

*Sabbath School Lessons
for Adults*



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PREFACE

This quarter's lessons are based primarily on scriptures from the books of I and II Timothy through I Peter 2, and are a continuation of a study of the New Testament books in last quarter's lessons. These studies only highlight some of the Biblical wisdom and ethical teachings found in these epistles.

The scriptures used are the specific basis for these lessons. However, you should not limit your study to only these references and be satisfied with merely answering the questions in the lesson study. With careful study of the whole Bible on these subjects, you should acquire the wisdom necessary to apply these truths to your daily walk with Christ.

Please keep two things in mind during the study of this series. First, remember that Christ is the central theme of each lesson; and second, that your aim is to learn to follow Him more devotedly.

The Sabbath School Department

July 4, 1970

Rooted in Sound Doctrine

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Timothy 6:1-14.

MEMORY VERSE: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Timothy 4:16).

Lesson Comments: Sound doctrine or true teachings are, and have always been, an important factor in the salvation of man. Having fallen from the standard of righteousness, man lost the image of his Creator and must be taught the way of returning to Him.

The sacrificial services of earlier ages were designed to indoc-trinate man to the point where he could see the provision made by God through Jesus, the Lamb of God, who was to take away the sin of the world. That system was a kindergarten method whereby all could learn of the coming Messiah.

Satan corrupted that system. A mixture of true and false doc-trines was introduced. This was so interwoven that the common people could not discern the true from the false. Jesus told the Pharisees, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). Again He said, "... Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:9).

Jesus Christ, as mediator of the New Covenant, exposed these errors and again started the Church out with a true message, a heaven-sent set of doctrines. The Holy Spirit guided the true fol-lowers of Christ so that the doctrine of Christ has been maintained by, at least, a few in each succeeding generation.

However, Satan has been at work again, attempting to corrupt Christianity just as he corrupted Judaism. The apostles of the Lord foresaw this and warned the Church of the danger ahead. The "falling away" (or apostasy) from the true faith came as predicted. Even men of the Church arose, "speaking perverse things." Those perverse teachings are present in the professed church today. This makes it necessary for those who would be Christ's true fol-lowers to examine every teaching in the light of the Scriptures.

Sound doctrines have a satisfying effect on the soul. This is reflected in the following: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender

herb, and as the showers upon the grass" (Deuteronomy 32:2).

When we are rooted and grounded in sound doctrine, the result is honor and praise to God and a blessing to us. Unsound doctrines have an adverse effect upon us. Instead of a distilling effect on the soul, we are as the parched ground. God cannot bless error, and He will not always tolerate those who persist in it.

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. What may we expect to see in the last days? 2 Timothy 4:3; 3:13.

2. What agency will accomplish this? 1 Timothy 4:1.

3. Should we expect a decline in social conditions comparable to the decline of moral and spiritual standards? 2 Timothy 3:1-7; Proverbs 14:34.

4. By what means does error sometimes penetrate the Church? Acts 20:28-31; Galatians 2:4; 2 Peter 2:1-3.

5. How does the truth relate to our liberty in Christ? John 8:32; 17:17.

6. What provision has God made for our instruction in sound doc-trine? 2 Timothy 3:15-17. Does this include the prophetic por-tion of the Word? 2 Peter 1:19-21. What evidence have we that the writings were regarded as Holy Scriptures, even in apos-tolic times? 2 Peter 3:15, 16.

7. What assurance has the Heavenly Father given us of His willing-ness to help us to a better understanding? James 1:5; John 7:17; 14:26; 15:13.

8. Discuss the Christian's obligation to study and learn. 1 Peter 2:2; 3:15; 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:21.

Counsel Concerning Spiritual Needs

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Timothy 1:6-14.

MEMORY VERSE: "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Timothy 2:4).

Lesson Comments: "Where there is no vision, the people perish: ..." (Proverbs 29:18). One of our greatest needs as workers with God is vision. The apostle Paul sensed this great need for himself and for Timothy, his son in the faith. In both his letters to Timothy, Paul stressed the need to "stir up" the gift of the Spirit within.

Timothy was not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord Jesus, nor of Paul, the prisoner of the Lord. In the early days of this dispensation it was not popular to be a Christian as it is now sometimes considered to be. The "afflictions" in the Gospel included the stigma attached to being a member of the minority religious group known as Christians. To become a believer in Christ often meant to become a social outcast and an object of persecution. Even so, they were to rejoice that they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

The Christian, from the time of his conversion to the end of his life, should constantly grow in the knowledge and grace of God, and in productivity; allowing nothing to turn him back. This must be accomplished even under trying circumstances, because our enemy, the devil, is alert to every opportunity to deceive, discourage, and persecute the children of God.

