

Corner For Religious News

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL Sunday School 'Lesson'

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November 15

PAUL'S ARREST IN JERUSALEM

LESSON TEXT—Acts 21:18-23:32.
GOLDEN TEXT—"If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed."
PRIMARY TOPIC—Paul Is Brave in Danger.
JUNIOR TOPIC—Paul and the Jerusalem Mob.
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Paul Faces a Mob.
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—The Spirit of the Mob.

I. Paul's Vow (21:18-20).
Upon Paul's arrival at Jerusalem representatives of the church there gave him a most cordial reception. In order that the brethren in Jerusalem might graciously receive him, it was proposed to him by the elders that he take a Jewish vow to prove that he was in no way opposed to the law. The effort was to remove prejudice. They recognized that such an act would in no way compromise or involve the Gentile brethren. Furthermore this would not compromise his own principles of action, viz., to the Jews he became a Jew, and to the Gentiles, a Gentile; all things to all men in order to gain them for Christ.

II. Paul's Arrest (21:27-40).
How far this act conciliated the Jews we are not told, but it only enraged the unbelieving Jews, causing them to resort to mob law. These maddened Jews on the basis of a supposition seized him and dragged him from the temple and beat him mercilessly intending to put him to death. Paul was rescued from the mob by the Roman guard. The chief captain, not being able to get any information from the howling mob, bound Paul and started for the castle. In order to protect him from the murderous frenzy of the mob, the soldiers lifted him upon their shoulders and bore him up the stairs. Paul kept himself under control, and politely asked permission of the captain to speak to the people. When he addressed him in Greek and quoted his Roman citizenship, the captain granted his request.

III. Paul's Defense (22:1-27).
Paul's chief concern was not his own safety. He used this opportunity to witness unto them of Christ.

1. His Claim for a Rightful Hearing (vv. 1-3).

(1) His birth (v. 3).

He was a Jew born in Tarsus, a city of no mean reputation.

(2) His Education (v. 3).

He was educated under Gamaliel and instructed "according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers."

(3) His Zeal (v. 3).

He was as zealous toward God as those Jews who were trying to destroy him.

2. His Attitude Toward Jesus (vv. 4-5).

"I persecuted this way unto the death," so that his attitude was one of hatred as was that of the Jews.

3. How His Attitude Was Changed (vv. 6-16).

While on his way to Damascus with authority to bind the Christians at Jerusalem, he was smitten to the ground by a light from heaven, and the voice of the Lord said, "Why persecutest thou me?" When Paul inquired what he was to do, he was told to go to Damascus where he would be told what to do.

4. The Lord Commissioned Him to Go to the Gentiles (17-21).

IV. Paul Before the Sanhedrin (23:1-10).

The Roman officer, in order to learn why Paul was arrested, commanded the chief council to assemble, and brought Paul before them.

1. Paul's Earnest Look at the Council (vv. 1-2).

This was a solicitation of their honor to give him a fair hearing, and also a look of conscious integrity and unflinching courage.

2. Paul's Stern Rebuke of the Head of the Council (v. 3).

"God shall smite thee, thou whited wall."

3. Paul's Appeal to the Pharisees (vv. 6-10).

Seeing that he could not get a fair hearing, and perceiving that the body before him was made up of Pharisees and Sadducees, he appealed to the Pharisees hoping to get their attention, for his preaching had something in common with their belief.

V. The Lord Stood by Paul (v. 11).

This assured him that his course was right, and thus comfort was brought to him.

VI. The Conspiracy to Kill Paul (vv. 18-22).

More than forty men placed themselves under a curse to abstain from eating and drinking until they had murdered him. God defeated their plan without a miracle.

Darkness

The darkness which is the result of the absence of the light which others ought to shed is bad enough; but how great is the darkness of disbelief and unbelief into which some will voluntarily plunge!—The Mennonite.

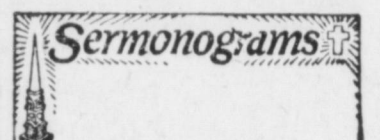
WHY GO TO CHURCH?

