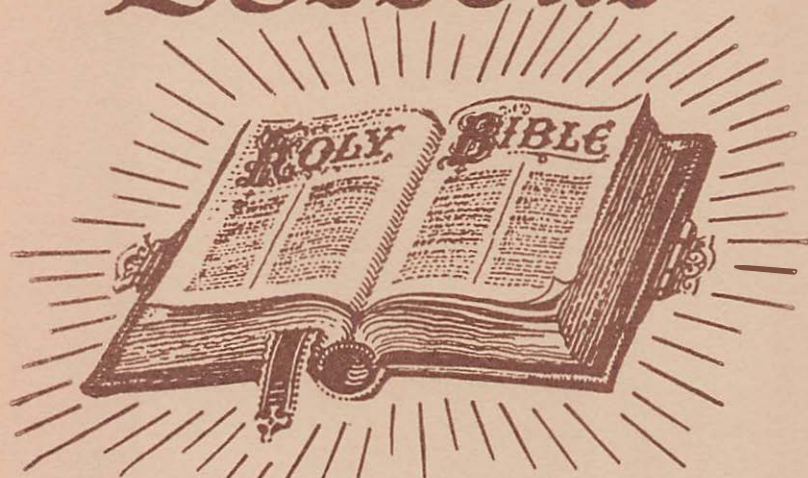


Bible Lessons



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

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 17, No. 4
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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Volume 17

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Theme for Fourth Quarter, 1985

What is the office of Jesus Christ now, and what does He mean to the Church of God and to the individual child of God today? We have just finished a series of studies about the life and ministry that He accomplished while in this world, but what about Jesus Christ today? We are inspired to set forth a series of lessons with this thought in mind. We will begin our studies with the subject of Christ and the soul-quickening life that He possesses and so effectively wields for mankind. From His position in the heavens at the right hand of God, Jesus Christ meets the highest and most important need for souls today. Just think of the various aspects of His office: Giver of the Holy Spirit, Dispenser of Spiritual Gifts, The Head of the Church, The Heavenly Bridegroom, The Great High Priest, The Second Adam, and various other capacities He is filling from heaven above. Our Healer, our Example, with fulness of Grace for every need, as King sitting on David's throne, henceforth expecting the great and final day of eternal fulfillment, Christ walks in the midst of the Churches, or congregations of God. Oh, may God inspire our hearts afresh with this vision of Jesus Christ as He is today.

—Bro. Leslie C. Busbee

October 6, 1985

JESUS CHRIST GIVES SOUL-QUICKENING LIFE

Eph. 1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Eph. 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Memory Verse: Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. John 5:25.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ today wields power to quicken a person from the ways of sin and this present evil world to a life of purity, holiness, truth, and righteousness. This He will do for all who truly repent, turn away from their sins, and trust and obey Him.

Word Definitions: *Principality:* chief, leader, ruler, one in authority. *Quicken:* to make alive; revitalize or give new life. *Working:* Energy, Greek word. "*Of His mighty Power*": The word is "dunamis", from which comes the word "dynamite".

LESSON BACKGROUND

Paul is writing to the Ephesian church, blessing God for the "spiritual blessings" that he had found "in heavenly

places in Christ." Since that day on the road to Damascus when he came face to face with the reality of Jesus Christ, the soul of Paul had been seeking to know and dispense to others of that which he had found in Him. He expresses his desire for those who had believed in Christ at Ephesus to be enlightened by God as to what the riches of Christ really are. He recognizes the effect of Christ in his own life and in the lives of the Ephesian brethren. Once they were going after this world and its values, and now they are not. They had been pursuing the lusts and desires of their flesh and now they are not. They have been quickened from the dead state of sin to the life of Christ. What has accomplished this? The gospel of Christ is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Romans 1:16. How wonderful that a man who is under the yoke of sinful pleasures and appetites can be convicted and convinced of the wretchedness of his life, drawn by the Holy spirit to submit to and trust in Christ, and quickened from that sinful way to live a life pure and clean before God! Notice that the apostle Paul mentions in our lesson the mighty power which God wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand. A quickening power was wrought in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Just like electrical energy and power is produced by means of water-fall power or steam-turbine power, so spiritual force or energy to effect a resurrection in the heart of man was made available through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. There still is and always will be as long as time shall last plenty of this quickening power for those who come to God through Jesus Christ to be saved from their sins.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the cause for man's need to be quickened, or made alive?
2. What are we dead in when we are unsaved?
3. What kind of spirit controls our lives?
4. What wrought the soul-quickenings in Christ?
5. How was Christ raised from the dead?
6. Where was Jesus set after His resurrection, and who placed Him there? What has He been made head over?
7. What is the nature of the unsaved?
8. What caused God to desire to quicken us in Christ?
9. We are quickened, raised up, and made to sit _____ in heavenly places in Christ.
10. What does God want to show in the ages to come?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Oh, this great wonderful power of Jesus Christ to raise men and women, boys and girls from the dead state of sin to a life of righteousness in God! Paul had experienced this resurrection and the transforming power of Jesus and his great desire is to see it published and proclaimed. It is wonderful to know that the story of Jesus and His risen life and ascension into Heaven is all true and is no fable. One of the greatest witnesses and evidence that it is true is the changed lives that bear testimony to that fact. "You hath He quickened." This has been said of many people down through the ages since Jesus went back to Heaven. He had quickening power on earth to raise the dead, but how much greater is His power "yesterday, today, and forever" to quicken a person who is dead in sins and in the graveyard of the law to a new life of righteousness, godliness, and divine love! This is an unmistakable witness of the reality of Jesus Christ today. No other power can transform and change the human nature. People can change some things about themselves, but the root of sin, self, and pride only the soul-quicken power of Christ can remove. He quickens people, raises them up, and makes them sit together. His life in the soul draws men and women together. It erases the strife and self-love that drives men and women against each other and apart. All that the devil ever accomplished in the souls of man Christ can undo and replace it with His life of truth and faithfulness. There was power generated and produced when Christ rose up from the dead. It was by the glory and power of the Father that He was raised up. We need to know and be aware of the exceeding greatness of His power toward us, power that was wrought in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Just as power for electricity is produced, even so power for holy and godly living is made readily available in Christ. We must hear the gospel, believe, and obey it. The effect will be a life transformed and resurrected from sin.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Life is a wonderful thing. It is the avenue through which we enjoy all things. Many people are in a state of ill health and unable to enjoy life. There are many more who are dead in trespasses and sins and do not enjoy the blessings of the kingdom of God. To be physically blind is to miss many

opportunities. Many people are dead in every sense of perception of spiritual things.

There is a great measure of spiritual joy we can avail ourselves of thru Jesus Christ. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." When our spirit is changed, we enjoy the blessings of God in this terrestrial body. When our terrestrial body is changed to an eternal body, the spirit that has been quickened will experience the bliss of heaven for all eternity. One old gentleman who had a perception of this said, "I'm going to live till I die, and then I am going to live forever."

In the Bible we read of several instances in which the dead were raised to life again. Think of the rejoicing there must have been and the relief and gratitude that was felt. Yet this does not compare to the magnitude of rejoicing that takes place when one sinner turns to God, for even the angels in heaven rejoice over that.

It would require great power and authority over nature to restore life to the dead. It would be quite a wonderful event to witness. How much greater, though, the power that breaks the bands of evil. To witness the saving of a soul is to behold the greatest miracle possible.

—Wayne Murphey

October 13, 1985

THE INDWELLING CHRIST

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

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

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

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

Eph. 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Col. 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Rom. 8:10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

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

Memory Verse: Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Rev. 3:20.

Central Thought: By receiving the Holy Spirit and being sanctified we can have Jesus Christ enthroned within our very innermost being to guide us into all truth, seal us from sin and evil, and enable us to live so to be accounted worthy of eternal glory.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus spoke the words that we have in our lesson as He was with His disciples the last time before His crucifixion. It is very doubtful that they realized the real import and meaning of His words as He promised to live within them through the Holy Spirit. How we thank God that we have these words recorded for us today, assuring us that we can have Jesus actually living within us through the Holy Spirit! That is the only way that God can truly guide a person, to live within them as His sacred temple. Man is the real temple of God. The temples of earth, wood, and stone have no attraction for God. He longs to dwell in the man who is poor and of a contrite spirit and who trembles at His Word! (Isa. 66:2) Paul, from his Ephesian letter, expresses the desire, the same desire, that Jesus expressed. The indwelling Christ is the cure-all for mortal ills and sorrows. The might that He exerts within the

heart and mind of an individual is to holiness, strength of character, honor, righteousness, and every other attribute of right and good. How we should desire this experience, and, after attaining it, how diligently we should guard and keep its sacred reality working! As Paul expressed to the Colossians, Christ within us is the hope of glory. I believe that we can safely and resolutely say that no man can enter into eternal glory who has not Christ within him. Those before Christ who sincerely and devoutly sought God and His perfect will are said by Peter to have had the Spirit of Christ in them. (I Peter 1:11.) Let us duly consider Paul's expression about the indwelling Christ to the Romans. Sin cannot cohabit with Christ. The flesh and its inordinate affections and lusts must be crucified. This is an identification mark of the indwelling Christ.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is man likened unto in our lesson today?
2. How does man have the capacity to contain things within him?
3. What are some of the things that men have within when unregenerated and in sin?
4. When Jesus lives within a person, what kind of fruit will be in that life?
5. What does Christ do while abiding in the soul?
6. If Christ dwells within us, what state is the body in?
7. What does the statement mean when He said, "The body is dead, because of sin"?
8. Describe the character, condition of life, and dispositions of a person who truly has Christ living within them.
9. How is it that Christ within us is the "hope of glory"?
10. By what means will God raise up those who will be saved?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Oh, how we should long and yearn for Christ to live within us! With our sins forgiven and washed away by the merits of His blood and our lives transformed by His grace, we should earnestly seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit by consecrating all to Him and taking hold of the promise by faith. He has promised to live within us. Think what this means! Jesus Christ, Who came as the Son of God into the flesh, Who lived and taught and healed the downtrodden, Who suffered and died for our sins, Who arose triumphant from the

dead, Who ascended up on high to the most holy heavens to sit at the right hand of God—this Jesus, this very same Jesus can and will live in the heart of every child of God who will qualify for His holy presence through submission, consecration, and faithful obedience. With Him comes His truth, His nature, His love, His humility, and every other attribute of His wonderful Spirit. The flesh with its desires and emotions becomes subdued to holiness and sobriety. Sin is destroyed from the heart and mind. Jesus reigns within His people. We are His sacred temple, His habitation, His chosen dwelling place of delight. He lives, talks, walks, and moves within us. He guides, instructs, and disciplines us in His way. He writes on the tables, the tender tables of our hearts His sacred laws and statutes. He shows to us the deep mysteries of His will and eternal purpose and enables us to conform to His holy standards of life and duty. He comforts us, lifts up a standard against the enemy when he comes in like a flood, and holds us steady under the pressures of life. Oh, the strong and triumphant Jesus lives within us. Not long ago I was burdened for souls and thinking of their wanderings and error. I thought, "Oh, if I could just get within them and guide them aright! They would do well, then." The Lord spoke to my heart, saying, "That is just what I have wanted to do from the beginning."

