

WALKER HOUSE
 115 The Penned Service Hat Place
 The House of Plenty

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Lesson II. July 12, 1919.
 Matthew 28: 18-20; Acts 8: 34-40.

Commentary.—The apostles' commission (Matt. 28: 18-20). 18. Jesus came after the resurrection of Jesus he went to Galilee, according to his promise, and met the eleven disciples. All power is given unto me—Here is a declaration of Christ's deity. He had finished his sacrifice of himself for the sins of the world. He had taken upon himself the burden of the world. By his resurrection the world had received its redemption. In his death and resurrection he had shown that he was the Son of God. He was simply uttering a great fact abundantly attested when he declared that all power "in heaven and in earth" was given to him. This comprehensive statement was made to his apostles preparatory to their receiving the greatest commission ever given to humanity. 19. Go ye therefore—Jesus had previously sent them forth with power to preach the gospel and to work miracles, but their term of ministry was brief; now, however, he sends them forth on a lifelong service for him. They were called upon to "go." They were to be actively engaged in their divinely-given work of ministering to the souls of men. Teach all nations—Take disciples of all the nations. R. V. There was a world-wide mission. They were to tell the gospel story with the object of making all their hearers disciples of Jesus. Baptizing them—The ordinance of baptism was employed as a token of the acceptance of the gospel by those who were baptized and as a sign to the world that they were disciples of Christ. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost—it is to be remarked that this is singular, hence there is here a significant setting forth of the doctrine of the Trinity in the unity of the Godhead. 20. To observe whatsoever I have commanded you—The apostles had been under the instruction of the Master for about three years, and the great truths that had been made known to them were to constitute the body of their preaching to the nations. Jesus had been giving to them and they were to give out to others. They were not to be hoarders of the riches of divine truth, but dispensers. I am with you always—A mighty task had been imposed upon that little body of apostles, but for their comfort and encouragement the comprehensive promise of the constant presence of the Master was given them. They were not going forth alone; they would be sustained and guided by the Lord. Up to the end of the world—Nothing beyond this could be desired. There could be no condition so distressing as to shut out the presence of Jesus.

II. John the Baptist and Jesus (Mark 1:1-11). John the Baptist preceded Jesus as his messenger by six months. He came to prepare the way for his coming. He did this by announcing the Messiah whom he expected, and also by calling upon the multitude that flocked to his ministry to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. John was a rugged man of the wilderness, differing in appearance from many who came to his ministry. He was bold in his denunciation of sin, and was earnest in proclaiming the coming of him who was "mightier" than he. John came baptizing with water, but he declared that the Christ would baptize with the Holy Spirit. As the people believed the message that John gave them, their sins were forgiven and they were baptized in token of their acceptance of the truth and of the remission of their sins. Baptism was a seal of the work done in them and a sign to the world that they were believers in the message of John. The great outstanding fact in connection with the ministry of John the Baptist at Jordan was the baptism of Jesus. Jesus had no sign to be remitted. He was infinitely superior to John in nature, yet John was commissioned to baptize, hence for the time being he was superior in office to Jesus, there fore he baptized him. This baptism had to fulfill all righteousness and by this rite he introduced to the public earthly ministry. Immediately follow-

ing his baptism the heavens opened and the Spirit in the form of a dove descended upon him. In addition to this token there was a voice from heaven that said to Jesus, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 III. Philip Baptizing (Acts 8:26-40). 26-31. Consideration has been given thus far in this lesson to the baptism which was performed by John the Baptist, and to the command that Jesus gave to his apostles touching their mission to the nations to teach and to baptize. Brief consideration is given to the work of one of the evangelists. Philip has been laboring in Samaria, and his work there was evidently done, at least for a time. He was distinctly called to undertake another mission. There was a man from far-off Ethiopia at Jerusalem who was intensely interested in the scriptures. He was about to go home and Philip was directed to go southward. He obeyed promptly and reached the Gaza road just in time to intercept the Ethiopian. The Spirit of the Lord told Philip to approach the eunuch and join himself to his chariot. Philip found the Ethiopian reading the prophecy of Isaiah. The text was exactly appropriate to the message that he had to deliver. He was uncertain as to the meaning of the words of the prophet. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before the shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." 34. The eunuch answered Philip—Philip was present just in time to be helpful to the Ethiopian of himself, or of some other man—This question shows the darkness of the Ethiopian's mind and his desire to know the meaning of the prophecy.
 The Jews had a tradition that Isaiah was seen in Samaria, and the Ethiopian thought he might have been speaking of himself. 35. Then Philip opened his mouth—The form of expression indicates that Philip realized the importance of the occasion and would speak impressively the message that God gave him for his listener. The man who would carry the gospel to far-away Ethiopia. Began at the same scripture—the passage from Isaiah that the Ethiopian was reading. Preached unto him Jesus—In explaining the passage Philip made it clear that Jesus was the one spoken of by the prophet.
 36. Came unto a certain water—On the road toward Gaza is a fine stream of water. What doth hinder me to be baptized—Philip had preached to the Ethiopian that Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecy and he had also declared to him the conditions of entrance into the body of believers, and the listener was desirous of becoming identified with the followers of Christ. 37. Believest thou with all thine heart—Intellectual faith is not sufficient to constitute one a true believer; there must also be heart trust. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God—For the Ethiopian to believe with all his heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God was to accept Him as this personal Saviour, as well as the Saviour of the world. This verse is not found in the best ancient manuscripts and is omitted from the Revised Version. 38.—Went down both into the water. The Ethiopian had a proper candidate for Christian baptism. He baptized him—By being baptized the Ethiopian declared that he was a follower of Jesus. 39. The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip—This marvelous removal of Philip would confirm the eunuch and his companions in their faith. They would recognize that he who had been sent unto them was a man of God—Farther on his way rejoicing—The Ethiopian had every reason to rejoice. A new light, a new life and a new joy had come to him. He was a converted man. 40. Philip was found at Azotus—He next appeared at Azotus, the ancient Ashdod of the Philistines.

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value nor sanctifying virtue. As a sign it is a symbol of the effusion of the Holy Ghost and an external witness and seal of the internal renewing and cleansing wrought by his power in the hearts of all regenerate persons and of his gracious influence melting and inflaming the heart with love (Rom. 6:25; Rom. 5:5). Paul understands it to signify union with Christ in his death "unto sin," and the power and glory of his resurrection life, with the other members of the "body" (Rom. 6:2, 4, 9; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:4, 5; Col. 2:12). Christian baptism is a public pledge of fidelity to God and righteousness on the part of its subjects, and is a seal of the covenant into which God is pleased to enter with his children and of his faithfulness in fulfillment. If the candidate fulfills his contract, walking in obedience and fellowship, God fulfills his promise of pardon, regeneration, sanctification, comfort, victory, strength and everlasting reward. Christian baptism is a public testimony to faith in Christ for salvation. The same truths are set before us in baptism, which were set before Israel when they passed the sea (1 Cor. 10:1, 2; Heb. 1:1, 2). Christian baptism testifies to the coequal tri-unity of Deity recognized in the formula established by Jesus, which is inseparable from Christian faith. It expresses further a public choice of discipleship with its accompanying renunciation of the maxims, affections and customs of the world. Its importance is inseparable from its significance. Jesus made it coextensive with the dissemination of his gospel and the discipling of the nations. It is not to be neglected, lightly esteemed nor carelessly accepted. W. H. C.

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