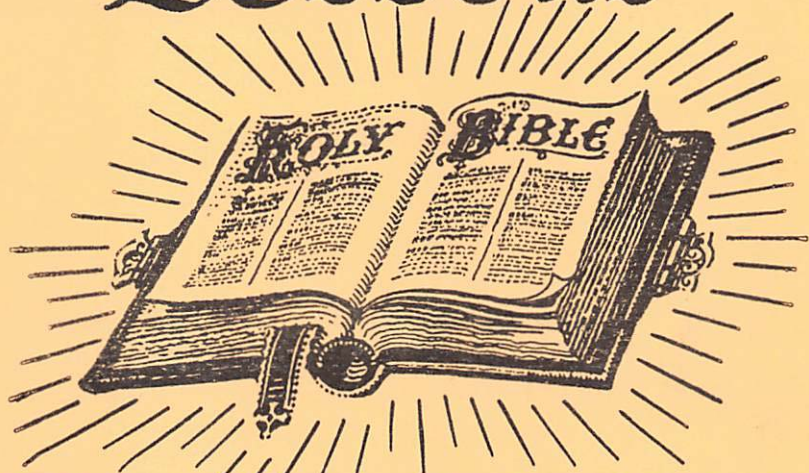


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Bible Lessons



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

ADULTS — YOUNG PEOPLE

Vol. 13, No. 2
April, May, June
1981

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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Volume 13

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Theme for Second Quarter, 1981

Our theme for this quarter will be a continuation from the first quarter. We will be studying more of the foundation truths of the Bible and entering depths of Bible doctrine that every one should be acquainted with. These lessons may overlap with previous studies, but we are persuaded that the great truths of the Bible do relate to each other, forming a great chain of knowledge. Beginning with the sufferings of Christ, His death, resurrection, and ascension, we will progress into other great standards of the Christian faith so vital for us to know and understand. What God has done is forever, and the truth of His Son, His advent into this world, and its benefit to mankind will never pass away.

—Leslie Busbee

April 5, 1981

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

Hebrews 2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him [Christ] to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Luke 24:46 And [Jesus] said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 8:32b He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

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

Hebrews 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every

weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

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

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.

4:1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

MEMORY VERSE: Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. 1 Pet. 4:19.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Jesus Christ suffered in human flesh as part of His redemptive atonement for mankind, and also to fellowship human suffering to understand things from their state. Since Jesus suffered for us, we ought not to draw back from any suffering that comes to us on His behalf.

WORD DEFINITION: *Succor*: help or assist. *Suffer*: to experience a painful sensation or impression.

LESSON BACKGROUND

From the time that Adam and Eve sinned and were put out of the garden, it has been the lot of mankind to suffer. Pain, sorrow, discomfort, grief, woe, adversity, and many other undesirable experiences have marked the course of humanity down through the ages. No one escapes this lot to suffer. "Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble." Job 14:1. Heartaches, disappointments, and mental distress often mar the skies of the mortal. If a man live many years and rejoices in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one

over against the other." Eccl. 7:14. Why does God allow suffering? It is for the discipline of mankind for the good of their spirit. There is much sin in the world, and sin lies too close to the flesh for God to allow man to sail along with no adversity. Affliction, pain, suffering, sickness, grief, and disappointments are blessings in disguise if we will but take them in the right way. For Christ to be our Saviour and High priest He must taste of human suffering. To exemplify the divine will of God for us, it must be so shown through suffering. Although Christ was the Son of God, yet learned He obedience by the things that He suffered. It was His lot to suffer. But it was for our sakes. As we view the sufferings of Christ, and realize that He did it for us, it causes us to love Him all the more.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Christ have to suffer for us?
2. Is there any profit or benefit in suffering?
3. Name some of the things that Christ had to suffer.
4. How can we share in His sufferings?
5. Why was Christ able to despise the shame and endure the cross?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The physical part of man draws back from suffering. It tries to find a way out. To bear pain and discomfort without complaint is difficult. There are certain things that we as mortals must suffer. A mother goes through great suffering to bring a child to birth, and a father has to suffer and endure many things in going out to provide for his family. One does not go far in life without experiencing pain and suffering. When Jesus came down into the human flesh, He felt heir to the many ways of suffering that mortals also experience. He felt the cutting and scornful speeches that were hurled at Him. He felt the pain of being rejected and mistreated. He was God, but He was in the flesh. He felt the reed striking His head and the piercing thorns that were wrapped about His precious brow. He felt them slap his face and pluck at His tender cheeks. The pain was keen as His back was lacerated with the stripes. Think of the suffering that He went through! But the pain in His heart was the hardest to bear. He had no place to lay His head. He had no wealth of the earth. His lot was to suffer for the sins of mankind. Try to imagine the pain of the

nails piercing those tender hands that had been laid upon many a sick brow. See the nails driven harshly and cruelly through those feet that had walked in Galilee and Jerusalem. Yes, He suffered for us. They tried to give Him something that would probably dull His senses to the pain, but He refused to take it. He was willing to bear the full extent of His suffering. We that follow in His stead can expect some suffering, also. It is not all an easy way. His yoke is easy and His burden is light, but there will be the hard and heavy places for us to suffer. If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. We should, like Paul, have a desire to fellowship His suffering. If we are willing to share Christ's suffering, we will be heirs with Him and will be glorified with Him. If Christ has suffered so much for us, ought we not to be willing to bear all things graciously for His sake? Can we not be longsuffering with our fellow man? When we are tempted to reach for ease and prosperity beyond the will of God, let us remember Calvary and the One who bore the sins of the whole world upon Himself. Let us arm ourselves with this same mind, and triumph in the sufferings for the Saviour.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There are several thoughts in our lesson which every child of God should grasp and never forget. First, we note that Jesus "suffered being tempted . . . in all points . . . like as we are, yet without sin." You may want to pin that down and say that you know Jesus never faced what you are facing. But, dear one, He suffered and was tempted in ways that were equivalent to what you are facing. No, Jesus did not have some of the diseases that we have, but He suffered the same pains that we suffer with various diseases. He never had a large debt suddenly forced upon Him, yet He faced similar things that would give Him the same distress. We must accept the fact that while He was here on the earth in the flesh He was tempted and also suffered in everything that we face. What a blessed thought! Yet we would never want anyone to suffer. The tender spirit in all of God's children feels deeply for those who are suffering. Yet, we are glad that when we face something we can come "boldly [or confidently] to the throne of grace," because we know that Jesus knows and He understands our need.

Another thought we should get hold of is that His suffering was greater than any suffering we may face in this world. He had the weight of all the sins of the world upon Him. He was made sin, who knew no sin, that we might have everlasting life. He took the punishment for every murder, for every lie that has been told, for every thing that has been stolen, for every influence of everyone that has been ruined, for crooked things committed, and every sin that has been committed in the world. All of this was upon Him. Why? because God needed an atonement for sin. God's laws cannot be broken, and one law is that sin must be punished. If people do not accept Jesus' dying on the cross as the atonement for their sins, they must face the punishment themselves. Oh, how we ought to love such a Saviour for all He has done for us!

—Sis. A. Marie Miles

April 12, 1981

JESUS CHRIST TASTES DEATH FOR EVERY MAN

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

John 12:31 [Jesus said] Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

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

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

II Cor. 13:4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5:14 For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

4:10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

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

CENTRAL THOUGHT: In order for Christ to save man from sin and death, and from him who had the power of death, that is the devil, He had to suffer death Himself to pave the way for a triumph over it all. We who would share in His resurrection must partake of His death in a spiritual sense by not living to ourselves or to our flesh, but to Him who has been raised from the dead.

WORD DEFINITIONS: "*It became him*": It was fitting for him. *Captain of our salvation*: Prince or Leader.

LESSON BACKGROUND

From the various writers of the New Testament we have gathered for our lesson today declarations and thoughts of truth concerning what the dying of the Lord Jesus should mean to us. Perhaps at the time of Christ's death the apostles little realized what a great value it was going to mean to them and to all the world. But after Christ was raised by the power of the Father from the grave and had ascended on high, they were made aware that it was a dire necessity to them for Christ to have died as He did. Death was a mysterious realm far beyond the scope of their comprehension. Christ could heal and do great things, but death held a barrier that was hard for

them to believe across. It was a marvelous thing to see the Lord raise the dead as He did on the various occasions. But seeing was believing, and when they saw the dead raised they had to accept it. When they saw their dear Friend breathe His last on the cross, and when they saw His precious form laid away cold in death in the tomb, the last flicker of their confidence went out. This was too much. He could raise people to life while He was alive, but how could He raise Himself? Thus hope faded, but it was shown to them in the resurrection of Christ what the real truth was. All the things that He had before said to them took real meaning now. The Scriptures opened up before their minds. They saw that it was not that Christ was a victim of circumstance, but that in dying He was fulfilling the will of God Almighty Himself. They also saw that the dying of the Lord Jesus set a pattern for their lives. It was to be a standard of death to the world and to their fleshly ways. For he who would follow Jesus and partake of the benefits of His death must walk by the same rule.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was Jesus made a little lower than the angels?
2. Why did Christ have to bear sufferings?
3. How are we subject to bondage through the fear of death?
4. How is the suffering and death of Christ to relate to us?
5. What does it mean to *bear about in the body the death of the Lord Jesus?*

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Jesus Christ must needs have died for humanity. The judgment for man's sins called for death. Sin disqualifies a man for the privilege of life. Death was a punishment that man could not forego or overcome. His days were to be consumed in vanity and his end was to come at last. All through the Scriptures are expressions of woe because of the sentence of death. Thus Christ came for the purpose of destroying that great monster and bringing hope of resurrection and life. But in order for Him to do thus, He must taste death for man. The sufferings of the mortal body and the separation of spirit and flesh He must experience. But He did it on the behalf of eternal salvation of mankind. He allowed Himself to be wrapped in the bands of death and to be sealed

in the tomb. This was so that He could burst the mighty bars of death's cold prison asunder. We that believe in Him and follow Him faithfully share a hope of being raised from the dead in that last great day. His love draws us and its compelling power exacts from us a pattern of godliness and separation from the sins of the world. We die to sin and all its pleasures and lusts. We give up our ideas and wishes. We give over every desire to His will and pleasure. We become willing to live the life of sacrifice and self crucifixion. But in so doing we find the reality of Christ's resurrected life. As we refuse to follow the inclinations and temptations of the flesh, and press close to Christ with a strong purpose of heart, we are rewarded to find the joy of His spiritual life flooding into our souls. Thus we see that the death of Christ was not only for our sins, but that it is a standard for us to follow and conform to. As we experience sufferings, persecutions, needs, distresses for His sake, we can see life working in our souls and in the souls of others. As Jesus Himself said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John 12:24.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Our Lord suffered greatly for our sins. The following is taken from *Clarke's Commentary* which explains the awful suffering of being put to death on the cross. Let us remember that Jesus was innocent and did no sin, yet He willingly suffered this awful death to take the punishment for our sins.

"This punishment was the most dreadful of all others, both for the *shame* and *pain* of it: and so scandalous, that it was inflicted as the last mark of detestation, upon the vilest of the people. It was the punishment of robbers and murderers, provided they were *slaves*; but if they were *free*, it was thought too infamous a punishment for such, let their crimes be what they might.