Our Christian testimony, like a light, shines brightest in the midst of darkness. Godly characters like Daniel, the three Hebrew children, and others are remembered for their faithfulness in spite of opposition. Jesus promised to be with us until the end; and He will. At this moment He is our advocate and intercessor and high priest.

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. How do the Scriptures stress the need for foresight in spiritual things? Proverbs 29:18.
Note: Many converts fail to grow into strong, well-developed Christians simply because they have no higher ideals. They bask in the security that comes with knowing their sins are forgiven, without being motivated to the active service of God where the greater blessings are to be experienced.
2. What should be the goal of the new convert? Hebrews 6:1; 2 Peter 1:5-10.
3. What lesson might one construct from Jesus' admonition to "...Launch out into the deep,..." (Luke 5:4-11). In this connection, also discuss the plight of the unprofitable servant. Matthew 25:24-30.
4. Discuss some examples of dedication to righteous living. Daniel 1:8; 6:10; 3:16-18; Acts 11:23.
5. What warning is given concerning persecution? 2 Timothy 3:12; Matthew 5:10.
6. Describe the work of sanctification. 1 Thessalonians 5:22, 23; 3:13; 4:4.
7. Whom must we resist in this world? James 4:7, 8; 1 Peter 5:6-10.
8. What help has God provided the erring Christian? 1 John 2:1, 2.
9. How does true hope provide the child of God with incentive to live rightly? 1 John 3:3; Mark 10:28-30.

July 18, 1970

Loyalty to the Gospel

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Timothy 4:1-8.

MEMORY VERSE: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:2).

Lesson Comments: The Word of God contains all the necessary elements of the gospel. Living by the Word standardizes the lives of Christians in sanctification and holiness. Allegiance to the gospel cannot be maintained by those who lightly regard obedience to God's Word. The minister is required to take the initiative in this, and be an example to the flock under his care. Another factor that contributes loyalty to the gospel is one's diligence in studying the Word. Paul advises, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Let us remember that Paul was addressing a spiritual man; a man endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. He was urged to "stir up" this gift and in addition he was to study if his ministry and life was to be approved.

The catalog of last-day sins of chapter three are now in fulfillment. Professors of Christ are having a form of godliness—accepting religion, but denying the power thereof. By their fruits we shall know them. In the midst of all this there are loyal followers of the gospel, both of ministers and laymen. These should be admonished to be of good courage and continue in the faith.

Paul's final testimony is worthy of note. "I have fought a good fight I have finished my course. I have kept the faith." All followers of Christ should keep their eyes on this testimony. Our conscience and knowledge of our responsibility is a good yardstick by which we can measure ourselves in the light of this testimony. All may not have the experience of Paul, but each one has a battle to fight, a course to run, and a faith for which to contend. We can count on the grace of God which is sufficient for every emergency.

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Questions for Study and Discussion

1. Why is it necessary to study? 2 Timothy 2:15.
 2. In what should we not be engaged? Verse 16. Why not? Verses 17, 18.
 3. What is required of those who would be vessels of honor? Verses 20, 21.
Note: This great house is symbolic of God's church. We should examine ourselves as to what class of vessels we belong; whether to those of honor or dishonor. If to dishonor; then we are unfit for the Master's use.
 4. What will those engulfed in the sins of chapter 3:1-6 fail to achieve? Verse 7.
 5. Will this class become better or worse? Verse 13.
 6. Why was Timothy admonished to preach the Word? Chapter 4:1-4.
 7. What was Paul's final testimony? Verse 7.
 8. Of what was Paul assured? Verse 8.
- Today is Ministerial Department Emphasis Day. Read the information on page 30 to become better acquainted with the work of this department. Your gift will be appreciated.**

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July 25, 1970

Duties of a Bishop

SCRIPTURE READING: Titus 7:1-11.

MEMORY VERSE: "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" (Titus 2:7).

Lesson Comments: The word "bishop" means an overseer or spiritual superintendent. The titles bishop, elder, and presbyter are essentially equivalent. A bishop (elder) is under the apostles, but over the deacons. Today, this title is misused in large circles to refer to one in charge of a diocese.