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

One characteristic of a worldly person is the tendency to desecrate all that is holy. He will pervert the pure creation of God and turn what is wholesome into wicked enjoyment. He sees God in nothing. Conversely, one who has the indwelling Christ will take the temporal things of this world, consecrate them to God and recognize a present and presiding divinity in all things. His thoughts and actions will be pure and holy because they are thoughts and actions motivated by the One within. As the verse in our lesson says, we can be "filled with all the fulness of God." It is recorded that a jealous minister exclaimed, "Has D. L. Moody a monopoly of the Holy Spirit?" "No," someone remarked, "but the Spirit has a monopoly of Moody."

Christ has promised to take up His abode in our hearts, but it is up to us to open our heart's door. Acts 15:9 says, "Purifying their hearts by faith". Until we really believe that Christ died, arose, and has all power in heaven and earth. He

will not clean out that sin nature and take up His abode within. We will not "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." To "know" that love means to experience it, and then to give it out to others. Herein is the fullness of God.
—Wayne Murphey

DIVINE LOVE

Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down;
Fix in us thy humble dwelling;
All thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion;
Pure, unbounded love thou art:
Visit us with thy salvation;
Enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast;
Let us all in thee inherit,
Let us find the promised rest:
Take away our power of sinning,
Alpha and Omega be,—
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, almighty to deliver,
Let us all thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve thee as thy hosts above;
Pray, and praise thee without ceasing;
Glory in thy precious love.

Finish, then, thy new creation;
pure and sinless may we be:
Let us see thy great salvation
Perfectly restored by thee:
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place:
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!

—Charles Wesley

October 20, 1985

GRACE FOR TRIUMPHANT LIVING

Eph. 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

John 1:16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Rom. 5:15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

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

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

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

II Cor. 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

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

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

II Cor. 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

Memory Verse: For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Ps. 84:11

Central Thought: The grace of God that comes through Jesus Christ enables the soul to be delivered from the power and dominion of sin and to live in a righteous and godly manner every day of this earthly life. Perfect victory, perfect peace, and perfect holiness are available to us through the abundant grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Word Definitions: *Grace:* This is a most wonderful and sublime word. The Greek term that is translated "grace" in our language is "charis" (khar-ece, with the accent on the first syllable) which means graciousness. This implies mercy, longsuffering, patience, help, strength, favor, goodness, and a good will of God to give us aid for whatever need we might have. *Grace for grace:* Favor upon favor, blessing after blessing, a never-ending supply.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The study that we have for today of the all-sufficient grace for triumphant living is truly one of the richest themes of the Bible. From the apostle Paul we have gathered some rich and glorious expressions of the workings of the grace of God. Paul knew a lot about the grace of God that had changed him from a self-righteous Pharisee to an humble saint of God. The epistles mention and name out this term, "the grace" of God, more than the Gospels. Luke mentions it once concerning Jesus as a child growing up. (Luke 2:40.) John also mentioned grace three times, two of which we have in our lesson. The other two Gospels do not mention the term. It was an expression of those who experienced it, and reaped the benefit of the life and death of Jesus. Grace in the Scriptures always shows victory and success. The Hebrew language has a parallel word meaning the same thing, and it comes from a root word that means to bend down or incline toward. There is plenty of grace available for our need today. It is our fault if we do not have grace. Grace is given to the humble. (Prov. 3:34, I Peter 5:5, and James 4:6.) Each one of the Scripture text entries in our lesson is a choice exposition of the grace of God, showing its capabilities and the extent of power. Abundant supply, effectiveness, efficiency, and reliability are all expressed in vivid language. Let us humble ourselves before God that we might be a partaker of His wonderful grace.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How are we saved?
2. How do we have good works?
3. Is there any problem with the supply of grace?
4. See how many things that you can express about what the grace of God can do in your life.
5. What does grace abound over?
6. What did the grace of God do for Paul?
7. What did Paul say that the grace of God could do for us?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Oh, what a wonderful opportunity that the grace of God affords to us today! We can be forgiven of our sins through grace. Through grace we can be sanctified wholly and filled with the Holy Spirit. Through grace we can live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world. Through grace we can go through great trials of hardship and suffering. Through grace we can triumph over temptation, discouragement, injury, and wrong. The grace of God enables us to overcome Satan and sin of every kind. Oh, the marvelous grace of Jesus! He saves, sanctifies, heals, keeps, guides, sustains, teaches, enlightens, and preserves us from harm. We need an abundant supply of grace for every day, and in Christ there is an abundant supply. Of His fulness (or abundance) we can all partake with full supply. We can reign in life by Jesus Christ through the abundance of His grace. Oh, it is wonderful! Those words spoken to Paul by Jesus are still true and applicable today. When we are denied the answer to our prayers, let us remember that grace will be there to help us endure the trial. Just to know that His grace is sufficient is enough to enable us to hold on and make a way for that grace to work in our lives. Grace does not go where it is not needed. When Jesus said, "My grace is sufficient for thee", Paul purposed to be true to Him regardless of the trial, thus making room for the grace to come. Many today do not have the grace of God on this account. They feel no need for the grace of God, therefore they do not seek it or make room for it to work in their lives. Humility is the door of entrance into grace. The Scriptures declare it over and over. God gives His favor and gracious help only to those who have the right and proper attitude before Him and others. Oh, let us magnify the grace and goodness of God and trust in Him for that grace every day.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Mr. McLaren and Mr. Gustart were both minsters who lived in Edinburgh. When Mr. McLaren was dying, Mr. Gustart paid him a visit, and put the question to him, "What are you doing, brother?" His answer was: "I will tell you what I am doing, brother: I am gathering together all my prayers, all my sermons, all my good deeds; and I am going to throw them all overboard, and swim to glory on the plank of free grace." It is when we live as this brother died that we can find triumphant living. When we put great stock in our works and our sacrifices, we will find self cropping up. This has always been a hindrance to living a triumphant life. We must work for God, but consider ourselves as unprofitable servants. We must stay humble before Him so that we can taste the fruit of victory. Wherein the law promoted the flesh, grace promotes God.

Jesus laid the ax at the root of the trouble. He told His disciples that after He went away the Comforter, or the Holy Spirit, would come. (John 14:16, 17). This fire of the Holy Spirit would cleanse their hearts (Acts 15:9) from all sinful nature derived from the fall of Adam. This is standing grace. An individual cannot remain long in a justified condition without displeasing God. God did not intend for us to stop with justification, but He desires us to "go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation for repentance." Heb. 6:1.

—Wayne Murphey

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October 27, 1985

AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

John 13:15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

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

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

Phil. 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Heb. 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.

I Pet. 2:19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

Memory Verse: And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. Eph. 5:2.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ in His conduct and service on earth left us an example that we are to pattern our lives after. From His throne in the heavens He is ready to send us help in carrying this out.

Word Definitions: *Example:* From the Greek definitions we draw some interesting things about this word. It means an underwriting or copy, an exhibit for imitation, or a specimen. *Vainglory:* Empty glorying or self conceit. "*Thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation.*": The pure Greek expression is "Counted not equality with God to be seized or held on to, but emptied Himself." "*Despising the shame*": Counting lightly the shame.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Christ Himself declared that His doings were an example for us to follow. He wants us to love as He loved. He was meek; we must be meek. He was holy; we must be holy. He suffered; we must suffer, also. He has gone above now. We see Him no more, but the shining example of His gracious life lives on in the Gospel. It is a life that we are now to live. We are to be imitators of Him, partaking of the same Spirit and attitude that He possessed. From the writings of Paul and Peter we are urged to take Christ as a pattern for our thoughts and lives. Why should one ever want to follow any kind of example? A wise person will gauge his life to follow examples that have proven outcomes of success and efficiency. It is a fool that takes no heed to the things he patterns after. To pattern after the world and conform to the styles of life in those around us who are vain and unwise is a very foolish thing to do. Everyone is following some kind of an example that they have seen in someone else. Think about this, and you will know that this is true. We are all affected by others. They have an influence on our lives. We are drawn to follow someone's example. Why not follow an example that has been proven over and over again as the most profitable and beneficial of all? Jesus put in practice and on exhibition the real life style that not only pleases God but brings to the individual the greatest joy and satisfaction one can have. Consider where He is now. He is exalted at the right hand of God in power and eternal glory. If we will walk in His steps we shall reach the same pinnacle of success and blessing from God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. In order to follow an example, what must we do concerning the example?
2. What are the things that we must consider about the example?
3. Why is Jesus such a good example?
4. Can we hope to share His glory without following His example of suffering and shame?
5. How are we to love one another and our fellow man?
6. What are we to do with the mind of Christ?
7. From our Scripture in Philippians, describe the mind and attitude of Christ toward erring humanity.
8. Is it possible for us to assume the same role?

9. Do you think that professed Christendom today, as a general rule, walk in Christ's example?
10. What is the best thing that you and I can do about it?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

When I survey the wondrous life our Saviour Jesus lived on earth, a holy longing to be like Him in my heart is brought to birth. I see His meekness coming down to mortal's vile and lowly stead, content to enter earth's domain within a lowly cattle shed. His zeal for right, His Father's cause the highest aim He held so dear, when just a child His Father's laws and business in His house kept near. I trace the steps He took, I see Him going down to Jordan's stream to be baptized fulfilling all the Father's law He did esteem. Beholding now the wilderness where, tempted of the devil sore, He held His ground and did not yield and then went forth with power more. I love to travel up and down with Him amid His earthly tread, and view the healings that He wrought, and hear the gracious words He said. He's my example, yes, He showed the kind of life that's best to live, the outreach to humanity and service noble e'er to give. I see no railing, strife, or press to get ahead of anyone, but faithful earnest toil and tear with patience got His work all done. No murmur fell from His sweet lips, nor ever once did He complain, although so oft without a bed He may have slept out on the plain. I see Him now with firm resolve make journey toward Jerusalem, well knowing all the sorrow's pain that in that place awaited Him. With courage all God's will to do, He rode into the city gate, to face the death He was to die, accepting all this cruel fate. He showed me how to be resigned, to be humiliated, too; He showed me how to die as God, someday, may well want me to. But, oh, I look beyond it all, and see Him crowned as King of kings, divine and holy evermore, the Prince of pure and heav'nly things. Be this my one and sole resolve: to follow in His blessed way, and imitate His acts of love and meet Him up in Heav'n some day!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

People seldom improve when they have no model but themselves to copy. When we set Christ up as our example we are offered a life of constant development. Too many people are hindered by philosophies of this world and find themselves going in circles. They become disillusioned, depressed and

suffer what modern psychologists term "a burn out". With Christ as our character goal, there is always something new and challenging to strive for. We progress from one victory to another; a life worth living.