"The body of the criminal was fastened to the upright beam by nailing or tying the feet to it, and on the transverse piece by nailing and sometimes tying the hands to it. As the hands and feet are the grand instruments of motion, they are provided with a greater quantity of *nerves*; and the nerves in those places, especially the hands, are peculiarly sensible. Now as the nerves are the instruments of all sensation or feeling,

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

—Marie Miles

OUR GRANDMOTHER'S STORY

When I was a little girl I did not like to attend religious meetings, especially on a week-day. My father was a minister, and I was taught the way of salvation, but I did not like to walk in it. I knew I was a sinful child, but I had no wish to follow Jesus Christ as a loving disciple. I often amused my brothers and sisters on my return from a prayer-meeting by my description of the remarks of "the brethren," and their mistakes in pronunciation and grammar. Sometimes at funerals, or in a solemn sermon at church, I would feel the need of becoming a child of God; but of me it might truly be said, that I did "always resist the Holy Ghost."

One day my father was requested to assist a neighboring minister in special meetings for nearly a week. I did not like such meetings. It was in winter, when deep snow had covered the fields even to the top of the fences, making one level, dazzling expanse, and I was glad these meetings were fifteen miles away.

Most unexpectedly my father invited me to go with him to spend the week at the minister's house with a child of my own age. I dreaded to go, especially as I had heard my parents talk

of "an awakening" in that place; still the novelty of a long sleigh ride, and the prospect of making a new friend, made me anxious to go, and besides I had a new dress, which would add to the pleasure of the journey.

The old fashioned green sleigh was brought to the door, with the clumsy bells on the horse. I was carefully wrapped up, and made quite proud by a huge black muff which my mother allowed me to carry; a foot-stove kept my feet warm. The old horse jogged along, shaking the bells monotonously, but we found many pretty sights in the clear, frosty ride.

I was beginning to feel rather cold and homesick when we reached the parsonage. A delicate, sweet-looking child was looking from the parlor window. Here I warmed my numb fingers, while little May carried away my cloak and shawls. In the afternoon, May and I talked over our schools and dolls, compared ages, and became warm friends.

As the older people were talking of the meeting appointed for that evening in a school house, it seemed to me that May listened attentively, and looked a little serious; but she always had a gentle, lovely expression. After an early supper, May said, "We will put on our things early, and get really warm before we start." "Why, May," I said, much disturbed, "are you going to the meeting?" "Certainly," my little friend said; "I should be very sorry to stay away; don't you want to go?" "It is so cold," I said, "and I am tired, and I think the meeting is for older people." May looked quite surprised. "We shall ride," she said, "in our covered sleigh." I tried to think of some other excuse, but May's father called to us to hasten, and I saw it was taken for granted that I should go too.

The old red school house was already filled on our arrival. A deep silence pervaded the room, lighted by candles brought in by the neighbors. May and I found seats on a little bench. When the hymn was selected, a man took out his tuning fork to get the pitch. I expected to be amused by the old and cracked voices, but all seemed melted down into a sweet melody. Many sang with tearful eyes. May joined her sweet, childish voice. May's father preached. I looked around, and saw every eye fastened on him. Hard-working farmers bent forward and listened eagerly; some faces were bowed on their hands. I tried not to hear much of this sermon, but some sentences would creep through my wandering thoughts. It was the old subject, "Repent, and believe," but handled with so much power and earnestness that a profound stillness filled the room as in the presence of death. After the sermon they

sang again that hymn, peculiarly sweet at such times,

"Awake, my soul, to joyful lays,

And sing the great Redeemer's praise."

At the close of the service an altar call was given. The minister invited all to come who had a need in their souls. How uneasy I felt. May looked calm and happy.

That night we went to our room in silence. May seemed to have found the Saviour precious to her. I could not sleep. While May was breathing tranquilly, I was restless and disturbed. My conscience said, "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." My wicked heart replied, "I am too young to be a Christian; it will destroy all my pleasure." Then I thought of May, smaller, younger than myself, peaceful and happy; loving her dolls and play, but finding Christ her friend and portion, "the one altogether lovely."

In the morning I was ill-natured and miserable, though I tried to conceal my feelings. We went in the afternoon to the old church, where a great congregation gathered, called from their wood lots and busy kitchens to learn what they must do to be saved. It was a dark afternoon, the church was cold and dreary. A great anguish possessed my soul when my father brought forth the terrors of the law, our hopeless, undone condition, the wrath of God, the entire sinfulness of man, the impossibility of meriting salvation by anything that we can do. I shivered in a corner of a high-backed pew, feeling the truth of all he said, until my own guilty little life appeared in its true light.

In the evening we went again to the same school house. The theme was Christ—His pity, His love, His ability to pardon even the chief of sinners. A great light broke into my soul. I saw that I need not despair; I need not perish. I had nothing to do but to trust in Christ, and take Him at His word.

In the closing hymn, May looked at me in her sweet loving way, for large tears were falling on the yellow pages of the old hymn book. When the altar call was given, I went down the aisle and knelt at the old wooden bench. I repented of my selfish ways and yielded my life to God.

May and I had a new tie of sympathy. I told her how the dreaded meetings had become full of beauty, while she helped me by her rich experience of grace. Through that blessed week we prayed and sang together, until Saturday evening forced us to part, feeling that we had now "one Lord, one faith."

In a few years that gentle, loving May was called into the joy of her Lord, being quickly ready for her heavenly home;

while I have spent this long life ever clinging to that Saviour who drew me to Himself when I was a rebellious, sinful child, and who has promised "to love me unto the end."

I was never sorry again to hear the bell ring for meeting; it always reminds me of the time when I sat on a little bench with May, a believing, rejoicing child.

—From *Sketches from Life*

April 19, 1981

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD

Luke 24:1 Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared and certain others with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

1 Cor. 15:12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

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

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

MEMORY VERSE: For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Phil. 3:20, 21.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: After being crucified and buried, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the power of His Father, and offers to all who believe and follow Him newness of spiritual life here and a hope of eternal life in the world to come.

WORD DEFINITIONS: "Every man in his own order": the word *order* here, referring to a series or succession (Greek) means that the resurrection from the dead will be done in proper order, with Christ being the first to have been raised from the dead (first-fruits) and then at His coming those who belong to Him. "Our conversation is in heaven." *Conversation* here is translated from the Greek word *polity*, which means citizenship. We who are saved are citizens of the heavenly country from which we look for Christ to come and change our vile bodies in the resurrection.

LESSON BACKGROUND

To study the truth of the resurrection in depth would require many lessons. We have in our study the account of the women coming to the tomb on the first day of the week and finding it empty, and Paul's admonition to the Corinthian Church of the need of recognizing the truth of Christ's resurrection and the resurrection of the saints that will follow. The belief of the Sadducees (a particular Jewish sect at that time) was that there was no resurrection. They did not believe in angels or spirits, either. Acts 23:8. We have wondered what the Sadducees really believed. Somehow this kind of teaching had gotten into the Corinthian Church. Paul was emphatic in his declaration of this error. How important to us is the truth of Christ's resurrection! This is what elevates the Christian faith supremely above every other religion, including that of the Jews. It affords hope of being raised from the dead. Christ's resurrection from the dead and the firm testimony of the apostles thereto was the appeal to that ancient world. People had lost faith in the gods of the Romans and the Greeks. The

people were in a quandry as to what to do or to believe. When the saints went forth teaching and preaching the good news of Christ's resurrection and the hope one can have thereby, it caught hold of people's hearts. Thank God, it still has a great appeal to the souls of men today! —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. For what were the spices brought to the tomb?
2. Why is the message of the angel at the tomb so precious to us today?
3. What danger is there in not believing in the resurrection?
4. Why does the resurrection afford us hope?
5. What order is the resurrection to follow?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The women that came on that early morning to the grave of Jesus were hoping to anoint His body with some spices. They were completely taken by surprise when they saw the stone rolled away and the tomb empty. The message of the angels—that Christ was risen from the dead—they could scarcely take in. It is difficult for us to fathom the depths of this wonderful truth. We cling to this present life, and to our mortal gaze death is a cruel monster taking away our dearest treasures many times just when we get them accumulated. It is hard to associate the resurrection of Christ with this present life unless we are enlightened and inspired by the Holy Spirit. Christ was resurrected from the dead by the Spirit of God. He must needs suffer death and be in the tomb for a little season so that He could triumph over it for us. Through Him death is swallowed up in victory. We who yield our hearts and lives to Him and faithfully follow Him in this life have confidence and hope of sharing in this blessed resurrection. His resurrected life generates power to our souls, enabling us to live a resurrected spiritual life right here in this life. Our affections are elevated from the earthly to the heavenly. We have been quickened from the sinful ways of life to the life of faith and holiness in Him. The risen life of Christ is the inheritance of the saints. It is the life of the Church, the life of the soul of man. To follow Him and be counted worthy of sharing in the resurrection of the dead is the great goal of the Christian life. The only way to be counted worthy of this heavenly calling is to accept Christ and follow Him faithfully all the way.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What a glorious hope of the soul to think of the resurrection! There are three states of the human spirits. First, we are born into the world with a body and soul. As we grow older and come to the age of accountability, which some feel is around the age of twelve years, according to the teachings in the home, we can knowingly be saved from our sins. The second state is when the child of God who has been "born again," and has lived a consistent holy life, dies. His soul and body separates. The soul goes to the place termed in the Bible as "Abraham's bosom," or "paradise." The Jewish historians called the unseen world, "Hades." (They call the grave or receptacle of the body, "gerber.") There the souls are with Jesus. The Apostle Paul said, ". . . absent from the body, present with the Lord." 2 Cor. 5:8. The souls are waiting for the resurrection of the body at the end of time. Now the third state commences at the resurrection day when the soul is united with an immortal body. That state begins in eternity. Oh, how wonderful it is when we think of death, as we can say with the Apostle Paul, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55)

Some want to say that in 1 Thess. 4:16 it mentions two resurrections. This is a false teaching. "The dead in Christ shall rise first" is what it says, but the word *first* does not refer to other dead people at all. The context teaches that those who are living on the earth when Christ comes will not ascend to heaven before those who are dead in Christ, but that the dead in Christ shall rise first, and that they will both ascend together. What a glorious day that will be for those who are Christ's at His appearing!

—Sis. Marie Miles

APRIL 26, 1981

CHRIST'S ASCENSION ON HIGH

Psalm 24:3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?

4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye ever lasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

8 Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

68:18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

110:1 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Acts 1:4 And [Jesus], being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he ye have heard of me.

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

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: But this man [Jesus], after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. Hebrews 10:12, 13.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: After Christ arose from the dead and showed himself to His disciples with many unailing proofs, He, in fulfillment of prophecy, ascended up by the power of God and sat down on the right hand of God.

WORD DEFINITIONS: "Thou has led captivity captive." Christ captured the power that had brought men into the captivity of sin. "The Lord (Jehovah, the Father) said unto my Lord (Christ)."

