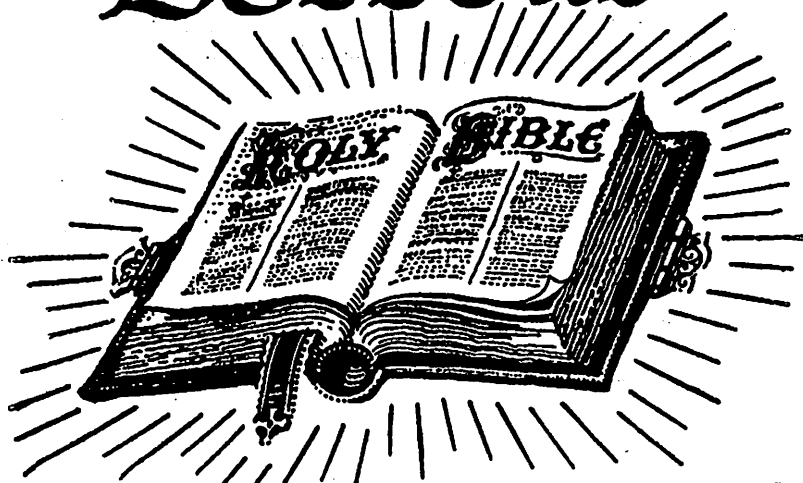


# Bible Lessons



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

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Vol. 29, No. 4  
Oct., Nov., Dec.  
1996**

**Faith Pub. House  
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# **Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People**

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**Volume 29**

**Oct., Nov., Dec.**

**No. 4**

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**Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of  
Jesus Christ and His Church  
Edited by Leslie C. Busbee and Wayne Murphey**

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## **THEME FOR FOURTH QUARTER, 1996**

For our Bible studies this quarter, we will consider the many wonderful lessons contained in the writings and ministry of Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ. God has graciously preserved the accounts of the labors of this precious servant of His and also the soul nourishing writings of his epistles to the various congregations and individual brethren. We find in his expressions and the way that he handled the scriptures in their meaning and application great blessings of inspiration and enlightenment. We find our beloved brother Paul bringing out truths that had been hidden through the ages, great doctrines that no one had been able to expound before so plainly and lovingly. We have been greatly inspired many times through the years of our Christian life by what Paul taught in his sermons and epistles. And we trust the spirit in which they were written will make these lessons and studies a real blessing to every one. The apostle Paul dealt with many different subjects in his writings, but in all of them we deeply discern the sweet spirit of Christ working so wonderfully.

—Brother Leslie C. Busbee



**OCTOBER 6, 1996**

### **THE WRATH OF GOD AGAINST THE UNGODLINESS OF MEN**

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

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

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

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

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,  
23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

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

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

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

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

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

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

31 Without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Romans 1:18.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Almighty God, who created the world and man, is sorely displeased with the course man has taken in opposition to His holiness and truth. He has made available the knowledge of His will and is ready to assist man with the obedience that He requires. But, since man persists

in his foolish, erring ways, God is determined to bring him to death and eternal destruction.

### DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS

(Romans 1:23), "*Changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man*": Because man lost sight of the Spirit of God and the reality of unseen and eternal values, he transferred the glory and praise belonging to God to the flesh and material things.

(Romans 1:26, 28), "*God gave them up,...God gave them over*": God withdrew His restraint and good Spirit that helps shield and safeguard a man from going astray into forbidden paths, and allowed man to go the way of his foolish inclinations. "*Change the natural use into that which is against nature*": Being cut loose from the discipline and control of godly restraint, man plunges headlong into habits and ways of life that are progressively ridiculous and sickening. This is explicitly referring to homosexuality. "*Reprobate mind*": A mind that is unapproved and rejected of God; worthless and void of judgment. "*Things which are not convenient*": Things not right, proper, becoming, or fit.

(Romans 1:27), "*Receiving that recompense of their error which was meet*": Receiving the proper reward for their straying from the way of righteousness. Every sin and disobedience receives a just recompense of reward. (Hebrews 2:2.) A life contrary to godliness and holy habits is cursed of God and the curse is manifest by the afflictions and calamities that follow such shameful ways. I am persuaded to believe that the woeful "AIDS" epidemic that is spreading in our society is the judgment of God because of homosexuality and corrupt passions.

(Romans 1:29), "*Debate*": Quarreling. "*Malignity*": Bad character, evil habits, and mischief.

(Romans 1:30), "*Despiteful*": One who insults, mistreats, and injures.

(Romans 1:31), "*Implacable*": One who cannot be brought to a truce or agreement of peace.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today is drawn from the epistle of the apostle Paul to the congregation of believers in Rome, the capital of the Roman empire. As it was the center of the known world, it was also the center of all the evil traffic and concourse of the wickedness of men. Paul expresses himself in this epistle that he had a longing to visit this part of the world and was ready to preach the gospel there. He said that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; because he knew that what it had done for him in delivering him from sin and the ungodly ways of life, it was able to do for anyone else who would believe and obey. He stated that therein, (that is, in the gospel of Christ), the righteousness of God was revealed from faith to faith, that is, from the faithful prophets and preachers of Christ to those who would accordingly believe and obey. With this, Paul addressed the discourse that we have in our lesson today. And the very things that he describes here are rampant in our world today. Men living with men, and women living with women, are on the increase; and not only so, but they are more and more out in the open demanding recognition and justification by society. This was the terrible sin of the men of Sodom who sought to get hold of the two angels who had come to Lot's house to inform him of the impending doom of that city. This is one of the many corrupt practices in the catalog of sin and transgression. The wrath of God against these things is clearly revealed in the holy scriptures and the preaching of the gospel of Christ. The ages have waxed long, and God is about to bring judgment upon a corrupt world who has cast off restraint and godly fear.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is man without excuse for his wickedness?
2. What causes man to become vain in his imaginations?
3. Why has man exalted the flesh more than the Spirit of God?
4. What happens when God gives a man over?
5. What causes people to do things that are not proper nor right?

6. What in our lesson makes us to know of God's wrath?
7. What are some of the results of living ungodly?
8. Why is God righteous in meting out destruction to man?
9. By what means can the child of God overcome these things?
10. Why did God give man up to these vile affections?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

The clouds of God's wrath and righteous vengeance are hanging low over this present, evil world. God is angry and grieved with the way men and women are living. He is angry and highly displeased with all the unbelief that is being manifest in people's lives. The wickedness of men who have cast off faith and obedience to God's laws have reached a depth of shame unequalled before. With every generation has come more evil. It was bad back in Paul's time, but it is much worse today. With the advance in communication and transportation, many evil minded people are keeping in touch with each other and the flow of evil is increased. Paul mentions what is called today homosexuality. Men live with men, and women live with women in shameful relationships. It is sin and abominable in the sight of God and His holy people. People could not and would not commit such evil things if they had the right sense of righteousness and judgment. But God has given them over.

A few years ago the abortion of little unborn children was an undercover thing against the law. Now the law upholds and protects such practices of murder and bloodshed. But the time is coming when such will be required at the hands of those who have so done. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of deliverance from sin to a life of purity, perfect love and holiness.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

In our lesson, we notice that twice it is said, "God also gave them up" and "God gave them over." These are serious statements from the God of heaven in relation to a person in

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

—Marie Miles (Written in 1976.)



**OCTOBER 13, 1996**

### **GOD'S PROMISED JUDGMENT AGAINST SINFUL MAN**

Romans 2:1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

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

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

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

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

7 To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

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



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

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

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

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

Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Romans 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. II Corinthians 5:10.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The day is coming when God will punish and bring judgment upon the inhabitants of this world for their wickedness. He will reward the righteous with life eternal and will punish the wicked with everlasting anguish and destruction.

#### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

(Romans 2:1), *"Thou that judgest doest the same thing"*: Man is so prone to judge and condemn his fellow man while he is guilty of even worse practices. It is a common disposition in carnal man to magnify the faults in his brother and be unaware of his own misdeeds. This will not affect nor stay the judgment upon himself.

(Romans 2:4), *"Despiseth thou the riches of his goodness"*:

To despise is to lightly esteem and think against. God is so good and patient and long suffering and forbearing. He withholds His wrath and judgment and allows stubborn man to go on in his rebellious way. But does man appreciate it and take advantage of it? No, very seldom.

(Romans 2:8), "*Contentious*": Argumentative, not subject to God, determined to please one's self, going against authority and the counsel of the godly.

(Romans 2:11), "*Respect of persons*": Partiality, respect for and acceptance of the face, favoritism. There is none of this with God. God does not look on outward beauty or comeliness. He judges a man according to what he has in his heart.

(Acts 17:31), "*He (God) has appointed a day*": God has promised in the holy scriptures that He will one day bring mankind into open judgment and confrontation with Himself. We will have to answer for how we have responded to His offers of love and salvation.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our last lesson, we considered what Paul wrote concerning the terrible condition that mankind had gotten into because they had rejected the knowledge of God. Today we continue in his writings which remind us that all of this wickedness that man is allowing in his life is going to be brought into account with his Maker in a final day of judgment. Along with our scriptures in this second chapter of Romans, we have the closing of Paul's message to the men of Athens on Mars hill from Acts 17:31. Paul mentions the promise of God's judgment again in Romans 14:10-12 and our memory verse from II Corinthians 5:10 declares it again. There are many other scriptures, not only in the New Testament but also in the Old Testament, that vividly declare God's decree to bring man to judgment and mete out punishment for his stubborn persistence in his sins. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What causes men to condemn others when they are themselves guilty of the same evil?

