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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. 3
July, August, Sept.,
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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

Vol. 8

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Theme For Third Quarter, 1976

The Epistle to the Romans was written by Paul, either at the end of the year 57 A. D. or at the beginning of the year 58. It was written after some of his other epistles. They are not arranged in the order written.

The book of Romans apparently was composed in the house of a Corinthian Christian, who is known to us only by the name, Gaius or Caius. This precious letter was carried by Phoebe, a woman, to Rome.

One wrote, "Never did there live a nobler spirit than that of Paul. He has made the world better by his very existence in it. He is one of our greatest persons, guiding the hearts of men; one of our greatest teachers; one of our high priests, who has offered unto God the sacrifice of a holy life and of a thankful spirit of prayer and praise."

"The book of Romans was written on the relation of Jew and Gentile, unfolding the true doctrine of justification by faith, vindicating the ways of God with man, and enforcing lessons of wise tolerance for all time—placed in the forefront of all the sacred epistles." —Sis. Marie Miles

July 4, 1976

THE GRACE AND APOSTLESHIP OF THE GOSPEL

Romans 1:1,3-5,7-12,14,16,17.

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

3 Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

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

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Memory Verse: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16.

Central Thought: The power and effect of the gospel of the salvation of Jesus Christ upon all who believe is victory over sin and a mutual faith and love in holy fellowship with God.

Word Definitions; Apostle: One who is commissioned to preach the gospel of Christ; set apart, and sent out. **Mutual (faith):** Faith that is active and true in one another, each other; that which is common in both parties. **“From faith to faith:”** Faith, persuasion, credence (trust), conviction, reliance, constancy in one’s conviction, assurance. The gospel flows from holy lives who believe to hearts who will believe with like precious faith.

LESSON BACKGROUND

On the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the hundred and twenty believers there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. In the list of the various peoples who made up this group is found those labeled as “strangers of Rome”. Acts 2:10. Paul was a Roman citizen. Yet he was a Jew. It is very likely that one of his parents was a Jew and the other was a Roman. He was born in Tarsus, yet he was brought up in Jerusalem and carefully taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the Jewish fathers. Acts 22:3. Rome was the capital of the known world of that time. There were some genuine believers in Christ at

Rome. Paul had heard of their faith and love for Christ, and he had a great desire to meet them. It is evident that this epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth. He was writing to people that he had never met face to face. He had "pencil" plans to visit them, desiring to be a help to their spiritual lives.

This first lesson is somewhat an introduction to Paul's lengthy epistle to this Church at Rome. It reveals the rich ingredients of the fervent gospel message that enflamed his heart and mind, and the longing and desire that he had to give it out to all men. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean to be separated unto the gospel? 2. In what way was Jesus Christ made of the seed of David? 3. How is Jesus declared to be the Son of God with power? 4. What kind of people is God calling us to be? 5. To what extent was the faith of the Romans spoken of? 6. What was the debt that Paul had to all men? 7. Why was Paul not ashamed of the gospel of Christ? 8. What is revealed in the gospel?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Jesus Christ our Lord was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. He came forth into this world made of a woman, made under the law. He was a Jew in the literal lineage of Abraham. This was all according to the flesh. But He did not remain in this state always. No! This state of the seed of David according to the flesh met a sad and torturous end on a Roman cross outside the gates of Jerusalem. He was put into a borrowed tomb. He did not need it permanently. As gloom enshrouded those who loved and followed Him because of the sad and woeful things that they saw happen, the hour drew near when He would burst forth from the bands of death, to be declared to earth's remotest end as the Son of the Living God with power, according to the spirit of holiness! The seed of David is become the Saviour of men, the everlasting King of Glory. All who hear and obey this message of salvation make up His Bride, the Church of God. All nations are included in the scope of His call.

Although Paul at one time fought against Christ and His hosts, the time came when he melted before this Mighty King and became one of His loyal ambassadors. Paul hears of the faith of those who lived at Rome. He has a great desire to

meet them and share this blessed fellowship of his knowledge in Christ. He feels the great debt that he owes to all men, regardless of nation. He is willing and anxious to preach the gospel to these believers at Rome, just as well as to others nearer to him. The assurance and boldness that he possesses concerning the faith of Christ has banished shame and fear. He knows what the power of the gospel is, and what it can do. It has transformed his heart and life. It has caused the old law of Moses' system that the Jews have idolized for centuries to fade and wax old like a garment. He sees that God has moved out of the ceremonies and customs of the law into a new and living way through Jesus Christ, who has proved Himself to be the Son of the Living God. But he also sees the danger of clinging to, and being influenced by, the old law system. He sees how it appeals to the flesh. Thus he is not only filled with zeal and anointing to preach the new, but he warns the people against the old law system. Now that Christ is come, we need not cling to the law of Moses. We must let Christ fill our heart and life, thereby only can we be justified fully from the power of sin. The faith of Abraham and of the saints of old, is perfected and renewed in the faith of the saints in Christ. He sees that the middle wall of partition is broken down between the Jew and the Gentile. They are both on the same level now. To the Romans he has much to say, and may God give us understanding, too. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We need to take time to think about our calling. The word "called" means to be summoned. First we were "called by Jesus Christ." Just think that the greatest jewel in heaven came to this world to give us this personal call. We would not be able to understand the call if Jesus had not taken on the form of a man and walked in our steps, yet without sin. Surely we have a great calling. And what are we called to be? Yes, we are "called to be saints." There are two ways of living in this world. Either God is the center of our life, and that is holiness, or self is the center, and that is sin. One has said that you "can't argue a man into living for God, anymore than you can hammer a rosebud open. God can love us into loving Him, and the sunshine, falling on a rosebud will expand it."

The duty of Christians is to be holy. That is our calling. Saints, and only saints, are beloved of God with a special and peculiar love. Saints are to be holy and

pure. They are to be separated from the world and consecrated to the service of God—holy in principle, and destined to become more and more holy and perfect in their whole life and conduct. Through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, saints are made pure in the sight of God. As saints love and serve the Lord they are made ready for heaven. —M. Miles

THE SO-CALLED LITTLE THINGS

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. I Cor. 9:27.

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. James 2:10.

This incident was related regarding a bishop, who had lost his experience of salvation.

"Preacher," cried the heart broken bishop, "I have lost God."

"What?" exclaimed the startled preacher, "You who have been appointed Bishop?"

"Preacher," continued the bishop, "It was the little things."

Ah, friends, you do not have to commit murder, rob a bank, get a divorce and re-marry, get drunk, nor get out and live a licentious life, to lose out with God.

You can remain quite respectable and just become too involved with legitimate cares and pleasures of this world or "the deceitfulness of riches."

Yes, you can just fail to continue to walk in light or heed the checking or convicting power of the Holy Spirit.

You can just begin to cease praising God for all His "benefits," slacken up in your prayer life and the study of the Word of God, become careless and find excuses to stay away from the house of the Lord.

Yes, you can just become calloused, sour, critical and backbiting.

No, we do not even need to go that far as to the "words" of our mouths and the "meditation" of our hearts; we can just give over to lightness, "foolish talking," entertaining, being too funny in the crowd, and thus begin to lose power. See Eph. 5:4

Neither does one have to go back to the worldly crowd, indulge in the sinful pleasures and habits again.

Women just need to begin failing to "adorn" themselves "in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety . . . which becometh women professing godliness with good works." (I Tim. 2:9,10)

It was told, relative to a woman who once knew God and had lived a holy life, that she came up to a place where she felt it would be all right for her to bob her hair (the women in the church were doing it and she felt she could do it also).

But it was further related that when she came up to the solemn hour of death, that she was known to scream with intense shrieks of anguish:

"Oh, God, just let me live long enough for my hair to grow out," but she didn't.

I trust that she called upon God for the forgiveness of her soul and that the joy of her salvation was restored, but nevertheless, she was ashamed to stand in the presence of God.

Ah, yes, friends, there may be one thousand ways to depart from God, but there is only one way back, and that is to meet Jesus Christ, just where you left Him. —Mary Jack

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July 11, 1976

THE WRATH OF GOD REVEALED AGAINST THE WICKEDNESS OF MAN

Romans 1:18-25, 28-32

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Memory Verse: For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. 1 Peter 3:12

Central Thought: Man possessing the access to the knowledge of God has turned to his own way, and in so doing, has become vain, foolish, and filled with vile and unclean affections. The gospel reveals the wrath of God against the error of man.

Word Definitions: **Maliciousness:** ill-will. **Debate:** quarrel, wrangling. **Malignity:** persistent, intense ill-will or desire to harm others. **Backbiters:** slanderers. **Despiteful:** full of spite, insulter, injurious person. **Implacable:** truce breaker, one who will not seek peace. **Reprobate mind:** a mind void of judgment.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today contains the horrid and wretched picture of the true condition of the fallen state of mankind beneath the yoke and dominion of sin. Whether it is Jew or Greek or any other nationality of man, Paul endeavors to set forth the truth that all have come under this bondage of sin. Paul even carries the thought far down the path of evil and describes some of the most gross and degraded sins that men and wo-

men get mixed up in. Satan has well succeeded in blinding many souls to their sad and woeful condition. As we shall see in further study in this epistle of the Apostle Paul, God sent the law to make man wise as to the truth of his sin. The background of this lesson is a stark reality in the world around us. How we see these things literally fulfilled every day! God is displeased, and in His gospel He has made a way for man to escape the power and dominion of these terrible sins. Such wicked practices heap woes and sorrow upon the human race. Disease and death are multiplied as man plunges into deeper depths of transgression. There is a Saviour who took man's punishment for his sins, and He is able to save them to the uttermost who come to God by Him. Sin will ruin, but Christ brings us salvation. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against what?
2. How does man hold the truth in unrighteousness?
3. How are the invisible things of God from the creation of the world clearly seen?
4. Can you give some illustrations of this?
5. Can man plead ignorance as an excuse for not knowing God?
6. What did God give man up to? Why?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

God is angry with the wicked every day. He has revealed His wrath against the sinfulness of men in the truth and power of the gospel message of His Holy Son who came to save man from the awful error of his way. Men hold the truth in unrighteousness. They have the key to know and understand truth and God's will, but they refuse to use their minds and hearts to search with earnest and sincere hunger for the things of God. Thus the truth is kept back from them because of the unrighteous attitude of their hearts. God created the earth and the heavens reflecting His power, His life, His love, His beauty, His wisdom, and His goodness. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Psalms 19:1. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches." Psalms 104:24. These along with other scriptures bear out that God created the earth to show His reality and nearness. But man refused to accept these tokens of the goodness of God for the purpose that they were given. Instead, they turned from what it all stood for, and began to worship and serve the creature and the material

things, excluding the God who formed them. They became inventors of evil things, using the earth and its fullness to accomodate their own sinful lusts and desires.