LESSON BACKGROUND

By His death and resurrection Christ became the King of Glory. He was strong and mighty in battle to defeat Satan and win the victory for the souls of men. Here in our lessons from the psalms, He is foretold as ascending on high in perfect triumph over all the enemies of righteousness. From the Acts

of the apostles we have the account of this ascension. It is evident that Christ ascended from the Mount of Olives which lies on the east of Jerusalem. What a rapturous sight it was to behold! As they looked upon Him, slowly His divine body began to leave the earth. Higher and higher He kept ascending into the upper air. Their eyes were fastened on Him in awe. Finally a cloud enveloped their blessed Lord, and they saw Him no more. How fleeting the earth seemed to them at that moment. Let us tarry here and gaze fixedly upon this scene! Absorb its vision into your innermost being. He passed from the visible into the invisible realm. He fulfilled the type and shadow of the High Priest's passing once a year into the most holy place. He is not passing into that within the veil. The veil has become His flesh which was rent by death. Now He is ascending the hill of God. He has conquered and subdued the cruel foe. He ascends to the right hand of the Father to assume the great office of intercession. How blessed and wonderful!

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jesus accomplish that merited Him the power to ascend up on high?
2. What battle did Christ fight and win?
3. What is implied by the phrase: "Until I make thine enemies thy footstool"?
4. By what power did Christ make His ascension?
5. What was the message of the angels to the apostles?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The ascension of Jesus Christ from earth to glory is one of the most wonderful and dramatic scenes in the Bible. It reveals the triumph that God had given to Him over the material realm. It is worth our time to try to draw imaginary pictures of what it might have looked like. There He stands on the summit of the Mount of Olives. All eyes are upon Him as He speaks of the kingdom of God and the coming Holy Spirit. As we look upon Him, let us ponder what manner of Man this is. The years of His labor and the rejection of the Jews come to mind. Stilling the waves of Galilee, raising Lazarus, healing the blind and the lame, teaching and preaching the kingdom of God and its precepts—all this is behind Him. This is He who was nailed to the cross on Golgotha; He who expired, bringing sorrow to our hearts. But He is alive now. The cross and the tomb are past. He stands now with His mis-

sion accomplished and His work finished. Perhaps with the look of a conqueror we could see Him glance briefly at the city of Jerusalem in the distance, the hill of Calvary and the garden of Gethsemane. Now He looks down upon His loved and faithful. Smiles of affection and tender compassion radiate from His splendid countenance. See, now He turns His gaze heavenward. His hands are uplifted in holy blessing. His precious form slowly begins its upward flight. Upward He goes, higher and higher, receding from earth and our sight. Clouds begin to gather around Him, and He fades from our rapturous view. But we keep on gazing, hoping to catch another glimpse of His beloved form. Then a voice is heard, and our attention is turned to two angels standing near, telling us that this same Jesus will come again. We were not privileged to see this glorious sight, but we can read about it, meditate on it, and richly feed our souls on what His ascension means to us. He is the King of Glory. We can address our souls to Him in prayer and put our trust in Him. And we can live in hope and anticipation of His coming, which cannot be very far off.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

People's last words are generally remembered. Let us think about some of the last words of Jesus, our King of glory. He rose from the earth up into the clouds to sit at the right hand of God. He is now interceding for us, which we will study about in the next lesson.

Some of the most wonderful words, which are so true, are "ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Oh, how wonderful it is to know this is true! We need power in our lives against the enemy of our soul. Only through that power can we become overcomers. I believe power comes from the same root word of dynamite, dynamic, and dynamo. This makes us to know that the Holy Spirit will do great things in our hearts and lives. No wonder the Apostle Paul said, "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. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:16, 17. Salvation is the complete work of justification and sanctification; therefore, through the power that we receive the "righteousness of God" is revealed to us. We become righteous and act in that manner.

The King of glory said before He arose into the clouds, that after they received "power, after the Holy Ghost is come

upon you," they would be witnesses. What is a witness? A witness is "one who can give a firsthand account of an incident," or "one who testifies." We know that the Lord can save us from sin because we have experienced it, so we can tell others. We can witness to that fact. We can tell others how wonderful it is to be saved from sin and to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We can witness to the fact that Jesus does save us from sin and that we can have power to live a life that is holy before the Lord.

—Sis. Marie Miles

May 3, 1981

CHRIST'S OFFICE OF INTERCESSION

Hebrews 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

7:22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

MEMORY VERSE: It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Rom. 8:34.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Christ ascended up on high and sat down at the right hand of God to intercede with God for all who seek His help and grace. He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

WORD DEFINITIONS: *Profession:* confession, acknowledgement, testimony. *Surety:* pledge or binding agreement. *Consecrated forevermore:* perfected or sanctified.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The book of the epistle to the Hebrews is one great exposition of the everlasting priesthood of Jesus Christ. One great thrust of its doctrine is the change from the Levitical priesthood and the Mosaic law to the everlasting priesthood of Christ and the law of grace. We no longer have to go through a Priest on earth, but are joyously invited to come boldly to Christ in faith with a true heart. Through the virtue of His blood for the atonement of sin and the cancellation of the wrath of God, we can approach the great God of heaven with confidence and joy. When Stephen was being gnashed upon by the angry Jews after giving his defence, He looked steadfastly into heaven and beheld Jesus, not just sitting, but rather standing on the right hand of God. We would be inclined to think that the urgency of Stephen's need caused Christ to stand. Perhaps He has stood up many times throughout the course of the history of the Church. But He will remain in that mediatorial position until the time that the Father declares it is the end. Thank God for this wonderful privilege of going with all our needs to the throne of grace.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Where is Jesus right now, and what is He engaged in doing?

2. What should this mean to us?
3. What makes Jesus so special to us with Him in this position?
4. What is He able to do for all who come unto God by Him?
5. How is Christ our pattern?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

What a wonderful privilege to carry everything to the Lord in prayer! He has an everlasting, unchangeable priesthood. The order of Melchisedec means just that. The Levitical priests were priests by birth and ceased to be priests after death. Christ was given an eternal priesthood by His resurrection from the dead and His ascension to the right hand of God. His blood has been shed. His Holy Spirit has been sent forth through all the earth. We can draw near to Him with full assurance of faith. We can receive the fulness of His favor. The Holy Spirit makes intercession with Christ. The prayers of His children ascending up to God are acceptable and beloved in His sight. Christ is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. He is our pattern and example. We can be like Him. This is our salvation and our hope. It is something for each one to press forward to claim and experience. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. Oh, what blessed words! He knows what we are passing through in the trials of life. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Let us hold fast our profession of faith in Him. Even if we fail or come short, this should not cause us to go down in despair. Bring the broken pieces to Him with confidence that He will work it out for the right. Many have gone down through the accusations of the devil. Satan does not want us to look up to Jesus. He will fill the mind with every other thought imaginable, to keep us from looking up to Jesus in true faith and full assurance. Doubts, fears, anxiety, mistrust, and accusations are the devil's tools. But Jesus ever lives to make intercession with God for us. He is able to deliver us from all our enemies. How encouraged we ought to be every day to be conscious of such a wonderful High Priest as Christ Jesus!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Oh, what a wonderful Intercessor we have! He is able to do all things for us. He is sitting at the right hand of God interceding for us. (Heb. 12:2) We come to the Father in the name of

His Son, Jesus. When a soul is convicted of his sins and comes to Jesus, asking for salvation, Jesus intercedes for him to the Father. God looks down upon that repentant soul. When He sees that one has accepted the blood of Jesus, or His death on the cross, as an atonement for his sins, God forgives him and writes his name in the book of life. Oh, how wonderful that is! We are glad for that Intercessor!

When we come to the Lord for help in a time of need, Jesus asks the Father to hear our cries. God, for Jesus' sake, hears and answers. When we need healing, God sees the stripes that Jesus bore for our healing, and as Jesus intercedes for us, we are healed. Oh, how wonderful! Surely He is "touched by the feelings of our infirmities"! He was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Praise God, He knows and He understands! We can safely trust in our great Intercessor.

—Sis. Marie Miles

May 10, 1981

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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

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

Luke 24:46 Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Mark 16:15 Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Revelation 14:6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

Romans 1:14 [Paul said] I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome, also.

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: How shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10:15.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: After paying the supreme sacrifice for the sins of mankind and triumphing over the grave for eternal life, Jesus Christ gave to His Church the great commission to carry the message of His great salvation to all the world.

WORD DEFINITIONS: *Power:* authority. *Preach:* Publish, announce, declare. *Gospel:* good news.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Look, behold, and ponder the great work that Christ accomplished. Observe His power, authority, goodness, and the magnitude of His great office as the Saviour of mankind. Meditate upon these things, and survey their vast potentials for men and women. Then feel the force of the great commission. The first three gospels each presents Christ's giving the great commission to the Church in a different aspect, and yet they all agree. We have endeavored to put them together as if in the same discourse. It is a vision that we need to be reminded of from time to time. We need to keep within the sacred limits of this great charge, and not be guilty of rending our ranks as Christians with foolish questions and words of strife to no profit. We notice a statement that Jesus made when speaking of the end of the world. The gospel must go forth as a witness. He knew that not everyone would accept it, but He wills that all have the opportunity to accept it. Then

the expression from the apostle Paul is so fitting along with that from the book of Revelation. The gospel of Jesus Christ IS the power of God unto salvation. No greater work can one be engaged in. No greater calling can one be counted worthy of. No nobler vocation can one follow. Oh, for one to answer the call of God's grace and enlist in this great army of the Lord! How consecrated God wants all of His children to be for His divine service! Let us present ourselves and all we have in holy consecration to His great cause, and be a part of the wonderful plan of redemption for all men. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. To whom was the great commission given?
2. What was contained in the great commission?
3. What did Matthew mention that Luke and Mark did not?
What did Mark mention that Matthew and Luke did not?
What did Luke mention that the others did not?
4. What was Paul's attitude toward his entrustment with the gospel?
5. What is revealed in the gospel?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

As with any other benefit or privilege in life, the blessing of salvation carries with it great challenge and responsibility. The enjoyment and rapture of being redeemed from the power of sin and evil evokes a high and holy calling to follow. It is error to take this lightly. God is calling all of His children to take advantage of their freedom and victory in Christ and turn their ransomed powers into instruments for the cause of righteousness. It is not God's initial plan for us to receive of the benefits of God's salvation without providing the Lord with a consecrated vessel to help spread the gospel for the benefit of other souls. Thus we should be aware today of the great commission that Christ has given to His ransomed Church. God would have every one who receives His mercy and grace to make a definite consecration of his heart and life for God's service. God gives to every one grace according to His own will, and can use every soul in some way. The main objective is to make known and available the saving knowledge of His grace to all humanity. Thus we can all be a part of the great commission. It is the greatest commission ever given to mankind. He wants His message to be preached and declared to all creation. Satan has opposed it greatly for these twenty

centuries, but the gospel has never been destroyed or silenced permanently. It has been hindered in many ways because of the blindness of people's hearts, but once the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shines into the heart, an impression is made that Satan cannot very well stop. The gospel must be preached. To some it is a savor of life unto life. To others it is a savor of death unto death. Whichever it will be is not the preacher's responsibility. It is up to the individual. It is up to each one to take it or leave it. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. The burden is on the hearer after it is preached in truth and according to Holy Spirit anointing. Let us renew our zeal and commitment to the great work of the gospel of Christ, and have a willingness to do as the Lord would have us to do in His kingdom.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The great commission is for us to "go into all the world and preach the gospel." That means that each one is to do all he can to get the gospel to as many as possible. It seems that most of the world has heard of Jesus, but not many have heard of His great power to save. They are taught that they just need to accept Him as their Saviour. They are not taught that He "can save them to the uttermost"; that He can change their lives and make them a "new creature in Christ Jesus"; and that they can be "born again" and live free from sin. Most are taught that one must ask the Lord every day to forgive him of his sins. Thank God, we can have an experience that enables us to live free from sin every day. Our hearts can be clean and pure from all sin. The announcement of Jesus' coming was, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins." That did not say, save them *in* their sins, but *from* them. Praise God! we have a message to tell the people. We need to go or send forth the gospel to every creature. We should not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Lift Him up and He will draw all men unto Himself. Let us lift Him up in our lives, in our talk, in our conduct, in our hearts, and let us love and serve Him with all of our hearts. He will never leave us nor forsake us if we will do His bidding.

