galatians, instructing them to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath" made them "free," from the law and the rituals of that law, and enjoy the liberty in Christ. They now had the law written in their hearts of flesh and they were not just written on tables of stone. They now had grace from God to live right in the sight of God. They did not have to offer sacrifices continually for their sins because God gave them grace to live acceptably daily in His sight.

Today, people are free from sin and the bondage of the world when they are a child of God and "born again" into the family of God. Oh, how sad it is to see people turning back to the bondage of sin. Little by little they take up something they felt they should give up when they were first saved. Little by little they let their love wax cold and things slip in that they accept and that leaves them open for more. Soon they are in bondage again and under the yoke of the devil. It should cause us to take a good look at ourselves and our lives. Examine ourselves and see if we are under any kind of bondage to the world. Are we free in Christ and not entangled with the things of this life in such a way that we cannot please the Lord? Oh, we need to keep free in the spirit and "stand fast . . . in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."

—Sis. M. Miles

JUNE 20, 1976

FRUITS OF THE FLESH AND SPIRIT

Gal. 5:7,8,19-26

Gal. 5:7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

(60)

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Memory Verse: This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Gal. 5:16

Central Thought: Every kind of life is from its own kind and development. Every outward manifestation will correspond to the inward principle of life. Be sure to be guided by the Spirit of God and the Word of God, and heaven will be your ultimate end.

Word Definitions: "Flesh means the whole entire body of sin and corruption; that inbred proneness in our nature to all evil, expressed by concupiscence. 1. It is called flesh because of its situation and place, which is principally in the flesh. 2. Because of its close, inseparable nearness to the soul. 3. Because of its dearness to us. Sin is our darling, our Delilah, the queen-regent of our affections; it fills all our thoughts, engrosses our desires, and challenges the service of all our actions. This reveals: (1) The deplorable state of fallen man. (2) The great difficulty of the duty of mortification. (3) The mean and sordid employment of every sinner—he serves the flesh."

LESSON BACKGROUND

There is a vast difference between the Spirit and the flesh. The flesh is man's body, heart, brain, and all his bodily appetites and powers. Because man is fallen, there is a proneness in man's flesh toward evil which in turn leads to sin, and sin mounts up in a sinner's life. Through confession, with godly sorrow, the sinner is saved from his sins and through the cleansing of the Holy Spirit, that sin principle or proneness

toward sin is broken, and a deliverance is gained. The person then has power over the fleshly appetites and can live for God. —M. Miles

QUESTIONS: 1. What is hindering people today from obeying the truth? 2. Where does this persuasion to do wrong come from? 3. Discuss the works of the flesh and what is the meaning of the term "flesh"? 4. What does the Bible say the fruit of the Spirit is? 5. Name some of the fruit derived from love, which comes from the Spirit. 6. How do we crucify the flesh and all of its works? 7. How can we walk in the Spirit?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Let us group the sins enumerated under four groups.

1. Sensual passions — "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness." Adultery means "violation of the marriage-bed," or living with another's wife or husband. Rom. 7:2,3; 1 Cor. 7:10,11; Matt. 19:7,8. Fornication means voluntary illicit sexual relations between unmarried persons. Matt. 5:28; Eph. 5:3; 1 Cor. 6:18-20. Uncleanness means morally impure, foul, filthy, unchaste, obscene, or whatever is contaminating in word or looks, in gesture or in dress, in thought or sentiment. Lasciviousness means lustful, wanton, loose; a person who excites lustful emotions in others. 1 Cor. 8:12; 1 Tim. 2:9.

2. Unlawful dealing in things spiritual—"Idolatry, witchcraft (sorcery)." Idolatry means "divine honors paid to idols, images, or any created object." Idolatry and sensuality have always been closely related. Idolatry also means "excessive admiration, or love for any person or thing." Matt. 22:37; 1 John 5:21. Sorcery or witchcraft means intercourse with evil spirits, supernatural or magical powers, art, black magic, and communion with the devil. This evil is rampant in the world today. Beware of yielding to the powers of the devil.

3. Violations of brotherly love—"Hatred [enmities], variance [strife], emulations [jealousies], wrath [ragings], strife [factions], seditions [divisions], heresies [keen controversial partisanship], envyings, murders." A horrible list of evils having their source in a fruitful hotbed of unreasoning hatred, each vice preying upon and feeding the other.