2. Why is man without excuse?
3. What can we do to keep from being hard and impenitent?
4. What is man doing for himself when he hardens his heart and will not change from his wicked ways?
5. How can a man count lightly God's forbearance and longsuffering and goodness?
6. To whom will God reward with eternal life?
7. What will He give to the wicked?
8. What is God going to judge in that last great day?
9. How has God given us assurance that He will judge the world by Christ?
10. What will every one have to give an account of in the day of judgment?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

There are several things that we are warned about in our lesson today. The first is that it is of no value to judge our fellow man for something he is doing when we are guilty of the same thing and of other things just as bad or worse. We are then warned to not despise the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and longsuffering. People do this so often. God lets them have chance after chance to repent and change their ways. But they count it lightly and go on in the forwardness of their own desires and pleasures. But the warning is also given that such hardness and refusal to repent and change our ways is but building up the account of God's wrath to be poured out in that last great day. God is going to render to every man according to his deeds. Paul also put it, "the things done in our body". But people are so prone to forget that the evil ways they are following are coming up before God and will be remembered against them in the judgment. Paul said in another place that "some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." I Timothy 5:24 It takes a lot of humility and true repentance for one to open up his case before God and get his sins sent on to the judgment through the blood of Jesus and the gospel. It is so much easier to let things slide by and do nothing about it. But the sins will

be trailing close behind and will be there to condemn us in that day. We are also warned that God is going to judge the secrets of men in that day. God knows what is down on the inside of people, the cause of their actions, and the root of their problems. Man seems to not know his own heart, it has such a tendency to be deceitful. Also we have the warning that every man will give an account of himself to God and not of his brother. Let us be sober and take diligent heed to these warnings.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

There seems to be two different motivations for judging. One of them is ignorance. It happened once that upon his first visit to the Sistine Chapel, a tourist could see nothing admirable in Michelangelo's frescoes. Nor did he hesitate to "snarl his displeasure." However, he decided quite wisely, that perchance his judgment might be wrong. He therefore kept returning to those works of art until the beauty they embodied was born anew in him. He began to see their deeper meaning.

This tourist judged Michelangelo's work out of ignorance. Generally, the only loser in a situation like this is the one who does the judging. We can judge other people this way. Because we do not know them, and because they may act or think a little differently than we do, we decide they are wrong. If we become better acquainted with them, we may find their spirit an admirable one.

Some people judge God through ignorance. In our lesson Paul said, "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law:..." Rom. 2:12. Although ignorance is not an excuse, God has made a differentiation between those who had the law and those who didn't.

There is also a motivation for judging that goes deeper than ignorance. There are instances in which people know others, and still turn against them and judge them. The stimulus for this motivation is "selfish reasons," and is not only destructive to the one who is judging, but can cause turmoil in the lives of many. The Pharisees were guilty of this self-motivated pursuit, and Jesus told them, "But woe unto

you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." Matt. 23:13.  
—Wayne Murphey

■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
**OCTOBER 20, 1996**

### **GOD'S WISDOM AND WORLDLY WISDOM CONTRASTED**

I Corinthians 1:17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

I Corinthians 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. I Corinthians 1:21.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The ideas and thoughts of men void of the Spirit of God and His holy inspiration are offensive and contrary to God and work great destruction in the soul of man. God has chosen to work in simple and despised ways to bring all of this fleshly wisdom to nothing so that man can see his need of true wisdom.

### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

**"Wisdom":** State of being wise, which is discerning and judging soundly and dealing sagaciously concerning what is true or false, proper or improper, choosing the best ends and the best means for accomplishing them; discreet, opposed to foolishness. "Sagacious" is defined as quick, keen, and accurate sense and perception. "Discreet" is defined as possessing discernment or good judgment in conduct and speech; prudently silent, not hasty nor rash. (Webster.)

(I Corinthians 1:17), *"Preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words"*: The wisdom of words refers to the natural ability of men to speak and entertain people with eloquence and great powers of oratory that command people's admiration and

praise. This kind of ability to charm and fascinate the listeners was greatly prized and desired among the Greeks. *"Lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect"*: God wants people to have a vision of the reproach and shame of the cross that will bring humility and death to pride and the sins of the flesh. Preaching with men's persons in admiration and with excellency of human eloquence has a great tendency to distract the mind from the reality of the cross of Christ and what it really means.

(I Corinthians 1:18), *"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness"*: The simple message of the gospel of Christ is sufficient to save the contrite and believing soul. If the one who hears the message is not hungry for the truth, and has no conviction for sin, then the gospel is foolishness and of no value. And absolutely no human craft of added attraction can be of any real purpose or value in accomplishing the work of salvation.

(I Corinthians 1:21), *"The world by wisdom knew not God"*: There were many great philosophers in the Greek community back in those days. Among them were Cicero, Plato, and Aristotle. Their wisdom searched high for explanation and the utterance of the counsel of God. But it failed to uncloud the mystery of God that was upon the minds of men. Only the plain and simple gospel of the crucified and risen Christ could bring back the knowledge of God that had been lost through the fall of Adam.

(I Corinthians 1:27-28), *"Foolish things, weak things, base things, things despised, and things which are not"*: The word "things" is not in the original text. He is speaking of foolish, weak, and despised people who God chooses to use in the preaching of the cross.

(I Corinthians 1:30), *"Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom"*: Christ Jesus becomes the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption that we need. The Greek word for "made" means to generate, produce, or bring to pass. Note the things listed that Christ produces for us and their order: Wisdom, (the fear of God and the true sense of our need of His salvation), righteousness, (the justification and atonement for sin), sanctification, (the power of the Holy Spirit

and the risen Christ to make a person holy and without blame before Him in love), and redemption, (the final work of resurrection from the grave to an incorruptible body to live forever).

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our lesson today, we have drawn from Paul's first letter to the Church at Corinth. After greeting them and commending them for their faith and progress in the grace of Jesus, Paul warned them concerning the contentions that were declared to be among them. It seems that the whole Church at Corinth was in a state of dissension. "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." He beseeched them to all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among them, but that they should be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. He pointed them to the one Head, even Christ. He, himself, Paul, was not their head. He disowned any importance of him baptizing them, but stressed the great commission he had followed in preaching the simple gospel of Christ. And here he introduces the thought of the contrast of the wisdom of men and the wisdom of God. It is clear that Paul was fearful and set hard against worldly wisdom getting mixed in with the work of the gospel. Why else would he have gone to such effort and extent to say so much about it? Let us note the various places where Paul quotes from the Old Testament Scriptures. In verse 19 he quotes from Isaiah 29:14. Verse 20 is from Isaiah 33:18. Verse 31 comes from Jeremiah 9:23,24. In 3:19 he quotes from Job 5:13 and in verse 20 from Psalm 94:11. Paul firmly based his conclusions and sentencing from the Scriptures. He is declaring that the wisdom of this world, that is, the wisdom of carnal and unregenerate minds, is utter foolishness with God. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. The meaning is that God captures or traps the worldly wise in their own devices.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Paul not want to preach with a show of words?
2. What kind of effect is the cross of Christ to have on us?



3. Where does the wisdom of this world come from?
4. What will be the end of wisdom that comes from human reasoning?
5. Is worldly wisdom any threat to us today?
6. Why is preaching considered foolish by the worldly wise?
7. What does the preaching of the cross mean to those who are saved?
8. What will the worldly wise call a person who wholly follows the Spirit of God?
9. In what way is the flesh getting praise and glory in our world today?
10. How can we be sure that we are being influenced by the wisdom of God and not the wisdom of this world?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

We live in a society and world dominated by human reasoning and worldly wisdom. And there is extreme danger in being contaminated and influenced by this terrible disease of the human mind and heart. Especially when it contradicts the holy Word of God are we going to have to be on our guard against its evil inroads. In the Pilgrim's Progress, Christian was influenced by Worldly Wiseman to not take the way to the narrow gate as Evangelist had directed him. Worldly Wiseman tried to influence Christian to go the way of Morality, Legality, and Civility rather than going the way of the cross for the deliverance of his soul from the condemnation of sin. We have the same carnal spirit working in the world today. Instead of taking up the cross and denying the flesh we have people who preach that that is not necessary, and that all one must do is to believe in Christ and join the church of your choice.

Worldly wisdom will counter every teaching of the Holy Word of God. It will allow a person to make a profession of being a Christian without suffering the shame and reproach of the cross of Christ. It will dull and dim the vision of real godly and holy living. Let us pray for the wisdom from above to guide our souls through this dangerous world! —Leslie C. Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is a vast difference between wisdom and knowledge. Men may create impressive, technological wonders through knowledge, and yet lack greatly in wisdom. Solomon, the wisest man to live, possessed an "understanding heart," which is a great example of what true wisdom is. This is something God gave him. Inclusive in an understanding heart is the desire to help others, and not just the knowledge to profit oneself. Because Solomon had compassion for others, as well as perception, he was able to help many.

Have you ever considered the devil in the context of wisdom? He plainly shows that wisdom and knowledge differ. Although the devil is knowledgeable and smart, he does not have wisdom. He does not have an understanding heart. He does not seek the welfare of others. He probably considered himself very smart when he afflicted Job, but look at the long range effect. Thousands of people have taken courage from Job's example of steadfastness and have been able to defeat satan. The devil worked and schemed to get Christ put to death on the cross, but millions of people have enjoyed victory over him because of the salvation Christ's death purchased.

Always keep in mind, the wisdom from God will seek out the welfare of others, which knowledge alone, or what the world calls wisdom, does not do. —Wayne Murphey



OCTOBER 27, 1996

### THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN

Romans 3:9 ...We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

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

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

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it

saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

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

Romans 7:5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. I John 3:4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God gave the law in Moses and the Holy Scriptures to help us to be aware of our sinful condition.