—Sis. Marie Miles

THE WIDOW AND TWELVE CHILDREN

A number of years ago, there lived a lady who had suddenly been left a widow, with a family of twelve children. Before this sorrowful event she had known much of the sunshine of life, and very little of the shadow.

She was the only daughter of an indulgent father, and had been brought up in affluence. Her husband was gifted and amiable, and her sons and daughters were bright in intellect and beautiful in person.

Her father, though a man of high standing in the community where he lived, belonged to a denomination calling themselves Christians, who yet deny the divinity of our Saviour. Being a decided man, he held his opinions with great tenacity, and manifested towards those who differed from him but little of the liberal spirit in which he gloried.

Mrs. S—, after her marriage, had been convinced that she was educated in a fatal error, had renounced it, and made a public profession of her faith in Christ and His divinity. In taking this step, she suffered as every affectionate and dutiful child must, when compelled by the spirit of God to embrace another faith than that of her father. But she remembered that Christ has said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me," and she was strengthened to do her duty.

Now, in the days of her widowhood, when her sorrow was so great that for a time she was scarcely able to utter a word, a new trial came which she had not expected. Her husband had left her but very small means of support, and with a large family of young children, she could rely only upon her father. Could that tender parent who once had been so indulgent to this his only child, fail her now in her distress? Yet the stroke, so little apprehended, fell.

Her father informed her that he would provide for her and her children, but upon one condition—that she should renounce that faith on which she had built her eternal hopes, and which was now her solace and support.

Here was a trial indeed. Was she prepared to look poverty in the face? Could she see her delicate children suffer all the innumerable evils that follow in the train of extreme poverty? Did not the great deceiver whisper, that after all perhaps the difference was not essential, or that she might still love Christ in her heart, though not attending a church dedicated to His worship?

If such thoughts came into her mind, she was enabled by the grace of God to dismiss them all, and to tell her father that she had cast her lot with Christ, and was ready to abide the issue. Her answer, as she had forseen, was received with high displeasure, and they parted.

What now was to be done? Mrs. S—— took time to reflect upon her future course. Her children must be fed, clothed, and educated. How could she be able to accomplish it? She resolved to ask divine direction, trusting that the God whom she loved would guide her way.

Calling to her home a few Christian women from the circle of her friends, she told them her situation, and asked them to pray with her there. They complied; and struck, no doubt, with the urgency of her necessities, offered up fervent prayers to God. We can imagine the purport of their petitions. "God of the widow, God of the fatherless, be not silent unto us. Who ever trusted in thee, and was ashamed? Who ever trusted in thee, to be confounded? Show us a token for good, O thou who clothest the lilies, and feedest the ravens; feed, clothe, protect this desolate household; and guide, comfort, and bless thine afflicted handmaiden, who has not been afraid to repose her confidence in thee."

By-and-by a child's voice was heard at the door. "Open the door, Mamma," called the little voice. "Grandpapa has been here. Open the door."

Mrs. S—— hastened forward, and the child rushing towards her, put a quantity of money in her hands. "Grandpapa," said he, "gave me this for you; and he says," continued he, "that the butcher is to stop here twice a week with meat, and—but what is the matter, dear Mamma? You are crying."

It is unnecessary to prolong the story. Suffice it to say, that from that hour the father of Mrs. S—— provided for her and her children in the kindest manner, and at his death bequeathed them his estate.

This excellent woman long since entered upon a better inheritance, and her children are in comfortable circumstances, respected and esteemed through the blessing of that God who heard the prayers of their mother. May they all be the heirs of that mother's faith.

—From *Sketches from Life*

May 17, 1981

DIVINE HEALING FOR SOUL AND BODY

Exodus 15:26 And [God] said [to Moses and Israel]: If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

Psalms 103:2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Psalms 118:8 It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.

6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.

7 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

8 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Matthew 8:16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

Mark 11:22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

24 Therefore I say unto you, What things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

James 5:14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Memory Verse: But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Heb. 11:6.

Central Thought: It is a clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures that healing of the physical body was included in the atonement of Christ, and that it is a privilege for the saints of God today to have faith and trust God fully for the healing of their bodies without the aid of medicine or men.

Word Definitions: *Heath in the desert:* A juniper tree that grows bare and alone in the desert. Unbelief and distrust sets one away from the bountifulness of God's provisions.

LESSON BACKGROUND

As our Scripture from Exodus states, God promised and provided healing for the children of Israel. "I am the Lord that healeth thee!" This utterance of Divine favor has inspired God's people even in these latter days. The Holy Spirit has communicated faith for healing in the promise that God gave Israel. The true Israel is those who are led by the Spirit, who walk by faith, the faith of Abraham. One of the gracious benefits that God bestows is the healing of all of our diseases. "With His stripes we are healed!" Here is another great declaration of faith that has been the battle cry of many a saint in the time of sickness and affliction. It was this Scripture that Matthew referred to spoken by Isaiah as being fulfilled in the healing of the multitude by Jesus. On the occasion when Jesus cursed the fig tree that immediately dried up and was withered openly the next morning, He left a wide open door concerning the extent of the utility of faith, covering not only divine physical healing, but any other need that we might have. Then we have the injunction of James, who in emphatic language makes it clear that being healed of bodily affliction is a privilege of the Church. We have also drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures stating the blessing of trusting the Lord. This most certainly can be applied to the subject of healing. Along with these plain Scriptures and the

hundreds of experiences testified through the years, we can most assuredly believe that Divine physical healing can be ours today as well as when Jesus walked here on earth. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." Heb. 13:8

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did God promise to do for Israel, and what were the conditions?
2. What were the two great benefits of the Lord in our lesson?
3. Why is it better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man?
4. What Scriptures can you use to prove that divine physical healing was in the atonement?
5. Does faith cover healing for the body only?
6. What all is included in the recipe James gives us for healing?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

What a wonderful privilege we have to trust in Christ for the healing of our bodies! It is true. Although it is very difficult for the darkened minds of carnal men to fathom such a truth, to the pure and lowly in heart it becomes a glorious opportunity to experience the favor of the Lord and receive great spiritual benefits as well. Satan sees the wonderful blessing it is to the soul, and he has produced great propaganda against this truth. Many people are deluded into thinking that the days of miracles and healing passed away with the apostles. Even when they are faced with clear definite testimonies of healing, they still refuse to accept it as a Bible doctrine. The Scriptures we have before us are steadfast and unmoveable and have been proved true over and over again. There are many times when people fail to be healed, we must confess, but this does not annul the worth and surety of these precious truths from the Bible. We must concede to the fact that God does not and will not always heal. There are reasons for this, and it is for each individual to seek God's special revelation to his or her personal need. Sometimes there is a lack of definite faith exercised. And sometimes God sees fit to take His child out of his suffering to rest in paradise, which is far better. Still, we are persuaded that divine physical healing is provided for in the atonement, and that we have full right and privilege to pray and trust God for the healing of the body. Our bodies belong to Him. Our bodies are His sacred

temple. He created these bodies and knows every need that they will ever have. He wants our bodies as living sacrifices on the altar for Him. It has been the deep conviction of many spiritual saints down through the ages to trust God fully. These Scriptures that mention a curse and the displeasure of God in trusting in the arm of flesh should not be counted lightly. Since Christ has provided healing for the soul and body in the atonement, and we gladly accept and experience His healing for our souls, what should hinder us from trusting Him fully for our bodies also? God is glorified and our souls are blessed when we trust and receive His healing. Let us consider these truths, and may God give to each one understanding.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

My heart just overflows at the very thought of trusting God for the healing of my body. How wonderful it is that we do not have to put our trust in man! Of course, it is good that people who do not know Jesus as their Saviour and Healer have someone to look to, yet how wonderful it would be if they could only look to Jesus. Many suffer at the hands of doctors who experiment on their bodies. A relative told me that he suffered more from the experiments than he did from the disease. Oh, how sad!

Down through the years I have found that in trusting God for healing we need to just believe and put in for it regardless of feelings or of the severity of the affliction. We must expect a miracle, and we can have a miracle on our bodies. I know that sometimes in the middle of an extended affliction the devil really comes hard against one. He tells that person he will never be well again, and tries to discourage him in many ways. But we must resist the devil and look to Jesus. Peter began to sink when he was walking on the water at Jesus' bidding, because he got his eyes off Jesus and on the waves. Oh, let us keep our eyes on Jesus and not on the affliction! Jesus healed when He walked the shores of Galilee, and He is the same today. Praise the Lord!

A number of years ago, I had several heart attacks, high blood pressure, and seemingly low blood sugar, as well as other problems. My nerves were in such bad shape that at times my whole body would get tight, and other times I would shake violently. I was very weak and my stomach was upset. I had several months of this, but through it all I knew God had healing for me. I kept holding on. At times I would be so weak that I could hardly get my spoon to my mouth, but I would still just

thank God for the healing that was mine. I knew it was coming. God did heal me and took every bit of that away. He took away the pains around my heart and the tightness in my chest. He healed the high blood pressure and I was able to eat what I wanted. Oh, it was wonderful what God did for me! Healing is ours through Christ, so be encouraged to look up.

—Sis. Marie Miles

“ALL IS RIGHT—I AM SATISFIED.”

A young black woman, Mary E. Massey, was, by the grace of God, early converted, and became a humble and devoted Christian, adorning her profession by a consistent walk and blameless conversation. To all that knew her intimately it became evident toward the close of the past summer, that Mary was rapidly growing in grace, increasing in spirituality of mind, and becoming more and more assimilated to Christ.

Her residence was in the country, where she was at service; and being desirous to remove to the neighboring town for the sake of increased religious privileges, she went to the railroad station to take the train for her new home. She was full of hope and anticipation. The train was much behind time, and it was after night when it arrived. It ran a short distance beyond the station before it stopped, and she, thinking it would not come back, started in a run after it. She had gone but a few yards when she met the train returning for her, and from the darkness did not observe it till too late to get out of the way. One car passed over her, fearfully mangling both of her limbs and one hand. She dragged herself into a fence corner and called out to those searching for her: “Here I am.” She never made a complaint, although her legs had to be amputated. When told that nothing could be done for her and that she could survive but a few hours, she replied in the spirit of sweet submission: “It is all right; I am satisfied. I have a mother and two sisters in the kingdom, and I shall be glad to join them.” To a friend who addressed her, she said: “I am perfectly composed. I am going to my ‘Father’s house.’ I do not wish to get well, for it was to be so. There is nothing I want but to see Papa. If he does not come, tell him farewell, for I am going to heaven. I started in an early day; I have kept the faith, and am now going to wear the crown.”

