

Corner For Religious News

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL Sunday School 'Lesson'

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D.D., Dean of the Evening School, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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Lesson for November 8

PAUL'S FAREWELL AT MILETUS

LESSON TEXT—Acts 20:18-38.
GOLDEN TEXT—"Ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts 20:35.
PRIMARY TOPIC—Paul a Loving Friend.
JUNIOR TOPIC—Paul's Farewell at Miletus.
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—An Example of Faithfulness.
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Responsibilities of Church Members.

After the uproar at Ephesus, the Jews laid wait for Paul to destroy him. This plot obligated him to retrace his steps through Macedonia instead of taking a more rapid sea voyage. He tarried with the disciples at Troas, meeting with them around the table of the Lord, and speaking words of encouragement to them. In order to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, he did not go to Ephesus, but sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus to meet him at Miletus. The picture of Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders is a very touching one. His object in this address was to impress upon them their responsibilities. The analysis of his address has been so well made by Doctor Stiller that it is substantially reproduced here.

I. Paul Reviews His Three Years' Ministry at Ephesus (vv. 18-21).

1. The Spirit of His Ministry (v. 19).
(1) He was humble, "serving with all humility of mind."
(2) He was tender, working for them in tears.

(3) He was faithful in the face of trials which befell him because the Jews were lying in wait for him.

2. The Diligence of His Ministry (vv. 20-21).

(1) He made known everything which was of profit unto them. This every true minister or teacher will do.

(2) He taught both in public and in private. A minister's work is not done when his pulpit ministrations are over. The effectiveness of his public work is sometimes determined by his touch with the people in their homes.

(3) He neglected no class, whether Jews or Greeks. The Christian minister must be exceedingly careful here.

3. The Theme of His Ministry (v. 21).

This was—repentance and faith. Men and women need to repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. Paul Presents the Present State of Things (vv. 22-27).

1. His Immediate Purpose (v. 22).
This was to go to Jerusalem. The constraint of the Spirit moved him to go forward though he did not know the things that should befall him there.

2. The Shadows Lying Across His Path (v. 23).
Though bonds and afflictions awaited him, he went forward to his work with undaunted courage.

3. His Fixed Purpose (v. 24).

This was to complete his ministry, which was to testify the gospel of the grace of God which he had received from the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. A Sorrowful Prediction (v. 25).

Those among whom he had labored should see his face no more.

5. He Leaves No Debt of Obligation Behind (v. 26-27).

He was pure from the blood of all men.

III. Paul Sets Forth the Ephesian Elders' Responsibility (vv. 28-35).

1. Motives to Duty (v. 28).
(1) They received their call and commission directly from the Holy Spirit.

(2) The flock for which they must care was purchased with the precious blood of Christ.

2. Perils Ahead (vv. 29-30).

(1) Grievous wolves would enter the flock and mercilessly devour them.

(2) False teachers would arise from among their number.

3. Incentives to Watch (v. 31).

Paul's own example. For three years he watched night and day with tears.

4. He Commends Them to God, and His Word (v. 32).

He knew that this Word was able to build them up.

5. He Was Unselfish in His Service (vv. 33-35).

(1) He did not covet any man's silver, gold or apparel.

(2) He labored with his own hands and taught.

IV. Paul's Prayer (vv. 36-38).

Having spoken these words he knelt and prayed with them all.

Patience

Patience is a beautiful trait, but it is not worn oftenest by those who walk on life's sunny side in silver slippers. It is the product of days of adversity. "The trial of your faith worketh patience."—Evangelical Messenger.

WHY GO TO CHURCH?

The Ten Commandments are closely related to the work of the church, especially such as "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," etc. John Ruskin, who wrote in sarcasm to his day, dared to re-write the Commandments as follows:

"Thou shalt have gods of ease and comfort before me. Thou shalt worship thine own imagination as to houses and goods and business, and shalt bow down and serve them."

"Thou shalt remember the Sabbath day to make sure that all its hours are given to sloth and lounging and stuffing the body with rich foods, leaving the children of sorrow and ignorance to perish in their sullen misfortune."

"Thou shalt kill any slay men, by doing as little as possible thyself and squeezing as much as possible out of others. Thou shalt look upon loveliness in womanhood to soil it with impurity. Thou shalt steal daily—the employer from the servant and the servant from his employer—and the devil take the hindmost."

"Thou shalt get thy livelihood by weaving a great web of falsehoods and sheathing thyself in lies. Thou shalt covet thy neighbor's house to possess it for thyself; thou shalt covet his office, his farm and everything he has. And to crown all these practical business laws, the Devil has added a new commandment—Thou shalt hate thy brother as thou hatest thyself."

Which of the two sets of commandments do you practice? Why not accept the one that is universally acknowledged as genuine? Your vote on these two will be cast by GOING TO CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY.