Note the steps downward of man from God. First, "they glorified Him not as God." Second, "neither were (they) thankful." Instead of receiving the blessing of the earth and the sky as from God to them, they failed to give thanks for these things in the light of His goodness. Third, they "became vain in their imaginations." Thus, fourth, "their foolish heart was darkened." Fifth, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Sixth, "they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man." The God who fashioned and created it all is lost sight of. The holy and righteous purpose that was in the mind of God is no longer considered. All man sees is material and earthly substance upon which he can lavish an unrestrained greed and lust for gain, pleasure, pride, and fame.

Oh, what a sad condition! The judgment of God is surely against these terrible sins. All who refuse to accept the sacrifice of Christ for their sins and who refuse to be washed in His blood to save them to the uttermost, face eternal damnation and destruction. Thus the message to the sinner is "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts 3:19a.

Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In our lesson, we notice that twice it is said, "God also gave them up" and "God gave them over." These are serious statements from the God of heaven in relation to a person in this world. God is not the author of sin but God may order circumstances in such a way that man finds no check or hindrance in the course of sin that he has chosen. Sin weakens the soul's power of moral perception. If man disobeys what he knows to be truth it will soon become a habit to disobey. Sin will destroy the soul's sensitiveness. So it pays us to listen to the checks and obey what we know to be truth. When you hear divine truth spoken to you, follow its indication of conduct and duty, and you will become more and more sensitive to it. But if you fail to obey and insist on going on in your own way, God will give you over to it and oh, how sad that will be!

Another thought to think about is worshipping and serving the "creature more than the Creator." Oh, how we see that today! People forget who created them. They do not regard

the commands of God, the Creator, that He has spoken to us through the Word of God, the Bible. They will dress, act, and live just as they want to because they are serving and loving the creature more than the Creator. Today, everywhere, the body is being exposed and put on exhibition, worshipping the creature and forgetting God, the Creator. Surely this should be much food for thought. —Sis. Marie Miles

T. V. Dangers

Ann Landers spoke before the Democratic congressional wives and said, "The average American child spends 25,000 hours in front of the idiot box (T.V.) by the time he is 18." She also mentioned the fact that television is one of the strongest promoters of medicine, to our already drug addicted society.

The damage, she said, was caused by "offering simple solutions" to the complex problems through taking pills, eye-drops and other nostrums."

Children are educated in all kinds of evils by watching T.V. The T.V. is surely an instrument in the hands of the devil today and adultery is glorified along with murder, wickedness and all unrighteousness. There is a spirit that goes along with the T.V. Many may say that they will only look at the good things and just hear the news, but there is a drawing to other things, which is hard for anyone to resist. The best thing to do is to not have it in the home. —M. Miles



July 18, 1976

MAN INEXCUSABLE AT THE JUDGMENT OF GOD

Romans 2:1a, 3-6, 9-16

Romans 2:1a Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest:

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5 But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

10 But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Memory Verse: Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered. Proverbs 11:21.

Central Thought: The fruits of a man's life will count at the judgment rather than the fact, if he is a Jew or a Gentile. God is going to judge the secrets of men's hearts righteously.

Word Definitions: **Impenitent heart:** disposition of a person causing him to refuse to repent or amend his ways. **Conscience:** Awareness, perception, or moral consciousness of what is right and wrong.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After saluting these brethren at Rome with words of comfort and commendation, and expressing the desire to visit and meet them personally, Paul made the statement that he was not ashamed of the gospel, and was ready to preach it to them as well as to any one else. He said that the gospel was the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, first to the Jew, but also to the Greek. He then mentioned the two things that the gospel brings to light. First, the righteousness of God, and second, the wrath of God against all unrighteousness of men. Our previous lesson was Paul's earnest and accurate description of just what all this

unrighteousness amounted to. It is a dark picture, but one of actuality and truth.

In our lesson today, we have the truth clearly brought out that men who will not repent of the evil of their hearts and ways are going to face the judgment of God in the last day. This is no new truth that he is bringing out. As Jude revealed, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, foresaw the Lord coming with ten-thousands of saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all of their ungodly deeds. That there is going to be a judgment, a final and righteous judgment, is a fact that only fools can and will deny. To saint and sinner, the truth of coming judgment is something we had better think much about. Even to people who have not had the privilege of knowing of God's Word, is given the appointment of going to the judgment.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think a man would suppose that being a judge of wrong is going to excuse any wrong in his life? 2. How can the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and long-suffering be despised? 3. What does the goodness of God seek to lead men to? 4. What kind of heart is it that treasures up wrath? 5. What is respect of persons, and why is there none of this with God? 6. What can the soul of man that doeth evil expect as a reward? 7. How will those under the law be judged? 8. How will God deal with people who have never heard the law or the gospel? 9. What is it that God will judge in that day?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgment. Hebrews 9:27. This is a truth that every heart needs to be pierced by. Because men are unconscious and indifferent to the knowledge of a coming judgment their lives can take any shape or pattern, bringing upon them vices of no end. When you think that you are going to have to account for your life in every detail, your works, your words, your thoughts, your attitudes, your aims, desires, resolves, and intentions, this will help to keep you in a careful state of mind. And to think that this judgment is not man's judgment, it is God's judgment. He will have the final and rightful word to say about every one of us. Man is quick to judge and form opinions. If only his opinions were true! But so often they are not. Man is incapable of passing judgment, and is

forbidden in the Word to do so unless it is righteous judgment. But man can be so sure he is right, and yet be far from the truth. We need to realize this, and take heed of the judgments we pass. But with God, there can be no mistake. He will judge righteously. He can and will do so because He weighs the spirit of man in an all-accurate scale. He knows the SECRETS of men. Man can hide some things from his fellow man, but he can hide nothing from God. It will all come out at the judgment. Even the barbarian and heathen that have not heard God's Word will be responsible at the judgment for the law of conscience and the activity of their inward thoughts. No one will plead ignorance and be justified. Man is more liable to do wrong and know about it than not. If he will be honest with himself and quit excusing himself for sin and evil, he will know much more than what he seems to know.

The hard and impenitent heart refuses to acknowledge the truth. Instead of confessing one's need of God's mercy and saving grace and turning away from sin, there is much inclination to make excuse or to cover his sin. The heart of man can be hardened! Do you realize this? Zechariah 7:12 speaks of people who made their heart as hard as an adamant stone lest they should hear the words of the law. The Hebrew word for adamant stone refers to a diamond. We know that a diamond is very, very hard and can stand much wear. So the heart of man can be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. God grant to each one of us constant refreshing and love in our souls to tender and keep us in our hearts soft and easily touched and moved. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Therefore thou are inexcusable, O man." No person has any excuse that will stand in the judgment day. God has made a provision for every person whereby he can be saved. The devil does all that he can to drag every soul down but God will lift a soul out of sin, if he will only take the humble way to the cross. Every person has a conscience and his thoughts are continually accusing or excusing one another. An accusing conscience tells us what we were designed for, that we were made morally in the image and likeness of God, and from whence we have fallen, and to what depths of depravity we sunk. An accusing conscience is the inward trumpeter that summons the nobler powers to the battle. But often the trumpet blast falls, as it were, upon the ears of dead men, and

the forces in a man's soul do not muster to the defense! How blessed it is when the trumpet voice is heard with joy and obeyed! Sometimes the person is alarmed at the strife and conflict within, but strife speaks of the awakening of life. Dead powers in the soul do not engage in battle. The powers within that are awakened to the sense and feeling of one's great sins causes that person to do something about getting rid of those sins, that causes the great conflict. The prickings of the conscience are painful, but they tell of a soul coming to life. One may try to bury the past but the conscience will not allow the past to be buried. The only way that a conscience can be eased from conflict is for it to be washed by the blood of Jesus. It is cleansed by faith and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. After salvation a person has put all of their sins under the blood, which cleanses. Oh, what a glorious peace floods the soul of that one who has been forgiven and all is clear before them and their Creator!

—Sis. Marie Miles

THE WHITE ROSE

Late summer twilight had claimed the narrow, gentle Thames as I walked slowly along the embankment toward the Hall where I was to preach. A strange reluctance had slowed my steps and I stood for a moment looking down into the slow water. My attention was suddenly held by the movement of a young woman who had risen from one of the benches near the water and approached the edge of the embankment purposefully. Something in her attitude struck a chill to my heart, and I started toward her.

"Pardon me," I began quietly. She started nervously and looked wildly around as though seeking to escape. She was dressed in deep mourning which emphasized the pallor and the hard beauty of her face. Her eyes, filled with depths of sorrow and knowledge of the disillusioned, startled even one who was accustomed to meeting life's derelicts every day in a Mission Hall in London.

"Forgive a stranger's speaking to you," I said, "but I am a minister, on my way to the Gospel Hall around the next corner. You are distressed and troubled. Would you come to the service tonight? There you might find rest from your trouble in One who is ready to be your Friend."

At my mention of the word "minister" her face fell, and she said indignantly, "No, I don't want to go to your meeting. I want none of your religion. Leave me alone."

Earlier in the afternoon, on leaving a home, I had been presented with a perfect white rose by my hostess. Now, acting on an impulse I did not understand, I held the rose out to her. It was a strange gesture, but I dared not disobey what I felt to be the leading of the Spirit.

"Will you accept this white rose?" I asked gently. "Perhaps it will be a symbol to you, to remind you that there are friends at the Hall who want to help you if you will come."

I was not prepared for her reaction. She drew back as though I had struck her. Mixed emotions struggled in her face.

"No—oh no," she gasped. Then, to my amazement, she reached out and grasped the rose and I saw there were tears on her face. I had to go, but I spoke again of the Hall and asked her to come.