The duties and qualifications of bishops (elders) are clearly outlined in Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-19. While there is nothing in these texts to indicate his literary qualifications, it is clear that his responsibilities call for some degree of literary knowledge.

It is said that the disciples were unlearned and ignorant men, but this does not mean that they were altogether illiterate. It is understood that they had not what we would call academic degrees, and hence were ignorant in the eyes of the trained Pharisees of their day. The Pharisees thought that Jesus was of the same category, but He read the scroll (Luke 4:17) and surprised His hearers by His display of wisdom (Verse 22).

In this lesson we learn what is required to adorn the ministry of a bishop. Some seek ministerial honors for the adorning of their life, instead of adorning the office. It is quite apparent that the ministry is not as respected today as it was in the old days, because of the laxity displayed by some who occupy this office. Also, in this lesson, great emphasis is placed on the bishop's standing in his community and in his family circle.

The apostle's powers and duties were many. He gave instructions as to the bishop's qualifications and duties—how he must instruct the old, the young, the husbands, the wives, the children, the servants, and all under his supervision. He is a steward in charge of sacred goods which he must distribute according to the knowledge given him by God, and not according to his own ideas.

The bishop should be a man who reads extensively, that he may be able to advise his congregation on many matters.

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Questions for Study and Discussion

1. By whom was this epistle addressed, and to whom? Titus 1:1, 4.
2. What shows that both men were in harmony with organization? Verse 5. Should such a system be discarded today? What will be the results?
3. What was to be the elders' primary qualifications? Verse 6.
4. While teaching others, what was to be his own responsibility? Verses 7, 8.
5. How would his ministry be successful? Verse 9.
6. With what class of church people would he have to contend? Verses 10-12.
7. What part of the doctrines should he teach? Titus 2:1-5.
8. To whom do we also owe obedience? Titus 3:1, 2.

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Plea for Forgiveness

SCRIPTURE READING: Philemon 10-19.

MEMORY VERSE: "For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother" (Philemon 7).

Lesson Comments: One of the greatest proofs of the grace of God in the soul is the spirit of forgiveness. It is a challenge to every one who prays. Being sinners by nature (1 John 1:8), we dare not approach the mercy seat in prayer except by way of confessing our sins and asking forgiveness of them.

This principle is forcefully laid down in the prayer our Lord has taught us: "... And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." If we fail to pray after this manner our prayers certainly will not be heard.

Despite this plain injunction, many are falling victim to Satan in not forgiving one another. Still more dangerous is the remembering of the evils that someone has done to us. This is one of the best weapons in Satan's hand against the children of God.

In this lesson, Paul is appealing to Philemon on behalf of Onesimus for forgiveness. Both were Paul's sons in the faith. It is not told here what the offense was, but it is evident that there was something that needed rectifying. Paul states here that Onesimus was unprofitable to Philemon, but profitable to him, Paul.

Paul advises that we grow both in grace and in knowledge. Undoubtedly Onesimus had come to be a profitable man. Here we have a parallel experience in that of Mark who also became profitable in his ministry to Paul. "For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever." This is implied in the text. "... And things work together for good to them that love God..." (Romans 8:28).

Onesimus had acquired a new status; he was no more a weak servant, but a beloved brother, and was entitled to more consideration from Philemon than before. On this ground, Philemon was to receive him as he would Paul. But Paul desired a settlement; he was not one to advocate debts. All debts except love must be paid, as he has stated in his letter to the Romans. But in this case, Onesimus' debt was to be placed on Paul's account, for this

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debtor, in Paul's knowledge, could not pay. This is exactly what Jesus has done for us. Our debt of sin was laid on Him because we could not pay. Payment was made in the atonement on Calvary.

This appeal to Philemon was written with confidence that it would be done. This, Paul here states, would bring refreshment to his bowels (Verse 20).

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. Who was associated with Paul when this epistle was written? To whom was it addressed? Philemon 1, 2. Discuss "the church in thy house." Why not a regular church building?
2. For what was Paul thankful? Verses 4-6.
3. What blessing was enjoyed by Paul and others through Philemon? Verse 7.
4. During what period of Paul's ministry was Onesimus saved? Verses 9, 10.
5. What do we understand by his being "profitable to Paul"? Verses 11, 13.
6. What is suggested as a reason for Onesimus' departure? Verse 15.
7. What status was now acquired by him? What was their two-fold relationship? Verse 16.
8. What responsibility did Paul assume in this case? Verses 18, 19.
9. If this request were not granted, how would it affect Paul? Verses 20, 21.