THE QUESTION BOX

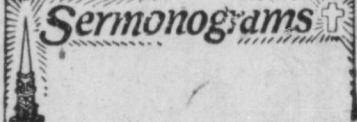
(Send problems in question form; answers will appear in later issue.)

1—How make Book Week effective?

The following experiment was tried and proved a success in Plattsburg, N. Y. Not having a Sunday School or church library a list of two hundred books were printed on a folder and placed in the weekly bulletin. On the folder were the names of the books, placed under certain headings according to the subject matter, the prices of the books, and lines for the names of the people who would agree to buy the books, read them as soon as delivered, then give them to the Sunday school to start a library. Approximately one hundred people responded. The pastor says, "A hundred people reading these books is better than many pastoral calls he might have made in the interest of good literature."

2—What lesson do you read in opening school when the graded and uniform lessons are used and all have to meet in the same room?

Select some general theme such as "Faith," "Loyalty," "Temperance," and build your opening program around the chosen theme, using hymns, Scripture reading, special features, etc., on the theme chosen.



Only love forgives.

Religion has no storage batteries.

Character is the poor man's capital.

Love never feels the weight of Christ's yoke.

You can't feed men religion with a silver spoon.

Weak characters go around difficulties. Strong ones through them.

If you feed your mind, it will keep on growing.

Be more willing to receive than to inflict an injury.

When Christ says, "Follow me," it is folly to say "No."

Go to church from duty until you go to church for delight.

An hour of well-doing is better than a month of repentance.

The steeple of some churches is the only thing which points to heaven.

A good sermon does little good unless you make good use of it.

A four-letter word that will solve the world's puzzles—"love."

The temple of achievement cannot

be built of wasted minutes.

Gossip does not embellish conversation—it throws mud upon it.

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

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

A smile and a good word has helped many a man over the stile of difficulty.

Prayer is as essential to the Christian life as air is to the physical life.

Sometimes the easiest way to cheer one's self is to go out and cheer some body else.

Loss of character is the most tragic misfortune that can befall a man.

Selfishness and injustice tangle life's threads in knots that are hard to undo.

Worship is the overflowing of a full heart; prayer is the craving of an empty heart.

God has a plan for your life, but you must co-operate with him in the program.

RELIGIOUS NEWS GATHERED ALL AROUND THE WORLD

The Lutheran cathedral in Reykjavik, on the southwest coast of Iceland, claims twelve thousand members.

For the third time in its history the British Foreign Bible Society last year issued more than ten million volumes of Scripture.

Rug-making schools attached to the American orphanages in Greece under the care of Near East Relief last year produced carpets valued at more than \$18,000.

Miss Ching, formerly secretary of the Peking Y. W. C. A. has been recently chosen national secretary of the Y. W. C. A. in China. Her secretarial staff will consist of fifty-four Americans and sixty Chinese.

A petition with 460,000 names has been presented to the German Reichstag requesting the enactment of a law which it is hoped will eventually make Germany dry. The names were secured in ten days.

Dr. Heber R. Harper, recently called to the presidency of Boston University, refused to leave his post as chancellor of the University of Denver, having been there but two years and is in the midst of a development program.

Considerable interest has been aroused within the Methodist church by the proposal of its board of bishops to have bishops now in the foreign mission fields brought to the United States in 1926 to preside over annual conferences in this country.

Edward T. Garland, secretary of the Bible Society of Maine, is collecting a copy of the Bible in which each one of the 31,730 verses shall be written by as many different persons. President Coolidge wrote the first verse, Gov. Brewster of Maine, the second, and former Governor Baxter of that state, the third. The task is now one-third completed.

A replica of the temple of Solomon will be erected in Philadelphia as an exhibit in the great celebration to be held next year in commemoration of the 150 years of American Independence. It will be one of the largest buildings in the exhibition grounds and will be a unit in the scheme of edifices that will trace the history of man from the time of the Chaldees to the Roman Empire.

Rev. Otto Lang, who as a boy took part in the Passion Play in Oberammergau, is now a student in Drew Seminary and plans to spend his life in the Methodist ministry in America.

Mr. Lang was brought to this country by Miss Anne Morgan, daughter of J. P. Morgan, of New York. His father, Otto Lang, took the part of Lazarus in the Passion Play of 1910 and his uncle, Andreas Lang, has been the Peter of the last two plays.

The daily press has been showing airplane views of the Swedeborgian cathedral now nearing completion at Bryn Athyn, Pa. The cathedral has begun under construction for fifteen years, being made possible by the will of Robert Pitcarin who left \$13,000,000 for the project. An unusual feature will be the presence of several landing fields, so that, in the future, a part of the congregation will find it easy to attend by air.

COMMENTS ON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Responsibilities of Church Members—Acts 20:25-28—for Sunday, Nov. 8.