Unless a person becomes conscious of his guilt of sin and condemnation before God, he will not be willing or desirous to seek salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

(Romans 7:5), "*The motions of sins*": The passions and desires, the affections and influences, the temptations and lusts, all of these inclining toward sinful practices that are forbidden by the law of God, yet desirable and attractive and alluring to the soul. "*work in our members*": The passions and desires of the principle of sin in the heart gave energy and efficiency to our hands, eyes, ears, tongue, feet, and other members of our physical body to put into practice the deeds and sinful activities of iniquity and unrighteousness.

(Romans 7:7), "*I had not known sin, but by the law*": Fulfilling and putting into practice the passions and desires that are in the heart was not known to be sin and transgression except by the light and reproofs of the law of God that was given through Moses and the prophets. "*For I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet*": The Greek says, "I did not know lust except the law said, 'You shall not lust.'" Paul is saying that he did not know what lust and evil passions really were without the law labeling them as such and causing him to sense his error.

(Romans 7:8), "*Concupiscence*": A longing and desire especially for that which is forbidden.

(Romans 7:9), "*I was alive without the law once*": Before a person is made aware of the truth of the law concerning sin, he is in a state of innocence, such as a child before he comes to the age of accountability. He is ignorant of what is right and wrong and unaware of the reality of sin and its blight.

(Romans 7:13), "*Sin, that it might appear sin*": Sin through the knowledge and light of the holy laws of Almighty God, shows itself to be the deadly and destructive influence that it really is.

(Romans 7:23), "*Another law in my members*": Paul testifies that he delighted and loved the law of God in his spirit, but he found out that there was another force working in his

hands, feet, tongue, etc. that warred against the holy law of God and brought him into bondage and captivity to the ways and practices of sin and disobedience to God.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Today we will consider the teachings of the apostle Paul concerning the knowledge and awareness that God wants people to have concerning what sin really is and how terrible and destructive it is to the soul of man. Paul quotes from Psalm 14:1,2, and 3 (and from other Old Testament scriptures) concerning the sinful condition that prevailed upon humanity. Through these Old Testament writings, God wants every soul to be made conscious, fully conscious, of their guilt before Him. Sad to say, in our world today very few people sense their guilt of sin before God. Sin is the main problem in our society, but very, very few people are conscious of that fact. The knowledge of sin has faded from the world in a general sense. It is for us who have these truths so plainly before us to take heed and allow the fear and respect of God to be upon us. For without realizing his helpless, sinful condition, a person will not be drawn to find Christ as his Saviour. There really needs to be a fresh revival of the knowledge of sin among men.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is sin not reckoned without the law?
2. Why does God want a man to be conscious of his sin?
3. What has God given to help us to be aware of sin?
4. What are our members that are affected by sin?
5. How were we alive once "without the law"?
6. What happened when the commandment came?
7. How does sin become "exceeding sinful"?
8. Why is the law of sin able to defeat the law of God in a man?
9. What condition is a man in who is a captive of sin?
10. Why is a man not happy in his sinful lost condition?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Sin is to blame for all woe and trouble past, present and future in this time world. Transgressing the laws and commandments of the Holy God who created man has heaped sorrow and anguish upon the human race. Fulfilling the lusts and desires of the fleshly part of us without the governing influence of holiness and righteousness revealed in God's law is to miss the mark and bring spiritual death to a person. Even though one is not aware of the wrong and trespass against God, sin in his life will still bring woe and trouble. God gave a code of laws and statutes to Israel by the hand of Moses, and He wanted the whole world to know about it. He wanted the whole world to become aware of their sin and transgressions against Him.

Man needs to wake up and become aware of his sinful condition. Sin needs to appear and be shown as sin. Sin needs to become exceeding sinful. As long as a person pets and condones sin in his life and is not aware of how bad it really is, he will not be willing to part with it. The pleasures of sin have a sweet taste to a person who is not aware of how exceeding bad they are.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The story is told of a minister who was preaching many years before he actually experienced the renewing power of God upon his heart. Going out one day into his field where a deeply pious farmer was at work, a man unlearned in the business of the world, but deeply learned in the hidden mystery of God in the soul of the believer, he said, "John, what do you think is the hardest thing in religion?"

"Well, why," replied John, "should you put this question to me, who am but an ignorant man? Let me turn it back and ask you the question." "Well," said the minister, "it seems to me that the hardest thing in religion is to give up those pleasurable indulgences to which our nature is so prone, but which are contrary to the requirements of religion."

"Ah," said John, "I think that there is a harder thing in religion than even this."

**"Well, what is it?"**

**"It is to feel that we are wretched and lost and perishing, and to relinquish all other hope than that which rests in the atoning blood of the Redeemer."**

**It seems that man does not want to feel vulnerable and weak, therefore he covers it up. For that reason he goes without help. They say that the biggest battle in helping a drunkard is in getting him to admit his problem. This was the purpose of the law; to open man's eyes to his condition.**

**"After all, I do not hate God. No, sir: you will not make me believe that. I have a good heart. I don't hate God." These were the words of a man who was prosperous in the things of the world. A few months afterward, a flood swept down the valley and threatened destruction to his large flour mill. A crowd was watching, in momentary expectation of seeing it fall, while the owner, standing in the midst of them, was cursing God and pouring out the most horrible oaths." It is a wise person who will believe God's account of the state of his heart by nature, acknowledge his guilt, and seek divine redemption.**

**—Wayne Murphey**



**NOVEMBER 3, 1996**

**PAUL'S MESSAGE IN THE SYNAGOGUE  
AT ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA**

**Acts 13:26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.**

**27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.**

**28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.**

**29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.**

**30 But God raised him from the dead:**

**31 And he was seen many days of them which came up**

with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:

39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;

41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;... Romans 1:16.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God Almighty brought salvation for the souls of mankind through His Son Jesus Christ whom He raised up from the dead after being cruelly slain. All who believe and follow Him are justified of their sins and partakers of the inheritance of the holy. It is for everyone to take diligent heed to this gospel and not despise it and perish.

#### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

(Acts 13:32-33), *The promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled,... in that he hath raised up Jesus*



*again*": All the core and essence of the Old Testament prophecies and promises were fulfilled and ratified by the resurrection of our Saviour from death and the grave. The crucifixion and death of our Lord upon the cross is absorbed and consumed in the glorious triumph of His being raised from death to immortality. "As it is written in the second psalm, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*": Note that Paul applies this quotation from the second Psalm as a referral to Christ's resurrection. This statement is quoted several other times in the New Testament. It is a prophecy of great importance. The Church in Acts 4:25-26 quoted the first two verses of this second Psalm in prayer to God with reference to Christ. Jesus quoted the 9th verse of this Psalm in Revelation 2:27 and applies it to those who overcome this world through faith and obedience to Him. So it is very evident that this is a vivid and accurate prophecy of Christ. Paul said in Romans 1:3-4 that Jesus, made of the seed of David according to the flesh, is declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Psalm 2:7 is prophesying the expression of Christ: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, *Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*" Although Christ was the Son of God from the womb of Mary (He being conceived of the Holy Spirit), yet it was through His being raised from the dead that He is given the eternal Sonship with the Father, a Sonship that He can and will share with all who believe and follow Him. Praises be to God forever!

(Romans 13:34), "*And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.*": Paul's application here from Isaiah 55:3 is very interesting and holds great importance for the soul of man. Here is how it reads in the Hebrew: "Incline your ear and come to me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will cut with you a covenant everlasting, the faithful (firm, sure, unfailing) mercies of David." Paul applies this to Christ's perfect triumph over death and being delivered from the corruption of the grave. We who come to Christ and receive His risen life and follow Him will receive the blessings that God promised to Abraham and all the faithful

through the years, including David. It is a covenant of grace that assures us of completeness and fulfillment in that blessed world of eternal life.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

We have for our lesson today the final part of Paul's message that he preached in the synagogue at Antioch in the province of Pisidia in Asia Minor. Paul and Barnabas had been chosen and sent forth by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel. They had been to several places and had seen the hand of the Lord work for the good of souls. They came to this city of Antioch and had gone into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. After the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue had given them an invitation to speak. Paul stood up and began his message. The first part of his discourse was concerning the history of Israel from their deliverance from Egypt to the time of David. He brought out how that David was a man after God's own heart, and that it was through his seed that God raised up the Saviour Jesus. We find this message of great importance because it reveals in a very plain manner just how Paul applied the various scriptures that he quoted from the Old Testament to Christ. The Gentiles received this message with joy and requested that "these words" might be preached to them the next Sabbath. The Jews rejected the message but those who were ordained to eternal life believed. The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. To whom was Paul's message of salvation sent?
2. How did God fulfill the promise made unto the fathers?
3. Why did Paul apply the second Psalm to Christ?
4. What are the "sure mercies of David"?
5. What is preached to us through the Saviour Jesus?
6. What are the things we need to be justified from?
7. What was the warning that Paul gave?
8. Is there any danger of this warning coming to pass on us?

9. What are some of the reasons why men refuse to believe?
10. Why is the resurrection of Christ so important?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

The second Psalm from which came the words in Paul's message, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee", is truly a wonderful prophecy of Jesus. It begins with the heathen raging and the kings and rulers taking counsel against the Lord and His Christ, wanting to cast away their discipline and restraint. People are still trying to "break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords". The language of the carnal mind is still, "We will not have this man reign over us." Luke 19:14. But the prophet goes on to say that the Lord will laugh and have them in derision. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Regardless of what puny man may do for or against His Christ, God still has set Christ at His own right hand as the head over His Church and the Saviour of all who believe. This Psalm shows that no matter what men do in their folly to resist the ordinance of God, the Almighty will still fulfill His pleasure. He gave to Christ, through the resurrection from the dead, eternal Sonship and fellowship with Him at His right hand. The nations are for Him to have and possess. Those who will be saved will be with Christ forever in safety and life, but those who refuse shall be broken to pieces with the rod of His eternal Word of power. The latter part of this psalm is an appeal to us. We should give diligent heed to the gospel of Jesus Christ with fear and trembling. We ought to welcome Him freely and with open heart and arms into our lives. "Kiss the Son!" Accept His Word and doctrine. Surrender to His rule and authority. Bow the knee and confess with your tongue His lordship and rule over you. Do it speedily without delay.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"God hath fulfilled... the promise." (verses 32-33.) God never made a promise that He has not fulfilled. What a glorious truth! We need that truth in these days of trouble and turmoil.