"In what world are you living?" is a vital question. For your world is the one reflecting your vision, your view point, your ideals, your interpretations of life including your essential qualities of character be they good or bad.

A selfish man sees a selfish world; a man whose object is money sees a financial world; one who revels in pleasure sees the world as a grand theater; the disgruntled man sees the world as a stage of troubles; the pessimist sees a world of hard knocks.

On the other hand an unselfish man sees a world of humanity; the one whose object is rendering service sees a world of blessed opportunities; the one who enjoys mental, moral and spiritual life, the world is Heaven's university; the man who takes everything that comes with a smile sees a world created and taken care of by God his father.

It is a question then of the right vision, right viewpoint, right ideals, correct interpretations of life and possessing good qualities of character. These may be attained while waiting on God in worship. WHY NOT GO TO CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY?



No man drifts homeward.

A church fuss is the devil's delight.

Wherever you go, love will light the way.

Nothing is well done until it is willingly done.

God's will is the very perfection of all reason.—Edward Payson.

Many a man refuses to let his shortcomings rest in peace.

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

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

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

A lack of harmony in the choir is not always revealed in the singing.

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

Sometimes the easiest way to cheer oneself is to go out and cheer somebody else.

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

You will never do a full day's work if you toil only when you feel like it.

You may rob a man by withholding from him that which of a right belongs to him.

Heaven may be reached by a single bound; but hell may be reached by a single step.

There are persons whose idea of putting "first things first" is always to put themselves first.

There is a great deal of practical Christianity in simply holding one's tongue on unpleasant subjects.

Make every occasion a great occasion; for you cannot tell when some one may be taking your measure for a larger place.

Do what you are paid to do and then some; it's the 'then some' that gets your salary raised.

COMMENTS ON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Paul's Arrest in Jerusalem—The ceaseless conflict over incidentals obscuring essentials—(Acts 21:27-39) for Sunday, November 15.

From his interview with the Ephesian elders Paul proceeded to Jerusalem and the trouble which he anticipated soon began. He was kindly received by the brethren and the church. Narrating his labors among the Gentiles he drew from them praise unto God. The church seemed to be harmonious and united yet as Dr. James H. Snowden says, "the old antagonism between conservatives

and liberals was working beneath the surface."

Some of the Jewish Christians were zealous for the Mosaic law and were suspicious of Paul's orthodoxy, and they proposed that he go into the temple with four brethren that had taken a vow and, by thus appearing with them, disarm these criticisms. Paul in accord with his practice of being all things to all men when no principle was imperiled, complied with this request.

V. 27-28—While doing this some Jews saw him, and instantly there was a tremendous Oriental uproar. Men are more willing to fight for their religion it seems, than to live by it. A maddened mob arose against Paul and would have killed him—only interference in the nick of time saved him.

They had brought the charge that Paul rejected Moses, and was defiling the temple, when he was only advocating progress in religion. They thought it death to their religion whereas it was new life. Many great causes have been defeated through stirring the passions of unthinking people by spreading falsehoods. No degree of consecration ensures one against being a victim of misrepresentation.

"This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people and the law, and this place." And as William Ridway says, "pretty much like all such religious-political 'bunkum' it was not so. Never pay attention to old Vox Populi. 'Pop' nine-tenths of the time does not know what he is talking about, and almost any one can swing him up hill and down dale by a few lies or half-truths."

Many Americans seem to think they are better than people from other nations and races. This is mob psychology.

V. 29—"They supposed—" Grave wrong may be done by an accusation, based on a guess. When a person acts on wrong information without knowing the facts he is guilty of bearing false witness against one who ought to be his neighbor.

Vs. 30-31—Angry voices are heard in bitter accusation; others muttering the half-truth which is worse than a lie; some tell open falsehoods—a mob will tell anything but the truth; and in a moment Paul is seized and dragged through the Gate Beautiful. It is bad enough for an individual to lose his head and run amuck; but when a crowd does so it is a reversal to the worst that is in man. A man with a head can handle a mob without heads—up to certain limits.