When asked if the religious services which were held in her room wearied her, she said: “No, I am not tired of singing and praying, but my breath is growing short. If this is death,

all is well, all is well." These were her last words, uttered a few minutes before she died. With her mind fixed upon the love and the promises of her Redeemer, and remembering His sufferings rather than her own, she passed away about midnight, quietly and sweetly to rest. The room in which she died was a sacred spot. It was instructing and most comforting to witness how completely this humble child of God was sustained, in her hour of trial and suffering, by her simple, trusting faith in Him. To her, death had lost its sting, and the grave was robbed of its terror. She had obtained the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, who, through death, hath destroyed him that hath the power of death, and delivers them who through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this story we have another illustration of that blessed truth, which many are slow to perceive, that "God is no respecter of persons," and that, as he hath made of one blood all nations, so the gospel of salvation is to all people. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, bond or free, white or black; all are one in Christ Jesus. Surely the gospel is glad tidings of great joy to all people, and the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

The power of faith to sustain the child of God under the most painful circumstances is illustrated in the last hours of this lowly woman. Nothing but the presence and the power of God could have sustained her and kept her joyful amid her excruciating pains. Her death was a glorious victory. She, though bruised and mangled, was enabled to come off more than conqueror, and to bear off great spoil. "By faith she endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

The importance of constant preparation for death is seen in this story. The summons came suddenly and unexpectedly, but it found her ready, with her lamp trimmed and burning. She had nothing to do but to commit herself into the hands of her Lord, and submissively await the moment when her spirit should be released from its suffering tabernacle. In the morning of life, in the season of health she had given her heart to the Saviour; and when He called, her answer was: "It is all right; I am satisfied." "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." "Prepare to meet thy God."

—From *Sketches From Life*

May 24, 1981

BURIED WITH CHRIST IN BAPTISM

Matthew 3:13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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

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

Romans 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.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Memory Verse: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Col. 2:12.

Central Thought: Christ wills that every one who truly believes in Him be baptized in water as a witness to the world that he is dead to sin, buried with Him in baptism, and risen to walk in newness of life. Baptism does not wash away sin, but it is the testimony of a good conscience toward God.

Word Definitions: *Baptize:* baptism is from the Greek word "Baptizo" which means to submerge, dip, or completely overwhelm. *Suffer:* Let, or allow. *Saved by water:* carried safely through the (flood) water.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The fact that Jesus purposed to be baptized by John, gives evidence that it is His will that all who come to Him and accept of His salvation be baptized also. Christ commissioned His disciples not only to preach and to teach all nations, but in so doing they were also to baptize. The apostle Paul associated the real meaning of baptism with death, burial, and resurrection. Peter in his writing compares baptism with the passing of Noah and his family through the flood safely. The longsuffering of God waited while the ark was preparing and kept back His judgment from the imprisoned souls of men who rejected the message of Noah. But this faithful man and his family braved the awful flood in the ark that he had prepared in obedience to God's command. Baptism is a like figure. It points to the fact that the person who is baptized has submitted to the will of God and is willing to obey in faith all the truth of Christ, and that as Christ passed through death to the great resurrection, we also have hope and assurance that we will pass through death to the resurrection. This hope and the power of Christ causes us to forsake the ways of sin, and live new clean and holy lives. We walk with Him in newness of life. Christ translates us from the power of darkness to His glorious kingdom. We indicate our faith and hope by following the Lord in water baptism; being willing to be submerged under water as an outward testimony of what has taken place in the heart. Briefly submerged, but raised up typifying the resurrection we have experienced unto life in Christ.

—Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was Jesus' reason for wanting to be baptized? Is it not the reason why we should be baptized?
2. Was baptism part of the commission?
3. Into what are we baptized?

4. What are we saying when we submit to be baptized into Christ?
5. Does baptism actually wash away sins? How do you know? What does it really mean to the Christian?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The doctrine of Christian water baptism is beautiful and filled with great meaning and purpose. Water baptism is a figure, antitype, and a representation. The passing of Noah and his family safely through the waters was a type of what baptism refers to. Baptism points toward the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the saints. According to 1 Cor. 15:29, we are baptized for the dead. That is, we are baptized with death and the resurrection in view. We accept baptism as a testimony, or witness, that we shall share in Christ's resurrection as we follow Him in death. This is made possible through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. There are other allusions to baptism in the Old Testament. Paul said in 1 Cor. 10:2 that the Israelites were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They went over the Red Sea dry shod because God had rolled the waters back. The Egyptians assaying to do this were drowned. Heb. 11. Jesus said in Matthew 12:39, 40, that the only sign to be given to that generation was the sign of Jonas the prophet. He explained that as Jonas was in the belly of the whale, so the Son of Man would be in the heart of the earth. This He was evidently using as an allusion to His burial in the borrowed tomb. Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish that God had prepared to swallow him. He escaped suffocation and drowning by a miracle of God. Read his own account for a description of his ride! Baptism is associated with these things. We become willing to follow the meek and lowly Jesus who takes us against the current of this world. To many this step has meant the peril of their lives. Millions have given their witness as martyrs. But their faith in the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection that they were going to share, enabled them to do it. Let us be strong to hold fast to our faith. Just as we were completely submerged in water, we will be submerged in trials, hardships, pain, persecution, and perhaps even death. But we are looking for a better day. This is our hope revealed in the true meaning of baptism—a looking forward to the great resurrection day of the saints.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is much false teaching about infant baptism which is not according to the Scriptures. We find that it is those who are capable of believing, who are to be baptized. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:16. Some might ask, "What about the children? Are they to be lost just because they are not old enough to understand?" The answer is that God has made provisions for them through His blood. Light and knowledge rate responsibility. Children are not capable of understanding what sin is and is not, nor capable of understanding how to live acceptably in God's sight. There is an age that child comes to when he does know. This does not mean that a child should not be taught. I know that I was taught not to steal, lie, etc., and taught to love Jesus. I was very tender in trying to please Jesus from a child, yet there came a time when I did wrong and I had condemnation on my soul that was different. There was a drawing to Jesus and a need I saw and understood that I was to seek His forgiveness and give my heart to Him.

Children come to the age of accountability at different ages, depending on their mental maturity. The apostle Paul refers to the time when he came to the age of accountability. He says, "For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Rom 7:9. When he came to the age of accountability, or knowledge of sinning against God, then he died spiritually.

We read that "Moses when he was come to years, chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Heb. 11:24-26. Every person must choose for himself whom he will serve. Parents can't choose for their children. Children choose when they "come to years," or to the time in life when they are capable of believing.

Many rest on their infant baptism, and that is the harm that it does. They feel they are saved with that rite and of course their names have been put on a church roll somewhere. It's sad how the devil deceives people. —Sis. Marie Miles

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WAITING TO BE SPOKEN TO

A young lady of refinement and high mental and moral worth became convicted of her own sinfulness, and yielding her heart to her God, came out from among her young friends

by publicly professing Christ.

She had one brother to whom she was most tenderly attached, but he was not a Christian. He had recently returned from college; and now that the sister had found Jesus, she felt the strongest desire for his salvation. She made his case a subject of earnest prayer, and deeply felt that she must speak to him personally on the matter; yet how could she gain courage to do so?

At twilight one day they were left together in the sitting room, and she tenderly told him of her interest in his behalf, and then spoke of the love of Jesus, begging him to accept Christ as his Saviour and Redeemer.

She was not prepared for the response that followed her trembling words. Her brother replied that he had for some weeks felt the burden of his sins; that the part she had chosen had deepened his feelings, and he had been wishing and waiting for someone to speak to him, that he might unburden his mind.

He felt he was now ready to ask the Lord to pardon his sins, and soon took an open stand by publicly professing the name of Christ.

What joyful news to the sister; what a reward for the cross she had taken! He was waiting to be spoken to, yet, had she neglected known duty, he might have longer concealed his true feelings, till by waiting he had lost the desire to become a Christian.

Oh, what a privilege to speak to the unconverted of Christ! How frequently may the word fall on the softened heart, and bring it to repentance!

When we hear the voice of God saying, "Speak to that young man," that friend, or relative, let us obey; for we know not how instrumental of good God would make us to others, or the good we may secure to ourselves by taking our cross for Christ's sake.

—From *Sketches from Life*

(NOTE TO TEACHER: Do not forget to order your lessons for the next quarter. We must have your order by June 1, 1981. The first Sunday of the next quarter is July 5, 1981.)

May 31, 1981

THE NEW TESTAMENT ORDINANCE OF FEET-WASHING

John 13:1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments: and took a towel, and girded himself.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 Tim. 5:9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,

10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

1 Cor. 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

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

Central Thought: The washing of one another's feet is an object lesson instituted by Jesus Christ for His saints to observe as an ordinance to carry out, and as a standard of humility and service to live by.

Word Definitions: *Ought:* duty bound; moral obligation. *Decently:* well formed and organized. *Layed aside his garments:* his outer garments and the girdle that held them close to his tunic or inner garment.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The introduction of the washing of one another's feet was something new to the disciples. It was hard for them to understand the reason for this. It was a custom in Old Bible times for guests to be furnished on their arrival with water with which they washed their own feet. But this that Jesus was doing was something different. Now there is great speculation in the Church world as to whether Jesus actually meant this little humble scene to be re-enacted on special occasion by the Church, or that he was merely laying down guide lines and principles to be carried out practically in our lives. Close survey of the Scriptures here and actual participation in such an ordinance assure us that Jesus meant this to be for both purposes above mentioned. He not only set an example in this feet washing, but His entire earthly ministry gives testimony to this sort of spirit and attitude of helping and serving others. He carried this out as an object lesson, portraying the closeness and humble attitude that He designs His members to have one toward another. It must be true in our lives. To carry it out as a rite or custom without its actually being in our ways and deeds of life would make it an empty form. At a special time and place with a group of earnest faithful saints in attendance, the carrying out of this proves to be a great spiritual blessing and experience. It should be done decently, and in order. Men should wash each other's feet, while the sisters wash the sisters' feet. There is a sacred and touching atmosphere that pervades such a service that is quite marked and noticed by the hungry heart reaching out for the blessings of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What does washing another's feet portray and indicate?

2. What should be in the heart of the person who washes?
3. What kind of feeling should be in the one being washed?
4. How can this principle be made a true pattern for our lives?
5. What is the great lesson in this ordinance that Jesus would have us to see and understand?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

What a beautiful scene we have before us in our lesson! The disciples are gathered into the upper room with Jesus to eat the passover supper. "Supper being ended . . ." The Greek text here reads "And as supper was preparing . . ." It was before the passover supper, and before the institution of the Lord's supper that this feet-washing scene took place. While they were sitting there at the table, Jesus rose to His feet. Every eye of the little group of men watched Him as He laid aside His outer garments, and girded Himself with a towel. What was this that their Master was about to do? See how He poureth water into a basin? No! Surely He is not going to attempt such a lowly act of washing their feet! But, yes. Not a word perhaps was spoken. The disciples pondered and wondered. They did not want to contest what their Lord was doing. But Simon Peter, as on other occasions, took the initiative to speak and ask the Lord about it. He could not see Jesus' doing such a humble thing. This shows how differently the human mind works from the Divine Mind. Peter could, no doubt, feature himself washing Jesus' feet, but for the great Master whom he loved, revered, and worshiped to do such a thing, NEVER! How different it was though, when Jesus let him know that if he refused Jesus' service now, all fellowship with Him would be terminated. Peter could not stand this to be. We find people in the world today who cannot come down to this humble level. Pride and vanity in people's lives will keep many from obtaining the real experience of the Lord. They may say, "Oh, the Lord did not mean for us to do that. He just wants us to show love to people and do good." So often in these very people is found lacking this vital ingredient after all. The true child of God who will live with this kind of pattern will not object to doing it as an ordinance. And what a blessing it is to the Church to observe this sacred service. How near it makes the saints seem to one another. What a sacred and holy atmosphere is felt. Yes, my dear fellow Christian, be assured that Jesus wills that this ordinance of feet-washing be observed by the Church until He comes again.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Some teach today that doing good works is what Jesus meant by feet-washing. Some say that if you take care of the sick, wash their feet, and minister unto their needs, that is keeping this commandment. We want to notice that when the Apostle Paul was referring to the "widow," who was to be taken care of by the Church, that she was to be one who had done "good works," etc., and then he adds, "if she have washed the saints' feet." If he had meant that good works was washing the saints feet, he would not have mentioned this requirement in two different phrases. So it is a commandment and feet-washing is an ordinance which we are to keep. The word, "ought" means "duty bound." Jesus said, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet." This is the same word used in "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." Luke 18:1. "We ought to obey God." Acts 5:29.