We need an anchor for our souls and minds. What greater thing could be given us than for the God of all creation to give us a promise? We know that it will come to pass. We have proof again and again of God fulfilling His promises. He declared that He would send His only begotten Son and that He would be the first begotten of the dead. He would be the first to arise in newness of the resurrected state. This all came to pass.

One person in need of some encouragement opened his Bible. His eyes fell on the words, "And it came to pass." This just lifted him up. What he was praying for, he knew then it would come to pass. Again and again God made promises, and again and again we read where they did come to pass. Be encouraged, dear fellow-traveler to that Home prepared for the faithful few. God will bring it to pass!

—Marie Miles (Written in 1974.)



**NOVEMBER 10, 1996**

### **PAUL'S MESSAGE AT ATHENS ON MARS' HILL**

Acts 17:22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

**MEMORY VERSE:** That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being. Acts 17:27-28.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Almighty God, who created the heavens and the earth and who gives to all life, and breath, and all things, desires greatly for us to seek Him, feel after Him, and find Him. God needs not man's art to portray Him, but reveals Himself to us by His Spirit working in the inner man. We must repent of our sins and be obedient to His Word for He will bring us all into judgment with Him at the last day.

### DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS

(Acts 17:22), "*Mars' hill*": The Areopagus, a hill in Athens where the supreme court of justice was held. "*Too superstitious*": The Greek word for this expression means "fearful of demons or supernatural beings or gods". It simply means that they were very interested in knowing about the gods and had even erected an altar to THE UNKNOWN GOD, as if they desired to be sure not to miss any god that they might be unaware of. Paul seized the opportunity to speak to them of the true God as being this unknown God.

(Acts 17:25), "*Neither is worshipped with men's hands*": He is saying that God is not served or helped by the hand of man, for all things come from Him. He needs not to dwell in a

man-made temple because He is Lord of heaven and earth and was happy in existence before man ever came on the scene.

(Acts 17:26), *"Made of one blood"*: Of one blood, or from one man, (Adam) God brought forth all the nations of men. *"Determined the times before appointed"*: The Lord planned and appointed in His wisdom the times and the seasons for man in his earthly life: where to go, what to do, and how and when to do it. *"The bounds of their habitation"*: The limits of their dwellings. Where man should live in the order and will of God is a very important thing for one to pray and seek God's face about. People suffer adversity and much sorrow for making moves contrary to the will of God.

(Acts 17:29), *"The Godhead"*: The image or likeness of God, His essence of holiness, love, mercy, and goodness. Such wonderful attributes cannot be revealed through the art and craft of man in gold, silver, or stone. The Greeks were great craftsmen in producing statues of the gods that they had imaginations of. God overlooked this ignorance, but in the gospel we learn of better things of how the Lord reveals Himself to the heart of man through His Holy Spirit.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Paul and Silas had been working for the Lord together for some time. They had been in Thessalonica and Berea and had met with much success in preaching and influencing the people to turn to the Lord. The Jews followed them and stirred up the people at both places. The brethren sent Paul to Athens, and while he waited for Silas and Timotheus to join him, his spirit was stirred within him to see Athens wholly given to idolatry. So he began to speak to people in the synagogue and in the market about these things. Certain philosophers wanted to know more about what Paul was setting forth in his teachings, so they brought him unto Areopagus, the place where the supreme court of Athens met. And, as this was their favorite pastime, Paul had quite an audience to hear him as he stood in the great court room to preach his message. When he was finished, some mocked at the idea of the resurrection of the dead, but others wanted to hear more about it. There were

certain people that held to Paul and believed his words, one of them being one of the judges named Dionysius. Paul's sermon here, though brief, contains much vital truth that we need to take heed to even today. We are especially impressed with the thought of how God wants us to seek Him, and feel after Him, and find Him. He is not far from every one of us. He is withdrawn and hidden from our physical senses, but can be revealed very clearly and sweetly to the inner man through His Holy Spirit if we will seek for Him with the whole heart.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Paul identify the true God and THE UNKNOWN GOD?"
2. Why does God not need to be served and worshipped by the hand of man?
3. Why is it so important to live in the order and will of God?
4. In what way are all nations of one blood?
5. What does God want men to do?
6. How does one "feel after Him"?
7. Why is it necessary for us to seek and feel after God?
8. Why is the art of man of no profit in making a likeness of God?
9. Why can man no more plead ignorance as an excuse for his error?
10. For what cause does God command all men everywhere to repent?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

God wants us to seek for Him. So many poor souls make the great mistake of living solely to the flesh and fail to put forth the effort to seek the Lord. Their time is all taken up with fleshly pursuits and the vain things of the world. They hear about God and His great power and goodness, but they are so involved in the carnal pleasures and riches of this fleeting world that they refuse to get any interest in knowing God. It is our responsibility to seek for God to reveal Himself to us. God

is not going to force us. He has come so far in showing His power and goodness, but He remains invisible and beyond our mortal sight. As we hear and behold the signs of His existence, then we should start praying and seeking Him earnestly with all of our hearts. The best time to do this is in our youth. Yes, before we get involved in the toils and cares and responsibilities that come with adulthood and marriage, we should be taking time to be alone with God, to pray and study His precious Word. But oh, so many neglect this in their youth, being all taken up with pleasure and careless, light living. Young people need to be serious and sincere in seeking the Lord. How we need to give our hearts and lives to God and be willing to follow Him in everything. We will never be sorry that we made this choice for the Lord. We must seek His guidance and the knowledge of His will for every move that we make in life.

—Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

I have read that Athens was stocked with thirty thousand gods, many of them magnificent works of art. But the apostle Paul was no mere sight-seer in this town. He looked upon what he saw in the light of the revelation of God and eternity. While others may have seen only Grecian handiwork in the Athenian "devotions," Paul saw "the city wholly given to idolatry." The person whose eyes God has opened will look upon those things which are unseen. (II Cor. 4:18.)

Think of the magnitude of what Paul did. As a lonely evangelist, he stood in the midst of an open-air court with all the Athenian dignitaries sitting in judgment. In the Epicureans, he was facing high-minded rationalists. The Stoics in attendance extolled virtue, but denied human responsibility and future judgment. He had the "leading pulpit" of the entire city. He was face to face with the wisdom of Socrates and Plato. It was a bold stand he took, but he believed the Lord, who stood by him, was worthy of the highest place in this philosophical center.

Paul's sermon poured from his heart. His subject was "Him," Christ. The apostle Paul always seemed to find a shortcut to Christ, because he gloried in Him.



Some mocked the message. The doctrine of the resurrection and final judgment was too much for their philosophical minds to comprehend. Paul's message of Christ, which made Felix tremble, made these people mock. Some hesitated, saying they wanted to hear him again. They lost their opportunity, for they never heard him again. What made it all worthwhile is that some believed. They left the forum changed. When Paul departed, there were still thirty thousand idols in the city, but there were fewer idols in the hearts of the people.

—Wayne Murphey



**NOVEMBER 17, 1996**

### **JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH**

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

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

Romans 3:21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

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

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

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

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

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

Romans 4:16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might

become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

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

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

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

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

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

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

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Hebrews 10:38-39.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Through believing from the heart in Jesus and His precious blood for the atonement of our sins, we are saved and delivered from the penalty and power of sin.

### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

(Romans 1:17), *"The righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith"*: From the faith of Abraham and all the saints of old to the faith of those who believe in Jesus the righteousness and holiness of the Heavenly Father is portrayed and unveiled. Only those who believe, obey, trust, and wholly follow God are able to partake of this blessed fellowship with Him.

(Romans 3:21), *"Being witnessed by the law and the prophets"*: The righteousness of believing in Christ was foretold and clearly testified of in the Holy Scriptures.

(Romans 3:25), *"Propitiation"*: The atoning Victim for the forgiveness and abolishment of sin. Christ bore in His body the

punishment for sin. God accepted the suffering of Christ on the cross as just payment for the penalty of our sins.