V. 32—The providential interference, that saved Paul in the nick of time was effected through Roman soldiers. God always works through human agencies doing his will though they may not know it. The gospel of peace has not yet so saturated society that it needs no sword to keep it in order.

V. 33—"Then the chief captain came and commanded him to be bound with two chains." Two often it is the mob victim rather than members of the mob who is arrested and punished. But better to wear two chains, deserving none, than to be worthy of bonds and go free.

V. 34—"Some shouted one thing, some another, among the crowd." No better description of the mob than just this. Gossips never agree in their tales. Slanderers when asked to be definite in their charges have nothing to say, are confused, or stammer out different stories. We should be careful in uttering charges that cannot be sustained.

V. 35—"And when he came upon the stairs—so it was that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the crowd. For the multitude of the people followed after crying, 'Away with him!'" The very same cry that was raised against Jesus when they sent him to the cross.

Mr. Snowden says, "A man's argument seems so conclusively answered when his head is off. A sword thrust that severs the tongue is so much quicker in bringing quiet than a reason that convinces the mind. But truth does not depend on the tongue that utters it, but may cry out the louder long after the lips that first declared it have been silenced and withered into dust." These Jews wanted to kill Paul but today nobody knows who they were, while millions are studying Paul's words.

Vs. 37-38—"May I speak unto thee?" Culture, courtesy, self-control are not the marks of a criminal.

V. 39—"I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus . . . no mean city." Many a man under arrest seeks to conceal the city to which he belongs, but Paul had nothing to conceal. His only request was, "I beseech thee, suffer me to speak;" and standing on the stairway he showed the spirit of him who not far away from that very spot prayed, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." How magnificently does Paul's spirit

ride above any thought of hatred or even-justice towards his enemies! What a masterly man! Secret of it? His faith in his cause and his grip on God. Paul was "tuned in" with Heaven.

We are still subject to these little prejudices and distorted perspectives of life today. Thousands of Christian people think that Christianity has a brief for the white race, and that America somehow is paramount in the councils of an all-seeing God. We say that Christ is our universal Savior and then we contradict it by our narrow nationalism. We say that all who call upon God are his and then we fix our theological boundaries.

The Jews allowed incidentals to eclipse the great essentials of faith. Let us take care that two thousand years later we have learned our lesson from Christian history and do not fall into the same pit.

WEEKLY STORY OF EARLY EDUCATION IN THE HOMES

How Henry Ford Got Started.

Henry Ford's father who owned a big Michigan farm was very persistent that his son Henry should be a farmer; little did he know that the bent of a child's life, his natural interests and capacity for some special line of work should guide in choosing life's work.

The place little Henry liked best was the shop where tools were sharpened. The little boy was allowed sometimes to blow the bellows, and with a small hammer he would make sparks fly from the anvil.

One Sunday he persuaded a chum who had a watch that would not run to let him fix it, and the nhe had his first lesson in machinery. He made a tiny screw driver and took the watch apart but failed to get it together. After that he practiced on every watch and clock he could lay his hands on. For this Sunday work he received parental chastisement.

In school he was the leader in using play time in making things; among other things by means of blowpipes, Henry made all sorts of glass ware from melted glass. One day he led the boys to dam a creek which as a result caused the flooding of two acres of potatoes, the damage of which his father had to pay.

So anxious was Henry to know more about machinery that at sixteen he ran away from home and found employment in one of Detroit's machine shops; while there one day he saw a heavy traction engine on the streets and conceived the notion of having a carriage run by a light engine. He proceeded to experiment with gasoline as a motor power and experimented for many years till one morning at 3 o'clock he started his first automobile out in the rain and to his great joy and the delight of his wife as a witness, the thing went and the farmer boy of Michigan won his place as a world mechanic and benefactor.

RELIGIOUS NEWS GATHERED ALL AROUND THE WORLD

The Supreme Court has decided that the Arizona minimum wage law for women is unconstitutional.

By a tie vote of fifty to fifty the House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States has declined to become a constituent member of the Federal Council of Churches.