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The Supremacy of Christ

SCRIPTURE READING: Hebrews 3:1-12.

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

Lesson Comments: The letter to the Hebrews is outstanding for its introduction to them of Christ as the eternal Son of God. In this is the mystery of godliness overwhelmingly set forth. He is introduced as the brightness of His glory, and the express image of the Father's person, through whom He speaks to us in these last days, individually.

This is not possible unless we receive His personal representative, the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father. "I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you," is still being fulfilled today. It was through this medium that John received the Revelation from an angel (Revelation 1:1). Agabus spoke to Paul and others through the Spirit, and all the gifts are set in the Church by the Spirit. We can have no apostles, prophets or any of the gifts without the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is He who divides these gifts to us severally as He will.

Christ, in coming to save us, took on Himself our human form and nature. While here in the flesh He was still divine; and although He was shorn of His glory, He retained His divinity. In proof of this He accepted adoration from His people, and pardoned their sins.

Having accomplished His work, He is now exalted to the throne of His Father's glory, where He ministers to us as High Priest, faithfully and mercifully, in making intercession for us.

We are invited to consider Him as the apostle and high priest of our profession who is the builder of this present house, His church; whose house we are if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.

It is possible that we can play the same role as Israel. Despite the manifestation of His glory to them in the wilderness, they failed to enter Canaan; their carcasses fell in the wilderness. Al-

though He is supreme, He does not work arbitrarily against our will. We may choose the path of faithfulness if it seems good to us. He can only advocate for us on the grounds of our righteous desires.

The reasons for Israel's failure might be divided into two categories: first, unbelief resulting in their rejection of the Messiah, and second, disobedience manifested by their putting the traditions of men ahead of the commandments of God. We are warned against following their example of failure (Hebrews 3:12; 1 Corinthians 10:5, 6).

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. Through what medium was God revealed to the fathers (ancient Israel)? Hebrews 1:1.
2. In what respect is this different from today? Verse 2. How is this accomplished? Who are not qualified to receive this revelation?
3. What is Christ said to be? Verse 3. According to Ephesians 4:24 and Colossians 3:10, is this image physical or spiritual?
4. What part did the Son play in the creation of all things? Hebrews 1:2, 10.
5. In coming to earth, what step did He take? Chapter 2:9.
6. Why was this step necessary? Into what fellowship does He bring us? Verses 10, 11.
7. Discuss why He took on the nature of man. Verses 14-16.
8. How did Paul address himself to the Hebrews? Chapter 2:1, first part.
9. Whom were they advised to consider? Verses 1 (last part) and 2.

Christ, Our High Priest

SCRIPTURE READING: Hebrews 5:1-9.

MEMORY VERSE: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

Lesson Comments: We cannot minimize the importance of the present office of Christ as our High Priest. He has fulfilled His ministry as Prophet for three and one-half years on earth, and has entered upon His priestly ministry in the heavens. Soon He will return as King for His millennial reign.

His qualification for the ministry lies in the fact that He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been tempted in all points like as we are, yet sinless.

Some reason that He was God and, therefore, could not sin. The fact is that He was both God and man. In His capacity as God, He had all power, but this power was not used to shield Him against temptation; if this were true, we would have excuse for our weaknesses. As man, He depended on His Father for Power to overcome just as we do, with strong cryings and tears to Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared (Hebrews 5:7).

The priesthood of Christ is unchangeable. Unlike the Aaronic priesthood, it abides forever, because He lives forever, after the order of Melchisedec. We can give no further information than that which Paul gives in this chapter under the inspiration of the Spirit.

Some would have us believe that the change in the Levitical priesthood has brought a change in the law of tithing. This doctrine is designed to undermine the work of the Lord. The law that made the tribe of Levi priests is changed, so that Christ who is the tribe of Judah can now be priest, after the law of an endless life. This has no bearing on God's eternal claim on the tenth of our increase.

Christ ascended to heaven from Mount Olivet and is at the right hand of God; there to intercede for us (Hebrews 9:24). The presence of God is within the veil.

Paul (who is usually accredited with the authorship of He-

brews) wrote this epistle about A.D. 64, at which time Christ was already within the veil, made High Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 6:19, 20).

