

Corner For Religious News

Sunday School Lesson!

REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D.D., Dean of the Evening School, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.

(© 1925, Western Newspaper Union.)

Lesson for October 25

PAUL IN EPHESUS

LESSON TEXT—Acts 19:1-41.
GOLDEN TEXT—"For the love of money is the root of all evil."—I Tim.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Paul Tells Idol Makers About Jesus.

JUNIOR TOPIC—Paul's Preaching Sets Up a Riot.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Diana or Christ.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Money or Christ.

Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, had preceded Paul at Ephesus. He had diligently taught the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him they perceived his lack of instruction in Christian truth. Therefore, they took him and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. Having thus come into fuller light, the brethren gave him a letter of endorsement as to other fields.

I. John's Disciples Become Christians (vv. 1-7).

These 12 disciples had been taught only the baptism of repentance as a preparation for the kingdom of God. Paul taught them to believe on Christ, i.e. to receive Him as the One on the cross who had provided redemption for them. When they received Christ, Paul laid hands upon them and they received the Holy Spirit.

II. Paul Preaching in Ephesus (vv. 8-10).

1. In the Jewish Synagogue (v. 8).

Though the Jews were Paul's inveterate enemies, his rule was to go to them first with the gospel. His preaching was characterized:

(1) By boldness. He realized that God sent him, and that His authority was back of him.

(2) By reason. God's message is in accord with the highest reason.

(3) By persuasion. It is not enough to come boldly with a reasonable message, it must be accompanied by persuasion.

(4) By speaking, "concerning the kingdom of God." He did not discourse on current events, literature or philosophy, but upon the message of salvation through Christ.

2. In the Schoolhouse of Tyrannus (vv. 9-10).

The Jews, being enemies of the gospel of the grace of God, were only hardened by Paul's earnest preaching.

Paul separated the disciples from them and resorted to the schoolhouse of Tyrannus. This was followed with glorious results.

III. God Working Miracles by Paul (vv. 11-10).

Ephesus was noted for its wonder workers. If Paul's ministry was to be successful here, God must in an extraordinary way put His seal upon His work. So wonderfully did He manifest His power that handkerchiefs and aprons brought from Paul's body healed the sick and cast out evil spirits.

IV. A Glorious Awakening (vv. 17-41).

1. Fear Falls Upon All (v. 17).

News of the casting out of these evil spirits created impressions favorable to Christianity.

2. It Brought to the Front Those Who Professed Faith in Christ, While Not Living Right Lives (v. 18).

They believed but had not broken from sin.

3. Gave Up the Practice of Black Arts (v. 19).

This means forms of jugglery by use of charms and magical words. They proved the genuineness of their actions by publicly burning their books.

4. Up roar of the Silversmiths at Ephesus (vv. 23-41).

(1) The Occasion (vv. 23-24).

This was the power of the gospel in destroying the infamous business of Demetrius and his followers. It was clear to them that idolatry was tottering before the power of the gospel.

(2) The Method (vv. 25-29).

Demetrius, a leading business man, whose business was the stay of others of a similar nature, called a meeting and stated that much people had been turned from idolatry, and that the market for their wares was materially weakened. He appealed to his followers:

a. On the ground of business, saying: "This, our craft, is in danger of being set at naught." v. 27.

b. On the ground of religious prejudice. He said: "The temple of the great goddess Diana shall be despised" (v. 27). His speech gained his end.

Christianity

Christianity is no mere scheme of doctrine or of ethical practice, but is instead a kind of miracle, a power out of nature and above, descending into it; a historically supernatural movement on the world, that is visibly entered into it, and organized to be an institution in the person of Jesus Christ.—Horace Bushnell.

WHY GO TO CHURCH?

Going to church regularly is a part of the program of any man's life who wants to make a real success. Human efforts needs the stimulation of a great goal. To live without a goal is like a great vessel sailing without a rudder. The reason there are so many failures in life may be traced to the fact that there was no worthwhile goal which commanded the best in a man.

Dr. Parkes Cadman says, "The goal for every man is Christ. To achieve his stature, to be transformed into his likeness, to have his mind, to be one with him as he is one with the Father—these are our divine destiny."

It is to be regretted that the mass of mankind have so many goals other than the Christ, that Dr. Cadman's statement sounds like a foreign language. It is either true or untrue. What is your answer?

If it be true, then the Church must have some consideration, for it is there that Christ is presented as in no other institution. The services of worship are planned that this high goal may be realized by each individual. WHY NOT GO TO CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY?

Gifts are passing, graces are eternal.

Character is the poor man's capital.

Affection is brass seeking to pass for gold.—Western Christian.

Weak characters go around difficulties—strong ones through them.

Race prejudice does not jibe well with God's fatherhood.

It isn't the long prayer which counts—it's the deep one.

Go to church from duty and you will go to church from delight.

Remember that when you sow wild oats you have to reap the harvest.

Education which is not based on religion and character is not education.—President Coolidge.

Life is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesies.

People pay far more attention to our example than they do to our good advice.

It is a poor religion that is never strong when its owner is sick.

Human things must be known to be loved; but divine things must be loved to be known.

Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.

It is better to say, "This one thing I do," than to say "These forty things I dabble in."—Washington Gladden.

THE QUESTION BOX

1.—How shall we stimulate attendance at Sunday School?

Have such an interesting and helpful program every Sunday that folks will want to attend; give pupils as much part as possible in running the school. (This question we have answered at length several times.)

