

Sunday School Lesson

December 23. Lesson XII—Paul's Last Message—2 Tim. 4: 1-5, 16-18. Golden Text—I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.—2 Tim. 4: 7.

ANALYSIS

I. THE LAST APPEAL, 1-5.

II. THE DIVINE PROTECTOR, 16-18.

Introduction.—Several years have passed since Paul wrote the letter to Philemon which was studied last week. He had escaped from his first imprisonment and been free to carry forward his missionary effort, reaching probably Spain, whence he turned east to cover some of the ground already traversed. But near the end of the reign of Nero, in A.D. 68, he is again arrested, and now there is no chance of his release, since the proceedings against the Christians are much more severe. It is the tradition that Paul was beheaded outside the city of Rome and that his body was buried in a place where now we find the church called Paul-without-the-wall. There, three letters, which include two to Timothy and one to Titus, are named "pastoral" because they deal with the problems of the pastor. Matters of discipline and government are discussed, and directions are given for the choice of bishops and deacons, while there are warnings against the different forms of heresy which are beginning to appear.

I. THE LAST APPEAL, 1-5.

V. 1. Timothy is urged to devote himself with all energy to his pastoral task and different arguments are given to stimulate him to further endeavor. In this verse the fact of the final judgment is set forth as a powerful appeal. The day is coming when all men must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. It is the same argument which is found in the earlier letters of the apostle, and was ever present to his mind. Life is a great trust, and we must some day give in our account.

V. 2. The varied duties of the pastoral office are mentioned. First comes preaching, to which Paul gave much weight. In 1 Corinthians he says: "The Lord has sent him to preach." "Be instant in season, out of season." This refers to the whole work of the evangelist which must be exercised at all times. There is no particular season for God's work. Every season is God's. Sometimes the pastor must reprove those who do wrong, or he must rebuke, or again he must encourage, but also with mind and patience and with a careful use of knowledge. Patience and prudence are great pastoral graces.

V. 3. The great danger to the cause of Christ seemed to be the appearance of false teachers who were spreading abroad all kinds of false doctrines. They were setting forth wrong views of Christ, were advocating wrong courses of action, so that now the church had to guard herself against very many insidious attacks. The people are spoken of as having itching ears, eager after novelties and rejecting the authorized teachers of the word. Every succeeding generation has had examples of such.

V. 4. This prevalence of evil teaching is a further argument to induce Timothy to exercise renewed zeal. The times call for strong leaders.

V. 5. A third appeal is made by Paul's reference to his imminent death. Some discussion has arisen over the cause which induced the apostle to speak in such unusual terms of himself. He feels that the end is near, and that his chances of getting a favorable sentence are gone. His death-warrant is about to be signed. Two reasons are suggested. He may have wished to encourage Timothy and the assurance that there was a crown awaiting all those who would devote themselves to such faithful service. But he may also have felt that with his death there was necessity for the younger ones to take the place of those called away. How can the church continue unless each new generation brings its own new workmen?

Vs. 7, 8. The figures are taken from the athletic life of the time. The Greek games were very famous, only in this contest the crown is not of olive or laurel, but of righteousness and of life.

II. THE DIVINE PROTECTOR, 16-18.

V. 16. This verse reveals the severity of Paul's ordeal. The first answer is probably the first part of this present trial. It does not refer back to the first imprisonment several years earlier. In this last trial there was no one to stand by his side. "All men forsook me." It is not easy to understand this. In v. 11 he says that Luke was with him, and one cannot conceive of Luke proving unfaithful in this sore necessity. Probably it means that none of those Romans, who were influential and had shown some interest in the gospel, came forward to make a strong plea on his behalf. He had no influential advocate.

V. 17. But in contrast to all this, "The Lord stood by me and strengthened me." God sent forth his spirit into the heart of Paul enabling him to make a bold and able defense and confession, so that the Gentiles who attended the trial, and, no doubt, represented many of the leading families of the city, heard the message which Paul delivered. So great was the impression made that Paul had received a brief respite from the mouth of the lion. This same strength will still be given to him when he comes to the last and fatal trial of all. For God is able to bring all his children out of every earthly tribulation.