All through the service, even when I was speaking and pleading Christ's claims, my heart was filled with an odd heaviness. Tonight, I had glimpsed, startlingly clear, a soul's desperate need, and I longed as I did so often, for the power that would compel men to listen to the only way of salvation and peace.

As I finished speaking and another worker took over, I saw—far back in a dim corner of the Hall—the girl to whom I had spoken on the embankment. My heart lightened. She had come then. Surely God must be dealing with her. Surely His hand had led in my speaking to her. I began to pray.

The service was finished and the invitation had been extended. I saw the girl suddenly start to her feet and walk forward. She began to speak, hesitated, then went on, apparently unaware of the curious gaze of the congregation.

"I've been listening to the invitations to 'come to Jesus' and I want to come. Do you think He could save such a sinner as I am?" she asked brokenly. But she went on before any of the workers could reply.

"I was going to end it all tonight in the river because I couldn't go on any longer in the life I've lived for five years. I was just ready to jump when that gentleman there spoke to me and asked me to come here. I rudely refused him. And then he gave me this white rose. I didn't want it at first—it was a symbol of something I had lost. And then I had to take it. It was like the rose my mother gave me when I left home five years ago. It was her favorite flower.

"As I took this rose tonight, I heard again her voice as she told me goodbye. 'Ellen, my girl, you are leaving your mother much against her wish, to go into a sinful world and, I fear, into

a sinful life. When you are far away and you see a white rose, remember that your mother's parting gift to you will be followed by prayer for the return of her child. Neither day nor night will I cease to pray that God may bring you home again, saved.'

"This pure, white rose brought me to my senses tonight. I knew I had to find the way, if it is open to me. The minister said there was One who would help me. Do you think He would accept a sinner like me?"

It was not difficult to answer her question. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever (without degree of sin) believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

She listened attentively as we gave these and other verses, then bursting into tears she dropped to her knees. She arose a new creature in Christ. Her first desire was to get home to mother.

"The years have passed," says our evangelist, "but this one snatched from the very jaws of suicidal death is still rejoicing in Christ and ever eager to witness of Christ's saving power. She will never cease to thank God for a white rose that a strange man was prompted to give to her."

—Anne Hazelton

July 25, 1976

BEING A LITERAL JEW NO PROOF OF DIVINE FAVOR

Romans 2:17-29

Romans 2:17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

18 And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;

19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,

20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

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

29 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.

Memory Verse: God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Acts 10:34b, 35.

Central Thought: The Jew is warned against a careless attitude and a vain trust in being merely a natural Jew, and is counselled as to what a real Jew is.

Word Definitions: **Sacrilege:** temple-robbery. **Blaspheme:** To vilify, to use abusive or slanderous language about, revile or defame.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Jews were so called, being inhabitants of Judea, formerly called Israelites. They were the nation that sprang from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They became a great and hardy people during the 400 years that they were in captivity in Egypt. During their exodus journey from the bondage in Egypt to the land of Canaan that God had promised to them, God committed to them the laws and statutes and religious ceremonies that helped further to set them off and distinguish them from other nations as a distinct people unto Himself.

Throughout the ages they had developed a personal pride in themselves and in their religious system. In this they be-

came careless and vain, forgetting the real essence and meaning of their holy heritage.

There were doubtless Jews in the assembly of believers at Rome. It is important that we be attentive to Paul's counsel to these Jews in the lesson, for it will help to guide us in understanding correctly his writings farther on in this epistle.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the Jew confident of? 2. What was the basis of this confidence? 3. What does Paul caution the Jews about? 4. How could they boast of the law and at the same time be breaking the law? 5. What is a real Jew? 6. In what way were other nations blaspheming the name of God by reason of the Jews? 7. Do you know the principal purpose of God in dealing with Israel as a literal nation?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The discourse in our lesson is a direct admonition to the Jew. It would be well to take particular notice of Paul's description of the Jewish frame of mind and attitude. "Thou art called a Jew." It is evident that up to this point the Jews had developed a national pride, and to be called a Jew was an incentive to their vain conceit. "Thou retest in the law." They were reposing in the security that they felt in the possession of the oracles of God. They at the same time had lost sight of the true adaption of the law to their individual lives. "Thou makest thy boast of God, and knowest His will." Boasting in the Lord is good and permitted, but heed must be taken lest one become high-minded in his attitude. "Thou approvest things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law." What part of the law they did grasp elevated their ideals and morality. They became very strict and dogmatic. "Thou art confident. . ." They felt quite capable of guiding, instructing, enlightening, teaching those who were blind, foolish, ignorant, and in the dark. "Thou hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law."

Close survey of these things mentioned will reveal the root of Jewish apostacy and the cause of their rejection of Christ. Their complacent, careless, restful attitude gave place to transgression in their lives against the very law that they were reposing in. "Teachest thou not thyself?" It is easy for us to hold the truth down on the other man, but when it comes to us personally and individually approving ourselves as saints, it is not so easy. May we say that although the Jews

whom Paul addressed here have long since passed out of this life, the spirit and attitude they had is still alive and working in men today. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10:12. There is so much spreading on, boasting, and high-minded talk today. It means much to keep an humble attitude toward ourselves, toward our fallen man, and toward God.

Paul makes it clear in the final two verses of our lesson just what a real, true Jew is. Let the people of today who boast and dote upon the literal nation of Israel and who speculate on flowery dreams of Israel being yet the chosen of God—yes, let these people consider what Paul says here. A true Israelite is not one outwardly. It is an inner nature, life, and disposition. It is this spirit that Jesus came to bring and give to all men, Jew or Gentile. —Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Jew was supposed to know the law and obey it. The Apostle Paul, in our lesson, brought out the fact that the Jews only had a head knowledge of the Jewish law, and could teach it, but they did not obey-it. It was just a form and a ritual with them. How can we apply this to the so-called Christian world today? If you talk to a person about his standing with God he will tell you that he goes to church every Sunday and he pays tithes. He tries to treat everybody right. Then, if you bring it down to being strictly honest in one's dealings, he will excuse himself in overcharging certain ones by saying, "Oh, they have so much money that they won't miss what I charged!" And if you mention about the exaggeration of the truth he would say, "Oh, it is just having fun and that person ought to have known I didn't mean it!" If you mention of telling a lie, he would say, "Oh, it is better to tell a lie about something than to tell the truth when you know it will hurt a person." He will excuse people who would steal because they are hungry or when they desperately needed something and couldn't buy it. As the adulterous spirit is so prevalent in the world today, some will say, "Well, everyone is doing it today and we should not be so old-fashioned." On and on people will excuse themselves when they are caught up in something that is wrong, yet on the other hand they might be the first ones to condemn another who might have done a wrong. They will stand high in their church and in their own outward estimation. Oh, how sad! Paul ends our lesson by saying, those who are God's are found a praise of God and not

of men. They are those who have the righteousness of God in their hearts. They themselves, are not condemning others, until they are measured up first. Only God can make a "new creature" out of those who humble themselves before Him.

—Sis. Marie Miles

August 1, 1976

THE JEW AND THE GENTILE PROVEN TO ALL BE UNDER SIN

Romans 3:1-4, 9b-19

Romans 3:1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. (Psa. 51:4)

9b We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. (Psa. 14:1-3; 53:1-3)

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: (Psa. 5:9; 140:3)

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: (Psa. 10:7)

15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17 And the way of peace have they not known: (Isaiah 59:7,8)

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes. (Psa. 36:1)

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Memory Verse: Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people. Proverbs 14:34.

Central Thought: The holy scriptures written by men moved by the Holy Ghost reveals that sin has held dominion over every soul of man that has lived, Jew or Gentile, except Jesus Christ.

Word Definitions: **The oracles of God:** The Word that God uttered and spoke to Israel which included His divine laws and statutes.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After pointing out the advantage or special privilege that the Jew had, Paul sets forth the truth that as far as sin and righteousness were concerned there was and is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile. They are all under sin. As a foundation for this undeniable fact, Paul reaches back into the Old Testament scriptures and lists several quotations that give firm direct evidence to the universal sinful and fallen condition of mankind. These, along with others not mentioned, are the decree of guilt, not only for the Jew, but for all men as well. Please notice that the verses in our lesson that are direct quotations from the Old Testament we have marked with their respective locations in parentheses. This will help you if you desire to look up these scriptures in the Old Testament and read them for yourself. Before a person can really appreciate and place the proper value upon salvation, he or she must realize how truly sinful and condemned they are in God's sight. God was not going to bring His Son into the world until this truth concerning sin was fully established. This was the purpose of the law. Notice how many of these scriptures are taken from the Psalms. —Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the chief advantage that the Jew had? 2. Can unbelief in the heart of man make the faith of God of none effect? 3. Is sin to be excused in one and punished in another? 4. What is the true application of the scripture, 'There is none righteous, no not one?' 5. Why does God want every mouth stopped and all the world to become guilty before Him?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

How extremely important it is for us to comprehend the truth contained in today's lesson! It is not a very pleasant

sight to behold, the condition of mankind in his sinful state. How much more convenient it is for people to overlook this fact and make allowances or excuses. But this kind of attitude will only deceive the heart and plunge it into gross darkness. Man separated from God and under the woeful inheritance from Adam is in a bad and wretched condition. He is sunk into a pit of miry clay (spiritually) and cannot get out on his own. He needs a Saviour, Someone who is stronger and mightier; who can reach a strong hand down and raise him up and out of his fallen state.

Think deeply, consider carefully, and look intently at the scriptures quoted from the Old Testament that describe the awful state the heart of man is in beneath the yoke of Satan. God is righteous, and God is true. There is no fault nor shadow of failure in Him. Man is the one who has failed and drifted from his native abode. God is going to be justified, and His judgment will overcome — let us be sure of that. These decrees spoken by men of old, inspired by the Holy Spirit, are the conviction of the great Judge of all the earth. This is His all-wise, all-faithful decree concerning the state of man and his dire need. Read each scripture thoughtfully and carefully. Let it soak into your heart and mind, and let your entire being absorb the terrible reality of its righteous facts. May you banish forever from your mind any thought of your own security and pride. This is your condition outside and without a Saviour. This is the condition of hearts today who have not found the Pearl of great Price.