4. Intemperate excesses—"Drunkenness, revellings, and such like." These are the vices of a barbarous people, and are vices of today. Alcohol is the curse of the day as well as the

many other vices connected to it and similar. Such-like would mean things like the above named sins. We could name lying, stealing, dope and tobacco using, corruption on TV and the movies, reading filthy magazines, etc. All of these things will take a soul to hell.

Notice that there is one fruit of the Spirit. That fruit is love. Joy is love exalted. Peace is love in repose. Long-suffering is love enduring. Gentleness is love in society. Goodness is love in action. Faith is love on the battlefield. Meekness is love in school. Temperance is love in training. What a beautiful list of virtues. All that belong to Christ have crucified the flesh and its works and are walking in the Spirit.

—Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The flesh must be crucified for the spirit of man to prosper in the things of the Lord. This crucifixion is not the literal hanging of the natural body on a wooden cross. That was what Jesus suffered literally, but there is a deeper crucifixion that must take place which can only be done within the heart and affections of man. Paul wrote to the Colossians that they were dead and that their life was hid with Christ in God. But then he charged them to do thus: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." The flesh must be controlled by the Spirit of God working jointly with our wills, or sin will be the result. All the temptations of Satan come to us through the avenue of the desires and passions of the mortal body. This was how he approached our mother Eve. He appealed to the sight of the eyes and the bodily appetite for food and the desire for wisdom. Through the avenue of these three things, Satan approached and tempted Christ, (Matt 4:1-11) and it is through these things that we can be tempted today. 1 John 2:16.

It is the warfare of the Christian to fight Satan in these points of battle and temptation. All the spiritual blessings of the Lord can be forfeited and lost by an inroad of the flesh into the heart and the affections. The life we live in the flesh must be stabilized and underlaid with the faith of Christ. The lawful things that we can use and enjoy concerning the flesh, must be carefully guarded and overseen. The love of man and woman in holy matrimony, the appetite for food, the quest for knowledge, the desire for bodily comforts, the effort for nice and pretty things, the desire to be attractive and respectable —

all these must be tempered by the Holy Spirit. The flesh unrestrained and undisciplined can be so foolish and vain. The Bible is an honest source of the examples of people who met great dishonor by going after the flesh. This is an undeniable fact proven over and over again by these true ensamples of the past. It is for us to take warning and to seek to be led, inspired, anointed, moved, filled, blessed, and preserved by the Spirit of God. —L. Busbee

JUNE 27, 1976

GLORY IN THE CROSS FOR CHRIST AND FOR OTHERS

Gal. 6:1,2,4-9,12-16

Gal. 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Memory Verse: As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Gal. 6:10.

Central Thought: The grace of Christ looses a man from his vain fleshly pursuits to a life of glorifying God and serving his fellowman in love.

Word Definitions: "Bear ye one another's burdens"—this word burden is defined as something that weighs one down; a load. "Bear his own burden"—this burden is a task, responsibility, or service to render or perform. **Communicate:** to share. **Restore:** repair or adjust.

LESSON BACKGROUND

This is Paul's conclusion of his epistle to the Galatian brethren. It has some very specific and pointed charges and injunctions. After all the explaining and earnest counsel concerning the law and grace, he now gives very needful precepts to carefully keep and obey. How wonderful that we are blessed today to have this epistle to read, study, and understand! Not only was this letter written for the sake of those brethren back there, but it has been divinely preserved and handed down to us for our spiritual good. Thus it was not Paul that ordained this, but rather God who was looking out for the spiritual welfare of all who from Paul's day would seek His way. I have read that Martin Luther wrote a commentary on this epistle in his day, and it was so widely read and esteemed by many seekers for truth. And what was the standard of truth that this epistle to the Galatians upheld? It was the truth of justification by faith. This truth is needful for our understanding today as well as then. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS: 1. What kind of people did Paul tell to go and restore the one taken in a fault? 2. What does the spirit of the law do for the guilty? 3. Whose law are we fulfilling when we seek to be a help to one another? 4. What burden or responsibility are we to bear as individuals? 5. Why did some cling to the doctrine of circumcision? 6. But what did Paul seek to glory in? 7. What is the Israel of God?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Note in our lesson the different charges that Paul lays to these brethren to keep. You will see that the keeping of these