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. Why should we have boldness at the mercy seat? Hebrews 4:14-16.
2. Why were the earthly priests able to sympathize with those who erred? Chapter 5:1, 2.
3. After what order was Christ made High Priest? Verses 5, 6.
4. What shows how dependent He was on His Father for power to overcome? Verse 7. Discuss fully why Paul could say so much about Him in his writings. Verses 11-14. What is meant by strong meat? To whom does this belong?
5. How does the book of Hebrews seek to impress the Hebrew people with the danger of rejecting Christ's sacrifices? Chapter 6:1-6.
6. In the patriarchal dispensation Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec. Discuss his qualifications to receive this. Chapter 7:1-4, 7.
7. Why could Jesus become Priest, seeing He was not of the tribe of Levi? Verses 12-14.
8. How does the priesthood after the order of Melchisedec differ from the Levitical priesthood. Verses 22-28.

The New Covenant

SCRIPTURE READING: Hebrews 9:1-12.

MEMORY VERSE: "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Hebrews 8:6).

Lesson Comments: When we look up the word covenant in any good dictionary, we find several definitions listed. In the Bible too, the word does not always mean the same. Some covenants are promises, nothing more or less. A law is a covenant. Some covenants consist of agreements between two or more persons. Still other covenants are testamentary covenants or wills—they bequeath estates, and become effective after the death of the testator.

The old covenant is in two categories. It was an agreement between God and the nation of Israel. It was also a will or testamentary covenant, because it bequeathed to Israel a home in Canaan. Therefore, that covenant was later called the old testament by such inspired writers as the apostle Paul.

The Israelites failed to keep their part of the old covenant, and the old covenant was not perfect, hence the need for a new covenant.

The new covenant is also a testamentary covenant. Under this covenant (testament), God's people are promised eternal life in a land possession in the new earth. This is the "better" promise of the new covenant.

There are some similarities between the old and new covenants. For instance, the old covenant was one in which the people covenanted (agreed) to keep a covenant—God's covenant, His ten commandment law. Under the new covenant God's covenant is written in the hearts and minds of His people, by the Spirit of God.

To each of these covenants, a "ministry" was attached, but the ministries are vastly different in nature. The old testament ministry was one of carnal ordinances (carnal rituals), offerings of meats and drinks, etc. The new covenant ministry is that of the Spirit in which the Spirit of the convert is transformed into a new character.

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Questions for Study and Discussion

1. Discuss the prophecy of Jeremiah relative to a new covenant. Jeremiah 31:31-33.
2. Why was a new covenant necessary? Hebrews 8:7-9.
3. By what other name is the new covenant mentioned in the Holy Scriptures? Hebrews 9:15-17. What does this name tell us about the nature or kind of covenant we are studying?
4. What is Jesus' dual role relative to the new covenant? Review verses 15, 16.
5. Specifically, what is the new covenant (new testament)? Hebrews 8:10.
6. When must a testament (will) be made, before or after the death of the testator? Hebrews 9:17. Discuss what effect Christ's death had upon His expressed will. See Galatians 3:15.
7. Compare the ratification (confirmation) of the old covenant with the ratification of the new covenant. Hebrews 9:18-24; Matthew 26:27, 28; Hebrews 10:12-16.
8. Discuss the better promises of the new covenant. Hebrews 8:6; Romans 6:23; Matthew 5:5.
9. Upon what conditions does the will of Christ offer eternal life? Matthew 19:16-21; 5:17-19; 21, 22, 27, 28.

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Achievements of Faith

SCRIPTURE READING: Hebrews 11:32-40.

MEMORY VERSE: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

Lesson Comments: The Bible definition of faith is, "... the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen..." This faith is strictly between God and man. We may have confidence in man which may or may not bring results; but Scriptural faith is a means capable of multiplying itself and bringing the blessings of God to those who possess it.

This chapter abounds in the achievements of faith. Here we see that the faith of mortal men put the power of God to work on behalf of otherwise weak human beings. Faith sees a way for things to be accomplished when apparently there is no way. Feats otherwise thought impossible become routine matters through proper exercise of a proper faith.

Natural man is accustomed to following the laws of nature. Without divine intervention man cannot break away from the realm of nature. With God the situation is different. He is the Creator of nature, and is not bound by it. When He interrupts the course of nature, this is what we call a miracle. This is why God's ways seem so mysterious to unregenerated men; they try to interpret His actions as if He were a man. God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts and His ways higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8, 9); therefore, we can never understand Him if we expect His actions to be perfectly logical and natural from man's viewpoint.

