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The Sunday School Lesson

Lesson 1. April 3. THE IDEAL CHRISTIAN

Lesson—Rom. 12: 1, 2, 9-12. Golden Text—"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6: 31).

The Lesson Text

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service.

2 And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another;

11 In diligence no slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer;

13 communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality.

15 Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly.

17 Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.

19 Avenge not yourself, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me: I will recompense, saith the Lord.

20 But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Comments

Verse 1. In this lesson we change from the history of the life of Christ as lived by Himself to the practice of that life as lived by His followers.

Paul was born in Tarsus about the same time as Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He wrote this letter to the Romans probably in A. D. 58. In this chapter Paul shows the need of the fourfold development expressed in Luke 8: 53. We must grow physically, mentally, socially and religiously.

Verse 2. Conformity to this world, or the present order of things, is destructive, because things are temporal while principles are eternal. The mind is renewed by truth, and Christ is the way, the truth and the life. Through obedience to Him we prove the perfect will of God.

Verse 9. The love here meant is the love of one Christian for another. Hypocrisy is an old-fashioned sin that dons new-fashioned clothes every generation. Through Christian growth we will be led to rebel it as a dishonorable thing, while being attracted to that which is good. Sin is the greatest curse, the greatest disaster and the greatest fascination in the world.

Verse 10. "Let every brother be able to know that his good name, his every interest, is safe in every brother's hands." Our greatest exaltation is in exalting others.

Verse 11. Do not waste life's strength or dissipate its powers. Purpose and high ideals are back of every achievement.

Verse 12. Some one has said that the world has already half destroyed us when we are too busy to pray.

Verse 13. To the extent that poverty exists, alleviate it; to the extent that poverty is unnecessary, prevent it. Hospitality is getting to be a lost art. It is time to revive it.

Verse 14. The deepest injury that comes from wrongs done to us is that it provokes resentment and anger in ourselves. "A soul filled with hate is a sorry spectacle." On the contrary, doing good both requires and stimulates noble impulses.

Verse 15. Human sympathy is one of the finest qualities of the soul. The capacity to feel with others is the tie that binds hearts in friendship and kindly affection.

Verse 16. No doctrine of the New Testament is more frequently stressed than that of the unity from the realization of His ideals as expressed in His prayer (John 17).

Verse 17. Paul's teaching throughout these precepts is a faithful reflection of the teachings of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. Taking thought for things honorable puts life's programme upon a constructive basis.

Verse 18. You may not be able always to preserve peace, but you can refrain from provoking war.

Verse 19. Avenging justice is the prerogative of God, and not of men. We are not sufficiently able to know one another's motives to sit in judgment upon one another's acts.

Verses 20, 21. There is but one way to conquer an enemy. His enmity will thrive upon your hatred, but will languish and die in the light of your good will. He desires your resentment; he does not know what to do with your kindness. Were the world to closely adhere to these teachings, it would banish war and bloodshed forever.

Topics for Research and Discussion.

I. A Renewed Mind (vs. 1, 2). 1. What change is made today in our lesson plan? 2. What do you know about the birth and early environment of Paul? 3. Of what fourfold development does Paul show the need in this chapter? II. A Transformed Heart (vs. 9-16). 4. What kind of love is Paul talking about? 5. Why do people persist in hypocrisy? 6. What is the one great curse of the world? 7. What should the church of Christ do with the whole question of poverty? 8. Why are we set so far from the New Testament idea of Christian unity? III. A Changed Will (vs. 17-21). 9. Where did Paul get the wisdom he puts into these teachings? 10. What is the practical application of verses 18? 11. Discuss the wisdom of verses 20 and 21. 12. Why do we not practice this?

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ADVICE TO GIRLS

BY MISS ROSALIND

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Miss Rosalind welcomes letters from young women asking for advice on any subject. All you have to do is to address your letter to

MISS ROSALIND, 34 King William St., Hamilton, Ont.

Dear Readers:—For a few weeks I shall be obliged to publish only the answers to letters sent in to me. If I do not do something, those who wrote me a month ago will forget what they asked about. So until I get caught up with my correspondence, will you look for your answer under your own pen-name.

ROSALIND.

Jean—Honestly, I think you are foolish to think so much about the young man. In the first place you hardly know him and in the second place, while you are worrying over him you may be overlooking some very good friends among the people you know already. Make yourself a real friend to everybody and if Fate will, it you will see more of the young man you are so anxious to know.