2.—What do you consider that a minister should know about his community?

In order that a minister may furnish the most helpful program and preach the best sermons the following may be suggestive: (1) He should know what provision is made for wholesome recreation; what kind of pictures are seen at the movies; by the help of the public librarian and the news stand, he should know what kind of literature is being read.

(2) He should have a working knowledge of the industrial and economic life covering such points as labor conditions, poverty and relief, health, wages, child labor, and all agencies for improving conditions and living.

(3) He should have facts relating to immigration and races, literacy, religious affiliations, agencies for socializing prejudices.

(4) He should know the causes of crime and delinquency in the community, and what is being done to improve conditions.

(5) He should be closely allied

with the educational forces: what of moral stands in teacher and pupil; he should be the leader in week-day religious education.

(6) He should know the work of philanthropic and benevolent organization, and last but far from least, he must know the programs of other churches of the community.

Priscilla, Timothy and Erastus, and Galus and Aristarchus, with the many converts won during these two years. On the side of Diana, first and foremost, was a business man of the city named Demetrius, a silversmith with a large number of craftsmen under him. In every shop in Ephesus could be bought the miniature temples of Diana in terra cotta for the poor, in marble for the well-to-do and in silver for the rich—the output of Demetrius and his associates. The crisis had been coming on for months, now the storm broke.

Oh, the conquests that Christianity must win in the major interests of life! This lesson is a typical setting forth of the way in which opposition to Christianity works when the opposition arises out of commercial self-interests.

V. 23—"There arose no small stir about the way" Paul was preaching. From that Ephesian day till now there has always been this "no small storm concerning the Way" condition. Whenever a Christian is around there is always likely to be a "stir." The gospel has always been a disturbing element. When Jesus was born "Herod, the King...was troubled." In Thessalonica the world upside-down. There is something wrong with the preacher that creates no "stir." His preaching must hit, ant if it hits it will hurt.

V. 24-25—"Sirs, ye know by this business we have our wealth."—Ah! when you destroy my market, you destroy me. Demetrius was not the only person who has argued against religion because it interfered with trade. The owners of slaves did the same thing at the time of the Civil War. People who have been interested in the drink traffic and in other soul ruining merchandise have said again and again to religio, "Hands off!"

V. 26-27—Whether there should be partnership between business and religion depends entirely on who is the head of the firm. To commercialize religion is to paralyze it.

V. 28—When enraged, yell. The emperor the head the louder the yell. Individual graft is dangerous, but look out when it organizes. This incident isn't ancient history. The voice of Demetrius is still heard in many a modern meeting, working the same principles, whether in the field of religion, politics or business.

V. 31-32—When democracy becomes mobocracy the days of any government are numbered. A mob cannot reason—it can only rear like a brute and act like one. Despise mobs—but people, never. Some in this mob later became Christians.

We must all handle money, but is must not handle us. We must get money, but will money get us? We may make a living, but we must make a life.

WEEKLY STORY OF EARLY EDUCATION IN THE HOMES

The Protesting That Wins.

"Listen, fellows, if you do not quit swearing I shall have to leave you," declared William to his school mates who were habitually profane.

"Look at him," they shouted; "you think yourself better than we, do you?"

"I suppose you want to be a preacher, eh? You surely are mamma's boy. Since when did you quit swearing?"

"I quit swearing last Sunday; it's a bad habit and is practiced by a class with whom neither you nor I would want to associate; profanity does not mark a gentleman to say the least, and I have quit it," said William.

"Say, chum, how did you come to quit it? Tell us all about it."

"Last Sunday my father and I took

a walk through the woods and we were real pals before we got home.

During our conversation he incidentally told me of some of the good traits

of his family history, one of them being their clean life and speech. He

said to me, "I never heard my father or any of my brothers swear; I am expecting you to keep up our good family history."

"I tell you, fellows, when I got into

my room that night and thought of

the confidence and hope my father

had in me—that I would have to keep

up the family honor—well, swearing

had to go."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

For Sunday, Oct. 25. Money or Christ

(Acts 19:23-24)

Paul starts on his Third Missionary

Journey, strengthening the Churches

on the way, and comes to Ephesus

where he labored for three years.

Ephesus—proud of its size, the greatest

city in Asia Minor; proud of its

location, the gateway between the then

East and West; proud of its great

theater seating 24,500 people—but

prouder yet of its great temple—one

of the Seven Wonders of the World,

adorned within with the paintings and

statues of the greatest Greek artists,

surrounding the stau of the Goddess

Diana, which legend said, had fallen

from heaven.

But now a silent battle had been

fought for more than two years in

the synagogue of the Jews. Quietly

it began but now the noise of it fills

the city. It is a battle between Diana

of the Ephesians and Christ. On the

side of Christ was Paul, Aquilla and

Priscilla, Timothy and Erastus, and

Galus and Aristarchus, with the many

converts won during these two years.

On the side of Diana, first and foremost,

was a business man of the city named

Demetrius, a silversmith with a

large number of craftsmen under him.

In every shop in Ephesus could be

bought the miniature temples of

Diana in terra cotta for the poor,

in marble for the well-to-do and in silver

for the rich—the output of Demetrius

and his associates. The crisis had

been coming on for months, now the

storm broke.

awaken

the sleeping beauty that lies underneath the soiled surface of furniture, floors, doors and woodwork. O-Cedar Polish will take off the marks of use and bring back a dry hard finish. Use it, too