Men void of faith reject the inspiration of the Bible. Consequently they disbelieve the story of creation, the virgin birth of Jesus and redemption through His blood.

"... Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

The prayerful reading and rereading of the Holy Scriptures will teach us that God "is" and that He is a "rewarder" of them who diligently seek him." This is God's prescribed way of imparting faith to mortals. Thank God for the Bible! It is a record of miracle.

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after miracle, after miracle; yet through constant study and searching of this precious Word, believing mortals begin to feel "right at home" with it. We live by it and are perfectly content to die by it. This is one of the things people have to experience to be able to really appreciate it.

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. What definition does the writer of Hebrews give of faith? Hebrews 11:1. Discuss how this substance and evidence works. How can we give evidence of things we do not see?
2. By what means do we accept His word? Verse 3.

3. Name in order the first five worthies of this chapter. Verses 4, 5, 7, 8, 11.

4. Why have these not received their reward? Verses 13-16. What lesson may we learn from the faith of Abraham? Verses 17-19.

5. Discuss the surroundings of Moses in Egypt. What would be the danger to him in remaining there? Verses 24-27.

6. Recall Israel's experience at the Red Sea. Verse 29.

7. How were the walls of Jericho thrown down? What simple acts did God require of them to manifest their faith? Verse 30. (See Joshua 6.) **Note:** God uses the foolish things of this world to confound the mighty (1 Corinthians 1:27).

8. Note the list of achievements listed in the lesson reading and tell that which impresses you most.

9. Explain what is meant by "... that they without us should not be made perfect." Verses 39, 40.

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Practical Exhortations

SCRIPTURE READING: Hebrews 13:1-9.

MEMORY VERSE: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

Lesson Comments: It is the privilege of each child of God to exhort one another. This, according to Paul, should be daily. These exhortations should emanate from one whose life is practical. One who teaches another not to steal, cannot steal if exhortation is to be accepted as valid.

In this lesson Paul draws his illustration from a practical example in racing. Grecian games were still popular in the days of Rome. Paul, for practical purposes, had watched those who participated in these games; with the race fans gathered around as they do in our day. The worthies of this eleventh chapter constitute the race fans who are the cloud of witnesses around us today.

During practice time artificial weights were used to handicap the runner, but this was to be laid aside during the actual race. This represents the burdens we carry instead of laying them on Jesus. Long garments were worn by all in those days; these represent our besetting sins which should also be laid aside lest they trip us as the garments would in the natural race.

Chastening is necessary for every child if he is to be rightly trained. God deals with us as sons—He chastises us for our good. It bears peaceable fruits of righteousness when we accept it in the right spirit, but works disastrously when we despise it.

We are here exhorted to look diligently lest we should repeat the experience of Esau. He sold his birthright for a meal. The devil would have him believe he would die had he not eaten that moment. This kind of delinquency is not infrequent today. Many do not place a high value on spiritual obligations, but treat their calling lightly; yet they expect to hear the "well done."

We need to realize that Christ does not change. As He walked among His people in the land of Canaan so He walks among us, in the midst of the seven candle sticks, the church (Revelation 1:13). He is still the Saviour and Healer of those who trust Him. This being so, we should not be carried about with divers and strange doctrines, but have our hearts established with grace.

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Questions for Study and Discussion

1. Seeing we are surrounded by these witnesses, what are we exhorted to do? What virtue do we need in running this race? Hebrews 12:1.
2. To whom should we look? In what capacity does He serve? Verse 2.
3. To what extent should we fight against sin? Verse 4.
4. What are we called upon to endure? Verses 7, 8. Discuss verses 9-12.
5. What three things should we diligently fight against? Verses 15, 16.
6. What was the result of profaning his high office? Verse 17.
7. Discuss the standing of the church today in contrast to that of the Jewish days. Verses 18-24.
8. How should we respond to God's provision for our eternal salvation? Verse 28.
9. How did the writer to the Hebrews characterize the nature of Jesus? Chapter 13:8.

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September 12, 1970

Faith Demonstrated

SCRIPTURE READING: James 2:14-26.

MEMORY VERSE: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25).

Lesson Comments: Theory and practice are two elements which are common to every professor, whether he be in the natural or spiritual realm. James in this lesson is challenging those who profess in theory without demonstrations.

Hearing without doing is from a deceptive heart which Jeremiah says is wicked and deceitful above all things. A heart that is sanctified by the blood of Christ quickly responds to the demands of the Word of God.