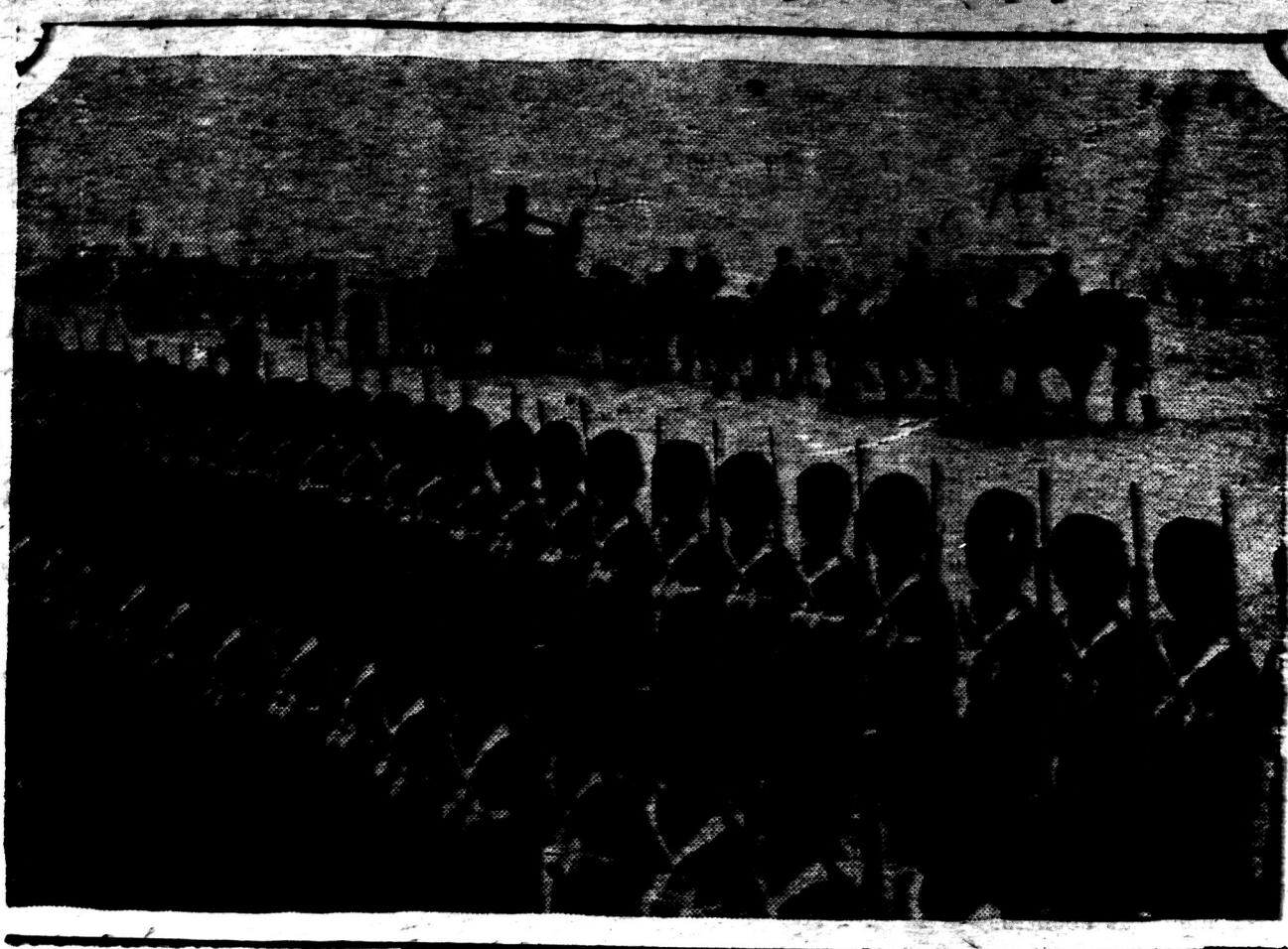
Or a Baker

"It's a great thing to be a good mixer."

"Yes, especially if you're in the concrete business."

Most automobiles are paid for as they are used, but not so rapidly.

Dull Weather Did Not Affect Spectacular Display



STATE OPENING OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT
Arrival of King George at the Houses, after a colorful riding from Buckingham palace, the pageantry making a brilliant spectacle.

King's Pudding Took a Week for Stirring

All Parts of the Empire Contributed to Delicacy Weighing a Ton—Children to Eat it

London.—All the King's products and all the King's men, plus the feminine and juvenile members of the population, have co-operated in making a giant Christmas pudding to set before the King on Christmas Day.

Community stirring parties drawn from the general public visited the recent cookery and food exhibition at Olympia to take a hand in mixing the pudding, which weighs one ton. The ingredients were placed in twelve huge bowls, laid in the demonstration theatre at Olympia, and as each bowlful was stirred to the proper consistency, it was removed and another portion put in its place. Although the stirring continued for seven and one-half hours a day, it took a full week for the task to be completed.