It's not the literal benefit that we derive from this ordinance, but Jesus said, "Happy are ye if ye do them." Joy will fill our hearts if we will open our hearts and worship our Lord. In this service our minds should not be on things of the world, nor taken up any more than is necessary on the order and performance of the service. —Sis. Marie Miles

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"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING"

A number of ministers were assembled for the discussion of difficult questions, and among others it was asked how the command, "Pray without ceasing," could be complied with. Various suppositions were started, and at length one of the number was appointed to write an essay upon it, to be read at their next monthly meeting.

A plain, sensible servant-girl hearing this, said, "What, a whole month wanted to tell the meaning of that text? It is one of the easiest in the Bible."

"Well, well, Mary," said an old minister, "what can you say about it? Let us know how you understand it. Can you pray all the time when you have so many things to do?"

"Why, sir, the more I have to do, the more I can pray."

"Indeed! Well, Mary, do let us know how it is, for most people think otherwise."

"When I first open my eyes in the morning," said the girl, "I pray, 'Lord, open the eyes of my understanding'; and while I am dressing I pray that I may be clothed with the robe of

righteousness; and when I have washed myself, I thank God for the washing of regeneration; and as I begin to work, I pray that I may have strength equal to my day. When I begin to kindle the fire, I pray that God's work may revive in my heart; and as I sweep out the house, I pray that my heart may be cleansed by the Holy Spirit of any wrong thoughts or attitudes. While preparing and eating breakfast, I desire to be fed with the hidden manna and the sincere milk of the Word; and as I am busy with the little children, I look up to God as my Father, and praise Him for the spirit of adoption, that I am His child. And so on all day; everything I do furnishes me with a thought for prayer."

"Enough, enough," cried the old minister; "these things are revealed to babes, and often hid from the wise and prudent. Go on, Mary, 'pray without ceasing.' And as for us, my brethren, let us bless the Lord for this exposition, and remember He hath said, 'The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way.' "

I need hardly say the essay was not written.

—*Sketches from Life*

June 7, 1981

THE NEW TESTAMENT ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Luke 22:14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Matthew 26:27 And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

1 Cor. 11:23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

Memory Verse: For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death until he come. 1 Cor. 11:26.

Central Thought: Remembering the Lord's death by partaking of unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine (juice of grapes) in a special service was enjoined upon the Church by the Lord Jesus Himself and proves to be a great blessing to the soul.

Word Definitions: *Unworthily*: being unfit; irreverently.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus Christ was facing the terrible ordeal of the cross. For this cause He had come into the world. It was at the time of the passover supper that He instituted another Supper that He wanted His disciples to keep through the coming ages as a Memorial to him and what He did for mankind. "This do in remembrance of me." It was the time of Unleavened Bread. This was the kind of bread that Christ had at the table. The fruit of the vine here used was pure grape juice, the blood of grapes. Both of these symbols carry deep and important spiritual meaning. God has dealt with the human family through the avenue of material things to convey spiritual truths and to produce something that will bring to remembrance. When Israel made their triumphant escape from Egyptian bondage, the Lord instituted the annual Passover

supper as a memorial throughout all generations of their deliverance from Egypt, which is a type of sinful bondage. He wanted them to remember that they were miraculously delivered by His hand of power. It was a type of the Lamb of God who now was instituting the great memorial service of the Church. We have mixed the accounts of Matthew and Luke into one narration, for both had important thoughts. Especially that of Luke do we want to notice, when he told that Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of me." The apostle Paul's account inserts the words: "As oft as ye drink it." This lets us know that Jesus did not give a definite schedule nor did He tell us how often, but that He does want us to keep this sacred ordinance, and how many times is in our control. The Holy Spirit may inspire and lead for the preparation and arrangement of when to have this service. It is an important service for the Christian to attend. To purposely avoid this service indicates a spiritual lack or decline.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. In our account, what words were spoken that indicate the Lord wanted us to keep this ordinance?
2. Of what do you think the bread and grape juice are symbols?
3. What frame of mind should one be in to enter this service?
4. How could one partake of this unworthily?
5. Who are we to examine as to the worthiness?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

When was the last time you were in an ordinance service? Do you think that this sacred service is held as often as it should be? These are questions that come to our minds as we study this sacred lesson. Oh, how the Lord wanted what He did for us to be fresh on our minds! The ordinance of the Lord's supper is a sacred and holy service. It should be entered reverently and prayerfully. It holds great values and blessings. It is a serious matter. To enter it lightly or without a real experience with the Lord is to invite the anger of the Lord and brings one into great damnation to the soul. Along with the ordinance of feet-washing, the Lord's Supper is a service that every true Christian should partake of at every opportunity. It is not for one to look around and judge his brother as to whether he is worthy. It is for each one to examine himself. In all probability and according to the sequence of events, Jesus

evidently washed the feet of the man who a short time later betrayed Him. He washed Peter's feet, knowing that Peter would deny Him. It is not for us to judge our brother. It is a time for us to judge ourselves. Jesus gave His body to be broken for us. He spilt His blood for the remission of our sins. In the spirit we must eat His flesh and drink His blood. We must absorb His word and doctrine, and drink of His Spirit. But He wants us also to partake of this ordinance in memory of Him. Since He gave Himself for us, the least we could do would be to partake of His flesh and of His blood. As the loaf of unleavened bread is broken before our eyes, we can visualize His precious flesh being torn by the whip, the crown of thorns, and the nails. As the blood of the grapes is poured forth, we can visualize the blood flowing from His head, back, and His precious hands and feet. Our hearts are melted in love and gratitude at the sight of what He did for us. As the prayer for God's blessings is offered and as thanks is given for what He did, we are warmed with fervent desire to live for Him always. What a sacred atmosphere is felt as the consecrated emblems are passed to each lowly believer! Then the service is closed with a hymn just as Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn and went out. It seems appropriate to dismiss the service and let everyone depart in the quiet and sacred spirit of the hour. A lot of visiting and talking can quench that spirit of worship, just as it can with any service. "This do in remembrance of Me."

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Can we not feel the love that flowed from heart to heart as Jesus and His disciples were together? Oh, how they loved their Lord and Master! They did not realize to the full extent, as we do today, just what it meant for Jesus to shed His blood and have His body broken for our salvation. Nevertheless, they loved Him. Today, in our keeping the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, we feel the love flowing from heart to heart as all in one accord let their thoughts go to the wonderful sacrifice of love that our Lord and Master made for us. As the family of God meet together in love to keep this ordinance, we think of the brothers and sisters, as the Apostle Paul has instructed: "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren: the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity." 1 Tim. 5:1. What pure and holy love flows from heart to heart! The same Lord over us all—Jesus is our elder Brother and God is our Father, since we are born into His family.

The Lord's Supper and Communion are the same thing. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of one bread." 1 Cor. 10:16, 17. What a beautiful commemorative rite our Lord has instituted! We also want to notice that He mentions just the "bread" and the "cup." That is all that is to be used in this ordinance.

—Sis. Marie Miles

THE TWO STRONG ARMS

A great scholar in Germany, who was anxious to find the right way to heaven, but for all his learning could not succeed, went, one day, to a church meeting. On his way he met a poor old man, to whom he wished "Good morning." The poor man thanked him, but added he did not exactly remember ever having a bad one. "Well, then, I wish you much luck." "I thank you, sir, but, to tell the truth, I never yet have had bad luck." The scholar did not know what to make of the man, so he requested him to explain his meaning. "With pleasure," said the poor man. "I have never yet had a sorrowful morning; for if I am hungry, I praise God; if I am cold, I praise God; if it rains or snows, thunders or lightens—let the weather be what it may, I praise God. I find joy in the Lord. I have never had a bad week. I resign myself to my dear Lord and Saviour, and am sure He does nothing wrong. What He permits, whether sweet or sour, joy, or grief, I know is all for the best, and I accept it with thanks and joy. 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' "

The scholar was astonished at the faith of the poor man, and asked again what he would do if God should thrust him into hell at last. "Thrust me into hell? *That* He will never do," answered the poor man; "but if He should, I have two arms—the arm of *faith* and the arm of *love*. With them I would grasp Him and hold Him so fast, that He must go with me; and where my Lord and my God is, there is my heaven."

—Sketches from Life

June 14, 1981

THE UNITY OF BELIEVERS

John 17:1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; for they are thine.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

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

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

1 Cor. 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

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

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Memory Verse: Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! Psalm 133:1.

Central Thought: Jesus prayed to the Father and gave Himself for the sake of the unity of all who believe in Him. The coming of the Holy Spirit brought the Church into a unity of heart and soul, and we are exhorted by the Apostle Paul to live and operate in that unity, always endeavoring to keep it as Christ designed.

Word Definitions: *Forbearing one another:* putting up with one another, Greek. *Endeavoring to keep the unity:* using diligence to preserve.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Lord's prayer as recorded in John 17 was offered to the Father just before the Lord and His disciples went out into the night into Gethsemane. His prayer was for the sanctification of His disciples so that they could be one in Him and the Father. It was the infilling and operation of the Holy Spirit in their lives that made the disciples really one. And thus it is today. We must also regard the counsel of the apostle Paul, exhorting us to exercise forbearance and longsuffering, endeavoring diligently to keep this unity. The unity that the Lord is calling His people to is a bright contrast to the strife and division that had marked the human family up to that time. The Jewish economy was torn asunder and divided between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The whole scope of mankind had been ripped into shreds by the confounding of the languages at the tower of Babel. Different cultures, different customs, different languages, different ideas and opinions, different backgrounds, different climates—all these factors had helped to drive deep wedges between the many kindreds of mankind. But now God is bringing out a plan whereby all these nations can be united, not in one group, but in one heart, soul, and mind. It was never His initial plan for mankind to be thus torn asunder. It was given and allowed in an effort to curb man's lusts and his inventions, and to keep men from conceiving together more wickedness. In full salvation, when men's hearts are cleansed from all greed, strife, vanity, and pride, the hearts of men can once again be unity-bound in one body. It is for us to be very diligent that God can work this great unity in our lives in reality.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What seemed to be the main burden of Jesus' prayer to the Father?