We see these things in evidence around us. Think of the lies, the strife, hatred, envy, cursing, bitterness, murder, and misery flowing in hot courses in our society today. How true is the statement: "The way of peace have they not known." Behold the fact and fruit of there being no fear of God before their eyes. Without the fear and respect to God, man launches forth on a sea of wickedness and evil without any restraint.

Thus the world through the righteous sentence of the law becomes guilty. Every mouth is closed when brought face to face with one's true condition of condemnation. Thus the way is prepared for the coming and welcome of a Saviour, One who can fully save and cleanse man from such a terrible condition of heart and life. —Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

God could not prevent the possibility of sin and still make man an intelligent, self-governing agent like Himself. God did not make man a machine but He gave to him the right of choice. He can live right or he can do wrong. If man chooses to give to God freely, a loving, willing service, that will bring great glory to the Lord. Man's power of choice places upon him the responsibility of his actions.

Now sin, according to the Bible, is as follows: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." I John 3:4. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. Sin is a willful, direct transgression of God's infinite law and is a serious offence, which will bring a soul to spiritual ruin, both in time and in eternity. "Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite? Job 22:5. The grand argument of the Apostle Paul is to prove that all mankind is "under sin." (Verse 9) "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Gal. 3:22. Thank God, He made a way that we might be brought into favor with God through Jesus Christ. He did not leave us in the pits of sin. Yes, He is a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13:8. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." I John 3:5,6. Jesus was given of God "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:14. Through God's Gift, we can become righteous. Under sin's control "there is none righteous, no not one." Through the blood of Jesus we can find forgiveness of sins and become righteous. Thus the perfect moral restoration of man to the original condition of holiness and purity is accomplished. Thank God for His perfect plan! —Sis. Marie Miles

(IMPORTANT NOTE TO TEACHERS: Have you ordered your lessons for the fourth quarter? We must have your order in this office by Sept. 5, 1976. The first Sunday of the next quarter is October 3, 1976. For your convenience, an order blank is printed in the back of the book.)

August 8, 1976

GOD THE JUST, AND THE JUSTIFIER

Romans 3:20-31

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.

30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Memory Verse: If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Psalms 130:3,4.

Central Thought: Man has been proven guilty of sin by the law, but is offered redemption and righteousness through believing in Jesus Christ.

Word Definitions: **Justified:** rendered or made to be just or innocent. **Propitiation:** atonement for sin; this word used in the Greek as the name for the mercy seat, the lid of the Ark in the Temple.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our previous lesson we saw that the law was given to certify man's transgression and cause him to be conscious of it. Paul quoted a number of Old Testament Scriptures to ascertain this. He is writing this with the Jews at Rome in mind, who would have access to the message he was sending them. All of the complacency and self-sufficiency of the Jew must be destroyed. Paul knew what sort of attitude this was and what it meant to have to give it all up. He had once been so deceived himself. God has inspired him to write this letter to the Jews to counsel with and to instruct them in the truth of Christ. Their national pride and the contempt that they had for other peoples were to be dissolved out of their hearts and minds. He desires that they realize that there is no difference now between the Jew and the Gentile. They are all on the level as human souls with God and the gospel. No longer are they singled out as a separate people unto the Lord. The law is finished because it brought only condemnation. Now, Christ has come to justify and to save. We do not need the condemnation any more after we learn the sinful condition we are in. We need a Saviour, and thank God, One such Saviour has been provided. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why cannot the law justify a man? 2. What kind of law is needed, and how can a man's sin be atoned for? 3. What kind of righteousness is needed? What has God's attitude been toward our sins that are already committed? 4. Does God look more favorably on the Jew than on the Gentile? 5. How is the law established by means of the faith of God?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It is very important for the child of God to grasp the truth that is contained in our lesson today. To understand the difference between the law and faith will save the soul from utter despair at the hands of the Accuser. If you are endeavoring to make Heaven your home on the basis of keeping the law you are surely bound to end up in one of two extreme by-ways of perdition. In your effort to please God on the basis of your own obedience, it is very likely that you will come to great despair and failure of which Satan takes easy advantage to discourage your heart and turn you away from seeking to serve God. Or, Satan can take the other route and blind your eyes to reality and cause you to have a high and self-righteous

opinion of yourself and the righteous things that you think you are doing. Therefore we should take heed and gain understanding of the futility of the law when it comes to really saving your soul. Listen to this plain emphatic statement: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." It is folly to think of justification by the law.

Thus we need the righteousness of a man who never sinned, a man who could impart to us His righteousness and forgive us freely of our iniquities. We have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God. It is folly to deny that. To try to amend our ways by righteous living will never erase the already heavy debt of sin upon us. We need to be justified by the love and favor of Someone who would take the guilt and blame for our sins. This One of whom we speak is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ who sits at the right hand of God making intercession for us. We have but to believe in Him with all our hearts, and prove our faith by obeying and following Him according to all that He taught us. God is Just. But through Jesus His Son, He has become the Justifier of men.

All boasting is excluded. We have nothing to boast of in our own strength. We have a law to live by, but it is not the law that came through Moses. This law that we embrace in Christ is the law of faith. Through this law God becomes the God not only of the Jews, but of all who believe in Jesus. And then, in reality, the law of Moses is fulfilled and brought to its fullest potential in our lives. The very thing that the law weakly and metaphorically pointed toward is now brought out in its beauty and perfection. It is a born-again, spirit-filled life flowing from the heart and soul of a man washed in the blood of Jesus. L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How shall man be just with God? To be justified is to be acquitted from the charge brought against us, and absolved from the condemnation with which we were threatened. With regard to us, the condemnation was deserved and the charge was true. Paul tells about Simon who thought the Holy Ghost could be purchased with money. He was proud and vain. Today, souls want to be merchants in dealing with God. But that will never work. It will never cause men to be just in the sight of God. There is nothing that we have that can pay for our sins and condemnation in the sight of God. How then can we be just? God has a right to punish us

because He is God. It is only through His mercies that we are not consumed. How then can we find favor in His sight? We must be beggars. That is a quality not natural in the proud heart of man. The publican prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He went down to his house justified. As one humbles himself, in godly sorrow, before the God of all mercy, we are "justified freely by His grace." The word, "freely" excludes merit. It excludes works on our part. By faith are we saved. Faith is used whereby we embrace with our minds and affections the Lord Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God, and only Saviour of the world, casting ourselves wholly upon the mercy of God, through His merits, for remission of sins and everlasting salvation.

—Sis. Marie Miles

THE KING AND THE STABLE BOY

During King George the Third's visits to the royal stables one of the stable boys attracted his attention. Something about the boy won his master's favor, and the King treated him kindly in many ways.

But a time of temptation came, and the poor lad fell into disgrace. He had stolen some oats from the royal bins, and being detected, the head groom had him discharged. There seemed to be no idea of speaking to the poor lad about the sin of stealing the oats, and abusing the confidence of his master, but only a determination to treat him as he deserved, and dismiss him. How good that God "hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities," Psa. 103:10, or He would have turned us from His presence for ever, and consigned us to everlasting judgment, for we "all have sinned" (Rom. 3:23).

Not long afterwards, when the King again visited his stable, he noticed that the boy was absent, and asked one of the men what had become of him. The man, fearing to tell the truth, yet not liking to tell a falsehood, said he had left. His Majesty was not satisfied with the groom's reply, and, suspecting something wrong, called the head groom to him, and made the inquiry again.

"I have discharged the boy, sir," answered he.

"For what reason?" asked the King.

"He was discovered stealing oats from one of the bins," was his reply, "and I sent him away."

The King felt sorry for the poor boy who had disgraced himself thus, but determined not to give him up, and ordered

him to be sent for immediately. The order was obeyed; without loss of time the boy was brought to the king. What a scene that was! Face to face with Britain's King stood the boy, a convicted thief!

"Well, my boy," said his Majesty when the poor lad, not knowing what awaited him, stood before him, trembling and looking very pale; "is this true that I hear of you?"

The lad could not look up into the King's face, but, with his head bent down, his only answer to the kind inquiry was a flood of tears. His mouth was stopped, for he knew he was guilty; he stood condemned, without excuse.

We read in Romans 3:19: "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

The King, seeing the stable boy was truly sorry on account of his sin, spoke to him of the evil, how he had not only taken what was not his own, but abused the confidence reposed in him.

"Well, my lad," said his Majesty, putting his hand kindly upon the boy's head, "I FORGIVE YOU." Then, turning to the head groom, he said, "Let the boy have his former place, and let him be cared for."

What a thrill of joy the lad's heart felt as the King uttered those three words, "I FORGIVE YOU." Instead of being ordered off to prison and punished and disgraced, he was restored to favor, and reinstated in the place he had lost.

As his Majesty was leaving, he turned around, looking steadfastly at the boy, and in the hearing of the grooms and servants about him said, "If any one says a word to you about those oats, TELL ME!" Now this was a double assurance to the boy. Not only was he forgiven, and that publicly, but not a word was to be said to him about his past sin; it was to be forgotten. Who would incur the royal displeasure by telling the boy of his fault? This act of grace had a greater effect upon the boy than any punishment would have had. How, after such kindness and forgiveness, could he again wrong so gracious a master who had so deeply interested himself on his behalf? Nay, rather would it call forth devotedness of heart in his service, and a fear of grieving him any more.

Is not this a beautiful illustration of divine grace, of God's ways with sinners like ourselves? It may be, like the poor stable boy, we are thoroughly conscious of our guilt, and with a broken heart, finding no words to tell out its contrition and godly sorrow. Now God frankly and freely forgives all who

believe on His Son, who died for sinners. Salvation, free and full is offered to all.

Just as the King said to the boy as he left the stables, "If any one says a word to you about those oats, tell me?" so God speaks to His children. He says (Rom. 8:33-34), "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." Rom. 8:31 says, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

If Satan distresses me about what I have been or what I have done, I go to the Lord and tell Him about it. It's all true perhaps what he says about me, but then, "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The King restored the stable boy to his position. God has done far more than this. He has united us to Christ by a link that never can be broken, and we not only have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, through the riches of His grace, but He says we shall in a little while be taken away to be forever with the Lord Jesus, where there will be none to tell us of our past sins, but every tongue will be employed in the praise of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. 3:24.