The entire British Empire, including Dominions, Colonies and protectorates, as well as Britain, Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State, contributed its choicest products for the King's pudding.

As for the recipe itself, supplied by M. Andre Cedard, the King's chef, here it is:

- 200 lbs. currants from Australia.
- 200 lbs. sultanas from Australia.
- 200 lbs. sultanas from Australia.
- 200 lbs. raisins from South Africa, Australia and Cyprus.
- 100 lbs. apples from Canada.
- 600 lbs. bread and 100 lbs. flour from home-grown, Canadian and Australian wheat.
- 91 lbs. candied peel from South Africa and Cyprus.
- 100 lbs. Demerara sugar from British West Indies and British Guiana.
- 100,000 eggs from Britain, Irish Free State, South Africa and Canada.
- 7 lbs. ground cinnamon from India and Ceylon.
- 3½ lbs. cloves from East Africa.
- 2 gallons brandy from Australia, South Africa, Cyprus and Palestine.
- 6 gallons rum from Jamaica and British Guiana.
- 23 gallons beer from Britain.

Mrs. Amery, wife of the Dominions Secretary, "unveiled" the Christmas pudding at the cookery exhibition at Olympia. Mrs. Amery said that it was the King's wish that it be distributed to children's institutions.

"We are united in the wish that by Christmas Day the King will be quite well again," she added.

Making Pastry Dough in Quantities

Those housewives who, for one reason or another, do not care for the plan so frequently recommended, of making pastry dough in quantities and keeping it in the ice-box, may be interested in the following suggestion as a similar time-saver.

Mix the flour and lard only, in as large amounts as desired, and keep it in any cool place. At baking time add the water.

If the usual proportion of one cupful of flour to one-half cupful of shortening and one teaspoonful of salt is used, it follows that 1½ cupfuls of the mixture will be needed for one pie. The writer has found this makes a more tender crust than when the ingredients are set away wet.

Discut mixtures may be made up in the same way. Especially in short-cake season this plan will prove a help in almost any kitchen.

His own clothes make the man, but women's clothes break him.

"You should not be angry with your husband; you should keep coals of fire on his head." "I may after I have been over him."

Crossroads

There are whose life in the act, the deed; No hesitant wonder, no perplexed delay; They see before them one decisive way, And on that way unquestioning they speed. Sufficient for the task its imminent need.

Its instant call suffices for the day; Equipped or lacking they will make no stay, But follow where the nearer voices lead.

Others are they who hear confusing cries And see a network of contending claim; Too wide in floating mist the landscape lies. A maze of byroads disconcerts their aim; Vision may linger, but the feet are lame—

The will is constant, but the purpose dies.

—Arthur L. Salmon in the Glasgow Herald.

To Cleanse Brushes and Combs

Hair brushes, nail brushes and every few days, in addition to the combs should be cleansed thoroughly daily scrub or rinse.

To wash hair brushes, dissolve two tablespoonfuls of borax in a little boiling water and add this to two quarts of lukewarm water in which has been melted a few soap flakes or chips. Holding the bristles downward, beat the water up and down with the brush. Rinse, first in warm water, then in cold salt water to keep the bristles straight and stiff. Dry in the open air, brist' down, on a clean towel.

To keep nail and tooth brushes in a perfectly clean state, soak them for two hours once a week in cold water to which a little borax, previously dissolved in hot water, has been added; cleanse and rinse as described for hair brushes.

Scrub combs with a nail brush, hitting the bristles briskly between the teeth of the combs, in a warm sudsy borax water; rinse and dry.

RIGHT

"If we let bygones be bygones, there would be less unhappiness in the world."

"Yes, but no hash."

The world is so full of a number of things—it's hard to keep up payments on all of them.

LONG AND SHORT OF IT

Primo Carnesi, six-foot Italian heavyweight, and Larry Swartz, the five-foot champion, having a friendly little set-to in Paris.

IF HE'S AS GOOD AS HE IS BIG!



Unique Money Maker

Seats in London Parks at Two-pence Available by Thousands Under System Long in Effect

When a visitor sinks into one of the comfortable chairs in Regent's Park or Kensington Gardens on a summer afternoon he thinks, "How much better they do these things over here." But when the inevitable functionary appears and demands two-pence, says "The London Referee," the visitor feels vaguely "rooked." He does not know the venerable history behind this taking of the twopenny.

The custom of putting chairs in public parks, says "The Referee," originated at Hampton Court. In Queen Victoria's time the man in charge of the Maze—that ancient institution beloved of young couples and children—was allowed to keep all the takings, and he also obtained permission to place a few chairs in Bushey Park. When this worthy man died he was found to be worth a good many thousand pounds, and this opened the eyes of the authorities, who found the Maze a very good investment, and, ever after, the right of providing chairs in the parks was let to a contractor, and a very flourishing business it is.