Friday—You would be very foolish to consider matrimony without being absolutely sure that you love the girl. Would certainly advise your friend to write. He seems to have a very bad case.

Dear Telegrapher—I shall give your name and credentials to some of the girls and boys who are seeking good letter-friends.

Pat—It is quite all right for a girl to invite a man to call. It is the only way she can get acquainted with him properly.

It is not correct to accept as escort home, a young man you have not met. Ask the hostess or person in charge of the party about it.

Introduce the young man to your mother and get her consent before you go driving with him.

Go into the store with him and choose your candy.

Tish—Write one letter, friendly and full of interesting home news. If it does not bring a quick reply do not write again.

Minnehaha—I would consider the question very seriously, before breaking the engagement. If you like, tell the older man and ask him to give you time to decide—but be very cautious.

Black Eye—I quite agree with you that young folks can have a heap better time being jolly good chums than thinking themselves seriously in love and "paring off."

Why don't you tell the other fellows your ideas on the subject? I find that chop and lots of water, and skim milk if you can get it, is as reliable a pig fattener as any.

I shall give your address to some of our fair correspondents. You write quite a good letter. Tell your sister when a young man thanks her for a dance, just to smile and say, "I enjoyed it, too," or something like that.

Judd—I think your ideas are fine. Just keep on thinking as you do, and you'll be all right.

Blue-eyed Helen—It will be all right to write to your friend while he is in Toronto and then you will know just when to expect his return and whether to meet him or not.

School-girl—Steam your face over a basin of very hot water. Then rub in a good cleansing cream. Do this before going to bed and leave the cream on all night. Drink lots of cold water and avoid eating candy and fatty foods.

Reader, Southington, Connecticut—Will gladly give your name to some of those nice Canadian girls you admire. It is surprising how many letters we get from our consins over the line.

Puzzled Quintette I have you remember your nine questions, because my answers have to be brief and very much to the point.

Surely a girl may ask a boy friend to call and see her just as she would ask a girl friend to run in for a chat.

He may call as often as the girl's mother thinks proper.

When skating with a boy, let it last as long as it is enjoyable for both; the girl suggests stopping.

When a girl is being proposed to, she knows by instinct how to act. There are no fixed rules.

Boys and girls do exchange photographs. A girl does not take a boy's arm when walking with him unless she is a cripple and needs support.

If three girls are out together and a boy friend comes along and wants to walk home with one of them, it depends on whether the girl wants him to do so, whether he does or not.

A girl may go to church with a young man.

There is no such thing as a gooseberry among nice people.

Unsettled—Write to the young man, once. Do not reproach him, but write as though you had just remembered he might like to hear from your home town.

Marguerite—When a boy takes you to a dance or a show, you should surely thank him for the pleasure he has given you.

I cannot advise you as to your other question; but would suggest that you consult your family doctor.

Dimples—Cannot you just have the boy for a friend? Let him under-

stand that you have no intention of keeping company with any one person for years yet—but just want to have all evening with your friends, boys and girls, all having good times together.

Perplexed—You are so young that I think you should do exactly as your mother wishes in every respect.

You can improve your memory by deliberately setting out to memorize some reading matter every day—four lines of poetry or a verse out of the Bible will do splendidly.

Smiling May—You should dance with others. It makes a girl too noticeable to dance with one partner all evening. You are too young to talk about being very much in love.

If your mother approves, you may entertain callers on Sunday evening.

Peggy—Games such as Wink, Post Office and the like belong to the very woodiest part of the Backwoods. They simply are not done any more. I am quite sure lots of girls always disliked them just as much as you and I. Dancing has taken the place of all those horrid games.

Peggy Dear—I do not know what nice girls and boys can do to see each other when a girl's father is so unreasonable as to not let her entertain her friends in her own home. If fathers only knew the little they do when they act so. I can only say, try to talk it over with your father and see if you can make him understand that home is a place to be happy in and young people should be allowed every possible freedom and happiness right under the home roof.

Indian Head—Your question is hard to answer, because everybody answers it according to the way he has been brought up. This is the question: "Is it right to dance and play cards?" Some say yes, and some say no.

You must decide for yourself if it is right for you to do these things. Personally, I think it alright. I dance and play cards and enjoy both very much. I am exactly the same person when I am dancing or playing bridge as I am when I am singing in church or writing these letters of advice.

If you can look at it that way, then it is right for you, but if by doing these things you might hurt another person, then you would do well to pause and consider carefully. The things themselves are harmless, it is each person's attitude towards them that makes them right or wrong.

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