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Matt. 6:14.

August 15, 1976

**THE BLESSEDNESS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
IMPUTED WITHOUT WORKS**

Romans 4:1-12

Romans 4:1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

Memory Verse: He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Psalms 103:10.

Central Thought: God can and will impute righteousness to the sinner who believes in Christ even as He imputed righteousness to Abraham because he believed.

Word Definitions: **Impute:** to count or number in favor of, or against.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Abraham was called of God to set forth a pattern of faith for all men to follow. Perhaps he did not realize the vast extent of the influence of the faith that he proved to have through all the adversity and trial. In believing in God upon the strength of His divine promises, righteousness was laid in abundance to his account. He also thereby became the father of the faithful. There are so many lessons and truths so vital to us revealed in the account of Abraham. Righteousness was imputed, or counted, unto him without works. This was accomplished before the law of Moses. In fact, it was about 430 years after this that the law was given. And, as our lesson reveals, his righteousness with God by faith was

established even before God instituted the rite of circumcision. It was just bare faith with nothing natural that made up the righteousness that was imputed to him. God knew that many things were to rise up of the works of men that would seek to intermingle with His plan. Thus he is establishing in Abraham a vital truth for all to see.

From Psalms 32:1,2 the apostle Paul quotes what David said concerning the blessedness of the man who receives the righteousness of faith. We can be sure that David had great occasion to know what this was, too. Were it not for the forgiveness of God and righteousness imputed without works, David would have had no place with God. This is a truth that every Christian must maintain in his heart and mind.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Was Abraham justified by works? 2. What caused righteousness to be imputed unto Abraham? 3. A reward given to someone who worked for it is reckoned of what? 4. How can righteousness be imputed to someone who has no righteousness? 5. Which came first: the covenant of circumcision, or the believing faith of Abraham?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The righteousness that Abraham possessed was by means of his faith in God. God had promised him to be a father of many nations. This was given while as yet he had no child. Although he and Sarah both were by age and natural means incapable of child bearing, yet his faith stood firm that God would fulfill his promise. Both Abraham and Sarah were guilty of laughing at the thought of bringing forth a child at an old age, yet their faith overmastered all doubt and they judged Him faithful who had promised. Thus Isaac was so named (meaning laughter) because they had laughed at the first. Now, the promise of seed to Abraham was first given when he was about 75 years of age. Isaac was not born until Abraham was about 100 years old. So we see there was a period of waiting and enduring. God was in no hurry in bringing to pass what He had promised. One touching scene recorded in Genesis 15 was right after Abraham's recovery of Lot and the goods of Sodom. He had refused to take reward for his service to those people, choosing rather to remain as he was, contented with his faith in God. God spoke to Him that He was to be Abraham's shield and exceeding great re-

ward. When Abraham referred to one who was already born in his house as a possible heir, God called him outside and bid him look at the heavens. Assuring him that the promised heir would come from the fruit of his own body, God challenged Abraham to count the stars to find how great would be the host of his seed. It was then that Abraham's faith took hold to the satisfaction of the Lord.

All this was done before the institution of the rite of circumcision was enjoined upon Abraham. Circumcision was a seal or token of the righteousness that Abraham already possessed. This righteousness was of faith. Without the faith circumcision was meaningless and vain. In Israel throughout the years circumcision was looked upon as such an important indication of favor with God. Even when faith in God was eaten away, circumcision was held on to. The circumcision of the New Testament, as we have already learned, is a spiritual operation of the Spirit of God in a man's heart and affections. Literal circumcision is of no more profit. The cutting away of the sins of the flesh from the heart of man is what God wants to go along with our faith in Him today. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is a blessing upon those "whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." (Verse 7) The Apostle Paul was trying to get the Roman Jews to see that through Christ there was a happiness that the law could not give. In order to taste joy we must feel sorrow. Sorrow for sin prepares the way for the joy of its removal. I am sure you remember the weight and the condemnation that filled your very soul when you realized that your sins had separated you from God. Those sins became exceedingly sinful. You groaned under the load and longed for deliverance. Hell faced you and eternal banishment from all that is good and from God. Oh, how you longed for peace! You felt your soul's poverty. You felt so helpless and lost. But you came to Jesus for deliverance. You asked Him, with godly sorrow to save you from your sins. God for Christ's sake forgave you and you knew that those sins were all under the blood. They had been covered. What a joy filled your very being! Now all is clear between you and your God. Surely, mourning has been turned into gladness. —Sis. Marie Miles

BOY WOULD NOT PART WITH HIS BIBLE

Let me just mention a story. I remember once hearing of a little lad in a town in Lanchester, where I first began my work of preaching. He lay upon the steps of a door, in the middle of the night, in the great town of Warrington, and the policeman, or rather watchman, coming upon him, said, "What are you doing here?" The boy replied, "I am without father and mother; I have traveled thus far, and I have no food, no money, no place to lie down in." There was something in the boy's jacket which attracted the watchman's eye, and when he touched it he thought he had found a thief. "What have you here?" he asked. The boy then put his hand into his pocket and brought out a small pocket Bible. "Well," said the watchman, "if you are so badly off, I will give you a few pence for your Bible; I will take it home to my children, and you will be able to get your bed and food for the night." But the lad, young as he was, knew that the Bible was true; he had an experimental knowledge of the Bible, and he was ready at once with his reply. "Thank you, sir," he said, "but I won't give it up." "Why you are starving," said the watchman. "Yes, but this is the word of God, and it tells me, 'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.'" Here was the experimental knowledge of the power of the promises. The watchman showed his humanity, his kindness, and gentleness towards the fatherless boy. He took him home and fed him, and God prospered that boy who relied on the promises. And, believe me, that is just the experience of hundreds and thousands who have found their extremity to be God's opportunity—who have found when they were very low that God could extend to them His everlasting arms, could lift them up, bless them, and preserve them.

—Homiletic Com.

August 22, 1976

FAITH BRINGS RESULTS

Romans 4:17-25 Romans 5:1-5

Rom. 4:17 (As it is written, I have made thee [Abraham] a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Rom. 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Memory Verse: Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. 11:1.

Central Thought: The man who is unwavering in faith, gathers strength, has a clear vision, also, soul growth, reaches sublime heights, and gives glory to God.

Word Definition: **Faith:** Our memory verse is the Bible definition of faith. **Stagger:** To cause to stumble, sway, hesitate, to lose determination, falter.

LESSON BACKGROUND

God promised Abraham a son and that through his family, Jesus would be born and thereby, the whole world would be blessed. Abraham was to be the father of many nations which includes the Gentile world, through virtue of the covenant which God made with him. Gen. 17:4-5. After putting him through many tests, (and he proved faithful) God gave Abraham and Sarah a son in their old age, which was a

miracle. Abraham was a hundred years old and Sarah was ninety years old. Gen. 17:17; Gen 21:1-5.

Jesus Christ, our elder brother, takes us by the hand and conducts us into the glorious temple of peace, where we stand in the presence of the Holy of Holies, and see it illuminated and glorified with the sweet light of the divine favour. There, the believer's blessings is a state of grace. Tribulations, although presently grievous, become to the believer a matter of joy and thankfulness. The endurance of afflictions, and the trying or testing of one's own heart is the seed bed for the growth of strong faith if the testings are accepted in the right way.

—Sis. Marie Miles

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Our first verse lets us know that God is a Creator, and being One, He "callesh those things which be not as though they were." If we have faith in the Creator we can do the same. That is faith. Faith is what it takes for us to receive anything from God. We have to have faith in His Word. If we do not believe the first verse in the Bible then we won't believe anything else in the Bible. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." Gen. 1:1. God is still a Creator. "Is anything impossible with God?" Faith is an increasing grace. The very obstacles that would stagger the faith of a doubting soul will be made by the believing man into the means whereby his faith is strengthened. Abraham, by believing was strengthened in his faith. How wide are the promises? "To him that hath shall be given!" In order for there to be an increase there must be a growth. In order to grow, there must be food and exercise. Faith is fed by the promise and the Word of God holds the promises. God spoke to Abraham and he believed God. Get a promise for your need and believe it as Abraham did. "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." James 1:5-7. We need unwavering faith. Physical and intellectual strength will fade and has a limit but inner, spiritual strength has no limits. It is eternal and we grow in strength by not wavering at the promises of God. We must believe without wavering that God cannot lie. For God to break His promises would be untrue to His own nature, and that can never be. We must see the divine attributes behind that promise that we are standing upon. We grow by feeding on the promises of

God. We develop faith by praising the Lord and giving glory to Him. We give glory to God, not for our weakness, but by striving to get out of our weakness and by putting on strength. We should not look at things around us but look past those things and see God as greater than the things seen, being "fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able to perform." —Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The deadness of Sarah's womb and his own body "now dead" (that is, incapable of producing seed) were the two things that Abraham "considered not." Had he considered them, he would not have been able to exercise faith. But he disregarded those dead things and looked to God who quickeneth the dead. God had promised and it was his faith in God's power to quicken and make alive that which was dead. Thus from the deadness of his mortal strength and the deadness of Sarah's womb came the life that God promised. Sarah was delivered of a child when she was past age because she judged him faithful who had promised. Later Abraham's faith enabled him to obey God in taking Isaac to the place that God showed him and to put him on the altar in preparation for sacrifice. He did this, "accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." Hebrews 11:17-19. It was as if he had received Isaac from the dead when the angel stopped him from carrying out the sacrifice that he was about to do.