Paul had planned, while at Ephesus, to gather a large gift from his Gentile churches for the poor at Jerusalem where famine was almost chronic. The Jewish Christians were most of them poor, and their condition pitiable. He would relieve the distress by raising a relief fund which would accomplish a double purpose. It would relieve acute distress and, coming from Gentile Christians, it might do something to make the Jewish Christians more ready to welcome the Gentile Christians into the church on equal terms with themselves.

Paul's method of raising money was "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper." Every Christian was to make a weekly contribution on Sunday, and to determine the amount of his contribution by his prosperity. The money was raised and Paul was so convinced of the importance of the collection that nothing could stop his going with it.

It was extremely dangerous for Paul to go to Jerusalem. The Jews had plotted to kill him on board ship out of Corinth. Paul knew the danger but duty demanded that he take the risk. The prophetic gift was not granted that personal danger might be shunned. Paul's burden was not what might happen to him, but what would happen in Ephesus if the elders were not faithful. It is his parting charge to these Ephesian elders whom he summons to meet him at the port of Miletus, that is the basis of our study today.

He speaks to them of the responsibility of church officers. They were to be an example to the rest of the members. (The real test for membership ought always to be "Are you receiving the life that comes from God, and passing it on?" This farewell address of Paul reminds us a little of Washington's "Farewell Address to His Countrymen." But Washington's address was political, while Paul's was religious. There is great tenderness of heart and searching of conscience in his farewell words.

V. 25-26—"Ye shall see my face no more." Gospel ties are very tender, very strong. Before giving them his farewell counsel he appeals to his ever faithfulness, that he had not shrunk from declaring unto them the whole counsel of God. It cost something to do this in Ephesus. If through all our years we shrink not from duty, our record too will stand behind us as a source of strength and satisfaction forever. Form and features may be forgotten but the spirit of a man is imperishably fixed upon his fellow-men.

V. 26—"Pure from the blood of all men." Hard to say—should be said Shrinking from faithful speech sheds much blood.

V. 28—"Take heed therefore, unto yourselves." An exhortation that applies to all preachers and teachers. If a man takes not heed to himself he will not to the flock. Let every teacher apply this verse to himself. We are to feed each other with truth in sympathy and service that brings life more abundant.

Vs. 29-30—"This counsel is followed by a word of warning—"After my departure grievous wolves shall enter in among you." Forewarned is forearmed. There are false prophets today who would take the heart out of Christianity by seeking to limit the gospel to a purely personal application.

V. 31—"Therefore, watch, and remember." Why watch? Because there were dangers seen and unseen; there were wolves in sheep's clothing. The devil himself can appear as an angel of light.

WEEKLY STORY OF EARLY EDUCATION IN THE HOMES

Code of Ethics for Parents.

Ernest R. Groves, professor of Social Science, Boston University, has written an article on "Parents Who Have Not Grown Up," published in the October number of Harper's, in which he shows the prevalence of immature emotional development in many parents, and because of this defect they are unfit for the proper training of their children. This fact is substantiated by childish moods and practices of such parents.

For improving parental training, he deduces some principles that might well be called "A Code of Ethics for Parents." These principles follow:

"Don't show off your child.

"Don't hurry your child in its natural process of development.

"Don't use your child as a means

of ridding yourself of emotions that you dare not express to equals.

"Don't lie to your child or permit anyone else to do so; it must be remembered that a lie is often concealed in the conduct of a parent.

"Don't use fear as a whip because fear makes a child a slave and less by that much of a natural human being.

"Don't stress the weaknesses of a child; to do so will increase that weakness.

"Don't assume that your child cannot reason; he can and will if you have the wit to let him, and help him.

"Don't let your home crowd out the child; put the child first and adjust home life to its needs.

"Don't be a tyrant to your child if you have superior power.

"The golden text is: Don't be emotionally childish if you desire manly and womanly children."

—D. Carl Yoder.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Responsibilities of Church Members—Acts 20:25-28—for Sunday, November 8.

1.—Was Paul justified in taking the gift to Jerusalem when he had been warned of the danger awaiting him?

2.—How should we part from our friends when Providence separates us?

3.—How were Paul's spirit and methods an example for Christian workers today?

4.—What responsibilities did Paul put upon these leaders of the church at Ephesus? Why was this church of such importance?

5.—Why does Paul repeatedly defend himself against the charge of self seeking?

6.—What are the difficulties in the way of our doing our Christian duty faithfully? How do they compare

with Paul's difficulties?

7.—How is it more blessed to give than to receive?

8.—What should be required of those who apply for admission into the church? Of those who are in it?

9.—What was the finest example of faithfulness you ever saw?

Lesson Prayer

Father, our times are in thy hand. We would not have it otherwise. Guide us, hold us, keep us, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Book Review

Centenary Translation of the New Testament, Helen Barrett Montgomerie, the Judson Press, Philadelphia, is written in the language of everyday life, chiefly designed for the average man and woman. It is a translation of the first hundred years of work of the American Baptist Publication Society.

"Cheer Up" lots of fun and good music Nov. 17-18. 2481f



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