God gave Moses the ten commandments to deliver to the people, who often failed to honor them. Christ brought to us an example of love. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." Much more profitable is this doctrine by example that Christ brought, than a doctrine by rule. Jesus said, "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me." John 12:32. As we follow Christ's example and portray His attributes, others will also follow Christ. There is nothing to be ashamed of about Christ. We can follow His example whole-heartedly, knowing that perhaps if others don't agree, at least they can respect our stand. It is when a person's religion becomes tacky, slothful and haphazard, that others will spurn it and despise it. True love is a positive drawing force and Christ was the perfect example of it.

—Wayne Murphey

Every Heart Has Its Own Sorrow

"Every heart has its own sorrow." There was a sad smile upon the lips that said it, and the eyes of the speaker were full of unshed tears, as if the heart rebelled a little, while a sigh stole up and was breathed out wearily. She sat in the full glow of the firelight, a patient, gentle woman, and on a low cushion at her feet was a young girl with her face hidden in her hands and sobbing passionately.

"Don't think so much about it, Maggie; it is all for the best. It seems strange and dark now, but the time will come when you will see that it was all right." All the time she smoothed softly the golden curls that fell over the flushed forehead—the head was lifted at length, and a fair face looked up, stained and swollen with weeping.

"I can't see how you can say this, Miss Levick. The time will never come when I shall see that it was all right."

The young face was hidden again, and tears dropped like rain through the small, white fingers. By and by they ceased flowing and the head was laid with a long, tired sob upon the lap where it had rested before. The hours went by in silence, while the firelight shone clear and steady in the room, sometimes bathing the watchers in its radiance, then flickering and going out like the hopes that they had cherished.

Maggie Harlan had cause to weep. Six years before her mother died, just as the sensitive, high-spirited child was learning to feel her need of a tender counselor, whose love was even greater than the many faults that tried it sorely. Her eldest brother graduated, and with impaired health went to Cuba for the winter. He never returned, so Maggie had only her father to cling to. Mr. Harlan almost idolized her, but he was an invalid, and felt that his child needed some influence besides his own in molding aright a character that already showed strong points, that might be shaped for good or evil.

Bidding farewell to the old home they removed to a quiet country village, where there was a long-established female seminary, and here Maggie had been to school, advised, aided, and benefited by Mrs. Champlan, the head of the school, and also the mother of daughters, causing her to take a warmer interest perhaps in the motherless girl, who not only proved an amiable pupil, but a brilliant scholar.

Mrs. Champlan employed numerous teachers, and it is with one we find Maggie. Miss Levick had been there only six months. She was not one of those brilliant characters that dazzle at first acquaintance; but she possessed a quiet, unobtrusive loveliness that won surely upon the affections of those who knew her. She had learned many lessons in the school of life; adversity and sorrow had been her teachers, and if they had made darkness in her heart, it was in this she had learned patience, and lip and eye told by their chastened beauty of a peace, storms could not disturb.

Maggie Harlan knew nothing of her history; she had come a stranger to Dalton. Well educated, a skilful musician, and speaking the languages with fluency, Mrs. Champlan was glad to employ her; and to Maggie especially had she proved a most devoted friend.

Mr. Harlan's health had been slowly but surely failing since the death of his wife, but his friends were so accustomed to his pale face and wasted figure that they little realized how near his feet were to the dark river. Hopeful and cheerful, he seldom spoke of bodily infirmities.

Three months ago he left home partly to attend to business in a distant city, and partly from the hope that travel might be of service to him. He only reached the place of his destination, was seized with severe hemorrhage, and died in a few hours. Only strangers were with him, strangers ministered to his last wants, and strangers sent back to his home the news of the desolation that had come to it.

It was a terrible blow to Maggie; all the more terrible for falling so suddenly. She moved about in a kind of stupor for several days, till the funeral was over, and she was left alone with no other friend than Miss Levick.

It was uncertain with regard to Mr. Harlan's property. He had always passed for a man of wealth, lived handsomely, and enjoyed all that money could bring. But Maggie remembered that he had often spoken anxiously with regard to the future, and it was with some misgivings that she awaited the investigation of his affairs. It proved as she feared. There was very little property beyond what would pay outstanding debts, and a very heavy mortgage was held upon the place where they lived. It was arranged that Maggie should go to Mrs. Champlan, graduate with the close of the present term, and then become a teacher.

This is the last night in the dear old home; all day has Maggie borne up bravely—now utterly overcome.

"It is a hard lesson to learn, darling, but some hearts have learned it, and when the agony was passed have blessed God for so teaching them. Sorrow sooner or later comes to all, and it works in the heart of each patience or despair. It all depends upon the way and manner in which they receive it."

"Perhaps you have the power to choose," said Maggie, "but I have not. It is not so much for you to be patient; it is your nature, and then you can't have so great cause for grief."

How Miss Levick's heart went backward at the words of this weeping child, while she repeated to herself many a precious promise.

Hour after hour they sat there; the sun had gone down, and the purple twilight shrouded the outer world; while Maggie's thoughts were busy with memories of the beautiful past, that was gone from her forever—shrinking from the future that looked so blank and cheerless, and keen agony as the present sorrow rose up in all its intensity—a radiant cup of joy dashed from her lips just as she was beginning to taste its sweetness, and her heart was full of murmuring and despair.

Miss Levick's words irritated instead of soothed her, and she could not help feeling there was not so much sympathy as she had a right to expect.

The teacher felt all this, and her tears dropped silently as she thought over Maggie's words.

"You have not so great cause for grief." There was a lesson in her past life that her heart prompted her to unvail for the instruction of the young mourner, and though she shrank from the task she determined it should be done.

"Maggie," she began in a low voice, "I have no home, Maggie. There are times when my path looks dreary to me. Once loving hands clasped mine, but one by one they have all lost their hold upon me and crumbled away into dust, while I am left to walk alone. I do not murmur at this, though there have been times when my heart has said, 'The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.' And if you will listen I will tell you how a heart more impulsive and passionate than yours was brought to rest quietly in the hands of One who doeth all things well.

"I was born in New England, and amid its wild, picturesque scenery I grew to love nature most devoutly—not calm, serene, quiet; I gloried in the war of elements, the play of the winds, the lightning, the thunder. When very young it was one of my pastimes to be out in the rain-storms; there was something in this akin to my own passionate nature. I did not like anything tame and restrained. My mother was a warm-hearted, loving woman, but so given to the world, so immersed in the whirl of society that she could not spend much time with her children. She saw that we were all fed, well dressed, well behaved, and her duty was done. I remember so well how prettily she looked—the dainty cap and collar, and when I used to put my arms about her neck and tell her how pretty she was, she would put me aside for fear I should spoil her clothes.

"My father was a proud-spirited man, who dearly loved my wild, uncontrolled ways; there was no danger of mussing him, and rare sport we used to have during his hours of leisure. I loved my father fondly, and people said that I had more influence over him than any other human being. Wealthy, and possessed of a social disposition, our house was a rendezvous for all. An Englishman by birth, my father was accustomed to seeing his sideboard well filled, and by degrees he grew to frequent it too often.

"When I was about twelve years old my mother died, and after four years spent in school I returned to find a great change in my father. He would at times be gloomy and morose for days together, keeping the whole house in a state of fear and discomfort by his sudden caprice and unreasonable exactions. This would pass away and he would appear as usual. These attacks grew to be more frequent, and at last came to be his habitual frame, and his frequent absence from home, which at first was a great sorrow to me, came to be looked for as a great relief."

(To be continued)

November 3, 1985

HEALING FOR THE SOUL AND BODY

Isa. 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.

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

Matt. 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.

I Pet. 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

James 5:13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

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.

17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

Heb. 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Memory Verse: And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Heb. 12:13.

Central Thought: Jesus purchased through the wounds and the stripes on His body a means of healing for the soul and for the body, also. He still heals today, and it is His will and pleasure for us to trust Him for our healing, both for soul and for body.

Word Definitions: *Bishop:* Director or Overseer. *Afflicted:* Undergoing hardship, trouble, or distress of any kind.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today has two main parts. The first is to establish the truth that Jesus did include healing for the soul and the body in His work of atonement. The second part declares that we today can and should trust Him for the healing that we need for body or soul. In the world this is a controversial subject. There seems to be more people these days that do acknowledge that there is healing in Christ. It would take a very blind and ignorant person to deny that healing was included in the atonement work of Christ. Such a person does not know the Scriptures. We can fully declare that Christ has purchased and arranged for healing for us, and not only that, but He still today carries on the healing ministry for those who trust and obey Him. Let us look with open face at these Scriptures, and may our hearts be inspired with faith. We have free access to the throne of grace. We can come to the Lord with any need we might have, and He will hear our prayers. It is a wonderful privilege to trust in the Lord. He can do far more than all the education of man could ever produce or figure out. From His throne in the heavens at the right hand of God, He still sends healing to His people. He is the great Physician. All the skill of man cannot equal the effect of one touch from His power. We must stress that the healing of the soul is far more important than the healing of the body. The soul is diseased, afflicted, and crushed. Christ can and will heal the inner man from all his troubles. This has the priority. Christ is more interested in the welfare of your soul than He is in this fleeting temple of earth that is destined to go back to dust. Let us pray for souls to be healed, souls who are bruised by the hand of the enemy, tormented by the devil. There is healing in Christ today. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Isaiah say Christ's stripes were for?
2. What about man needs healing?
3. Do we have the privilege to pray concerning our healing?
4. How can we be sure that healing is in the atonement?
5. What are some of the arguments against healing?
6. Is it supposed to be a hard thing to trust in God for healing?
7. What is it that availeth much?
8. What did Elias accomplish through prayer?
9. What is the most important thing to be healed?
10. Have you ever been healed?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Jesus paid the price for our healing when He bore the wounds and stripes inflicted upon His precious body. If He was willing to go through that much suffering to purchase healing and make it available to us, how much more willing is He to heal those who put their trust in Him and obey Him! It has been settled beyond all question in the Scriptures concerning the provision for our healing. Matthew quoted from Isaiah and declared that Christ Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses. The healing that Christ performed was on the merit of His stripes that He bore later. Today, seeing that He is the same as He was back then, we can look for experiences of trusting in His power to heal and deliver us. Oh, the soul of man needs healing! Souls are bruised and diseased by lust, greed, pride, jealousy, hatred, bitterness, envy, and dishonesty. Oh, how defiled and wounded are the hearts of men. What they need is healing from Christ. Thank God, we have witnessed numbers who have found healing in Christ. When nothing else would do or help, men and women have found the Saviour with just the healing touch they needed for their lives. All manner of sickness and disease has been healed by this great Physician. The children of God really don't need the art of science and medicine. It is better to trust in the Lord anyway than to put confidence in man. (Psalm 118:8.) Let us be encouraged about this. An experience of healing from Christ is surely a great blessing. When you pursue faith, put yourself in God's hands, and experience His healing upon your body, it will convince you of the reality of this truth. Look at these Scriptures now, and face up to them. Rejoice and thank

God for the healing that He has promised and strive to be in a condition of soul that you can take hold of it in a time of need.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

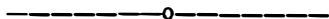
God places the greatest emphasis on the healing of the soul. He is definitely concerned about our earthly needs, but sickness of the soul carries a far greater consequence than sickness of the body. First, "Confess your faults one to another [which is healing of the soul] that ye may be healed [physically]. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man [spiritually healthy] availeth much [temporally]."