Now our lesson tells us that his faith was imputed to him for righteousness, but that it was not just for his sake alone. But it is for our sakes also, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. The faith that Abraham had, causing him to triumph over the powers of death that worked in his own body and in Isaac, is a type of the faith that we have in God concerning the victory He wrought over death in Jesus Christ, "who was delivered (or put to death) for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Such is the goal for the power of God in salvation. It is to abolish death and bring life and immortality to light (to our knowledge and understanding) through the gospel. The sting of death is sin. Sin has been destroyed through the offering of the body of Jesus. We have victory over the power of sin. Thereby death has no power. The faith that we hold steadfast in Christ unto the end will assure us of a part in His glorious resur-

rection. Praise the Lord for the glorious life and power that works in the souls of the redeemed! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

HEALED BY FAITH

In Missouri was a man named Jeremiah Cole, who had been led into the light independent of any human instrumentality (1880). He had suffered from dyspepsia for twelve years; he had been so bad he could eat only specially prepared articles of food. He was instantaneously and wonderfully healed in answer to his own importuning prayer, so that he could eat all ordinary foods without discomfort. His own healing led to the healing of his sister, Mary, who had been an invalid all her life. She began to have spasms at two years of age, and later dyspepsia and other ailments, until her life was one of continual suffering. Through her own prayer and that of her brother, she also was led to claim her healing, and the work was done. Both of these persons became effective ministers in the reformation. —Birth of a Reformation

August 29, 1976

THE CURSE AND REMEDY

Romans 5:10,12-21; 6:1,2

Rom. 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

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

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

18 Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom. 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer 'herein?

Memory Verse: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Rom. 5:8.

Central Thought: As the immeasurable ocean exceeds a drop, that much more Christ paid for our sins, that the curse might be lifted from our souls. Doubt not, therefore O man!

Word Definition: **Imputed** means "to charge, to attribute something to another such as a fault or crime." **Abound** means "to be filled with, plentiful, to be wealthy in." **Passed** means "moved forward, to go from one to another, to receive." **Sin** in our lesson stands for the principle of evil, the root of all wrong; **grace**, the principle of all goodness, the root of all that is virtuous and holy in the universe. Paul speaks of these two forces coming into the world—one through Adam, the other through Christ. These principles are the moral monarchs of the race, and the monarchs are always fiercely fighting.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson refers to the sin of Adam in the garden of Eden. Adam was created in purity and was the crowning creation of God. God was able to commune with him in the "cool of the day." What a glorious relationship! But the devil

tries to spoil anything that God has and anything that is beautiful. He tempted them, denied that God's word was true, and led them into sin. What a terrible sin that was! It plunged the whole human race into sin. Let us not ask, why sin, why moral evil, why a taint upon the whole race, from one man's disobedience? Let us rather say, here is sin, here is the undoubted fact of a depraved moral tendency; and thus in the mediatorial work of Jesus is the sovereign remedy. Seek for that remedy that Jesus brought us. The curse can be lifted through His precious shed blood and resurrection. Let this be in our thoughts as we study the lesson today.

—Sis. Marie Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. How did the sin principle enter the heart of mankind?
2. Did death reign before the giving of the law of Moses?
3. What is the difference between sin and grace?
4. Who brought the offense and who brought righteousness?
5. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"
abound?"

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Sin and grace are the two opposing sovereigns placed before us by Bro. Paul. Sin touches the soul and the body. Sin has brought in trouble, death, and moral inability. Death, as a terror, was brought in by sin. Death came in by sin and the blood of slaughtered Abel cries from the ground and gives utterance, "Death has reigned, for sin has entered." The terrible slaughter on the earth's battle-fields tell us what an awful power sin is. Sin brings trouble, and there is no argument to the contrary. Sin brings unrest and an absence of peace, also. There is the moral inability to do right. God created man with freedom of will and the sin principle that "passed upon all men," through the fall of Adam, causes man to have a bend toward evil. It is sad today for people to deny that the sin principle is not there. The word says, "And so death passed on all men"—that is—thus it is, or so it happened, that death passed on all men. As death is the penalty of sin, and by one man all became sinners, thus it was by one man that death passed on all men. The force of the words "and so" have been much disputed. But Paul does not say "so also," but "and so," thus it was. This verse merely brings in a comparison between Adam and his posterity. It is "by one man" that men became sinners; and thus it was "by one man"

that death passed upon all men. The scope of the passage is to illustrate the doctrine of justification on the ground of the righteousness of Christ, by a reference to the condemnation of men for the sin of Adam. We die on the account of Adam's sin. This is true because on no other ground can the universality of death be accounted for. If all die on the account of Adam's sin, how much more shall all live on account of Christ? We can say all men are subject to penal evils on account of one man. Jesus came to deliver us from spiritual death and banishment from the communion of God brought through the fall of Adam. "In due time Christ died." The due time came and brought grace, eternal life, peace from trouble, and moral ability through the power of the Holy Spirit, who cleanses us from that sin principle passed upon all men, to have communion with God. Praise God from whom all blessings flow, and for His matchless love toward fallen mankind! "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

—Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Sin is not imputed when there is no law. There comes a time in every child's life when he or she comes to the age of accountability. Light and knowledge comes to the understanding as to what is right and wrong. From that time on, the individual is held responsible and must give an account for what transpires in their life. A careless and indifferent attitude after the age of accountability will merit only sorrow and condemnation. But, before this time (and God alone is the judge of just when this takes place) the soul of the individual is in a state of innocence before God. Sin is there, but it is not imputed or reckoned against the person. God would not be just if he held a man accountable for wrong if there were no means of communicating the knowledge of that wrong. As we have already found out in our study of the epistle to the Romans, God is going to judge the secrets of men's hearts in the day of judgment. He knows just how much each one is responsible for. He knows not only how much one knows, but God knows how much one COULD know. He weighs the attitudes and the spirit that is on the inside.

Sin in the heart of a child in innocency is in a dormant state. The child is not conscious of sin. He does not realize that the things that he is doing is offensive to God. But knowledge comes to every one sooner or later, in one way or

another. The times of ignorance God winked at, or overlooked, but now commands all men every where to repent (reform, amend their ways) Since light has come into the world, ignorance has been reduced, and the excuse that pleads ignorance has lost any foundation. Man can know and find God, if he desires to know and find God. And this is where the catch is. The little child, before it becomes responsible before God, is sheltered from condemnation by the blood of Jesus. Little innocent children who leave this world before the age of accountability are saved. They are not responsible for the sin that is inherited in their hearts. Is not God wise and just? —Bro. Leslie Busbee

DANCING

No man can dance and remain pure. Passion, and nothing else, is the basis of the popularity of the dance. Any girl who dances is guilty of corrupting the morals of her dancing partner.

Dancing into the small hours of the morning does not leave one freshened and invigorated for the next day's work. As ordinarily pursued, the modern dance ignores God's law of rest through sleep, and often involves dissipation that makes it anything but beneficial to health.

By no small stretch of the imagination can it be claimed that the smoke-filled, liquor-laden atmosphere in which much dancing is indulged is conducive to good health.

To introduce the less objectionable dances, as many of our schools are doing, may seem harmless, but the step from the less objectionable to the more objectionable is too easily taken. What begins harmlessly enough, may easily end in the sort of thing reported as all too common—girl students returning from dances under the influence of liquor. Surely the combination of the modern dance and liquor is a most perilous one for our young people.

The dance floor permits liberties between the sexes tolerated nowhere else, and these liberties constitute the danger in dancing. It has been truly said of certain dances that "the very pose of the parties suggests impurity."

Who can deny that it is sex that gives the dance its attraction? Separate the sexes, eliminate the amorous embraces of the dance floor, and how long would the dance retain its popularity?

The dance has been the downward step for many, according to the agreeing testimony of reform workers and others in a position to know.

An ex-dancing master investigated the moral situation in Los Angeles, and found that 81 per cent of the fallen women of the city entered their life of shame by way of the modern dance.

A New York reform worker says, "Of 1,000 girls under my personal care, every one of them traced their first step downward to the dance."

A Roman Catholic archbishop makes the startling statement that "the confessional reveals that nineteen out of twenty who have fallen from virtue date their first step downward to dancing parties."

In the light of such testimonies, for churches to sponsor dances, and for Christians to participate in dancing, is to give this modern amusement a respectability it does not deserve.

The dance HAS caused many to fall, and for that reason Christians are duty bound to refrain from participating in it or encouraging it. May God make us strong to do our duty in a lax and evil day. —J. E. Harris

September 5, 1976

BE INSTRUMENTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Rom. 6:3-7,12,13,16-19,22-23

Rom. 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruits unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Memory Verse: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Central Thought: It is not a sin to be tempted, but yielding is sin. Therefore give God your soul and body—think, speak, walk, and work according to the will of God. You will then have power to overcome temptations.

Word Definition: Instrument means “a thing by means of which something is done.” “That form of doctrine.” “Christianity is represented under the notion of a ‘mold’ or ‘die’ into which they were cast, and from which they took the impression of its excellence. The figure upon this die is the image of God, righteousness and true holiness, which was stamped on their souls in believing the gospel and receiving the Holy Ghost.” —Clarke Com. Old man, is our wicked, corrupt, and fleshly self. The word “wages” signified the daily pay of a Roman soldier.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Apostle in the preceding chapter proved that salvation was to both the Jew and Gentile and that it must come through Jesus Christ, by faith. He now continues to point out that to be a child of God, and be clear in his sight, one must live a holy life that only comes from a pure and clean heart.

We trust that the Lord will help you to get the precious gems of truths in these lessons. I am sure that by prayer and looking to the Lord, He will cause your heart to rejoice in the precious truths in these lessons. Those who are

spiritually minded will, by the Holy Spirit, be blessed in a great manner. —Sis. Marie Miles

QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean to be baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ? 2. What is the "old man" that dwells in the heart of man? 3. How can the members of our body be instruments of sin? 4. How can we use our members as instruments of righteousness? 5. What are the wages of sin and the gift of God?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It takes the glorious energy of the Holy Spirit to raise us up from a dead state of sin and cause us to walk in newness of life. Just as one goes down into the watery grave in baptism and is covered by the water, just so the soul of the sinful man must be covered by the blood of Jesus. Through the covering of the blood he is cleansed from the sins that he has committed and arises a new creature.

God did not intend for us to stay in a state of justification but the Bible also teaches sanctification. We are "sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Romans 15:16. Sanctification means to "set apart, to cleanse or to make holy." We ask forgiveness for our committed or volitional sins, but we cannot ask forgiveness for the sin principle that passed on all men as our last Sunday's lesson taught us. The sin principle needs to be purged or cleansed by the Holy Spirit. "Our old man" needs to be "crucified" or killed by the Holy Spirit's purging power. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Acts 1:8. Praise God, for the second definite work of grace in the heart. It is a real experience. Many have not experienced it, and want to teach that they received it all at once. God's Word definitely teaches there are two works of grace in the heart. In the Old Testament we read where God told Moses to fashion the ark like he taught him in the mount. There were two rooms and two altars. Blood was applied to both altars and the blood was for cleansing. The first was for the cleansing of committed sin and the second for inherited sin, or the sin principle in the heart that passed upon all men through Adam's fall.