(Romans 4:16), *"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace"*: Paul makes it clear in the preceding statements that the promise made to Abraham of inheriting the world was not by the law, (for it was given before the law), but through believing and trusting in God and waiting before Him. For us it is still through faith and it is by the unmerited favor of God and not by any good works that we might try to have. If it could be obtained by obedience to His law, then faith is made void and there is no grace needed.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

We have for our lesson today the teachings of the apostle Paul concerning how we are justified and made righteous through faith in Christ and His shed blood. Much more was said in his writings concerning this great truth, but we have gleaned several scriptures that we feel will bring out the truth very well about it. Paul, in the first three chapters of Romans, dwelt quite extensively on the sinful nature and condition of mankind. Now he is pointing us to the only sure and safe way of being delivered from this awful, sinful condition. He makes it plain that obedience to the law that was given by God to Moses was not sufficient to bring about real salvation from sin. There had to be a sacrifice and atonement to satisfy the wrath and displeasure of God against sin. To just start obeying the laws of God would be good, but it is not enough to erase the dark deeds that we were guilty of while under the yoke of sin. Obedience is vital and very needful, but it alone will not satisfy the God whom we have sinned against. He uses the faith of Abraham as a comparison of our faith in Christ, and it is rightly so a very worthy comparison. We are to believe in Christ with the same earnestness and steadfastness of heart that Abraham had when he was believing God for the fulfillment of His promises to him. It is not an empty and heartless faith. Abraham believed with all of his heart and acted upon it with all submission and confidence in God's faithfulness. So we must believe with all of our hearts and trust lovingly and

faithfully in that blessed Saviour who died for the punishment of our sins and who was raised from the dead so that we could be fully justified and set free from the bondage, penalty, and power of our sinful ways of life. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is the example of Abraham's faith so important to us?
2. How can we rightfully believe in Christ for our justification?
3. Can we truly believe in Christ if we are not willing to repent of our sins and quit them?
4. Is it possible for us to believe in Christ with a useless faith?
5. What do we gain when we truly are justified by faith?
6. How is Abraham's faith on the same level as our faith in Christ?
7. How are our sins fully forgiven and eliminated?
8. Why did it take Christ's resurrection to justify us?
9. Why has man so often been prone to look for other things to base his faith upon other than that of Christ?
10. How is the grace of God in Christ sufficient for all the sins of all mankind?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

How blessed it is to be set free from the bondage and guilt of sin and transgression against God! How terrible it is to be unforgiven and have the condemnation of God upon our souls! For this cause Jesus came into the world so that He could be the means of us who were thus defiled and unfit for God's holy fellowship to be justified and cleared of all guilt and condemnation. If we would be justified and made righteous in the sight of God, we must plead the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as our atonement. That is all we have to appeal to. We cannot work our way to forgiveness and peace. We must believe and accept the sacrifice that has been offered on our behalf. Being justified before God by believing in Jesus as our Saviour brings us into a peaceful relationship with God. We are not

afraid to meet Him in the judgment because our sins we have opened beforehand in faith in Christ and we have sent them on to the judgment. (I Timothy 5:24.) We have turned loose of our sinful and vain way of life. We have quit the sin business. Our hopes and desires are for the holy ways of the Lord. We know that our sins and past wrongs are fully forgiven and covered by the precious blood of Jesus. We are made righteous in His sight. He has removed our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west. (Psalm 103:12.) He has subdued our iniquities and cast all our sins into the depths of the sea (of God's mercy and forgetfulness). (Micah 7: 19.) We are not afraid to face life from day to day, and we are not afraid to die. We are not afraid to go to sleep at night, for we know God is on our side and will watch over us. Oh, it is wonderful to be justified and made pure in His sight! —Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Peace *with* God (Rom. 5:1.)

Peace *of* God (Phil. 4:7.)

When the great Atlantic cable was laid, the first message flashed across it was one by Queen Victoria to the President of America: "Peace on earth, good-will toward men." This is the first, great need of mankind. Indeed, this is really essential to universal peace.

What a vast difference in the two texts at the head of this meditation. "*With* God" and "*of* God" refer to a twofold peace vital to human happiness. We may have the first without the second, though we can never have the second without the first. The first peace is dependent on faith; the second on prayer. If the first describes a state between God and myself, the second describes a condition within my being.

"We *have* peace," not "we *make* peace." "Peace *with* God" can never be ours without personal surrender to God on our part, yet it is the fruit of the personal surrender of the sinner's Saviour, and not of the sinner. Formerly sinners were asked if they had *made* their peace with God. Though the questioner meant well, it was wrong. A better phrase is: Have you *found* peace.

—Taken from *Handfuls on Purpose*.

**NOVEMBER 24, 1996**

**SIN AND DEATH OVERCOME BY JESUS CHRIST**

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

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

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

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

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

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

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

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

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

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

18 Therefore as by the 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.

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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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. Romans 5:17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we can possess the righteousness and holiness that was lost through sin and disobedience by the first man Adam.

### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

(Romans 5:8), "*God commendeth his love toward us*": The voluntary giving up of one's life for any other person is one of the highest expressions of love. Jesus said in John 15:13, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." To lay down one's own life on the behalf of another is indeed a gift that can scarcely be despised.

(Romans 5:9), "*We shall be saved from wrath*": This present evil world is hanging on the brink of eternal destruction. God has decreed in His Word that He will pour out His wrath upon rebellious man who refuses to humble himself to serve God. We that are saved and have taken refuge in Christ will escape the wrath of God when it is poured out in that last great day. The awful, fiery destruction that will melt the heavens and earth and bring man before the great judgment bar of God will have no effect on us; for we are partakers of the grace of God and the risen life of Christ.

(Romans 5:11), "*Atonement*": This is the reconciliation of God to man and man to God, the restoration of God's fellowship with us.

(Romans 5:14), "*Death reigned from Adam to Moses*": From Adam until Moses (when the law of God was given) sin was working in the hearts and lives of men. Death reigned, that is, everyone had to come to the end of mortal life and give

back the spirit that God had given. Sin and death reigned even over them who had no knowledge of the law of God. Adam had clear knowledge of God's will, and his transgression brought swift judgment and condemnation. Sin came into the world through Adam and it was passed on to all of his descendants, even on them who did not have knowledge like Adam had.

(Romans 5:15), "*Not as the offence, so also is the free gift*": The apostle's expression here is somewhat awkward. But it can be expressed like this: Like it was with the offence, so it is with the free gift, yet in the opposite direction. The offence was by one man to condemnation, and the free gift is by one man to salvation.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

We have in our lesson today the wonderful truth of Jesus Christ restoring to us what was lost in Adam. Paul declares that it was the great and unbounded love that God had for us that made Him willing to send His Son to die for us ungodly people. By Adam, sin entered into the world and brought with it spiritual and physical death. The law was given to make sin more apparent and clearly defined. Sin was dormant without the law and God overlooked and bore with man's ignorance, but it still worked death upon the human race. All along the way, man had to finally succumb to death. Sin and death brought all the misery and sorrow that ever existed in this world. But the great love of God was not willing to leave us in that woeful condition. In due time, or at the right time according to the Father's wisdom, Jesus Christ made His blessed entrance into this world. He came to restore man to fellowship with God. God wanted man back into communion with Him. As in Adam all mankind fell into the snare of sin and suffered the punishment of death, even so in Christ can all who trust and obey Him be rescued and redeemed to live for God in this present world. Christ prevailed to turn the tide for us. We no longer need to live dominated by sin and under the fear of death. We can be changed from our old ways to the ways of righteousness and holiness with a living hope of triumphing over death in the resurrection with Christ. —Leslie C. Busbee



## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is the giving of one's life for another so rare?
2. In what way did God show how great His love was for us?
3. What is the wrath that we need to be saved from?
4. How are we saved by Christ's life?
5. What are the two main things that Christ saves us from?
6. What is the free gift that God offers to us in Christ?
7. Who shall reign in life by Jesus Christ?
8. Why did God have to give His law to man?
9. What can the grace of God do where sin abounds?
10. What are the things that Christ restores that Adam lost?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

When Adam and Eve listened to the voice of the tempter and partook of the fruit that God had forbidden them to, they opened the door for sin to make its fateful entrance into this world. They had no way of knowing how much trouble and destruction and sorrow they were opening up for themselves and their posterity. Sin and death took over and ruled mankind in a general sense. There were those noteworthy souls along the stream of history who, through faith and obedience to the will of God revealed to them, prevailed to please God and receive His rich blessings. But, as a rule, sin and death held man in subjection. Sin passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Everyone was in the snare of sin and transgression. It was a sore disease of misery and death. There had to be someone who would pay the supreme price of a voluntary death to make up and atone for man's disobedience. And thank God, there was One. God sent to the world His Son. He was born of lowly Mary, making His appearance in the stable of Bethlehem. As the Son of God He was endued with power and strength to go forth and subdue sin and death for us. As Adam brought it on us, Christ can take it away. You and I can be overcomers today. We can overcome the sinful ways of life, the corrupt habits and filthy conversation that we have been

caught up in. We need not continue any longer in sin. We have a great and a powerful Redeemer who intercedes for us at the right hand of God. We have the privilege to come to Him with our need of His saving grace and power. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him, for this wonderful grace and salvation that He has made available to us!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"...by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." After a day of fierce fighting at Marengo, Napoleon Bonaparte placed his sentinels at different positions around the camp. They were charged on pain of death to keep awake and guard against surprise attacks from the enemy. About midnight Napoleon arose. Walking about, he found one of the sentinels sleeping, worn from the battle of the preceding day, his gun lying beside him.

Though instructions had been given that a sentinel's duty must be done, or else he must die, what did the emperor do? Softly and silently he took up the gun, placed it on his own shoulder, and performed the duty himself until the break of dawn. Upon awakening, the soldier was filled with alarm, and concluded himself a lost man. But Napoleon simply handed back the gun as a generous act of love to him as a soldier, and instructed the guard to be more alert in the future. "By the obedience of that one," the post was filled and the law kept to the letter.

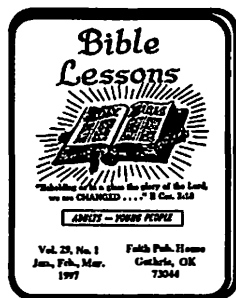
—Wayne Murphey



#### Expiration Notice

*If your subscription expired with this quarter, please send your renewal at once. It is necessary that your subscription for the first quarter of 1997 be in this office by December 1.*

*We trust that these Sunday School books and the lessons they contain will be an inspiration by helping to open up just a few of the hidden mysteries of our majestic God.*



**DECEMBER 1, 1996**

**SET FREE FROM SIN TO BE SERVANTS TO GOD**

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

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

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

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

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

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

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

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

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Romans 6:22.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ not only died for the forgiveness of our sins, but He also died to sin so that we can also die to sin and be free from its principle and practices. We must no longer let sin function in our lives but must obey God in His righteousness and holiness if we would have eternal life.

### DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS

(Romans 6:1), *"Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"*: Paul had just stated in chapter 5:20 that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Perchance some would take it that the more sin one would have the more grace would be provided and God would be glorified the more. Paul goes on to declare that this is not the case, for in Christ we not only have forgiveness of sins, but through Him are dead to sin and live no longer therein.

(Romans 6:6), *"Our old man is crucified"*: The old sinful, lustful, proud, striving, and selfish way of life is put to death with respect to Christ Jesus who died that it thus may be. *"That the body of sin might be destroyed"*: The root, principle, and substance of sin is rendered powerless and removed from the heart so that we do not have to yield to the flesh in its affections and lusts that are contrary to God and His holiness.

(Romans 6:8), *"If we be dead with Christ"*: Being dead with Christ means that we are dead to what He died to, and that was sin.

(Romans 6:12), *"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body"*: There are thousands of professed Christian who are misled in thinking that the body continues to sin, but the soul is kept pure. But this was not the apostle Paul's teachings. The language is emphatic and clear. Do not allow sin to rule your eyes, your ears, your tongue, your hands, and your feet, and cause them to engage in any activity that would be offensive and displeasing to God.

(Romans 6: 19), *"To iniquity unto iniquity,... to righteousness unto holiness"*: Sin has proven in every heart and life to be progressive, going from one depth of evil to a deeper one, always having a tendency to get worse as time goes on. Living for God is progressive also. We must yield our members to serve God, starting out in being justified by faith, and then walking in the light of the Word of God by living meekly and prayerfully, always careful to please the Lord. As we keep seeking the Lord and are attentive to His Word and the dealings of the Holy Spirit, we will be drawn to make a complete consecration of self and earthly store so that we can be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified and perfected in holiness.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Paul, in our lesson today, undertakes to show to us that we are to be dead to sin and be free from its binding chains. We can be free from sin because we can be dead to sin. We can be dead to sin because Christ died to sin. By one sacrifice Christ has perfected forever them who are sanctified. This is the will of God that we be thoroughly purged from sin and be set free from its vile dominion. We are to take our stand against this horrible taskmaster who has brought us so much trouble and sorrow. We owe nothing to Satan and sin. We owe them no consideration nor room in our hearts. Sin and death has no more dominion over Christ, nor do they have any dominion over us. We are free from sin and are made servants to God.

Paul speaks with great plainness of speech and not in riddles or parables here. He is pointed and without apology. "You do not sin any more. Do not allow any member of your body that is used to express or act your feelings and desires to be an instrument for the promotion of that which God is displeased with. When you were in sin you yielded your tongue to utter unholy words of anger, foolishness, vulgarity and strife. You allowed your hands to smite, perform and accomplish ungodly deeds. You must cease from all of this. Now yield your members as tools for the glory of God and the benefit of your fellow man. As you were progressive in sin, going from one grade of iniquity to another, so now move forward in the Christian way, attaining to the righteous and holy life that will make you fit for eternal dwellings."

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. By what means can we be dead to sin?
2. Can we live in sin if we are dead to it?
3. How did Christ's death free Him from sin?
4. Is there anything in Paul's sayings that would indicate that we have to sin more or less every day?
5. What are our members that he is speaking of?
6. In what way does a sinful man yield his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin?
7. How can we yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto God?
8. In what way does a sinner progress from iniquity unto iniquity?
9. How can a child of God progress from righteousness unto holiness?
10. What will be the end of a life free from sin?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Our lesson today declares the glorious truth that through Christ we can die to sin and that we do not have to sin anymore and suffer under the bondage of the devil. We have the authority to throw off the vile yoke of oppression and bondage and yield ourselves to the loving Saviour to do His blessed will. We do not have to use our tongues anymore to utter lies, deceit, abuse, profanity, and foolishness. We do not have to use our eyes to observe evils on the television nor have to use our ears to hear the vulgar and indecent music. We do not have to use our hands to abuse and injure and create unholy designs and devices. We do not have to use our feet to take us places that the Lord is not pleased with. Thank God we can use our members to promote righteousness and true holiness and love! We can testify and sing and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. We can read the Word of God and listen to the preaching of the gospel. We can write letters and articles for the Lord and His children. We can go places for Jesus to minister to others. Oh, how different it is when we yield ourselves servants to God instead of to sin and ungodliness. I heard the story of a brother driving his team of horses and wagon down the road one day. He was being accused by the devil and did not know how to resist him. The devil was accusing him of

not being saved and was getting him into confusion. Finally it came to him to just do some sin and then he would know he was not saved and then he could repent and be saved and know just where he was. So he consented to do that. What sin would he do? First it was suggested that he would curse and swear. NO! He could not do that! Then it was suggested that he beat his horses. NO! He could not do that! Then it came to him to go home and bawl his wife out. NO! NO! Oh, his whole being recoiled against these things. It was then that the Lord comforted his heart with these words: "See, you are my child, for you do not want to do any sinful thing!" He would not yield his members to commit any sin. We do not have to yield our members to commit sin. We are set free from sin, praise the Lord! Our hearts are set on pleasing our Saviour and our heavenly Father and we do not want to grieve or displease their great loving hearts. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

In the fourth century, when the Christian faith was preached in its power in Egypt, a young brother sought out the great Macarius. "Father," he said, "what is the meaning of being dead and buried with Christ?"

"My son," answered Macarius, "you remember our dear brother who died, and was buried a short time since? Go now to his grave, and tell him all the unkind things that you ever heard of him, and that we are glad he is dead, and thankful to be rid of him, for he was such a worry to us, and caused so much discomfort in the church. Go my son, and say that, and hear what he will answer."

The young man was surprised, and doubted whether he really understood; but Macarius only said, "Do as I bid you, my son, and come tell me what our departed brother says."

The young man did as he was commanded, and returned.

"Well, and what did our brother say?" ask Macarius.

"Say father!" he exclaimed; "how could he say anything? He is dead."

"Go now again, my son, and repeat every kind and flattering thing you have ever heard of him; tell him how much we miss him; how great a saint he was; what noble work he did; how the whole church depended upon him; and come again to tell me what he says."

The young man began to see the lesson Macarius would teach him. He went to the grave, and addressed many flattering things to the dead man, and then returned to Macarius.

"He answers nothing, father; he is dead and buried."

The truth expounded in this story is that to be dead with Christ is to have our ears stopped to many things, especially those things which defile our mortal bodies and our soul. To be dead **with** Christ also means to have our hearts tuned with His.

There are several other principles taught in our lesson, one of which is that a Christian's duties are interwoven with his privileges. There are many who like to believe in the privileges and overlook the duties. Because we are alive unto God, we must renounce sin, since that corrupt thing belongs to the estate of spiritual death.

We must also keep in mind that although the lowest sinner is not below the grace of God, neither is the highest Christian above the temptation of the enemy. —Wayne Murphey



**DECEMBER 8, 1996**

### **SANCTIFICATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Ephesians 1:12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

I Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:



6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

I Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice evermore.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour. I Thessalonians 4:3-4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** After we are born of the Spirit of God and saved from our sins, there is another experience that God wants us to have. And that is being sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit which will preserve us blameless until the end.

### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

(Romans 12:1), "*Your reasonable service*": The word "reasonable" here is translated from the Greek word which is our word "logical", which means rational, or that which makes good sense.

(Ephesians 1:13), "*After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise*": The receiving of and the sealing of the Holy Spirit comes after we have trusted in Christ and are truly saved. The Holy Spirit is not given to a sinner. This blessed gift of the Father that He had promised in the Scriptures and was also foretold by Christ Himself is poured out upon those who

consecrate and give up their whole life and being to God and His perfect will. The word "seal" here refers to a signet stamp or special mark for security or preservation. It is a seal of high authority, which the tampering with merits great woe and judgment.

(I Thessalonians 4:3), *"The will of God, your sanctification"*: The word "sanctification" has the same meaning as the word "holiness". They are both translated from the same identical Greek word. "Agiosmos" which means purification or purity through being made holy unto God. It is the will of God that every person who receives Christ as Saviour go on to the sanctified and Holy Spirit filled life.

(I Thessalonians 4:4), *"To possess his vessel in sanctification and honour"*: By being sanctified and filled with the Spirit of God we are enlightened to how God wants us to live and conduct ourselves while in this mortal body. The word "vessel" here refers to a man's body, his appetites, feelings, functions, labor, recreation, etc.

(I Thessalonians 4:5), *"Not in the lust of concupiscence"*: A man should live with his wife not in unrestrained and domineering fulfillment of the animal passions, but in holiness and consecration to God with supreme love for Him and His perfect will, and a holy and tender regard for the feelings and comfort of his wife.

(I Thessalonians 5:22), *"Abstain from all appearance of evil"*: The Greek expression is "hold off and restrain from every form of evil."

(I Thessalonians 5:23), *"Wholly"*: Fully or completely. I have heard that the German Bible says, "Through and through!"