We can always retain an accurate picture of other faces while we forget ours, although we have just been before the mirror. This is used by James to illustrate our position when we fail to demonstrate our faith in God's Word by doing His will. God's law is likened unto a mirror which shows dark spots in our lives as the natural mirror shows on our faces. As we remove the natural spots by washing, so should we apply the blood of the atonement for cleansing our lives.

When we are saved we cease committing the sins of the world, but commit the sins of which John spoke (1 John 1:8). This hinders our Christian growth. If we realize that we are members of one body we will not exercise partiality in our treatment one of another. He who wears poor raiment will be treated equally with those who are richly dressed. The Word of God is exceedingly broad and condemns such trifles as transgression.

We speak of perfection as found only in Christ. But here is a perfect example we may emulate if we are to be established in the faith. James calls upon us to demonstrate our faith by our works. Abraham is cited as an example of genuine faith when he offered up Isaac at God's request.

This example should not be viewed lightly. Nothing less is required of us, but we must start with such things as ministering to the needs of our brothers and sisters in the faith, and to all who

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are in need of our help. We cannot tell them as some do, "Be warmed and be filled" while they go destitute. Abraham's faith grew through previous trials and experiences so that when the supreme test came, he was able to endure it.

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. To whom was this epistle originally addressed? James 1:1. Who are these twelve tribes? How is this possible if ten were lost as some teach?

2. What emphasis does he place on obeying the Word? Verse 22.

3. To what is God's Word compared? What comes to those who keep the Word? Verses 23-25.

4. How may we demonstrate our faith in religion? Verses 26, 27.

5. How may we know when we commit the sin of partiality? Chapter 2:1-4.

6. What shows how broad the law of God is? Verses 8, 9.

7. Do we have to offend in all ten points of the law to be guilty? Verses 10, 11.

8. How would we prove our faith a dead faith? Verses 14-17.

9. What is the greatest illustration we have of faith? Verses 21-24.

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September 19, 1970

Source of Difficulties

SCRIPTURE READING: James 4:1-10.

MEMORY VERSE: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

Lesson Comments: It seems strange that irregularities such as are written in this chapter should be among professed Christians. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." When such conditions as these are in evidence it is proof that those possessing them have left their first love.

The newborn babes in Christ are sincere, zealous, and careful. They are preoccupied with things that are honest, just and of good report. They do not war, fight, and lust for material things, or for power as the world does. Those who mix their faith with fleshly warrings are termed adulterers and adulteresses, in that they are in friendship with the world.

There are some who have fallen from grace, but remain in the church organization. These are called upon to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts. Also, they should cease from their superficial rejoicing and be sorrowful for such state. When this is done they will, in humble submission, make God's will their will.

Another matter which requires attention is the state among the rich. This does not seem to be confined to conditions in the Church. We are admonished if riches increase not to set our hearts on them; nor should we glory in them. We are warned against being mindful of being rich as this leads to divers temptations and a snare which leads to perdition. If we consider ourselves stewards of that which we possess, this will help to eliminate the possibility of our falling into the above-mentioned conditions.

Money serves many purposes. It is necessary for the support of the cause we have espoused. The many appeals that come to us from time to time call for self-denial and sacrifice. But the more we sacrifice for the cause of God the more we receive; this is the law of giving and receiving.

Material wealth is uncertain and can vanish with the wind

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in a moment. In times of economic recession or depression, the rich and poor alike suffer loss. The child of God is admonished to do good and be ready to contribute what he can to those in need.

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. What was the reason for the trouble of which James speaks? James 4:1. What was the chief instrument in this war? Chapter 3:5-8.
2. To what did this lead? Chapter 4:2, 3.
3. What ugly picture was painted to them? Verse 4.
4. What was suggested as the remedy for such a state? Verses 7-10.
5. Who should take the lead when such conditions exist? Joel 2:15-17.
6. What last-day conditions may we expect among the rich? James 5:1-3. How does God regard the cause of the workers? Verse 4.
7. What exhortation should we accept in such a situation? Verses 7, 8.
8. What is recommended for the afflicted and sick? Verses 13, 14.
9. What guarantee do we have of success? Upon what does this depend? Verses 15, 16.

September 19 is Foreign Missions Emphasis Day. To learn more about the outstanding work you can help strengthen today, read the information on page 31.