Before a person is saved, he yields his members as instruments to be used by the devil, but when God becomes the master of the heart and life his members in his body are

used as instruments of righteousness. What a wonderful change takes place! A swollen part in our natural body can not be used. Just so, a person filled with pride is too swollen and too big for God to use. We can thank God that we "have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered" unto us. —Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What are our members? Are they not our hands, our feet, our minds, our eyes, ears, and also that member of the body so hard to tame—the tongue? A person who is living in sin yields these members as servants for evil and sinful purposes. The hands are used to perform and carry out injury and harm. The hands are used to strike and injure others. The feet take the person to places that the Lord would not be pleased with. The mind is yielded as a channel for wicked thoughts and plans. The eyes are used to look at filthy literature or evil scenes on T.V. and movies. The ears are used to listen to gossip and ugly stories. And, of course, the tongue is used for so many forms of evil that we have not space here to mention them.

Now we are children of God. We have these same members. Salvation does not take them away. But we can take these very same members that once were instruments of sin, and we can use them for holy and good purposes for God. Our hands can do many meaningful and helpful things to glorify God and help our fellow man. Our feet can be used to take us on errands of mercy as well as to the house of worship to hear the Word of God. Our minds can be stayed on the Lord to keep us in perfect peace. Our eyes can read the Bible, our ears can listen to messages from the holy ministers of God. And our tongue can be that of the learned, speaking words in season to them that are weary and we can let praise to God be the fruit of our lips. And remember, we must yield these members to the holy cause of God. He will not use them against our will. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

September 12, 1976

MARRIED TO ANOTHER

Rom. 7:1-12

Rom. 7:1 Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

Memory Verse: What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? I Cor. 6:19.

Central Thought: The marriage of a husband to another, after his first wife has died, is used by the Apostle Paul to picture the law being dead and Christ being accepted.

Word Definition: Adultery means "sexual relations between a married person and another not the spouse." Adulteress means a woman guilty of adultery. Law signifies "(1) A rule directing and obliging a rational creature in moral and religious actions. Prov. 28:4. (2) That which often hath the force of governing and over-ruling our actions in our present imperfect state, Rom. 7:23,25. (3) The whole doctrine of the word delivered by God to his church, Psalms 1:2. (4) The decalogue, or ten moral precepts, Rom. 2:25; 7:7. (5) The second table of the law, Rom. 13:8. (6) The precepts of God, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, John 1:17. The principles of reason, or law of nature written in man's heart, Rom. 2:14. (8) The old testament, John 10:34; 15:25; I Cor. 14:21. (9) The doctrine of the gospel, which no less obliges men to the belief and practice of it, than the law did, Isa. 2:3; Rom. 3:27. (10) The works commanded by the law, Gal. 3:11. (11) A strict and precise observation of the law, Phil. 3:5. (12) The covenant that God made with the Jews, with all the constitution of worship thereto belonging, Heb. 10:1.

—Cruden's Concordance

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Apostle Paul has proved in previous chapters that the law was insufficient for the Jew's justification or sanctification. He is trying to get the Jew to see that he is free from the law now since Christ has come. He can have a better and happier relationship with God through Christ.

In verse 5 the Apostle Paul brings out that the "motions of sins, which were by the law" or notwithstanding the law. But rather than let the Jew think that he is charging that the law favors sin, in verse 12 he states that the law is "holy, just, and good." The law teaches us what sin is, otherwise we would not know. The law cannot give a person power to keep from committing sin. The blood of Jesus makes a person clean and a new creature, therefore he can have power to live without sinning. The law of grace gets to the root of the trouble of sin. —M. Miles

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The Apostle Paul takes another approach to convincing the Jews that the law had served its purpose and is dead, since

Jesus Christ has come. He compares it with a husband and wife that are married. According to the teachings of Jesus we are brought back to the Adam state of marriage. One woman for one man. In Matt. 19:4-9 Jesus says that "from the beginning it was not so" (for a man or woman to leave his or her companion). Under the law of Moses God permitted him to give them a bill of divorcement "because of the hardness of your hearts." But under grace the only way a husband can put away his wife is for "fornication." She that is put away cannot marry or she will "commit adultery." She cannot remarry as long as her husband liveth.

So the Apostle Paul states the same teachings—as long as a husband and wife lives they are not to remarry. If they do they will be committing adultery. He therefore states that the law has died since Christ came to fulfill the law and the law is no longer in force. We are to be married to Christ and bring forth fruit unto Him. The Apostle Paul says in II Cor. 11:2, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have expoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." He treats the subject of us being the church, and we are to be subject to Christ, as wives are to be subject to their husbands, in Eph. 5:23-32. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. . . This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." So we are married to Christ and the Jews were to count the law as being dead now and it is lawful and right for them to accept Christ.

He brings out how the law led him to Christ and taught him, when he came to the age of accountability, that sin was in his heart and life. "The commandment came, sin revived, and I died," being separated from Christ because of sin in my life and heart. The law taught him what sin was and therefore it became death to him. —Sis. Marie Miles

THE DANGER OF SEEKING DELIVERANCE BY THE LAW **From "The Pilgrims's Progress" by John Bunyan**

Christian had been directed to the narrow gate by the good Evangelist. Through this narrow gate he was to find forgiveness of sins and the way to the Celestial City. This gate represented repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His righteousness. But as Christian earnestly journeyed toward the narrow gate, he met a man by the name of Worldly Counsel. After Christian had told this man where he was

going and for what purpose, he was ridiculed and told that the way he was being directed into was the most dangerous and troublesome way in the world. "I could direct thee," he said, "to the obtaining of that which thou desirest without all these troubles." In answer to Christian's query, Worldly Wiseman continued: "In yonder village named Morality there dwells a gentleman named Legality, who has a son named Civility. He has a skill to help men with such burdens as this is on your shoulders. There are houses there for thee and thy family, and there thy life will be the more happy, and thou shalt live by honest neighbors in credit and good fashion."

When he asked the way to this town of Morality, Christian was directed toward a high hill, and told by that hill he must go. As Christian turned out of the way to go to Mr. Legality's house for help, the hill which he must go by became so high and so hard that it looked to him as if it would fall on his head. The burden (of sin) on his back became much heavier than before. Out of the hill came flashes of fire, and Christian began to quake with fear. It was then that he looked up and saw Evangelist coming toward him with a very severe and dreadful countenance. After Evangelist had gained an explanation from Christian as to what he was doing there out of the way, the man of God told him to stand still and listen to his words. He explained to Christian how that by going toward Morality and Legality and Civility to ease the burden of sin he was going in the way of the law, which would bring death. He was rendering the cross to be of none effect to him. Christ died in vain if justification would be found by the law. "Therefore," he concluded, "Mr. Worldly Wiseman is an alien, and Mr. Legality is a cheat, and his son Civility is a hypocrite and cannot help thee." After this, Evangelist called aloud to the heavens for confirmation of what he had said; and with that there came words and fire out of the mountain under which poor Christian stood, which made the hair of his flesh stand up. The words were thus pronounced: "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." —L. Busbee

MOCK DIVORCE TAUGHT

"Life's Realities" (1975) Stockton, Calif.—Newspaper

The Mira Loma High School teaches a course in marriage. They end up telling about their course by saying, "The course concludes with a mock divorce proceeding. Well, it's about

time! In the old days, the schools were so busy teaching reading, writing and arithmetic that the really important things like getting divorced, were neglected."

How sad that they have to have a mock divorce after teaching them about married life. The world surely disregards the laws of God about "until death do we part."

September 19, 1976

ANOTHER WARRING LAW

Romans. 7:12:25

Rom. 7:12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Memory Verse: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

Central Thought: The inward man can only win by the help of the second man, Jesus Christ.

Word Definition: **Wretched** means miserable, very unhappy. **Deliver** means to set free from evil. (Web. Dic.)

LESSON BACKGROUND

In studying our lesson we want to remember that the Apostle Paul is talking about when he was in sin. The person who is not saved has a conflict on his hands. In the beginning, God created man in his image of holiness. Man fell, through the sin of Adam. As youth comes to the age of accountability he knows what sin is and that sin has separated him from God. God draws him unto Himself and the devil, or the flesh, pulls him away from God. But be sure to notice in the last verse of our lesson that through Jesus Christ there is victory. God delivers the man from his wretchedness and makes him a new creature in Christ Jesus.

QUESTIONS:

1. How can we know what sin is? 2. Was Paul a Christian and yet said, "I am carnal, sold under sin?" 3. Could the Apostle Paul perform that which was good and why couldn't he? 4. What was warring in his members? 5. What was his conclusions and who gave him deliverance?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Oh, the conflict that goes on in the heart of that one whom the spirit of God is striving with! The Apostle Paul is showing us the conflict of the sinner, by letting us know about his own experience. He was brought up under the strictest of the sect of the law keepers. He knew what the law taught. It taught him that he should not covet. But he could not keep from coveting. He did not want to sin but he could not keep from sinning. The things that he hated to do, those are what he did. A power was pulling him that overcame his will, because it was greater than he was. We know that many a sinner has hated himself afterwards when he looks back at his sinful deeds. He promises himself that he will not do so again. Then when he is out in the world and the sinful things are

presented to him so strongly, he cannot say no to it, but yields. Oh, the conflict! The sinner might even see that the thing that he is doing is leading him to ruin but he cannot help himself. The man who drinks will even say that he will quit and never touch it again, but he doesn't have any power to keep what he declares. How sad!

The law said, "Thou shalt not kill." Someone does a terrible wrong to a man. The man is helpless to defend himself but must suffer that wrong. Hatred builds up in his heart and mind against the person who did him wrong. It eats into his very heart and mind. It takes possession of him. He promises himself that at the first opportunity he will get even with the one who did him wrong. Oh, how terrible he feels as his mind dwells upon it! Yet, there is another voice inside that tells him that it will not pay to get even, and that he had better drop the whole thing. He thinks on that angle for a while, but the overwhelming injustice of it all sweeps over him and he again lets hatred rule him. Finally, the opportunity arrives. He only intended to hurt the man for the injustice, but hatred so took hold of him that he killed the man. What a terrible thing to do!