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The thought of sacrifice is no new thing in the scriptures. All through the Old Testament we have sacrifices being offered to God mentioned. Paul shows us that the sacrifice that God is desiring is the giving of ourselves to Him, body, mind, and spirit with all that goes with these things. This is the sacrifice that He justly requires of us if we would have His blessed Spirit to come as an abiding Comforter to live within us. And, as Paul said to the Ephesians, this blessing comes after we believe. It is a second work of grace in the heart, an experience that comes after we are

saved. We must make the consecration of ourself and earthly store to God and believe with steadfast faith that He will accept our sacrifice and send us the Holy Spirit. It is the will of God for every believer in Christ to go on and be sanctified wholly. And if we will take Paul's instruction to the Thessalonians to rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and all the other things mentioned, it will bring us to the place where God can be glorified to pour out His blessed Spirit from on high and sanctify us wholly. And it is even as Paul said finally, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the living sacrifice that we should offer to God?
2. What should we do instead of conforming to this world?
3. Why is proving the good and acceptable and perfect will of God so important to us?
4. Why do we need the Spirit of God in our lives?
5. Why do we need to be sealed?
6. What will sanctification enable us to do?
7. How will a sanctified man treat his wife?
8. Is a young couple really ready for marriage if they are not both sanctified wholly and being led by the Spirit of God?
9. What are some of the things Paul told us to do to help us in being sanctified wholly?
10. Why does Satan hate the doctrine of sanctification and cause much confusion in people's minds about it?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Many, many people down through the years have been hindered in their efforts to live for the Lord because they did not make the perfect sacrifice of their all to the Lord to be sanctified and filled with the Spirit of God. So many drawback from putting all on the altar. Many draw back from consecrating and offering their bodies as living sacrifices and end up snared in sin again. And there are many who do not openly give up profession and go back into sin but are not prosperous in spiritual things and drift along with a profession. But there are those who have a mind to go all the way with God no matter what the cost. They are informed through the Word of God and the preaching of the

gospel that there is a deeper work of grace for them to enter into. They sense a weakness within, a foe in the temple not subject to God. They begin to seek the Lord with all of their hearts. They may not understand all about it, but they know that they have a need. And they keep seeking until finally at last God is able to lead them to the place where they yield all to God and the Holy Spirit comes down from heaven and fills their innermost being. Oh, what a blessing this is to them! They begin to grow and increase in the things of God. God begins to bless and lead them in His service. They bring forth the fruits of the Spirit and are a blessing wherever they are in the Church or the work of the Lord. For this cause Jesus suffered on the cross that we might be sanctified and filled with His Holy Spirit. Every newly saved soul should begin to seek God for Him to lead them to the place where they can be sanctified. It is the difference in success and failure, victory and defeat. No person can make it to heaven if they draw back from being sanctified. God will not bless them if they refuse to receive all He has for them. They will fall backwards and lose their experience and finally their souls if they do not recover themselves and seek the Lord with all their hearts. Let us take heed to this truth. Sanctification is the New Testament Caanan land and the Most Holy Place. It is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, the perfecting of the plan of God in the human soul. To refuse it is to invite spiritual defeat and disaster, but to receive it is life and peace forevermore.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

To be sanctified means to set ourselves apart for active service to God. God wants people who will work for Him. Sometimes we get the impression that to be sanctified means our will must be crucified. This is not so. Paul said, "be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,..." When our mind is renewed, we still have a will, and we are still free moral agents, but our will is to do God's will.

Cult leaders require that their follower's will be broken. God doesn't. The apostle Paul had a strong will before he met Christ on the road to Damascus and still had one after he met Christ. It was simply changed into a proper channel through the renewing of his mind.

The Christian whose will is broken in the pursuit of holiness, will have a passive faith. And a passive faith makes for a lazy Christian, the kind who simply wait for someone to care for their needs. God is calling for people who will put their whole heart into His service and be active.

Christians are a challenged people. We have something to prove. That something which we are to prove to the world is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God. —Wayne Murphey



**DECEMBER 15, 1996**

**WALKING NOT AFTER THE FLESH,  
BUT AFTER THE SPIRIT**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

**Galatians 5:17** For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the

other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

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

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

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

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

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

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Romans 13:14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Christ Jesus, coming down in this mortal flesh, conquered the weakness to sin that was found in the flesh. He made it possible for us to live not after the fleshly desires but rather after the leading and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

(Romans 8:2), "*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*": Christ brought not mere rules and codes of conduct for us to live by. He brought and made possible for us to have LIFE through the Holy Spirit living within the soul. He not only told us what to do but He Himself put it into practice; and through the Holy Spirit that He sends to live within us, we can also put in practice the holiness and righteousness that pleases God. This inward law liberates us from the law of sin and death. The law of sin and death was the old law of Moses that only brought condemnation because it told what to do and offered no grace or inward power, thus bringing the knowledge of sin and death upon man.

(Romans 8:3), "*Condemned sin in the flesh*": Brought judgment against. God through Christ "zeroed in" against the

sin that worked in the fleshly lusts and sentenced it to be banished from the soul of man.

(Romans 8:4), "*The righteousness of the law*": The righteousness of God's holy law can now be literally carried out through the power of the Spirit of God living in those who seek after the things of the Spirit of God with all the heart.

(Romans 8:6), "*Carnally minded, spiritually minded*": The Greek says simply "the mind of the flesh" and "the mind of the Spirit." Now the word "mind" here means inclination or purpose. It refers to the desires, decisions and direction that we are going and seeking to follow.

(Galatians 5:19-20), "*Adultery*": Impure relations between men and women who are married. "*Fornication*": Unlawful sexual relations between unmarried people. "*Lasciviousness*": Uncontrolled familiarity between men and women.

"*Variance*": Quarreling.

"*Emulations*": Jealousies.

"*Seditious*": Divisions.

"*Heresies*": A disunion because of a party spirit or false doctrine.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In our previous lesson, we studied the Holy Spirit infilling and how it brings holiness and victory in the soul. Today we will consider the teachings of Paul on the line of being spiritual and being led by the Spirit of God. Sad to say, the majority of the people of this world are not led by the Spirit of God. They are motivated and controlled by the flesh and its aspirations and desires. This is a binding and captivating influence that proves to be a real prison to the soul, keeping it from the spiritual blessings and liberty in Christ. We draw from Paul's two epistles, one to the Romans and the other to the Galatians. In both, he warns them against the influences of the flesh. This warning is for us today, for the same flesh that they had to work against and deny back then is still a formidable foe for us today to be on guard against.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of people have no condemnation?
2. Why was the law weak through the flesh?

3. What did God have to do to provide a way to overcome the flesh?
4. What will we have to do to be able to have a triumph over the flesh?
5. Where will being carnally (or fleshly) minded get us?
6. What must we do to be spiritually minded?
7. Why are the flesh and the Spirit contrary to each other?
8. Is there anyway that we can sow to the flesh and still reap everlasting life?
9. Can you think of other fleshly things not mentioned here?
10. What is there about the fruit of the Spirit that makes it so blessed?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

It is very easy to fall under the influence and rule of the flesh. From the moment one awakes in the morning until they close their eyes in sleep at night, there are thousands of fleshly attractions and involvements calling to us. Many people know nothing else the whole day long and long into the night than just the flesh and its activities. They take no time for prayer and devotions to God. They rise from slumber to fix up their body for the day, eat some earthly food, then out the door to face the toils of the day, all of which are fleshly guided and sustained. It is just this way all the day long. It is a trap that many are in. Their reactions and conduct are mainly of the flesh. Their relationship with others is mainly a fleshly thing with no real fellowship in the Spirit thought of. When it comes time for the service of God, it is usually with drudgery and very little joy or enthusiasm that they attend if they do at all. The flesh has sway and is the thing that is important. Very little love, (true and holy love) joy and peace are manifested. Longsuffering, gentleness and peace are rarely seen. No faith is needed since everything is according to nature and the flesh. Meekness is not thought of, and temperance (or self-control) is denied. What a sad way to live! It is so vain and shallow and unsatisfying! But oh, the Spirit of God wants to lead the willing soul into a life of being spiritual and awake to the eternal things of God. And He will, if we will let Him. Many realize that they are too much taken up with the things of the world, but they fail to take into account that it is their own doing. It is their



flesh that is standing in the way. Their flesh they have to deny and bring into subjection. And this takes determination and strong hungering and thirsting for the Lord. We can be spiritual if we want to be. Lift up your eyes and look away from the frivolous things of the flesh and behold the true riches of faith, hope, and love that God is holding out for us!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

There is a difference between the work of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. The work of the Spirit may be regarded as the direct result of the Spirit's active energy, and the fruit as the outcome of His indwelling presence. In Galatians 5:19-22 we see the *works* of the flesh contrasted with the *fruit* of the Spirit. The works of the flesh are the natural outcome of an active evil principle within. The *fruit* of the Spirit does not spring from anything naturally in us, but is the result of the new life begotten in us by the Holy Ghost and maintained by His continued abiding. "In me, that is in my *flesh*, dwelleth no good thing." The fruit of the Spirit is not spoken of in the plural as the *works* of the flesh are. This signifies the *oneness* of the fruit. Every grace mentioned is by part of a whole, so that no Christian is complete unless he is characterized by all these nine graces. (Gal. 5:22.) The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness and truth. (Eph. 5:9.)

—Taken from *Handfuls on Purpose*.



**DECEMBER 22, 1996**

### **THE SON OF GOD COMING INTO THE WORLD**

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

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

Romans 8:3 ...God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

I Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Philippians 2:5 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.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father.

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

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

Hebrews 10:5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

Hebrews 9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

26 ...Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. 1 Tim. 3:16.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, came down from the glory of His Father into a mortal body

to be tempted and tried, to suffer and to die for our sins and to give us victory and everlasting hope of eternal glory with Him.

### **DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS**

(1 Timothy 1:15), "*Of whom I am chief*": The Greek says, "Of whom I am first". He means here that the top name on the list of sinners and lost souls was his own. Whether or not he did any more evil or any less evil than any other soul, his own sins were enough to send him to a lost world. Therefore he was the worst of all for his sins were sinking him to eternal damnation regardless of how he rated with others.

(Hebrews 2:9), "*Made a little lower than the angels*": The Greek says, "Made less than or inferior to the angels for a little or short space of time".