The numbers of seats have gone up by leaps and bounds, and there are now tens of thousands in use in the London parks, and all owned by one man. The takings are enormous. One collector will make as much as eight pounds on a good day, and even in winter, with the snow on the ground, he will take three pounds in one evening in Hyde Park. We are indeed a hardy race still!

A visitor from South America last week offered three shillings for his chair, and was agreeably surprised to find he only owed twopenny. Possibly he imagined he was buying it.

Let anyone with an afternoon to spare take an armchair near the Round Pond. If he is lucky he will hear a blackbird singing a duet with a wood pigeon in the tree above him, and perhaps a tame squirrel will come and beg for food.

Feast of Lights

There are many popular institutions which, if stern necessity compelled, we could do without. But Christmas is not among them!

The festival has not always been observed on December 25th. Once it seemed that Christmas would be like Easter—a movable institution, for there are references to it having been held in April, June, and July.

Toward the end of the first century, however, the early Christians began to set aside a definite day for the observance of the birthday of Christ, but there was not complete unanimity as to the date. The important Churches of Egypt, Palestine, Jerusalem, Antioch, etc., chose January 6th, which tradition had handed down as being Christ's birthday. But the Western, or European, Church declared December 25th to be the proper date, and the Pope, in A.D. 137, ordered that the day should henceforth be observed as a solemn feast.

Christmas in January.

It was really "solemn," too; for it was many centuries before Christmas became a time of joyousness. Despite the Pope's order, it was not until A.D. 427 that Christendom—with the exception of the Armenian Christians, who still observe Christmas on January 6th—came into line, and December 25th was adopted for Christmas. That date is not now claimed as being the actual birthday of Christ.

The latest researches of scholars seem to indicate that He was born on January 11th, and thus the Eastern Churches, in their first choice of January 6th, were nearer the date than the one which the more powerful Western Church pressed on them for acceptance. But as Christmas commemorates an historical fact more than a date it does not really matter.

December 25th has had many names and the one which, in a sense, is the least fitting, is that with which we are most familiar—"Christmas," in short! A medieval scribe in a hurry was responsible for the word "Christmas." The incorrect pronunciation came about gradually. Copying an old ecclesiastical calendar, he abbreviated the entry on December 25th from "Christe's Masse"—the latter word meant "service"—to "Christemas." "Michaelmas" arose in the same fashion—from "St. Michael's Masse."

"Day of the Manger."

The oldest name for Christmas is "The Feast of Lights"—a reference either to the lights in the heavens when Christ was born or that He was the Light of the World. "The Festival of the Nativity" is the next oldest name, and is followed by "The Feast of the Incarnation." A quaint name, found in old carols, is "Godde's Daye." "The Day of the Manger" is another. "Yule" is a name borrowed from a pagan feast held on December 22nd to celebrate the passing of the shortest day—December 21st. An old Irish name was "The Glory Day"—a reference possibly to the song of the angels—"In excelsis gloria." Another fourteenth-century name was "Ye Goode Day." In Bavaria Christmas was called "The White Day." But "Krissmuss" has pushed to the first place, and stays there unchallenged! And that although the Prayer Book, after giving two titles to December 25th, adds, "commonly called Christmas Day."

The Holiday Spirit

Those who see the world through blue goggles fail to notice how, despite wars and the rumors of wars, the disposition of mortals toward fellow mortals grows more amiable year by year as the Christmastide recurs. Consideration for the other fellow, for the person who is to enjoy the landscape or use the roadway after us, is waxing, not on the wane. A simple, familiar example is seen in the Christmas shopping, with which many persons have filled an anxious, exhausting week, either as purveyors or as customers. There has been in evidence more than ever the disposition to do it early, but merely in order to avoid the rush, but to take into consideration the fact that those who wait on the wants of the public are just as human as the public.

There have been crowds and the discomfort incident to blocked thoroughfares, but the prevailing spirit of the throng has been genial. People have bought right and left and thought in all directions as never before. There has been a personal satisfaction in trying to manifest thoughtfulness for others, not simply as a seasonal occupation but as the token of a year-round affection. The red-letter day itself is simply the culmination of a festival for which the candles of the heart are always burning. Even these overladen hours may reflect the gracious influences that surrounded the Nativity and inspired the pious art of the old and devout painters when they limned the eternal child in the arms of the Madonna. Let the spirit of the child rule the preparation, as well as the enjoyment of the Yuletide, and the final observation will be all that it should be. The streets will catch a beam beyond the gleaming tree, the holly wreath, the rich adornment and soft radiance of the colored lights. For the illumination of a teeming city thoroughfare as of a pastoral countryside is from a star which the wise men in all ages have discerned, to guide them out of darkness—"Till the day breaks and the shadows flee."