The annual convention of the Religious Education Association will be held in Toronto, Canada, March 10-13, 1926, the general theme being "Education for Participation in World Affairs."

The private papers of William Jennings Bryan are to go for perpetual custody to the Library of Congress, where they will ultimately be available to responsible historical scholars.

Dr. William Chalmers Covert, general secretary of the Presbyterian board of Education, is now organizing a nation-wide interdenominational movement to restore and Christianize the American family.

The essential feature of the Church school of the First Congregational church, Toledo, Ohio, is an eight year's preparation of the children of the school for church membership. The school has closed its fifth year and is an established success.

The United States Government is to take its religious census of the country next year. This is done every ten years, in the years which end in '6' and the object is to learn how many persons are church-members,

how many ministers there are, how many children in Sunday School, how much property the churches own, and similar data.

A new and modern legal code for Turkey, designed to sweep away the old laws based on the Koran, has been completed by a commission of experts and will be placed before the Grand National Assembly at Anagra for adoption when next that body meets. Polygamy is entirely abolished, civil marriages only are legal and the right of inheritance by will is adopted.

A fifty-three bell carillon has been presented by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to the Park Avenue Baptist Church, New York City. The carillon is a memorial to Mr. Rockefeller's mother and is the largest and most expensive in the world, having cost \$60,000. The only bell on which there is an inscription is the "Big Tenor," which reads, "The Lord bless thee; the Lord, praise him and sanctify him forever." In loving memory of my mother, Laura Snellman Rockefeller-1839-1915-whose gentle, kindly spirit and steadfast devotion to Christ and his cause will ever be an abiding inspiration, this carillon is given, John D. Rockefeller, Jr."

The Bushwick Avenue Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., supports ten native teachers at Sona Bata; eight native teachers at Moanza (Congo); a native worker, a native preacher, and a native hospital assistant in south India; four beds in Clough Memorial Hospital; Sunday School worker and native Christian nurse in China; four native men in training at Ramapatnam, south India; a native preacher in Central America, besides other more general missionary objects. If there were more churches of like spirit with this one, our foreign missionary problem would be far less acute than it is now.

THE QUESTION BOX

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

1—Suggest some lines of action which will make a Sunday School teacher more efficient.

(A) Know your pupils—their background, environment, their intimate personal problems. It is especially important to keep in touch with the parents of their pupils for co-operative action in behalf of the best interests of the church.

(b) Develop group consciousness by organizing the classes for specific worthwhile tasks.

(c) Study participation. Give the pupils an increasing part in all things possible. This often can be done by open conferences when considering class activities.

(d) Get a good project at the beginning of the year and carry the thing through. Secure a copy of Shaver's "The Project Principles of Re-

ligious Education."

2—How may faithful attendance at the Sunday School be secured?

—Too much stress has been put upon members rather than on faithfulness. The per cent of attendance of the membership of the Sunday School in the United States is only 60 per cent of the enrollment so that by securing the full attendance of our enrollment we would almost double the present attendance record; therefore, no school should seek more members than can be well taken care of.

To properly care for the members involves such a good program, with such helpful teaching that will give value in turn for every moment of time a pupil invests in the school. Then such co-operation with the home must be effected that will enlist the assistance of parents in a united program of religious education so that the home and the church are united factors in the moral and religious welfare of the child.

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LESSON PRAYER

Our Father, as we study of Paul who suffered persecution that thy gospel should be preached and taught to those who knew not thee, we praise thee for the wonderful love which prompted this sacrifice, and we pray that we may be more earnest in our service for thee. Give us something of the spirit of Paul, which was the spirit of the Master. In His name. Amen.

BOOK REVIEW

"Young People's Projects" by Edwin L. Shaver, University of Chicago Press, 50c each, is a guide for Christian leaders in building educational programs for young people. There are six separate programs, each with its challenge to young people to think through the problems of the Christian life: "A Christian's Life Work;" "A Christian's Recreation;" "A Christian's Attitude Toward the Press;" "Christian World Builders;" "Christian Young People and World-Friendship;" and "Young People and the Church."

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