precepts takes something more than what the righteousness of the law provided man. The law never had the spirit of restoration. It had no measure of mercy to save a man from transgression. It only brought the offense to light and brought condemnation and death. But to be able to go forth and restore someone to the favor of God takes being spiritual, and one must do so in the spirit of meekness, realizing that he himself can be tempted in the same manner. This was far different from the law. The law never taught us to actually bear one another's load. That heavy load upon our brother's heart can only be helped by the law of Christ living within us. The law never enabled a man to prove anything except his own insufficiency and guilt. Under grace, we are gifted with tasks of service. By the grace of God we are made capable of shouldering burdens and responsibilities for the welfare of other souls. We are made strong to fill our place faithfully. We are made individual depositories of the great treasures of Heaven. Grace is given each day to bear our own individual responsibility. We are made to realize that the cause of all our failures does not lie in the other person, but it is in us. Thus we are given understanding that we must face the judgment for ourselves individually. But this does not disannul the spirit of sharing that the example and spirit of Jesus set in motion. We are to communicate with one another and are bound closely to each other by the chords of love and peace. The keeping of the law could never accomplish this. The righteousness of Christ shifts the burden of being just from our human flesh to His holy shoulders of power and grace. This enables us to live with a tranquil mind and earnest heart concerning doing good unto all men. This will produce the fruit of righteousness not only in ourselves, but also in others.

He concludes that circumcision, along with the keeping of the law, is all of the flesh. It will never accomplish a perfect work in the soul. It may look impressive to the natural man, but the soul languisheth under the yoke of the law. But in the grace of Jesus, that flows from the precepts of His sacrifice and self-denial, gleaming forth in remembrance of the cross that He suffered and died upon, the soul finds grand and glorious freedom and access to the treasures of the Kingdom of God. Thus the old Israel fades from view, and the true Israel of God shines forth in her eternal glory. How grateful we are to be a part of that great City! —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We are not to cast down nor condemn others when they are "overtaken in a fault." If it were not for the grace of God in our souls, we would be in the same condition. We can't glory in our own self or our own graces. It is only God that has helped us to be an overcomer. When we think of it in this light, we must realize that we must consider ourselves when we try to help others or when we see others being overtaken in a fault. We must be kind and understanding in trying to help them. In this way, we can help bear their burden. As our lesson has told us, this is one way we can "fulfil the law of Christ." That law is love. Oh, may God help us to have more love and more carefulness in our words and our dealings with others around us. That should be the deep desire of our heart. We do want to help others make it into heaven and we must seek God to help us to know how.

Another thought in our lesson we want to think about is to "not be weary in well doing." Sometimes we pray for God to work out a problem or to roll away some "stone" in our life, or to deal with some loved one. If it is not done right away, sometimes we become weary in praying. Oh, we must keep praying and seeking God to work. Just do not give up, but keep praying. —Sis. M. Miles

CONDEMNED, AWAITING EXECUTION

A Prince, travelling through France, visited the arsenal at Toulon, where the galleys are kept. The commandant, as a compliment to his rank, said he was welcome to set any of the prisoners free, whom he should choose. The Prince, willing to make the best use of this privilege, spoke to many of them in succession, enquiring why they were condemned to the gallows. Injustice, false accusation, oppression, were the only causes they could assign. They had been ill-treated and were all innocent.

At last he came to one who, when asked the same question, answered: "My lord, I have no reason to complain; I have been a very wicked, desperate wretch. I account it a very great mercy I am here."

The Prince fixed his eyes upon him, gave him a gentle blow upon the head, and said, "You wicked wretch! It is a pity you should be placed among so many honest men; by your own confession you are bad enough to corrupt them all; but you

shall not stay with them another day." Then, turning to the officer, he said: "This is the man, sir, I wish to see released."

The bitter remorse that filled the hearts of the other men as they saw their companion walk out free while they themselves remained to face their doom can better be imagined than told. Any other one or all of them might have been set free had they confessed their guilt.

Of all the words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: **IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN!**

But definitely greater remorse awaits every reader of these lines who refuses to confess his ruin, guilt and righteous condemnation, and accept the pardon God offers sinners only.

The very first step to being saved is to admit that we have sinned and deserve only punishment. Then we will understand the meaning of Christ's death for us. He bore our punishment and by accepting Him we can go free. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9).

—Sel.