"And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." I Cor. 12:28. When God set the offices in the Church to fulfill its needs, His first gifts were for the spiritual edification, then bodily helps.

A doctor, who was instrumental in developing a vaccine, when commended for his work in saving "lives", turned to a minister and said, "Ah! would, like you, I could say 'souls'!"

When some people pray, they agonize so that it seems as if they are trying to overwhelm God into granting their petition. One of the verses in our lesson says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." If Christ was willing to suffer that we might be healed spiritually and physically, certainly He is more than willing for such to take place in our lives. Prayer is not the overcoming of God's reluctance, but the taking hold of His willingness.

—Wayne Murphey



November 10, 1985

JESUS CHRIST,

THE HIGH PRIEST OF OUR PROFESSION

Heb. 2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him 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 succor them that are tempted.

Heb. 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

Heb. 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.

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

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

Heb. 7:25 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.

Heb. 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Memory Verse: Who is he that condemneth? 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: Jesus Christ ascended up on high to the right hand of God to intercede for the souls of men. Through Him man can be saved, and through Him we have access to God, the Father. He is our great High Priest.

Word Definitions: *Succor*: help, aid, or assist. *Consecrated forevermore*: perfected forevermore. "*Became us*": This means that Jesus was made fit and proper for us.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The reconciliation of man to God and God to man was the purpose of Christ's advent to this world. He came to bring God and man back together. His work was to offer a sacrifice that would appease the wrath of God and at the same time show a love to man that would turn man's wayward heart back again to his Maker. The definition of a priest is one who officiates in a mediatorial office. There were many priests in the law system, but one main High Priest. There are many priests in the New Testament system, also. Every born-again child of God is a priest, but there is one main High Priest, and that is Jesus Christ. The New Testament priesthood works under His jurisdiction. The book, or epistle, of Hebrews is the only book in the New Testament that names Jesus as the High Priest. Very little is said in any of the other epistles on the matter. To come out and say that Jesus Christ is the High Priest could have been a very dangerous and controversial stand to take. The writer of the Hebrews grasped the Psalmist's expression in Psalm 110:4, which says, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." He shows in His writing that the Levitical priesthood is no longer of God, that Jesus Christ is now our high priest after another order, that of Melchizedek. He explained that Melchizedek was a priest of the most high God, not because of birth, and that death was not a close of this priesthood. History tells us that Melchizedek was a priest because of His faithfulness to God and righteous bearing before man that gained him their respect and confidence. That is the order of Christ's priesthood. Christ intercedes for mankind. Whosoever will can come to Jesus and find favor

with God according to His Word. Jesus oversees and superintends the sanctuary now, which is the Church of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was reconciliation needed between God and man?
2. To effect a reconciliation, what must be done?
3. Why should we consider Jesus, our High Priest?
4. What will happen if one does not consider Him?
5. How does our High Priest relate to our infirmities?
6. Who made Christ the High Priest? What Scriptures did the writer use to stress this point?
7. What is Christ able, as High Priest, to do?
8. In what way was Christ made fit to be our High Priest?
9. Can you name some of the differences between the Levitical priesthood and that of Christ and in what ways Christ's priesthood is superior?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

How wonderful that we have someone at the right hand of God, there in His holy presence, acceptable and loved, who can bring our needs and burdens to an Almighty God! This we do have in Jesus Christ. If we can but lift up our eyes away from the vain and fleeting things of this world, we can view our Lord and Saviour pleading for us like He did for Stephen in his dying hour. Jesus suffered in our place and took our sins upon His body to the cross. He atoned for our errors and wrongs, our sins and transgressions. Through His blood our iniquities can be washed away. We can be right with God again. How wonderful! Oh, that more people could get their eyes open to the glorious opportunities we have with God! We know that Jesus does understand our mortal state. He was here one time. He remembers how it feels to be in a corrupt body that is weak and buffeted by the devil on every side. He has power from God to strengthen and sustain us in these hard places. We can come to Him at any hour of the day or night and get an audience with Him. He loves to visit and help us. That is what He is at the right hand of God for. Oh, let us use Him and get the fullest advantage of Him. He can save to the uttermost. He can bless and comfort more than any human being ever can. He views this mortal life in every aspect and can communicate to us the wisdom and knowledge we need to chart our voyage over the seas of life. Oh, can we comprehend the blessedness of our privilege to have relations

with this One who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens? He is our Friend, ever near to help us. He wants to take us to Himself some blessed day! Let us go often to His throne of grace and commune with Him daily.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest after the order of Melchisedec.” When God swears something, we can rest assured that it will be for time and eternity. Christ will never lose the office of the priesthood. Not only will He always remain in the office, but God will never regret giving Christ that position. God created Adam and established him as caretaker of the Garden of Eden. He placed him in a leadership role and Adam failed. God gave man a responsibility to live uprightly and he shirked his obligation. It was not long until God repented that He had even made man. (Gen. 6:6). What a contrast to Christ. The English word, “priest”, comes from the word “presbyter”, which indicates “elder or leader”. An elder or leader is one who is tried, proven faithful and capable of performing the duties allotted to his care. Such was Christ. He is a faithful mediator who has proven Himself faithful in all things. He became as man and endured faithfully the temptations of the flesh. He proves Himself a capable leader, for we find the multitudes flocking to Him and note His loving care and concern for them. We may be unable to depend upon man, but Christ is entirely worthy of our perfect trust. God Himself was satisfied with Jesus for He trusted Him to carry out the plan of redemption, which Christ faithfully did. Now He lives to make intercession for us continually.

—Wayne Murphey

November 17, 1985

JESUS CHRIST, THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-

ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Eph. 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Eph. 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Col. 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

Memory Verse: And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. Col. 1:18.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ has been given by God to be the Head of the Church of God. This means that He controls, governs, guides, sustains, and nourishes His people in all things.

Word Definitions: *Head:* Director, chief, principal, leader, governor, most important or foremost. Webster. *Voluntary humility:* The Greek word for voluntary means willing, or inclining. This indicates a humility that is the product of human endeavor with a wrong purpose to deceive or put one's self over.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In all the writings of the Gospels that tell us of Christ's ministry here on earth, we do not find a place where Jesus called Himself the Head. He confessed to be the Christ, and Master, and Lord. However, the apostle Paul recognized Christ from His exalted position in the heavens to be the Head over all things to the Church. Paul compares it to the husband as being head of the wife and he also likens it to the head of the human body. All the functions of the body have their controls in the brain which is housed in the head. After Jesus Christ had arisen from the grave and showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs to His disciples, He ascended by the power given to Him of God up out of sight into the eternal realm of God. There He was given a seat of power and authority at the right hand of the Father. From that position He wields His power and grace in the best interests of the souls of men who believe and obey Him. He is the great High Priest who intercedes to God for the Church, but He is also the Head and controller of the Church. The government is upon His shoulders. (Isa. 9:6.) Every child of God must abide in Christ. He will uphold, comfort, and sustain every saint of God through all their lifetime. He surveys the work of the Lord and sends forth the Holy Spirit to direct each member of His body, or Church, in what labor He wants them to be in. He guards, protects, nourishes, and cherishes His Church. It is a beautiful and wonderful truth, but Paul also inserts a warning concerning some who are not directed by the Head in their functions and ways. It is the responsibility of every individual child of God to see to it that they are abiding in Christ with respect to the rest of the body. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What were the three main things that Paul wanted us to know and understand?
2. What did Paul say was wrought in Christ?
3. Where did God set Christ?

4. What did He give Christ to be?
5. Why does God not want us to continue to be children?
6. How are we to get out of this immature or juvenile state?
7. How does Christ, as Head, affect the Church?
8. Does the Church need some man to be a visible Head, and let Christ be the invisible Head?
9. Is there any danger or possibility in a person functioning in a religious profession and not be really connected to the Head, which is Christ?
10. What kind of challenge does this lesson bring to you?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

When we abide in the Lord, and He abides in us, then He is our head. We become part of the great body of Christ, which is the Church of God. In all things Christ has preeminence. His ministers are servants who humbly help the other body members to live for Him. There have been unwise incidents in the history of Christianity when men have exalted themselves, thus putting themselves apart from the Head and outside of His body. If only everyone who professes to know Christ would abide in Him and wait for Him to direct their ways! He wants to fill all. He wants to fill all things in all His people. Thus He will be their Head. All will go well, and the work of the Lord will prosper. The Church will be united and kept in holy bonds of love and harmony. All the members will cooperate together and be increased and edified. However, let someone lose their connection with the Head and begin to be puffed up in their own minds, and you will have great woes and troubles. It is so important that we be connected to the Head. God designed the Church like a body. There are joints and bands that link the body up together. Receiving impressions and commands from the head, the body operates and functions. Notice these expressions: "fitly joined together," "compacted by that which every joint supplieth," and "the effectual working in the measure of every part." It will mean much for this to really be fulfilled in people. It can be if everyone will keep his right connection and relationship with the Head.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

God's children should recognize that Christ is a very capable leader. As the Head of the Church, He has led many thousands of souls into the realms of glory. If we, as individ-

uals or as a body of people, stray from the true way, it is due to the fact that we have failed to follow our Leader.

Many stray from God when they begin to feel self sufficient. Gideon led the Israelites against the Midianites and won a great victory. Then the men of Israel desired Gideon to rule over them. He replied, "The Lord shall rule over you." This is the attitude that we are to maintain. Though we be used of God, we must watch lest we think more highly of ourselves than we ought.

Let us keep our faith in God and be willing to follow Him. We are not to have a "blind faith" that ignores the problems of life, but a faith which faces circumstances as they are, then rises above them with full assurance in Christ.