(Hebrews 2:10), "*It became him*": It was fitting for God in bringing us to glory to perfect Christ through suffering.

(Hebrews 10:5), "*A body hast thou prepared me*": The Greek says, "a body thou didst provide for me."

(Hebrews 9:11), "*Not of this building*": The Greek says, "Not of this creation". In other words, the tabernacle that Christ built for the souls of men is not of earthly substance or material, but it is rather a spiritual structure of faith and holiness in the heart of man.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

For our lesson today, we have gleaned from Paul's writings what he had to say about Jesus coming into the world. Paul attached a great deal of importance to this thought of Christ coming into the world. According to these sayings, he was persuaded along with the other New Testament writers that Christ came down from the glory of the Father to take on Him human flesh. He relinquished His high position of power and glory in the form of the Eternal Father and was made in the likeness of man according to the flesh. He was born of Mary, a lowly maiden of Galilee, and was laid in the midst of poverty in the manger wrapped with the lowly strips of cloth. This is how He made His blessed appearing. Though He was high and lofty, for our sake He was made lower than the angels. As Paul said in another place, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (II Corinthians 8:9.) His purpose in coming was to redeem us from the curse of the law so that we might receive Sonship with the Father. He came to condemn sin in the flesh and deliver us from the power of sin. He came to save sinners. He came to be a servant and suffer the awful death of the cross to pay for the sins of mankind. He came to taste death for every man and suffer that we might be set free. He came to obtain eternal redemption for us and to put away sins by the sacrifice of Himself. He wrought the eternal purpose of God which was to reconcile our lost souls back to the Father's holy embrace.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the various expressions in our lesson that tell of the purpose of Christ coming in the flesh?
2. Why did Christ have to come under the law and in the likeness of sinful flesh?
3. Why did Christ not hold on to equality with God?
4. How did God reward Christ for His humility and obedience to the cross?
5. How did God provide Christ with a body?
6. What did Christ have to expect when He came down into human flesh?
7. What did Christ come down into human flesh to accomplish?
8. Why is it so important for us to believe that Christ came in the flesh?
9. What kind of tabernacle did Christ come to set up?
10. How can we be assured that Christ did accomplish the mission He came into the world for?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

At this season of the year, our thoughts are turned especially to the truth of Christ coming into the world, being born of the virgin Mary, and laid in the lowly manger in Bethlehem. It is all a touching and inspiring story and true. He was the son of Mary, but was also the Son of the living God. He was conceived in the womb by the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of the Almighty God. He had no earthly father lineage-wise. He was

coming from the glory of eternal life. God provided, through the womb of an earthly woman, a physical body for the Word of God to inhabit. But the purpose of His coming is what we are mostly interested in. He was sent by God to come in the likeness of sinful flesh. He possessed all the sensations, feelings, temptations, sorrows, sufferings and burdens that we as human beings have. His purpose was to conquer and overcome that power of sin that had us in bondage. And He accomplished that. Through His grace we can conquer and overcome sin and live a righteous and holy life acceptable before God. He came to redeem us and to give us power to be the sons of God, being born of the Spirit and the Word of God. He came to save sinners. We were all sinners and short of God's pleasure. We needed someone to pay the penalty for our sins and supply power and strength to overcome sinful habits and practices. He came to taste death for every man. Someone had to die as the Victim to atone for man's disobedience. Jesus became that Victim, suffering the awful death of the cross to pay the price for our redemption. Let us rejoice in this great Saviour and Friend, and love and obey Him all the days of our life with a hope of seeing His sweet face in Heaven some blessed day.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

"I have read of one," said Charles Spurgeon, "who dreamed a dream when in great distress of mind about religion. He thought he stood in the outer court of heaven and saw a glorious host marching up, singing sweet hymns and bearing the banners of victory. They passed by him through the gate, and when they vanished he heard in the distance sweet strains of music.

"Who are they?" he asked.

"They are the goodly fellowship of the prophets, who have gone to be with God."

"And he heaved a deep sigh as he said, 'Alas! I am not one of them, and never shall be, and I cannot enter there.'

"By-and-by there came another band, equally lovely in appearance, and equally triumphant, and robed in white. They passed within the portals, and again were shouts of welcome heard within.

"Who are they?" he asked.

"They are the goodly fellowship of the apostles."

"Alas!" he said, "I belong not to that fellowship, and cannot enter there."

"He still waited and lingered, in the hope that he might yet go in; but the next multitude did not encourage him, for they were the noble army of martyrs. He could not go with them, nor wave their palm branches. He waited still, and saw that the next was a company of godly ministers and officers of the Church; but he could not go with them. At last, as he walked, he saw a larger host than all the rest put together, marching and singing most melodiously; and in front walked the woman that was a sinner; and the thief that died upon the cross; and he looked long, and saw there such as Manasseh and the like; and when they entered he could see who they were, and he thought: 'There will be no shouting about them.' But to his astonishment, it seemed as if all heaven was rent with sevenfold shouts as they passed in. And the angel said to him, 'These are they that are saved by mighty grace.' And then he said: 'Blessed be God! I can go in with them.' And so he awoke.

"Blessed be God! You, and I too, can go in with that company. I cannot hope to go in anywhere but with that company. Such is my own sense of how I expect to enter heaven, and we will go together, brother or sister, trusting in the precious blood, and washed in the blood of the Lamb. God grant it may be so!"

—Taken from *Anecdotes*.



**DECEMBER 29, 1996**

### **CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR**

Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompose to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Ephesians 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Ephesians 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 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.

Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. I Corinthians 10:31.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The life of a Christian should reflect the goodness and love of God. Therefore it should be filled with good deeds, kindly relations, and a peaceful, merciful attitude toward all men.

## DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL COMMENTS

(Romans 12:11), "*Not slothful in business*": Business here is translated from the Greek word from which is derived our English word "speed". Slothful means to be slow or tardy. In other words, the Lord wants us to be diligent and strive to be speedy and quick to obey Him, to come to the aid of others, and to be ready for action at all times. "*Fervent in spirit*": Fervent translated from the Greek means to be hot, (boiling in liquids and glowing in solids), burning, fiery, and intense.

(Romans 12:16), "*Be not wise in your own conceits*": The Greek says, "Do not become wise with yourselves". In other words, do not think yourself wise, but ever be seeking for greater wisdom and knowledge, always sensing your need for an increase. As the poet William Cowper put it, "Knowledge is proud that it knows so much while wisdom is humble that it knows no more."

(Colossians 3:12), "*Bowels*": Deep tender feelings of compassion and affection.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

For our lesson today we have gleaned out of Paul's writings a few instructions concerning our attitudes and conduct as Christians. We are not able to include all of Paul's writings on this subject, for he had quite a bit to say about Christian conduct. There is no substitute for good behavior. A person's profession is sickled over so many times by a failure to behave and conduct himself properly. Ecclesiastes 10:1 states: "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour." To profess to be a Christian and act like the devil is a shame and a disgrace to the name of Christ. It is taking the Lord's name in vain to allow bad and ugly behavior in our life. The Lord will not hold us guiltless if we do this. It is a sin that many are guilty of. An evil and uncontrolled temper, a loose tongue, a murmuring and bitter attitude, all these are common among professed Christians. And the sad thing about it is that many who allow these things in their lives are indifferent about it and go on thinking that their conduct is not so bad and



is not affecting their standing with the Lord. Let us be diligent to cultivate good and wholesome qualities of life and character, thus glorifying and adorning the doctrine of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is good behavior so important in our lives?
2. Will uncorrected behavior cause the loss of one's soul?
3. What are the various kinds of corrupt communication?
4. Will these good traits come automatically in our lives?
5. How can we be "dear" children of God?
6. Is it always easy to "put on" these good things?
7. What usually happens when we fail to put on these things?
8. Why can there not be perfectness when charity is missing?
9. What is the best rule to follow in having good behavior?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

If you're going to be a Christian and profess to love the Lord  
Be aware that good behavior will great benefits afford.  
How you love and treat your neighbor, how you act and what you  
say

Will be for you or against you when you reach your final day.

Godly living is the greatest and most lovely of the arts,  
And the Christian life is beautiful in all its various parts.  
Deeds of kindness, helpful service, sacrifice for others' cheer,  
These will not go by unnoticed by the Lord who's standing near.

In a garden what is lovely, what most benefits us all  
Is what calls for earnest labour, tender loving care to fall.  
For the weeds and undesirables grow without an ounce of toil,  
And the good things unattended will be apt to wilt and spoil.

So it is with us as Christians, all the good fruit we must plant,  
Cultivate and guard it ever from the foes who would supplant.  
Love and meekness, patience, wisdom, kindness, humbleness  
of mind,

Warm and tender with rejoicing, always to God's will resigned.

Never slack nor dilatory, ever cheerful, keen, and bright;  
Not complaining or fault finding, ever strong for truth and right.  
Sympathetic and not partial, living peacefully with man,  
It will make life so much sweeter if we'll do the best we can.

For we're sowing for a reaping seeds that bring a harvest soon,  
And a rich reward is waiting that will prove a wondrous boon.  
So toil on, my fellow pilgrim, keep your life all in good trim,  
You'll be glad for all your effort when in Heaven you see Him!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us,..." Eph. 5:2. 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. It is easy in the society we live in to find ourselves depressed, disillusioned, going in circles, and suffer what is known as "burnout." 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 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 wholeheartedly, knowing that perhaps if others don't agree, at least they can respect our stand and attitude. It is when a person's attitude and behavior becomes tacky, slothful and haphazard, that others will spurn our profession and despise it. True love is a positive drawing force and Christ was the perfect example of it. —Wayne Murphey