2. Give a good Scriptural reason why Jesus wants His people to be one.
3. What kind of an experience will help produce this unity?
4. Did Paul teach unity?
5. Is it pleasing to God for Christians to be divided?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

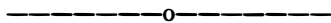
In the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ it is His plan and purpose that all who believe in, love, and obey Him be united in heart, soul, and mind. Anything short of this is to be beneath the dignity and virtue of His wonderful name and cause. This unity is enjoined upon a creation that Satan has rent asunder and plundered by strife and division. But it is a new creation that this unity will work in. Men and women must be born from above, made new in heart and soul by the blood of Jesus and the Spirit of God. Then they must be consecrated for the service, will, and name of the Lord and receive the Holy Spirit in their lives to cleanse, sanctify, and guide their lives. The enfolding of heart to heart and the blending of saints into one body is truly one of the great climaxing accomplishments of the New Testament plan of Salvation. It is the glory of the Church to be united by the strong cords of divine love. There must be meekness, longsuffering, gentleness, and forbearance employed to see this done. This is on our part. We cannot be in unity if we do not put forth effort and exercise ourselves to be in unity, yet is it not a union of man devised and organized by human effort and creeds. It is from Heaven, the fullness of Christ living within the very inmost being of a man, and the fruit of the Holy Love that is shed abroad in the heart. That we might be one, perfect in one, Jesus gave Himself to be crucified. It is a perfect unity that He is after: perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. There are problems here that have to be worked out. Sometimes our minds work differently. It will take effort on our part and the grace of God in our hearts to get unity in this practical cause. But it is possible, and not only that, it is commanded. Oh, that everyone who claims to be a Christian could see how God wants this unity to work! We are quickened together, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We are fitly framed and builded together. Ephesians 2:6, 21, 22. It is a beautiful picture to see the Church of God in the unity of the Spirit, the unity of the faith, and the unity of co-operation.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is a great move on in the world that the sectarian churches should all get together. Many are wanting a one-world church. They are agreeing to tolerate each other's views of how to worship God, and have even made room in the World Council of Churches for the Russian belief. This is not true "oneness," but is an insult to Jesus' prayer that all should be "one." The only way to bring about the genuine oneness that Jesus prayed for is to have a real experience of Bible salvation. One must have repented of his sins and forsaken them, and truly be filled with the Holy Spirit. All must "see eye to eye" on God's Word. When all have the same spirit, it will bring all together. The love of God will flow from heart to heart and the same spirit moving on one will move on another according to God's Word. The Spirit that moves or leads a person must agree with the Word of God. If it leads differently, then that is not the Spirit of God but another spirit working to deceive. Truly it's precious to be one in Christ and one with all of Christ's believers, who are true believers from the heart and are living according to His teachings.

—Sis. Marie Miles



SCARS OF DIVORCE

"Please, please don't sign them! O Daddy, don't sign those papers!" My pleadings must have added greatly to my father's burden, but the pen held firmly in his hand continued to write his name on the final paper.

Thus was my world destroyed and I with it, for on that day something died in the heart of a child. A child? In years, yes, but the child pleading in the divorce court that day would never again be a carefree little girl. For now my mommy and daddy were divorced. It was a big word and a hateful one. What it meant to grownups I did not know, but what it meant to me is a story that can never be told.

It meant that the home we had known existed no longer. To us children our home was our world, with both Mother and Daddy essential parts of it. But that world had suddenly crumbled. Like a storm that strikes suddenly and leaves you to pick up the pieces, so life had suddenly turned our home inside out and upside down. Much of the shock lay in the fact that the ones destroying it were the two who had been our very security and life.

From now on the family must be divided. I was told to choose between my mother and father—I could not have both, though I loved both and wanted them, **both of them**, to love me. Each was so necessary to me; how could I turn my back on one and say I wanted the other more?

I remembered nights when I was sick and how my mother kept vigil—how she had fed me and tended to my needs. Surely she loved me! When things troubled me, I had always gone to her, and her explanations had banished childish fears. I had great faith in my mother.

Nor could I doubt my father's love or the close place I had in his heart. Often my brothers had sent me to Dad when they wanted some favor, knowing he seldom refused me. This special place I had with Daddy was perhaps because I was so like him and we understood each other so well. I had deep respect for my father—but how could I compare it with what I felt for mother? And how could I make a decision that would separate me from either?

This was the down payment in the price of divorce—and the children had to pay. To parents who still count the cost, I plead the cause of your children! If you subject them to the agony of choosing between the parents they love, something wonderful has to die in their hearts during the unnatural struggle that choice entails.

Years have passed, but I still shudder at the memory of the day I left our home—with my mother. Daddy cried like a child, and then just stood and stared into space. I have wondered what went through his mind then. He had worked so hard to do right by his family, and now all he had built was gone. Was part of his grief due to the fact that missing from the circle of his motherless children was his only daughter? Was he thinking of what might have been?

In my mind there is no doubt of what might have been: theirs could have been a successful marriage had they determined to keep the home intact—had both, or even one been willing to sacrifice personal feelings.

As far back as my memory goes, I remember my parents quarreling. Like all quarrels, these were born of selfishness and stubbornness, with neither willing to give in to the other. Foolish advice was, "Separate if you can't get along; it will be better for the children." (Better to **crush** six young hearts than for one or two to bear small hurts? Better the blow should fall on six lives, young and tender, not old enough to know why they must be separated from one another?)

Bitter protests and tears were vain for divorce courts do not consider human heats when they collect their dues. Mother and Daddy were to be "free," but we children were not. I became a slave to despair. The quarrels? They ceased, to be sure, but cries of heartbroken children took their place, and I, for one, longed to hear those quarrels if only it meant I could have my mother and daddy back!

This story is my own—the plea I make is that of my own heart, though my brothers, too, could write their stories, and neighbors in our small town could add to it. Perhaps it is just a familiar story—Daddy, too busy to do the little things that count so much, and having to neglect his six-and eight-year-old-boys. My little brother longed for his mother, but his loss and grief gave expression to meanness; so he became a problem child in school. My teen-age brothers became involved with the law to the extent that they spent a night in jail. I realized even then that this, too, was part of the price of divorce—that the children pay.

Perhaps a girl needs her mother even more than do the boys. I seemed to be cut the deepest and to suffer the most. The shock of that day in court was indelibly printed on my memory, but I had only begun to taste the bitter portion dealt to a child of divorced parents.

(to be continued in next lesson)

June 21, 1981

HUMAN RELATIONS AND THE GREAT COMMANDMENTS

Luke 10:25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readeest thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go and do thou likewise.

Rom. 13:8 Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Memory Verse: Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13:10.

Central Thought: God wants us to not only love Him, but we must love our neighbor as we do ourself. Our neighbor is the person that we meet along the way that needs our help and love, no matter who he is or where it may be.

Word Definitions: *Neighbor:* One who is near or close by, fellow man. *Lawyer:* One expert and skilled in the Mosaic law.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today can be said to be one of the most difficult matters for the human soul to really master and successfully follow. Here is where most of our conflicts arise in our lives. Knowing how to deal in love with our fellow man is of dire importance to the child of God. "Love thy neighbor as thyself." This comes from Lev. 19:18. Jesus connected it up with the righteous commandment of loving God. It is very evident that this second commandment had a great bearing—

even upon Jewish society. For this lawyer, when asked by Jesus what was written in the law, gave these two commandments even as Jesus did when He was asked what the greatest commandments were. The lawyer knew what the answer was, but, like many of our day, he was willing to justify himself rather than to seek for the Lord's justification. Note the question, and ponder the motive of his asking it. "Willing to justify himself." This human tendency to justify one's self will bear looking into. Take special notice of Christ's answer. It is an illustration, doubtless an actual happening. Bear in mind that it was religious people who failed in the menial task of caring for another person's need and distress. Take heed here. There is no substitute for practical human relations. No amount of prayer, no lengthy sermon, or flowery testimony can erase a failure to help another in time of need. Jesus is driving this point home. Notice His question: not "Who is my neighbor?" but "Will I be the neighbor?" Notice the difference. This throws the responsible place squarely with each individual. It is not *whom* my neighbor is, but whether *I* will be a neighbor to all I meet. "Who was a neighbor?" The answer was obvious and without doubt. "He who shewed mercy." Then the final conclusion is also obvious and to us today: "Go and do thou likewise." —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think there is any difficulty in the commandment "Love thy neighbor as thyself"?
2. What excuses could have soothed the conscience of the priest and Levite?
3. Why is it so striking that a Samaritan should come to the front of the matter?
4. Ponder the extent of the Samaritan's care. Should he have gone farther, or was he commended for what he did?
5. Think of some practical ways that we can shew mercy to our fellow man.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Many times we meet people along life's way that are in just as much need as the man in our lesson, but in a different way. There are many crushed and wounded souls along life's journey that have been robbed of kindness and deprived of a fair trial of human relations and understanding. They have been stripped of the comfort that an understanding friend can give. They are just barely hanging on to

hope and courage, and Satan is beating them to despair. This is real. This has really happened many, many times. There are those who come along in their pious airs of spiritual superiority and fail to administer any help. Mercy rejoiceth against judgment (James 2:13). We seem to assume that others will just automatically be all right without any effort or concern of our own. Unsavory words that lack the salt of grace have crushed and bruised many hearts in this world. And so often the wounded heart is not known at the time, and the person who has hurled the piercing words is unaware of his brother's need. Oh, how we need to take heed and be careful of our human relations! Nothing is gained by condemning and criticizing. Yes, we are vexed and tried and displeased many times with the way certain ones do. But this could be the time for us to look for the wounded heart involved. The Samaritan SAW, HAD COMPASSION, and WENT TO the man. Many times we fail in these first few steps. They are so vital in recognizing another's need. The priest and the Levite failed to do these three. They saw, but that was about all. What can we do? Words. Words. Just as they can bring death and wounds, so can they bind up and heal. Words spoken in season, fitly spoken, spoken with grace and seasoned with salt—these are the methods of healing to our fellow man. Retaliation and giving a cold shoulder never accomplish anything. These things show that we are in as bad or worse condition than the person we deal with. Mercy, yes, this is the thing—mercy and peace from a warm and interested heart coming forth earnestly and meekly. There is no need of a long, drawn-out sermon, but a few open expressions of kindhearted friendliness. This will bind up your fellow's heart wounds. Take the Master's message and try it. "Go and do you likewise!"

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Our lesson brings us to the thought of just how much we are to love ourselves. Sometimes we look at the actions of some people and it seems that they really love themselves. All they think about or strive to accumulate is to help themselves. They are thoughtful about having a nice bed, good food, comfortable chairs to lounge in, a good running car, money to take pleasure trips and to do things to please their every whim or desire. Does Jesus condemn this? What did He say about a man "that hateth his life in this world," and if a man "loveth his life shall lose it"? (John 12:25). What did

Jesus mean when he said, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed"? (John 6:27)

There needs to be a balancing out of the life that we are to live according to God's Word. Can we not have nice things and be comfortable? Where do we draw the line, and how can we fulfill the law by loving our neighbor as ourselves?

The last verses in our lessons can bear some thought. The things mentioned in the last verse are things done against our neighbor or against someone. By doing any of these things, we clearly show that we do not love our neighbor. We cannot do any wrong to anyone and yet love him. There needs to be a real change in the heart and life of a person who would keep the command to "love your neighbor as yourself." All we owe anyone is love. What a challenge this lesson is to us!

—M. Miles

SCARS OF DIVORCE

(continued from previous lesson)

With Daddy thrust out of my life, my brothers gone, my heart fastened more tenaciously than ever on Mother, and words cannot express the shock that was mine when I found her in the arms of another man. In that instant I knew utter desolation. I had lost my father—now my mother no longer belonged to me! Another man—a stranger to me—had taken her and this discovery completely changed and embittered my life.