How can the inward man win? How can he be delivered from the wretchedness of sin? "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Praise the Lord, there is deliverance! We can live right and do the right through Christ. Not through ourselves but through Jesus, who died on the cross to save us from our sins and to give us power over all the power of the devil. We can resist evil. We can face injustices done to us with a sweetness that only God can give. We can do right, through Christ. —Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We have before us in this lesson a most misunderstood passage of scripture. Instead of taking it as it really is, that is, as a description of Paul's former life under the law, it is taken as Paul's present condition as a Christian. This kind of slant on the scripture gives license for sin in one's life. In the true setting of this reading, along with what is stated in the previous and following chapters, such an interpretation is far from the truth. To describe Paul's condition under the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ as wretched and in bondage to the law of sin in his body is a downright reproach to God. The rest of the Bible does not add up to such a disgraceful conclusion. It should never be taken as a standard of New

Testament experience of salvation. It can only be truly applied to Paul's state of mind and heart under the law. The purpose of his bringing this out is to show the futility and failure of the law to accomplish the true designs of God within the soul of man. Thousands of people today rest content with this erroneous application of the scripture, thus justifying themselves for actual sin that is working in their lives. Their hope is vain and false. Such a teaching does not challenge and stir the soul to seek victory over sin, but lulls them into a slumber from which few ever awaken. It is a popular teaching and it appeals to the flesh and draws the crowds. But at the same time, it is a proof of those who are willing to deny themselves and follow Christ. Others will wrest the scriptures to their own destruction. Let us take heed, not only to this part of the Bible, but to all Scripture and seek to understand and obey the truth that is revealed therein. —Leslie Busbee

THE LAW OF SIN

Bro. William Johnson, missionary in Africa, gives the following account: One woman was much distressed, and wept, and said that she had two hearts, which troubled her so much that she did not know what to do. One was the new heart, that told her all things that she had ever been doing. The same heart told her she must go to Jesus Christ and tell Him all her sins, as she had heard at church. But her old heart told her, "Never mind; God no save black man, but white man. How know He died for black man? New heart said, Go cry to Him and ask. Old heart tell me do my work first, fetch water, make fire, wash, and then go pray. When work done then me forget to pray. I don't know what to do." I read to her the seventh chapter of Romans, and showed that the apostle Paul felt the same things, and spoke of two principles in man. When I came to the verse "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" she said, "Ah, massa, that me: me no know what to do." I added the words of St. Paul, "I thank God through Jesus Christ," and explained to her the love of Christ—how He died for sinners like her. She burst into tears; and has continued ever since, so far as I know, to follow her Saviour.

—Homiletic Commentary

September 26, 1976

WALK IN THE SPIRIT

Romans 8:1-13

Rom. 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

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

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Memory Verse: If the Son therefore shall made you free, ye shall be free indeed. John 8:36.

Central Thought: Christ sets men free from sin and gives him a glorious freedom and liberty in divine sonship.

Word Definition: Life in verse 6, denotes a fully satisfied existence, in which all the faculties find their full exercise and their true occupation. Man's spirit, became the abode and organ of the divine Spirit, and has eternal life from above. Peace is the inward feeling of tranquillity. Peace causes one to not fear death and the judgment. Carnal mind is a mind

filled with thoughts of the carnal things or worldly desires. Man is not naturally subject to God, the law or the will of God. The carnal minded man hates good and also hates the good that he sees in other good men. Why did Cain slay his brother? "Wherefore? because his own works were evil, and his brothers's righteous." Few men are willing to admit their enmity against God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

It has been said that if the book of Romans were a ring that the eighth chapter would be the precious stone on that ring with it's sparkling point of the jewels. There truly is a dazzing beauty in every verse in the eighth chapter. The first verse is a true picture of the believer's happy condition. The natural man is in a state of condemnation but through Christ he is free and can walk after the spirit.

QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean to have condemnation? 2. How can we be freed from condemnation? 3. Who condemned sin in the flesh? 4. What does it mean to be carnally minded? 5. Can a person please the Lord and walk after the flesh?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The state of condemnation in the natural man testifies the verdict of God. His Word makes us know that even nature was affected by the fall of man. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shall thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground." Gen. 3:17-19. Therefore, the weeds choke the flowers, the pestilences destroy the fields, the earthquakes cause trouble and the thunders roll. Man's conscience also testifies of the fact of guilt. Systems of idoltary and false religions are built because man is seeking freedom from quilty feelings. Priests could not have made a successful trade of religion if man had been free from condemnation. The Bible declares, "for all have sinned." The sentence is that of universal condemnation. The carnal mind does not entertain the thoughts of God. Man might act like he likes and admires truth and right but he only seeks that kind of goodness that is not foreign to

his depraved longings of his nature. But the decree is that "the wages of sin is death."

But thank God, when man humbles himself before God, with godly sorrow and with humility of heart and mind, and seeks for forgiveness he is freed from the condemnation. He passes from death to life. What a glorious freedom that is! "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves." God send his Son in the likeness of man and through his life and death on the cross, he purchased freedom for us. Jesus was made sin for us that we might be freed from sin. Oh, how precious it was that our Lord and Saviour loved us so much! We want to love Him and live daily for Him.

When we are saved and freed from condemnation, we are not to walk after the fleshly desires anymore. We are to walk after the spirit. We are to do the things that are pleasing unto the Lord. We are to keep our bodies under subjection to the will and pleasure of the Lord. Thank God, he does give us a new spirit, new desires and power to live according to His will. We no longer are carnal minded but spiritually minded. We seek those things that are above. It is a precious way to live in this life. —Sis. Marie Miles

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How wonderful is the truth, that what the law could not do, Christ has come and accomplished for us! What the law could not do was to cause man to live triumphant over sin. The law provided temporary and repeated forgiveness for sin, but the nature of man remained unaltered. Thus sin was yet the out-growings of his heart. The law was not perfect. It did not fulfill the pleasure of God for mankind. It was a failure as far as bringing a perfect cure for sin. All it did was to bring to light man's sin and cause him to be conscious of its true purpose.

But God sent His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh. It was while Christ was here in the human body, surrounded with influences and temptations that allure men and women into sin, that the great victory was wrought. Sin was conquered. Sin was condemned. Man was no longer condemned. Man was destined to be set free from condemnation. It was the sin in the man that Christ aimed the power and virtue of His blood at. Once a man on a hunting venture in a tropical land was awakened in the night by a weight on his bosom. As he raised his head he beheld coiled up in his bosom a venomous serpent. As he lay, wondering what to do and not daring to

move, the flap of his tent opened quietly. In the dim outline of moonlight, he saw the figure of a man. The man looked at him for a moment, then disappeared. In a short time the flaps opened again and a pitcher that contained warm milk was slowly extended toward the serpent. Slowly the horrible creature uncoiled itself and disappeared into the pitcher over which the man placed a snug lid. The man was saved. This is a picture of what Christ has done for us. We were helpless with sin coiled up in our bosom. But Jesus came and suffered to save us from that awful sin. How we should love and praise Him the rest of our lives for this. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

A FAMILY "SORROWFUL, YET REJOICING."

In every congregation there are families where the minister finds repose, sympathy, and encouragement in seasons of trial and spiritual declension. The apostle Paul could number many such in his missionary labors. Even the "man of sorrows" found rest and a home in the family of Bethany, when wearied with toil, and the ingratitude of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Such was the S___ family in the congregation of L___ N. Y. There the minister was welcomed by smiling faces and cheering words, and he soon felt that he was at home in this lovely Christian household.

It consisted of the parents and eight children. The mother had for years been an invalid, and seldom able to appear in her place in the house of God. She spent much of her time in reading the Word of God and books of practical religion, and prayer was a daily employment. She was a mother in our Israel. The parents had consecrated their children to God in prayer and faith, and by precept and example endeavored to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

None of the children were professors of religion, yet religious principles seemed to regulate everything among them. They tried to oblige each other and to render each other happy. A loud word from the parents was unnecessary. As one expressed it, "You could see religion all round the house."

I would sometimes complain to Mrs. S___ that I saw no fruit from my labor. When cast down and discouraged, she would cheer me with the hope of a glorious future. She said she believed she should live to see all her children gathered

into the fold of Christ. I used to think, "O woman, great is thy faith."

We long mourned over the desolations of Zion. Iniquity abounded, the love of many waxed cold. Praise be to God, He remembered us in our low estate. The longest, darkest night is often followed by a pleasant day. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. So it was with us. The Lord had mercy upon Zion. He poured upon the people the spirit of grace and of supplication. He gave efficacy to a preached gospel, and some were deeply anxious.

One evening I was sent for to visit the S—— family. Oh, what a scene! It would have melted the hardest heart. Five of these children were in deep distress on account of their sins. There sat that praying mother, "sorrowful, yet rejoicing." And there the children, so moral, so amiable, crying, "God be merciful to us sinners." It was a house of mourning, but angels rejoiced. Is there not joy among the angels of heaven over one sinner that repenteth? I mingled my tears with theirs, and I felt as if it would be a relief if I could comfort them in their sorrow. But no, "none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good." I prayed with them, and did all I could to point them to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Not a word about their morality, their filial affection, their reverence for the Bible and religion, though they were so moral, so affectionate, so distinguished for everything that is lovely and of good report. All felt that their sins were many and great, and that their only hope was in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ.

In the course of two weeks they all felt that Jesus had spoken peace to their souls, saying, "Son, daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven." And during that revival these eight children, together with two sons-in-law and a daughter-in-law, gave evidence that they were converted, that "old things had passed away and all things had become new." To God be all the glory. It was all the Lord's doing, and marvelous in our eyes.

But if God had bestowed special blessings on that family, it was to prepare it for peculiar trials. That faithful, pious mother was first called to her rest and her gracious reward in that world where God himself shall "wipe away all tears," and some of the children have followed her. The last words of one of them were, "Now I am happy. Now I'm in heaven." "These all died in faith."

Oh, fathers and mothers, cherish Mrs. S____'s faith in reference to your children. "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." —"Sketches From Life," 1871

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