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Christian Conduct in Persecution

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Peter 2:17-25.

MEMORY VERSE: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:7).

Lesson Comments: This lesson is for the consolation of those who have a genuine experience of salvation, and are kept by the power of God through faith. To this class, trials are more precious than gold. Nothing will separate this class from the love of God; rather, under trials they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

It was the plan of Jesus that the joy of the disciples should be full. This joy constitutes the strength of the believer (Nehemiah 8:10). No one may have this unspeakable joy without the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This was exemplified in the experience of Stephen. His record is: "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55).

Stephen was stoned with his face shining with this glory, which reflected the glory of the inner man, Christ. Like his Master, Stephen died with forgiveness in his heart for his persecutors. How do we measure up to his standard?

The first death recorded in the Bible is that of the martyr Abel, who died at the hand of his envious brother, Cain. Since that time millions have died the victims of persecution; in many instances among false brethren.

Joseph suffered imprisonment in Egypt rather than violate a commandment of God, but through patience and discretion he turned this affliction into a great victory for the cause of truth and righteousness.

Daniel and the three Hebrew children are bright and shining examples of Godliness, courage and faith maintained in the midst of great persecution.

Every real Christian will maintain the best possible relationship with the government under which he lives. Here we are admonished: "Honour all men, love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." It is right to obey all laws that do not con-

flict with God's law, even if those laws seem unimportant to us. Jesus gave us an example of good citizenship in paying tribute to a Roman emperor.

We should not resent suffering; this is the path that Jesus trod, and we are called hereunto, to suffer with Him.

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. What reason do we have to expect persecution? 2 Timothy 3:12; John 15:20.
2. Discuss proper Christian attitude toward justifiable criticism and persecution for right doing. 1 Peter 2:20.
3. How did Jesus react to persecution? 1 Peter 2:23.
4. Describe some of the evil treatment suffered by the apostle Paul. 2 Corinthians 11:23-28.
5. To whom did Paul give credit for his deliverance? 2 Timothy 3:10, 11.
6. How did the church react to Peter's imprisonment? Acts 12:5. With what result? Verses 11, 12.
7. What responsibility does the Christian have to his country? 1 Peter 2:17. How does this compare with his responsibility to God? Acts 4:18-20; 5:29.
8. How severe was persecution of the Christian Church to be at times? Revelation 6:9-11; 20:4.
9. What assurance have we been given of overcoming power? Revelation 12:11; Matthew 28:20.

\$ for \$

(DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR)

Dedicated young people sacrifice to attend Midwest. Nearly all of them have to work their way through. With families to support, some of the young men spend long, tiring hours at earning enough to live on and then do their studying long after most of the community has gone to bed. For this they pay dearly—but they rejoice for the opportunity, and God blesses.



These young men—and others, as well, who are not yet married, and young ladies, too—work hard to pay their tuition. But even then their student fees are less than half the cost of operating the college. Somehow we have to match every dollar they pay.

The church is being blessed by the services of those who have sacrificed to train at Midwest and are now out in the field. YOU are being blessed! They gave willingly for their training and continue to give. You can well afford to match their sacrifice. Dollar for dollar is what it takes.

Remember that young people sacrifice to attend Midwest. The least YOU can do is share in that sacrifice. Match their dollars.

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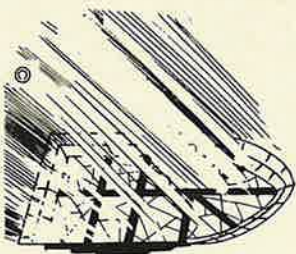
DOORS ARE CLOSING

It has been pointed out by careful observers that the so-called Christian nations are reaping where they did *not* sow. A half century ago Korea was a wide-open mission field, eagerly responsive to Christian influences. Forty years ago Viet Nam called for Christian missionaries. Because the Christian nations did *not* sow, an awful harvest of bloodshed and terror has been reaped.

Twenty years ago India was a mission frontier; today Christian missionaries are banned. Five years ago all signs said GO in Nigeria; then the signs turned red—HALT! was the command, and all progress stopped! How much longer before more signals will flash STOP?

Jesus said to work while it is day, "the night cometh when no man can work." Today is "day" time; doors are still open. Some doors have closed; others are closing. What can be done about it?

Millions of untold sinners long to hear before the door is closed. We can tell them, IF



Give to Foreign Missions

September 19—Foreign Missions Emphasis Sabbath

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Lu. 21: 24-28