Queer Christ 1935 Gifts

"Didn't they use to tell us, Ann," said Mrs. Peters, "that in China people paint their coffins pink and blue and pea green and yellow, and keep 'em in the front parlor to look at till they're wanted? Seems to me I remember something of the sort."

"So do I," assented Ann Tenney. "They make one another presents of 'em, too. 'Tain't likely a person would forget such an enlightening little fact, once they knew it. That missionary doctor told us. But why do you ask, Lydia?"

"Because I've just been out to the Twiggens'. It's so far that folks don't get round much after snow flies, and Mrs. Twiggens said that there hadn't a soul been in since Christmas; my, but they were glad to see me! They showed me their presents, and all talked at once, except I noticed that Gran'ther Twiggens seemed a mite out of it. He's pretty deaf now, so I yelled at him: 'Have a pleasant Christmas, gran'ther?'"

"Hey!" says gran'ther. "Oh, yes, yes! Fine Christmas; and the folks gave me the best present of all."

"That's nice," says I; "aren't you going to show it to me, gran'ther?"

"Hey!" says he. "Show it to you? Well, now, Lyddy, sorry to disoblige a lady, but it ain't possible. Not today; maybe not till spring. Ye see, Lyddy, it's up to the cemetery."

Ann gasped. "Lydia! They couldn't have—"

"It isn't just for gran'ther, Ann; at least it has the saving grace of being a family monument, I understand."

"But his name will go on it first. Awful! How could they?"

"I'd have said awful, too, if I hadn't heard gran'ther chuckle. Seems they got it set up two or three weeks beforehand and took him over in a sleigh for his first view Christmas morning. He's as pleased as Punch!"

Lydia laughed. "It doesn't sound exactly Christmasy, does it? Well, there are plenty of queer folks in the world, and I s'pose it's natural enough some of the queerness should show up Christmas time. The Twiggens aren't the only ones. There was Henry Brimble giving Louisa arch supporters. Considering it was waiting on him that broke her arches, it does seem that she was entitled to 'em for plain everyday, without having to wait till Christmas. And Maria Teesby; you remember the year the Teesbys gave her the opportunity of having her appendix out at the hospital? And Myra Pressey who sent little Mymie to the dentist to have her front teeth straightened; and—"

"Mean dodges, I call 'em all," interrupted Ann with spirit.

"Oh, well, I don't know's I'd say exactly that—'began Mrs. Peters.

"Maybe not; maybe not," conceded Ann with a tolerant twinkle. "There are two sides to every question, of course. Well, Lydia, you may give me a coffin for my present next year, if you're positively pining to; all be sure it's a nice, bright red one with plenty of gold dragons and butterflies and things on it to look real gay and Christmasy."

Holly Berry Beliefs

As far back as the fifth century Christians invested holly branches with a symbolism that helped to keep sacred memories alive. The crimson berries symbolized the blood shed on Calvary by the Founder of the Christian religion; the prickly leaves held remembrance of the Crown of Thorns, and the bitterness of the holly bark was symbol of the draught of which Christ partook while hanging on the Cross.

Once, in fact, there was a custom of making a decoction from the bark, and drinking it in the midst of the Christmas celebrations, so that—in the words of an old writer—"Ye shall not forget the Cross as ye rejoice in the Manger."

To show how tradition grows, it was not long before the simple symbolism of the prickly leaves passed into a belief that the Crown of Thorns was itself formed of twisted holly branches. From that sprang another belief—that it was not until after Calvary that holly berries were red. The change came, it was said, because the green berries on the branches used for the Crown of Thorns were covered with blood.

The oldest belief connected with holly is that it was the "burning bush" referred to in the Old Testament.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Christmas: Old bells ring new, and one bright star
Shines with a tender, lovely light—
Far shepherds dream on Bethlehem's hills,
It is again the magic night.

Christmas: O blessed God who gave Thyself,
Let all hearts rise in gratitude—
Grant each may feel that splendid love
That glorifies the Christmas mood.

—George Elliston.

Unusual
Employer: "You don't often miss your train."
Employee: "No, but it was on this morning."

The automobile or distant place together, including the poorhouse.

Just to make a trophy was his other day's Tanneys.

Marion Talley's wholesome, farm life which to any other."

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