Following Christ is something positive. It is not an excuse for a lack of character strength and does not make a mouse of man, as some suppose, but it is a decision to choose the wisest manner of living so as to obtain an assurance of eternal glory after this life.

Paul said, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened." Eph. 1:18. I believe what he meant by such a phrase was to obtain a true vision of Christ as He is; realizing that He, as the head of the Church, is greater than any obstacle or difficulty that can enter our lives. May God help us to keep our hand in His, until He leads us safely home.—Wayne Murphey

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November 24, 1985

JESUS CHRIST,

THE DISPENSER OF HEAVENLY GIFTS

Eph. 4:4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

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.

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

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.

I Cor. 12:8 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 prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Memory Verse: 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. 1 Cor. 12:12.

Central Thought: As the Head of the Church, Christ has the power and authority from Almighty God to distribute and bestow spiritual gifts and functions upon qualified and faith-

ful men and women for the edification and progress of His work and cause.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today coincides with the parables that Jesus gave, one concerning the talents in Matthew 25, and the other concerning the pounds in Luke 19. It concerns the distribution of divine powers and gifts for the operation of His Body in this world. From one Scripture in Psalm 68:18, Paul gets his thought about Christ giving gifts to men. He speaks about the unity of things in the profession of godliness: one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all. Although we are all in one body with one faith under one God, etc., we are all gifted and endowed with various and different gifts and operations. Every one does not have the same gift or function. Paul clearly states that we do not all have the same office. Realizing that such a state can have its problems and conflicts, Paul is exhorting us to remember that the body is like that in a natural way, and we as a Church are to function just as harmoniously and cooperatively as the human body. There has been in the history of the Church, problems that have arisen over this very thing. Each member and each gift is for the profitable edification of all the body. The hands, the eyes, the feet Paul likens to the different gifts of Christ. How wonderful that Christ is the Dispenser and Giver of these wonderful gifts! They are for the perfecting and maturing of the saints for the work of service. Being all in one body, we derive benefits and blessings from one another. This is God's plan, and it pleases Him to see it all worked out and functioning like He planned.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Paul stress the oneness of God before He mentions the different gifts?
2. What are these gifts given for?
3. Where do these gifts come from, and Who gives them?
4. What were these gifts that Christ gave?
5. Are all of these gifts alike?
6. Is there any danger of these gifts conflicting with each other?
7. How can any problem or conflict be avoided?
8. Who decides who gets the gifts?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Any kind of business or organization that has a function or operation must be organized efficiently and controlled diligently. It is that way with the Church and the work of God. It must be organized and controlled. God and Christ are the ones who control it. They know who to give the gifts to. They know who is qualified and who can handle certain gifts. The apostles are those who are sent out and commissioned as ambassadors or delegates for Christ to plant and preach the truth. A prophet is a foreteller of future events, one who warns people of coming calamities and dangers. An evangelist is one who announces the good news of the gospel, a preacher. Pastors are shepherds who feed the flock of God and take oversight thereof. Teachers of the Holy Scriptures work along with the Pastors in helping establish the truth in people's minds and hearts. A person with the word of wisdom can give counsel and guidelines for difficulties and times of crisis. The word of knowledge operates to help boost the soul in richer and fuller light and understanding on the Word and will of God. The gifts of faith, healing, and miracles work hand in hand to benefit the souls of the saints in trials, afflictions, sicknesses, and other distressful times. The discerning of spirits is like a built in germ-fighter, to help ward off false spirits from doing damage to the body. The gifts of tongues and the interpretation thereof enables the gospel to be preached in other languages. Then there is the gift of helps, or assistance, that can be used in a wide area in the Church. The gifts of governments and leadership are given by the Lord also. All of these gifts are needed in the Church and are a great blessing when in operation. Let us all covet earnestly the best gifts and see to it that we stay in the love of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There are a number of gifts in the body of Christ. Each one has its place and is very important. When a person is filled with the Holy Spirit, he is then given a gift. Many times the devil will be right there to push a person ahead of God's plan for him, and that person many times becomes discouraged. Zeal without knowledge is a hindrance to souls. The Bible says, "For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Romans 10:2. Yet, on the

other hand, we do not want to dampen zeal. I am afraid that not very many have enough zeal. But zeal is a beautiful work and very profitable when it is according to knowledge. God will give that knowledge, but one must wait in prayer upon the Lord to have it. We notice in the life of the Apostle Paul that after his conversion and being filled with the Holy Spirit that he went into Arabia and spent three years before he went up to Jerusalem. Then he spent fifteen days with Peter and also conferred with the other Apostles. God was preparing him for a work. Many times we have seen in the lives of others how God was preparing them for a work that was not known to them, but as they moved on they moved right into greater responsibilities and a greater work for God as they kept humble.

There are gifts of giving. This must be prayerfully administered. The gift of mercy is much needed. Many times oil of mercy is needed. There are many gifts that are not mentioned in the Bible, but there is a work for all.

God is gracious as well as wise to plan and ordain gifts and callings for men who are redeemed and called by His holy purpose. It is important that we be not ignorant of the spiritual gifts and the function of each in the body of Christ and the work of the Lord. God looks down into a man's heart and weighs his capabilities and what he can handle, and distributes to each accordingly. With each one working in the capacity that God has called and given, the work progresses and souls are blessed in the body and in the world. In this lesson consider the different gifts and callings of God, and count it a privilege and an honour to be chosen to be in the body of Christ regardless of what the Lord may bestow upon us.

—Marie Miles
(Written in 1974)

EVERY HEART HAS ITS OWN SORROW

(Continued From Page 20)

"Months passed on, and at last I woke up to know what others had known for a long time, that my father was drinking deeply and losing constantly at play. O, Maggie, I can never tell you the terrible suffering through which I passed. I left society and shut myself up at home, determined, if it was possible, to save him. I had influence with him; but how could I appeal to him—how let him know that I knew the places he frequented and the company he kept!

"Then change came. I grew indignant that he should bring all this misery upon me—the poverty and disgrace that I felt sure must follow such a course. Then in a moment of tenderness I would plead and expostulate with him, begging him with tears to leave his habits of dissipation for my sake, for his own sake, for the sake of my dead mother; while he would talk and weep, telling me that he could not break away; there was something continually drawing him to the gaming-house—he knew it was ruining him, but he must go, while the bitter, burning tears would roll over his face. Little by little every available article of property was disposed of and poverty stared us in the face.

"At length my father's constitution failed under the wear of constant excitement, and he was forced to leave his customary resort and confine himself to the house, and not unfrequently to his bed. Remorse preyed upon him, and his sufferings at times were terrible. With all this I was not impatient, neither did I leave him, for it was a part of my being, the love I had for him; and though at times a flood of bitterness possessed my soul—wretched, helpless, tortured with distress of mind and body, I sought to comfort and console him.

"He lingered for two years a pitiable wreck of what he had once been, and died, I trust, repentant, leaving me alone and utterly destitute.

"I had relatives in Baltimore, said to be wealthy, and for a few weeks I trusted in their kindness; but there was no notice of my letters for a long time, and then one came couched so blandly, sympathizing with me in my loss, hoping I was well, but saying not a word of the future, or manifesting the least care or concern for what might become of me. Bitter were the tears, but it roused me. I determined to rely upon myself. My father had been a thorough scholar, and I was educated according to his system. There was nothing superficial, and the extent of my reading, both in English and the classics, was far more than the course usually prescribed for ladies. I also inherited a talent for music which had been carefully cultivated, so that I was well able to teach any branch that might be desired. Through the kindness of our family physician I obtained a situation in a seminary at some distance from my home, as music teacher. My deep mourning, together with my extreme youth, procured sympathy and kindness from many; but I rejected all the overtures and led a life of perfect isolation, as much alone as if in a wilderness. I aimed to be kind and courteous in my demeanor to all, but no one

was admitted in the least degree into my confidence, and every emotion was carefully concealed from observation. Satisfied with my books and my music, learning language after language, not that I liked study so passionately, but it made me forget, I felt that I never could be again what I had been. My chief solace, when not studying, was at the instrument; and here with my pupils did I spend hour after hour, reveling not alone in the written music, but improvising according to my will. These pieces pleased me best, for here I could pour out my anguished feelings, the mournful, withering wail of my despair.

"How long this might have lasted I can not say; but my heavenly Father, against whom my heart, without knowing it, rebelled so grievously, was pleased to deal mercifully with me, and sent me in my withering, deadening grief a great and precious gift. You have often asked me about this picture, Maggie," and she took it from her pocket. It was the likeness of a noble-looking man in the prime of manhood.

"It was my husband, my noble, generous husband," and she pressed her lips to the dumb semblance.

"Harris Levick was an inmate of the same boardinghouse with me, but for a long time we were as perfect strangers. He pitied me at first; and not repulsed by the manner in which his advances were met, he persevered until my heart gave way, and I learned first to regard him as a friend, a brother, and after that to love him with all the devotion of one whose love flowed in but one channel to one object. Once more I entered society because he wished it, and again sunshine rested in my heart and on my life.

"Months passed; we were married, and I left my labors at the seminary to preside over a home simple in all its furnishings, for Harris was not wealthy, but oh, what a paradise it was to me! We had books, flowers, and music. We had young hearts full of love for each other and hope for the future, and for one short year I forgot all the bitterness of the past; and when love's signet ring was clasped with one sweet pearl I felt that God was good to me, and thought I was grateful for his blessings. Four years with rare delight swept over me, and when God touched my treasures I found that my heart was as proud and as bitter as ever.

"Harris was a lawyer, with fine talent and a steadily increasing practice. For a young man he was said to excel, and all looked forward to a brilliant future for him. How many times we talked over the home we should possess in a few

years, planning its surroundings and its adornments with almost satisfaction, hardly thinking that change might mar the program; and still would Harris often close this dreaming by, 'If God wills,' and seated by his side with no wish of anything beyond his love, I too could respond, 'If God wills.' Yes, it was easy to say, 'Thy will be done,' when that will brought me only what I craved.

"We had been married four years. Willie, my precious baby, was three years old, the joy of our home, the dearest, most affectionate little heart. There was a particular case on the docket. My husband had need of all his skill and ability, besides it was necessary that he should meet personally with several connected with it, and on whom much depended. This rendered a journey to Chicago necessary. How I remember the morning he left me; bright and beautiful as it was, I could not help the tears that would come. True, it was comparatively a short journey, still I could not keep down the sobs.

" 'I shall be gone only a week, darling, it will soon pass. Cheer up, here is Willie, bright as a sunbeam, and I will write if possible every day.'

"Try as I would, I could not restrain myself.

" 'Why, Allie, had I thought you would have felt so bad I would not have gone.'