Emotions that had been sealed within me now broke forth in endless weeping. Bitterness enveloped me like a cloud and resentment made it impossible for me to speak peaceably to Mother. Back of confused emotions came the resolve that no one else should have her—she belonged to me and to Daddy! I became crazed with the idea that I must win her from the one whom I felt now was the cause of my sorrow.

A showdown had to come. One day I found Mother and her boyfriend with other friends in the front yard. Blind despair and a lingering hope gripped me, and for me that gathering became a court session, with a child as prosecuting attorney and the neighbors as jurors. The desperation that filled my heart poured out our need of Daddy, our need of the home we had left—"Oh, please, Mommy, let us go back and be happy!"

Artists may paint human suffering, but neither artist's brush nor writer's pen can recapture the horror of the moment when a child realizes he has lost the battle for his mother's love. One day she had been my mother—the next, she was a stranger whose only feeling seemed to be displeasure at the scene her unreasonable child was causing. Neighbors pitied and tried to comfort, but their words did not reach me—I knew only departed hope. I had failed, and no failure had ever involved so much.

I may have been in a state of shock as I found my way back to the old home. A few weeks before I had been in this home—a happy, confident child, but as I entered the familiar yard, there was no joy in my heart—no anticipation or eagerness. Daddy met me at the door and seemed thankful I had returned, but he found, to his sorrow, that it was not the same little girl who had come back. Shock and grief caused youth to flee, and with it had gone laughter and joy.

He tried, but was not able to save me from the depths of despair to which I sank. I wept until tears no longer came. Many pitied but there was no healing for my wounded heart. When we heard that Mother had remarried, great bitterness possessed me. Grief had so eaten away at my life that I became hard and rebellious. The faith that my mother had destroyed caused me to lose confidence in everyone, even my father, and I felt that everyone was against me. Nothing mattered anymore. When Daddy corrected me, I thought that he, too, had turned against me, and I rebelled under his authority.

I left him and stayed with anyone who would have me. Later, harsh circumstances compelled me to go back to my mother and her husband.

I must have been a shadow of the past to them, and I lived with the stinging reality that I was not wanted. Yet every fiber of my being craved to be loved. Violent arguments—a war of hate—began between me and the intruder. Strain began to show on mother's face, and in my misery I found secret consolation in the fact. My strained emotions became a physical illness, for the human system can be over-taxed just so long before something breaks. Clouds of gloom settled over me; nightmares caused me to run screaming through the house. I suffered cruelly and being alone most of the time, actually developed a fear of people. I succumbed completely to shattered nerves.

I wish I could take the hand of every parent harboring the thought of divorce, and lead you back with me into the valley through which I have come. If the hurt of an innocent child's heart, the bitter shock of a tender life, the tears of the unwanted, misplaced child, the horror and gloom could be called to witness in the divorce courts, no child would again have to walk the dreadful road that starts with the signing of those final papers in the divorce courts. Instead, the tears would become your own and in the valley you would realize that the ones who suffer in divorce and remarriage are the innocent children.

Thank God, in my struggles through that darkness I met the Saviour and slowly—very slowly—began to live again. Since that time I have married, and at one time it seemed that I would fail as my parents had. But through sacrifice and love I was able to prove that marriage can be made to last. My wonderful husband and lovely children are my reward after having, as Job, drunk scourging like water.

Many will say, "But my case is different." I contend that every marriage can be made to last if either husband or wife will fight to that end. Mine did not succeed overnight, but every effort proved worthwhile for, through sacrifice of my own feelings, I brought out qualities in my husband that I had not known existed. God alone knows the joys I now reap from every battle I fought—with myself—instead of with my husband. I had learned to give when I would rather take, to smile when my heart rebelled, and to hold my peace and let God speak for me. But it was worth all it cost when compared with the reward—one of the happiest marriages in the world.

From experience I know divorce is not the answer—sacrifice is. You who contemplate divorce—I beg of you, remember me. Hold that child of yours in your arms more closely, and in pity spare him that which I have had to endure and can never forget.

—A Wounded Heart

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June 28, 1981

THE MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

1 Cor. 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophesy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Rom. 12:4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Memory Verse: For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
1 Cor. 12:13.

Central Thought: All who believe in Christ are united by divine love and mutual faith, but are much like the functions of the human body. Each member has a different calling and function for the welfare of the work of the Lord. Each depends upon the other, and each supplies aid for the other. Though the gifts and callings of the Lord vary from one member to the next, the unity and harmony of the body is preserved.

Word Definitions: *Severally*: Particularly or individually. *Members in particular*: members in parts, or each member a part. *Measure*: allotment or distribution by rule.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The Lord does not want us to be ignorant of spiritual gifts and their function in His great body, the Church of God. He foresees the danger of the disruption of unity and harmony by a wrong understanding or viewpoint concerning the work of the Lord having to do with each member and their individual calling being different from others. Thus Paul, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, wisely uses the simple, yet understandable illustration of the human body and its various member working together for the life and operation of itself. The hand, the foot, the ear, the eye, the nose, and the tongue are all different members performing and functioning in varied ways. But they are all connected together in the body, modifying and sustaining each other. The foot is not inferior to the hand, nor is the eye exalted over the hand. Each one is important—just as important as the other. This is the figure of the various distributions of the Spirit and His workings. He does not work the same in all. The body is one and all the members are united, but each has a different calling or function. Each member is to be recognized in the capacity that he or she is called to function or labor in. This is to be carried out among God's people. It is so important to be aware of these facts, otherwise confusion and disunity may arise. Failure to recognize another's gift hinders one from being so benefited. God has a place for everyone to fill. Every life should be consecrated and all on the altar for God to work in, to will, and to do of His good pleasure.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS

1. What are the gifts of the body of Christ given for?
2. Who chooses what gifts are to be given to the members?
3. How is the body of Christ likened unto the human body?
4. Is it possible to feel inferior to someone else's gift? Is it possible to feel superior to someone else's gift?
5. How can we avoid this?
6. How are we members one of another?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

For the preservation and promotion of the work of Christ in the earth, His body, the Church, has functions and operations centralized in the individual members of such a body.

God deals with each man individually, but with the design in view to work a working together and a benefit or profit to all. The word of wisdom is a gift heading the list in our lesson, perhaps not meant to have priority over the rest. But when we weigh the value of wisdom, godly wisdom, we are made to wonder if the apostle might have meant it to have priority. The Bible has much to say about wisdom and its value to us. A person with such a gift can be a real asset to the cause of God. The word of knowledge goes hand in hand with wisdom. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," the prophet said in Hosea 4:6. Many things are done and carried out through ignorance that hurt and hinder the cause of God. God wants this gift functioning and recognized. The three gifts of faith, healings, and miracles are of great value to the saints. Trials, afflictions, problems, and distressful situations arise that faith and supernatural working of God's power can be a great blessing to. Prophecy, the foretelling of future events and the preaching of the Word of God gives us warning to prepare and guard ourselves from conditions and dangers that may be ahead of us. There are spirits in people that need to be discerned and exposed and reproved. How much hurt and injurious events can take place when this gift is not functioning or recognized! The gift of tongues is the ability to speak or preach in another language. It is not a priority gift, but it is needed under certain conditions. All these gifts are meant to be a blessing to the body of Christ, which is His church. We are to covet earnestly the gift that God can entrust us with. God knows what we can handle. There is great responsibility that goes with having these gifts. Pride must not be allowed. It is the Spirit of the Lord that gives these gifts. We are to live and labor according to the ability that He gives.

—L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When Christ was here on earth, He was in one body. His work was limited. Now that He has gone away, He has sent His Spirit into the body of those who are "born again," and they are filled with His Spirit. There are many members but all are, or compose, one body. Each member is working in the place which Christ has set him in. It is God's doings and not ours. Our part is to be willing to labor in any capacity that is needed. What a precious thought of being "baptized into one body;" immersed into Christ, losing our identity and just being moved by the Spirit of God! It's not us but the Spirit of

God working through us. We have nothing to boast of. It's God and His Spirit that inspires and moves upon each heart to do what God wants done. Our part is to live in the Spirit and yield to the Spirit so He can work through us to the glory of God.

Our first verse says that "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." There is nothing that is done that is prompted by the Spirit unless it is profitable. We might not know all the good that is done because many times God hides that fact from us. But we can be assured that God's Spirit will never lead us astray. The Spirit will agree with the Word of God. Anything that comes forth or anything that might be brought to us, that does not agree with the Word of God, is not from the Spirit of God. The Word and the Spirit working together will bring profit.

—M. Miles

UNEXPECTED RELIEF

Henry Badgerow was a man about seventy years of age at the time of the incident, and a resident of Steuben county, State of New York. This was in the year about 1830—31. He had been for many years an invalid—so much so that he couldn't walk—the result of a horse running away with him. In a forest, isolated from neighbors, the old man resided alone with an aged wife. They were quite poor, and wholly dependent upon the labor of a son who worked away from home for others. This son was at length taken sick with a fever, and unable to minister to his parents' wants. This was in mid-winter, when storms were frequent and the snows deep and lasting.

One evening when the storm was at its highest, this old couple found themselves without a particle of food in the house. Matters were desperate with them. They could see but starvation staring them in the face. They resolved upon prayer, having a firm trust in their heavenly Father, whom for many years they had been humbly serving. They did not retire, but continued in fervent prayer that God would send them food. About two and a half miles distant lived a young married man in comfortable circumstances, by the name of Joseph Clason (the author of the story). He was not at this time a Christian, although it was not long after this he was converted, and has since lived an eminently active and godly life. About 12 o'clock on the night of the snow storm above

mentioned, young Clason awoke. His first thoughts were of old Mr. Badgerow and his condition in that storm. His mind became so impressed with the thought of him, and so wrought upon that he could not again go to sleep, although trying so to do. At length he awakened his wife, told her that he was in trouble about Mr. Badgerow, for fear he and his wife were starving. She replied that if he would get right up and make a light, she would prepare something, and that he had better take it right down. Young Clason did so, taking with him a pail of provisions.

After a jaunt through the storm and snow in the dead hour of night, he reached the old man's cabin. There he found a light burning. He knocked; the door was opened by the wife. The old man was fervently praying, but when he saw young Clason with the pail of provisions, he held up both hands and said, "Now I know that God hears prayer. Not one mouthful have we in the house to eat. I know that God sent you here." Young Clason stayed with the old couple until daylight. The conversation revealed that about midnight the old man perceiving that a storm had arisen, and that unless relief came, which was not likely, they would starve, resolved to appeal to his heavenly Father, saying that God who sent the ravens to feed Elijah would feed him if he went to him in faith, and now God had heard his prayer, and he blessed God that he could do so in all trouble and trial.

The old man having asked Clason how he came to visit them, he replied he didn't know, but supposed God had sent him, as he had awoke and couldn't again sleep on account of thought of him.

The incident made a serious and lasting impression on young Clason's mind.

In the morning, as Clason was returning home, he came by his father's house. His mother, seeing his pail, wished to know where he had been. He replied, "To feed the hungry." His father spreading the incident, the neighbors all turned out and brought in enough provision to last them during several weeks, the old man being greatly loved and respected by his community on account of his sterling Christian life and character.

—From *Answers to Prayer*

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