" 'It is very foolish I know, Harris, but it seems to me that I shall never see you again,' and I wept convulsively.

" 'God bless and keep my treasures,' said Harris.

"I kissed him passionately again and again, and then saw the door close after him.

"It was two days before I heard from my husband; he was well, business prospering, would be home in the time specified, and I was sorry that I had been so foolish; the days were pleasant, and he needed change; he might have made a pleasant excursion of it if I had not been so babyish; and I told Willie of all my weakness, and I promised I would never give way again. I knew my husband was never so happy as when at home; he was ambitious in his profession, a stirring business man; it would be necessary for him to go away often, and his leaving should never be clouded again. Thus I resolved. Willie, putting his dimpled arms about my neck would say to me, 'Good, pretty ma, don't cry any more when pa goes away.'

"The week was nearly passed, Harris would close his business and leave in the morning. How my heart thrilled as at night I dressed myself carefully, and put the little suit his father liked best on Willie! Then, seating myself and taking

my baby on my lap, I rocked him and told him stories to while the time away till I heard the tramp of the iron horse.

"Nine o'clock rung from the little French clock on the mantel. A moment and the rumbling of the cars was heard, while the whistle screeched out its warning, and Willie bounded from my arms, 'Pa come, pa come!'

" 'Not yet, darling,' and I whiled him back to wait patiently. It was far past his usual bedtime, but his eyes were never brighter. This was an unusual occasion, and he could sleep later in the morning. An hour passed, it seemed to me an age; again and again I went to the door to listen. By and by there was a carriage at the gate, and footsteps coming up the graveled walk.

" 'There is more than one; my husband must have brought company, that is what has kept him so long at the depot.' And I took Willie by the hand and opened the door. Four gentlemen stood on the steps, but my husband was not among them. I staggered back, and should have fallen but for the kindly care of one.

" 'Tell me all; I can bear it; my husband is dead.'

"I did not need the words, I knew it. But when they told me of the accident, the terrible collision, the fearful death of so many, and my husband among the number, I felt the floor slipping away from me. My grief was too bitter, my eyes were dry, and my brain like bursting. Why should God take one and not the other? And I clasped my child to my heart; and if I ever prayed earnestly it was that we might both go.

" 'We thought it would be a comfort to you to see your husband; the body will soon be here.'

"And the humane man began making preparations to receive it. All the while I sat mechanically clasping my child tightly and passionately, asking to be taken out of a life so wretched as mine would be without his presence.

"The door opened, and a litter borne by four men was placed in the middle of the room. Gently they arranged everything, and with the delicacy of those who know what sorrow is, left me alone with my dead.

"There lay my husband dressed just as when he left Chicago—his face calm and serene, while the blood still oozed from a wound in the temple, and his breast was mangled and bleeding; still I could not make it real, while Willie begged so hard for 'pa to wake up.' Poor child! he could not realize his misery; he did not know what it was to be fatherless."

(To Be Continued)

December 1, 1985

JESUS CHRIST, THE HEAVENLY BRIDEGROOM

I Cor. 6:15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

II Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Eph. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Rev. 19:6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, these are the true sayings of God.

Memory Verse: Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; Ephesians 5:25.

Central Thought: From the right hand of the most high God, Jesus Christ is lover of the souls of men as a heavenly Bridegroom. We who are saved and sanctified know the joy and the fulness of this love and spiritual fellowship with Him.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The idea of the relationship of Christ as a Husband to the Church was not a new one. The very fact that God had instituted the sacred rite of marriage from the beginning shows that it has spiritual references. The 45th Psalm is a wedding hymn or song of loves. The writer in Hebrews 1:8,9 directly applies the content of that Psalm to Christ as the Great Bridegroom for the Church. The Song of Solomon has many metaphors and expressions that typify Christ as being a Bridegroom. Here is an aspect of Christ's office to the souls of men that appeals to the heart in a very special way. We have drawn from Paul's writing and from the words of John in the book of Revelations a clear view of Christ as He is pictured being as a Husband to His people. Isaiah 54:5 speaks of our Maker being our husband. Also in Isaiah 62:4 and 5 we have strong terms that describe our relationship with Christ as that of a bride to a husband. Our land was to be called Beulah, which means "married", and the Lord would delight in us like a young man delights in a virgin. Just count up all the qualities of a loving, affectionate, faithful, kind, gentle, firm, true, righteous, holy, pure, and strong husband that would be an answer to any worthy maiden's prayer. Survey all of this and you will have a real good picture of what Christ can do for a soul, and what He can be to a soul. He is the lover of our souls. All that are drawn to Him by His cords of love are united in a holy bond of love to Him and love to one another. Satan does not like this sort of thing, and he is out to spoil this kind of experience. He will keep people from seeing it, and then will seek to beguile those who do have it to give it up.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How close a tie can we have with Jesus Christ?
2. How are we joined to Him?
3. In what condition or state are we to be presented to Christ?
4. By what means are we to become a chaste virgin, after being defiled with sin?

5. What does Satan want to do to that relationship with Christ?
6. How did Christ show His love for the Church?
7. See if you can list the things that make a good husband? How many of these things can you say are true of Christ?
8. What kind of wedding garment does the Bride of Christ wear?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

A husband, a real and true husband, loves his wife and manifests it in many ways. He loves her not only for the pleasure that she brings to him, but because of the tender regard and loving care that he feels for her and her state in life. He will provide for her wants, and needs, and desires. She needs love and affection. She needs comfort and security. She needs means to go and to do with. She needs protection and a strong arm to lean on. She needs that heart to heart communication, someone to counsel with and discuss the matters that weigh upon her heart. Jesus Christ fills the bill for all of these things for us. His love and sweet affection to our souls is felt so richly. Oh, how He cares for us and sees after our every need! He even grants to us our desires as He sees best to do. He communicates with us as we open our hearts to hear His Word. He supplies all of our needs both spiritually and temporally. He cares for our mortal temples, too, for they are the temples of Christ, also. Oh, He is our Heavenly Bridegroom! He has made a covenant with us to stay with us forever. If we should ever fall short of His pleasure, He will not cast us away, but will seek to counsel and admonish us in His way. How well it would be if every soul could get a vision of this thought. It would heal backsliding and enlighten to victory. We are joined to Him in the Spirit, and that union is more real than the physical union. We are to keep ourselves unspotted and undefiled from this world. He wants that kind of wife. He keeps us from these worldly things if we will follow Him faithfully. He gave His life to purchase for Himself a spotless Bride. Let us take heed that we be part of that pure Virgin who will wear that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Christ is the perfect bridegroom. The question is, then: What kind of a companion are we, in this spiritual marriage?

Sad to say, there are many who treat Christ as they do their earthly companion; with great indifference. In order for a marriage to succeed, both parties must work at it. This spiritual marriage will not prosper if it is a one-sided affair. It must also be maintained. One of the most important ingredients in a good marriage is communication. Where there is not interaction through sharing and caring, even in the small events of life, the marriage soon becomes rocky. We must learn how to take every care to God and express our feelings to Him. Then we must be in tune to His will for our lives. Another thing that always gives a marriage a boost, is expressing thankfulness, gratitude and love. These things should always season our prayers of petition to God.

The very first bride was Eve. Adam looked upon her and loved her because she was a part of him. She was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. When Christ was on the cross, His side was opened up. This was a symbol of the creation of His spiritual bride. Through His sleep in death, God created a bride suitable for Christ. This means that we, as His bride taken from His side, have the mind of Christ. When the world looks upon us they should see a reflection of His image.

—Wayne Murphey

December 8, 1985

JESUS CHRIST, THE SECOND ADAM

Rom. 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

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

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

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

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

Heb. 2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man,

that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

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.

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

21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

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

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

Memory Verse: 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. Hebrews 2:9.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ came to earth to restore to humanity what was lost in the fall of Adam from fellowship with God. Just as in Adam we were all made sinners, so in Christ we can all have life. Just as in Adam all men die, even so in Christ shall come the resurrection.

Word Definition: "*Similitude of Adam's transgression*": The sin like Adam accomplished. Adam transgressed the one commandment given to him. After this there was no law until Moses. Yet sin was there, working in the heart of man; and death reigned even though there was no law to make sin accountable.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The thought of Christ being the second Adam ought to be very encouraging to us. Now we know what Adam did and what influence he had upon all the earth. Sin came into the world because of his and mother Eve's disobedience to God. That close tie and fellowship with God was severed. Man had to be driven from the garden and the access to the tree of life. Great sorrow filled his heart. He no longer could sustain life easily like he had been able to do from the beautiful garden. He had to till the ground by the sweat of his brow. Thorns and thistles withstood his endeavors. The toil broke down his strength little by little. However, it affected mostly the disposition of his offspring. The seed of sin grew in everyone's heart. David testified in Psalm 51:5 after he had been blighted by sin: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." This is not a reproach upon his mother, as some have stated. It is true with every other birth in the world, with the exception of that of Jesus Christ. Man is born into sin. The seed of sin is within him. This was all the result of Adam's transgression. Not only sin came upon all men, but death came because of sin. Everyone must die. In being the second Adam, Christ must overcome sin and death, bringing righteousness and risen life to mankind again. That He did, thank the Lord. We can be forgiven of our sins and cleansed from the sinful seed, thus bringing hope of sharing in the resurrection from the dead. All this comes through Christ, the second Adam.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is our inheritance from Adam?
2. How did he procure this for us?
3. From the quotation in our lesson from Psalm 8 and reading from that Psalm we can get a picture of Adam's state. Could you, in your own words, describe Adam's lovely situation before he sinned?
4. Could we say that the fall of Adam and the change that took place in his life was a tragedy?
5. Why is Christ called the second Adam?
6. What must be done to restore to man what Adam lost?
7. When will we fully be restored to Adam's original state?
8. In what sense can we have that restoration now?
9. Is there another phase not yet fulfilled?
10. When will the final state be accomplished?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

We are so impressed by the writer's application of the Scriptures he quotes from the 8th Psalm in our lesson. He quoted this passage in Hebrews 2:6-8. Reading in the Psalm we are impressed at the view of Adam's high position in the creation. All things were put under his feet. We know that because of sin Adam lost this estate. However, the writer is applying this Psalm to Christ directly. Even in verse 5 he spells out the dominion of the world to come, not given to angels, but to Christ. Just as Adam ruined the earth because of his transgression, even so Christ comes to restore life and health to all. This is so wonderful to behold. Sin has been conquered. Christ led captivity captive. He broke the chains that bound us in Adam. Sin and death have lost their sting and victory. We believe that in believing in and following Christ we will be resurrected from the grave some blessed day to live forever. We shall arise from our graves and mount up to meet Him in the air. Thus shall we ever be with the Lord. Yes, we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour now. We see not yet all things put under Him. Sin has been conquered and death has been robbed of his victory. However, death has not yet been destroyed and put under. Death is still permitted to take its toll of humanity. Some day the second Adam will quicken those whom death hath severed and they shall come forth to see good things in that blessed world to come. If we would have this kind of hope, then we need to be sure that we are partaking of the salvation and deliverance that this second Adam can give us now in our souls. We can be cleansed from sin completely and live in fellowship now with God in the Spirit. Only then can our calling and election be sure to partake of eternal life with Him. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When Adam sinned in the garden, he lost God's image out of his soul. He was no more like God because God cannot sin nor will He have any part of it. Adam's sin separated him from his Creator. Then when offspring began to arrive, they were born in Adam's likeness because that was all Adam possessed to pass on to the succeeding generation. It was impossible for Adam to transmit God's likeness to his children because he didn't have it any longer himself. Since Adam begat children in his likeness, they, too, passed on what they

had inherited, and so on down to us yet today. All are born in the likeness of this flesh and possess from birth its qualities and characteristics; selfishness, greed, hatred, envy, jealousy, etc. But Jesus was the product of a different lineage. He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, therefore He came to us in God's likeness, not possessing the qualities of the flesh as above mentioned, but rather possessing the qualities of His Holy Father. He inherited no sinful nature and He committed no sin of His own volition, therefore He was without spot or blemish before His father, and so it was upon Him the sins of the whole world were laid because only He could offer a sacrifice that was not marred. God saw the sacrifice He made and was satisfied to the point that He would accept that perfect sacrifice and in turn pardon the transgression of poor lost humanity like you and me. God gave His Son that we might live, Christ gave His life that we might live, but what are we giving that we might live? May God help us each one to be our very best for Him who gave heaven's best for us!

—Clifford Wilson
(Written in 1969)

December 15, 1985

CHRIST SITTING ON DAVID'S THRONE

Acts 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand.

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

Heb. 1:13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

Heb. 10:11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

I Tim. 6:14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

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

Central Thought: Jesus Christ ascended from this earth after His resurrection and sat down at the right hand of God. The Scriptures declare that this fulfills the prophecy of Christ as the fruit of David's body to sit upon his throne. He is now seated on David's throne as King of kings and Lord of lords, from henceforth expecting and looking forward to the day when all things shall be put under His feet.

Word Definitions: *Potentate:* ruler or officer with supreme power and authority.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The first part of our lesson today is part of Peter's message given to the crowds on the day of Pentecost. Peter quotes from David in three places, all from the Psalms. Psalm 132:11 contains the prophecy of the fruit of David's body to sit upon his throne. Psalm 16:10 declares Christ did not see corruption. Then Psalm 110:1 declares that Christ was to sit at the right hand of God. These three Scriptures as Peter quoted them prove that Christ is now seated on the throne of David. While a good part of the professed Christian world look for Christ to sit on a literal throne over in Jerusalem, we rejoice to know that He is now seated at the right hand of God ever living to

interceed for us. It was not to the angels that the right hand of God was given, it was to Christ. After He had offered up Himself in a perfect acceptable sacrifice to God for the sins of mankind, Christ ascended up to the heavenly element and sat down at the right hand of God. The world goes on and takes little thought about this, and He permits it to be so. Unbelief and sin rule the hearts of people and blinds them to this blessed Jesus seated in the heavens. The heathen rage and the kings of the earth imagine a vain thing, but he that sitteth in the heavens laughs them to scorn. (Psalm 2:1-4.) He is going to show someday to the world that He is the King of glory. They could see Him in that position now if they would but turn their eyes from the vanities of this evil world and look up by faith and obey His precious Word. Yes, our gracious Lord and Saviour is seated on David's throne today, interceeding for us, and directing His great economy in the lives of men and women, boys and girls. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What had God sworn unto David?
2. What two things did David prophecy concerning Christ?
3. Where is David's throne?
4. What is Christ doing on David's throne?
5. What is Christ looking forward to and expecting?
6. What is He going to show in His time?
7. What did Christ accomplish with His sacrifice?
8. What did Christ do after He had made one sacrifice for sins forever?
9. When will His enemies be made His footstool?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

David's throne is a symbol of power, blessing, and authority. It means victory over sin and evil. It means that Christ rules and reigns in the hearts and lives of His people. We can triumph in Christ always. If people hear the gospel and accept the message of truth, we rejoice. If they will not hear it, we are still triumphant and rejoice in Him. Anyone who is foolish enough to reject this triumphant Christ and resist His appeal for their souls will pay dearly for this great mistake. Jesus Christ is on the throne of David today. We ought to bow down before Him, love and adore Him. We ought to kiss and embrace Him, worship Him purely, receive instruction and discipline from Him, lest He be angry and we perish from the way, for His wrath can be easily kindled by our resisting Him. He has

sat down on the throne of David at the right hand of God to intercede for humanity, and will continue to do so until the end of time. He is earnestly yearning for the consummation of the ages and the end of the world when He will gather together His Bride for eternal dwellings with Her. We shall see Him in His beauty over there. In His likeness we'll behold Him, He is waiting for us at the portals. We who are in this body do groan, being burdened, yearning for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body. We long to be free from this vile body, and the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, but let us remember that Christ is longing for this, too. Throughout the ages He has tarried. The heavens must contain or hold Him until the time that God sees that it is enough. May God help us all to hold fast our faith and be rewarded on that great day that is soon to come.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Have you ever noticed how difficult it is for one who has held a position of power to relinquish that position to someone else? Even after the position is handed to another, there is a tendency in the one who previously held it to continue to advise and instruct. David held absolute authority over the Israelites. His reign was during a period of warfare. The Israelites conquered and ruled other nations. David held life and death in his hands. Many riches were amassed during his reign and He was the sole ruler over it all. Yet, David gladly relinquished His throneship to Christ. "For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand. Until I make thy foes thy footstool." When Peter spoke these words on the day of pentecost, he was illustrating that it was not David who had ascended into the heavens to send the Holy Ghost to them, for David himself had acknowledged that it was Christ who was sitting at the right hand of God. David recognized that there was one greater than himself, one capable of conquering every foe.

—Wayne Murphey

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December 22, 1985

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

Matt. 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Luke 2:7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Memory Verse: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, fathered by God Almighty through a miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit. He came into this world to be the Saviour for all people.

Word Definitions: *Swaddling clothes:* Strips of cloth. *Espoused:* engaged to be married. *Privily:* secretly.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We will break into our regular lesson series for a special study on the virgin-birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Perhaps we may be tempted to think that we do not need to study about this as it's something we already know about. However, let us look into it again with the realization that there is always something more to gain as we study the Scriptures. Let us especially think about the miracle of Christ's birth and the problems that it presented. Luke informs us in the first chapter of his Gospel that the angel Gabriel paid a very special visit to Mary one day with the news that she had been chosen of God to be the mother of the Saviour. The thing that bothered Mary about it was that she knew no man. The angel explained it thus: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:35. Nothing unusual happens without side effects. Mary was betrothed to Joseph to be married. They had not yet been married. I feel confident that there was some real difficulty involved with this. Just how this all was negotiated we do not know, but it had to come out. Mary was with child. I am sure that she endeavored to communicate to Joseph what had happened and why she was with child. Now whether He just could not grasp the situation or lost confidence in Mary is not certain. He was minded to put her away secretly. He did not want to get her in trouble with the law or society. Can you not see the problem that he was faced with? The Lord intervened. God spoke to Joseph through the angel that all was well. There was shame and humiliation, but it had to be for this to come to pass. Let us look to God in every difficulty that living for Him presents and we know that He will help us. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What problem was presented when Mary was found with child?

2. What did Joseph decide to do about it?
3. What changed his mind?
4. What did the angel say that the son of Mary would do for His people?
5. Why did Mary have to lay her first-born son in a manger?
6. What was the purpose in God allowing this difficulty to be?
7. What did the angel give the shepherds as a sign to know the Saviour when they found him?
8. What was the tidings that the angels gave to the shepherds, and what was their song?
9. What does this mean to us today?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

All the time that Mary and Joseph waited in anticipation of the birth of her first-born they were inwardly conscious of a most wonderful joy. This was no ordinary baby that she was carrying. She knew that this child was from God. There could be no doubt. The angel visit to her and the angel visit to Joseph stood out indelibly in their minds. Mary had a lot of things to ponder over. No doubt it gave her strength and courage to brave and endure the long and difficult trip to Bethlehem. The hardship and privation of being without comfortable lodging might have been a real trying ordeal along with the pains of bringing forth her first-born son, also. Oh, can we not imagine the wonderment and joy than sprang up within their hearts as they were visited that night by the lowly shepherds from the fields who told them of the wonderful sight of the angels and the message that they brought! Yes, it was true! Christ was born. The Messiah (Hebrew word for Christ), the long looked for Messiah, at last had come. It is so wonderful to visualize these sacred scenes of long ago, to image their reality in our hearts today. It really happened just like the Bible tells us. Emmanuel, God with us! God coming down into human flesh to visit and redeem a people for Himself! As we welcome the Christmas season this year, let us dwell on these sacred scenes and truths as never before. Let us give ourselves anew as a living sacrifice to Jesus. In the coming year let us look forward to greater progress in spiritual life and in the work of the gospel of Christ.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How do we perceive this small baby who was born nearly 2,000 years ago? When Simeon saw the infant Jesus, he said, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Luke 2:30-32. Everyone would be better off if they could perceive Jesus as that great light to lighten their way through life.

When the gospel was first preached to the Saxons of Northumbria, by Pauliness, King Edwin sat in council with his chiefs and wise men to consult whether they should give up their idols and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the councilors arose and said, "In winter, O King, when thou art sitting in thy hall at supper, with a great fire, and thy nobles and commanders around thee, sometimes a little bird flies through the hall, in at one window and out at another. The moment of his passage is sweet to him, for he feels neither cold nor tempest; but it is short, and from the dark winter he vanishes into the dark winter again. Such, O king, seems to me the short life of man; for we know not whence we come or whither we go. If therefore this new doctrine can teach us anything certain, let us embrace it." Thank God that the light (Jesus) was born into the world, and He is reborn in our hearts by faith.

—Wayne Murphey

December 29, 1985

JESUS CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN

II Pet. 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

I Thess. 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

I Thess. 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

II Thess. 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

James 5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

Memory Verse: And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:3.

Central Thought: This very same Jesus that we have been studying about will on an appointed day come again in the clouds to destroy this present world, raise the dead, punish the wicked, and those who know not God, and take His people to that beautiful world of everlasting life.

Word Definitions: *Dissolved:* The Greek word here means "loosened", which refers to the atoms (which scientists acknowledge as being held together by a strange and mysterious power) will fall apart and disintegrate into nothing.

LESSON BACKGROUND

From Peter, and Paul, and James we have the prophecies concerning Jesus coming again. The days are hastening on their way toward that great and final day when these things will be fulfilled. Everything else that we have studied in this series of lessons about Jesus in His mediatorial office at the right hand of God has been verified and proven true by the saints of God down through the years. Let us be assured that He will keep His promise and come again just like it has been foretold. It may be nearer than we might think. "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." The pulse of the world today is the striving for peace and safety. It matters not how secure man makes himself in this present evil world, and how prosperous they become in the material things of life; it will all be dashed from them in a moment. The world will be destroyed at Christ's coming. There will be no intervening rapture and tribulation to give people another chance to be prepared to meet Him. When Jesus comes the dead will be resurrected, both saint and sinner, both evil and good, both just and unjust. It will all take place at the same time. He will come to take vengeance on them that know not God, and to be glorified in his saints. There will be no interlude of a thousand years between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. If we are going to be ready and accepted of Him, we will have to be in that condition when He comes. All grudging, malice, strife, and bitterness must be out of our hearts. It will mean so much for us to be accounted worthy to stand before the Son of Man in that day.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What will the day of the Lord come as?
2. What does this mean concerning the disposition of men at that time?
3. What will happen to the heavens and earth which are now?
4. How should we live and what kind of condition should we be in to be ready for that day?
5. What do we look for, seeing all these things will be destroyed?
6. What will happen on that day?
7. Who will be resurrected?
8. What will be done to the wicked? What will He do with the righteous?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

To be ready to meet the Lord is the highest resolve and desire of the child of God. It should be on our minds every day. Today might be the day. How our hearts and minds should be away from this present evil world and fixed on those treasures which are above where Christ is now seated on the right hand of God "expecting" until that day comes when He can come again. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Hebrews 9:28. Paul said that a crown of life will be given to all of those "who love His appearing." In our lesson we find the words: "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." Oh, if we will live faithfully to Him and keep Him uppermost in our hearts and minds, we will welcome the glorious sight of Christ coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory! We are exhorted to be persons in all holy conversation and godliness, and be found in him in peace, without spot, and blameless. These are solemn charges and challenges to us. Jesus told us in Luke 21:36: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Won't it be worthwhile to suffer as a Christian and be rewarded over there! Just think of the saints who have gone on before us being raised back to life and vitality and awareness again! This coming year could very well be the last of this old planet earth. If the Lord's coming is twenty years away, then we could count it very close, could we not? If it is ten years away, that would be closer still. Or if it is five years off, see how close it is! For these are but little whisks of time, so soon to pass by. May the Lord direct our hearts into His love and patient waiting for Christ.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

If we should say that the Lord's coming is near, we would perhaps be labeled as an alarmist. Our purpose is not to alarm, but through an awareness of conditions about us and a careful study of the Bible, we feel confident to say that Christ could come today, and He would be justified in doing so. The signs of His coming have been fulfilled.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of

God." That which brings terror to one person is a cause of joy to another. The baying of a hound on his track strikes fear into the heart of the hunted. The same sound would cheer someone lost in the woods and looking for a way out. It makes all the difference in the world at which end of the cannon you stand when it is being fired in battle. Its belching fire is the same in either case, but in one instance, it is against your enemies, and in the other, against you. There is no more dreaded thought to the sinner, than that the trump has sounded the return of the Lord. The Bible says that the saints are to comfort one another with these words. (I Thes. 4:18).

There were men and women on that night of 1833, during the great meteoric shower, who were filled with terror. One mother awakened her boy with the cry, "Sandy, Sandy, get up, will you? The day of Judgment has come." Instantly the boy was alive to that call, and was on his feet shouting, "Glory to God! I'm ready"

—Wayne Murphey

EVERY HEART HAS ITS OWN SORROW

(Continued From Page 40)

"Days passed. They put my dead from me. How was I to live without him? Alas! had I read the lesson rightly I should perhaps have been spared another. Hardly three months had passed when scarlet fever broke out in the village, and Willie sickened and died.

"My cup was full; the waves of bitterness rolled over me; I was ready to curse God who had dealt so severely with me; and no words can describe the darkness, like the shadow of death, that settled over my soul. I neither wept nor prayed. I thought of God only as an enemy whose hand was relentlessly against me, and every power of my body and mind seemed locked up by a stony despair. I followed my baby to the grave, but it was as one who neither saw nor heard. I went back to my lonely home and brooded silently over my hard fate.

"The autumn days hung their beauty all around me, but I had no eyes to see, no ear to catch the joyfulness floating around me. Christmas came, a bright, beautiful winter morning, and I stood by the window watching passers-by. There were no friends, no Christmas cheer for me. Why was my fate so pitiless? As I stood by the window, my heart making bitter responses to every peal of the bell, our clergyman passed, a kind, benevolent-hearted man; he bowed kindly, and then entered.

“ ‘Are you not going out this morning, Mrs. Levick?’ ”

“ ‘No sir. I have nothing to rejoice over, unless it be that every drop in my cup has turned to bitterness.’ ”

“He did not answer at once, but taking both my hands, and looking earnestly into my face said, ‘Almost every house was smitten; we lost two of our darlings.’ ”

“He passed on to the church, and presently I heard the voice of the people. Every note came directly to my ear, for the door was being opened and closed continually.

“ ‘Ah!’ thought I, ‘they can sing, they can observe Christmas; they have lost only children, I have lost all.’ ”

“When the service was over I watched to see the people go back to their homes. My heart smote me not a little as I saw that not less than one-half the congregation wore the badge of bereavement. There was a widow with her fatherless children; feeble age tottered on missing the strong arm of manhood on which it had been accustomed to lean; little children, motherless, walked with demure steps by their father’s side; and there a lonely couple thinking of the little ones that used to follow them with dancing steps.

“ ‘What a wretched, suffering world it is!’ and I bowed my head upon my hands and wept, the first tears I had shed since they took my baby from my arms. Just then baby’s old nurse came in—the dear old motherly heart—the sight of my grief touched her.

“ ‘He knoweth what is best; each heart has its own sorrow,’ and she held me in her arms just as she used to hold Willie. Then she talked to me a long time of God’s goodness and love; that he knew and pitied our anguish; that this life was not all, there was a future, and that it would not be long till we should stand on the farther shore.

“Somehow her simple words went directly to my heart; and although I wept till I was nearly exhausted it did me good, and that night I slept like a child.

“I awoke next morning with a strange feeling of weakness in every limb, and a sense of bewilderment and confusion that I tried in vain to shake off. Past events, even my recent bereavement, would rise up for an instant before me, and then float away into dim distance. I was prostrate with high fever, through which I was tenderly watched by Mrs. Bryan, aided by friends whose approach I did not now repel.

“After long delirium and unconsciousness I awoke at last to reason, and for several days bore reluctantly with what I fancied was Mrs. Bryan’s needless caution in keeping the

room so dark. At length I could bear it no longer, I wanted to see the sunlight once more, and insisted that the window should be opened. Poor Mrs. Bryan put me off till tomorrow, then the curtains were rolled up, and the blinds thrown open; I knew it, for I felt the pure air on my cheek. But, alas! I could dimly see the sun shining through the rose tree, and the white spire of the village church; all was dim and faint as before.

"It was not that my room was darkened; the light had gone out of my eyes, I was almost blind; I should never see the sunshine nor the flowers again; all my life I must be a helpless, dependent creature, a burden to myself and to others.

"I remembered then my ingratitude, the hardness of my heart, because he had taken my idols, and I felt the Lord had justly smitten me. Day after day I could see less of the flickering sunlight, and at length it was gone to me entirely.

"Oh how beautiful now seemed to me the broad green earth! How I longed to look upon the sweet flowers! Once I would not look at them because they reminded me of those his hands had so often gathered for me. Now I longed but to look at them, while the song of the birds filled me with pleasant music. For hours did I sit and listen to the robins as they crooned out their love songs in the old elm tree, when suddenly a thought struck me: 'These winged creatures warble and bask in the sunlight, answering the purpose of their existence, while I, a rational creature, am gloomy and sad of heart, and full of complainings. I am of more consequence in His sight than a bird.' These reflections brought tears, and I found myself offering up a prayer that I too might become as happy in the purpose of my life. This prayer was the earnest wish of my heart, and it was not long till I found the Saviour, and, leaning upon him, felt happier in my blindness than when I walked alone with my wicked heart.

"My chastening was severe, but the Lord raised up friends in my necessity. After three months of total blindness, the result of long-continued nervous excitement, my sight was gradually restored. In the meantime I had made the acquaintance of a family from the South, who pressed me so kindly to return with them to their own home that I could not refuse.

"This home was in the suburbs of New Orleans, where the mild air and sweet perfume of orange groves did much toward establishing health. Alas, the blight, war and desolation should sweep over such a home! How I felt I hardly know, nor in what way I found myself in camp and hospital. The lengthened watch that knew no variation in the long wards, the

terrible suffering of the brave men who had periled their all for the Union, and I ministering to their wants, aiding them to bear suffering patiently, binding up their wounds, above all, pointing them to Him whose precious love had brought Him to do more for them than they had done for others—sad as it was, it was no doubt the very thing for me; I forgot my own griefs, personal sorrow was unthought of. I felt thankful for the benefits I had received, leaned more and more upon His protecting care, and looked forward, not blindly and with mute despair, but with hope and a joyful reunion on the other shore. For me I can say, 'It is good that I have been afflicted.' I feel a firm confidence in the goodness and mercy that will not leave me nor forsake me."

The hands of the clock were slowly creeping past the midnight hour; the leaping flames were gone; in their place were only embers glowing redly under the white ashes, even as hope will live and glow in a strong heat under all the smoldering ashes of disappointment.

Maggie rose from her seat and folded her arms about her teacher's neck.

"I pray God to teach me the sweet lessons you have learned. I am so sorry that I said 'you had not so much cause for grief as I.' But why do they call you Miss Levick?"

"Your question is very natural. It was simply a mistake on the part of Mrs. Champlan, and I had not energy enough at the time to correct it. After that I felt it was just as well, I should escape questioning."

They went forth in a few hours, each to her appointed lot, and the angels looked down upon them both.

ALONE

"Alone with God!" the keynote this
Of every holy life,
The secret power of fragrant growth,
And victory over strife.

"Alone with God!" in private prayer
And quietness we feel
That He draws near our waiting souls,
And doth Himself reveal.

"Alone with God!" earth's laurels fade,
Ambition tempts not there;
The world and self are judged aright,
And no false colors wear.

"Alone with God!" true knowledge gained,
While sitting at his feet;
We learn life's greatest lessons there,
Which make for service meet.

—Selected

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