

Sunday School Lesson

December 8, 1946

A. D. Cann

PAUL ADMONISHES THE CHURCHES (Temperance Lesson)

Lesson: I Corinthians 11:20-27; Romans 13:13-14; Ephesians 5:18-21

Golden Text: Let us walk becomingly, as in the day. Romans 13:13

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

Paul gives the three churches an exhortation to temperance. From his letters we gather that intoxication was an universal evil. Drunkenness is one of the many gates of Hell and it is with us as Sunday School teachers and students to fight this diabolical evil.

I. ADMONITIONS TO THE CORINTHIANS

This letter to the Corinthians reveals how thin is the line that separates grace from lasciviousness. "When, however you meet in one place there is no eating the supper of the Lord; for it is his own supper of which each of you is in a hurry to partake, and one eats like a hungry man, while another has already drunk to excess"—Weymouth translation. Added to this evil we have the extreme opposite; that of observing the Lord's Supper in such a formal way that the spiritual significance is lost. The celebration of the supper brings to remembrance the leading truths of the Gospel. (1) It holds up to view the infinite love of God who gave his only begotten Son. (2) It reminds us that salvation, like the bread and the fruit of the vine, is the gift of God. (3) It brings to remembrance the life of Christ, all he was, did and said. It is proof he lived and died for us. (4) As the Passover to the Jews, so the Supper helps us to realize all that Christ did to redeem us from the bondage of sin. (5) It teaches us that Christ is the food of the soul. (6) We must partake by faith or it will be of no avail. (7) We are taught to distribute to one another what God gives to us. (8) It is a prophecy of Christ's second coming, the perfect triumph of his kingdom. It contains a promise of victory and heaven.

II. ADMONITIONS TO THE ROMANS—

They are (1) negatively—not in rioting and drunkenness not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying (2) positively—"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." A wicked man may restrain his carnal appetites for selfish reasons. For example, they will be a drain on finance, they may wreck health, they may injure reputation, they may wreck our homes, in the long run they may lessen our happiness. In the sanctified Christian the carnal appetites are destroyed and the legitimate appetites of the body are under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit.

III. ADMONITIONS TO THE EPHESIANS

This is a strong temperance lesson and we naturally ask what can be done to promote temperance among young people. Paul has the answer: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the spirit." Strong drink makes one insensible to right and wrong, indecent, ugly, violent, selfish and everything else that is wicked. How blessed it is to know that the Holy Spirit will destroy the unnatural appetite and in its place give appetite for spiritual things.

QUESTIONS AND PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. What does the Lord's Supper bring to our remembrance?
2. What is the sure way of promoting temperance?
3. Give reasons why temperance is profitable.

December 15, 1946

A LETTER ON CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD

Lesson: Philemon 4-20

Golden Text: Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.—2 Corinthians 3:17

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

This letter written by Paul, the prisoner from Rome, is considered among the choicest of Paul's writings. Here we see a revelation of the Apostle's affections. He is the very embodiment of goodness; kind but not soft, stern but not harsh. While other Scriptures portray the Apostle's affections, yet none do so as fully as the letter to Philemon. Notice

I. PAUL'S PRAYERS—

"I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, hearing of thy love and faith." It was a constant source of joy and comfort to the Apostle, while in prison, to know that those converted under his ministry were doing well, spiritually. There is a mutual love in spiritual relations that corresponds with parental love in human relations. Paul was sending greetings to Philemon in order that he might make a request of him.

II. PAUL'S PLEA FOR ONESIMUS—

Onesimus was a slave who evidently had wronged Philemon, his master, and had run away. Meeting Paul in Rome, he became converted and a devout follower of Jesus Christ. Paul, the prisoner, became a devoted friend of Onesimus the slave. . . . Paul's object in writing this letter is that Philemon might receive back his servant, not as just a slave, but a "brother beloved." Here we have—

III. PAUL'S SACRIFICE FOR THE SAKE OF CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD—

"If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself." After calling the slave his brother, his son, his heart, he further calls him his partner or other self. "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account." Though Philemon as well as Onesimus, was converted under Paul's ministry, and in a sense they both owed Paul their very lives; yet Paul recognized Philemon's right to his slave. Notice also that Paul used his influence to encourage Onesimus to return to his master, even though it cost him something to do so. In this attitude of Paul we have a perfect example of Christian brotherhood. It meant much for Paul to give up Onesimus whom he found "profitable," but he did so because of his scrupulous respect for the rights of others. He also goes the extra mile by assuming the responsibility of righting the wrong which the slave found impossible to make right of himself.

QUESTIONS AND PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Give the significance of Paul's greeting to Philemon.
2. Why did Paul make a plea for Onesimus?
3. Do you think it was necessary for Onesimus to make restitution?
4. Let us express our gratefulness to those responsible in bringing about our salvation.

December 22, 1946

A MESSAGE OF LOVE (CHRISTMAS LESSON)

Lesson: John 3:16; Ephesians 3:14-21

Golden Text: Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift—2 Corinthians 9:15

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

The Christmas lesson ranks second only with Easter. Four great events stand out in the Gospel narratives, namely—birth, death, resurrection and second coming of Jesus. More is said of his death and resurrection

than is said of his birth. However, in point of time his birth ranks first.

I. SUPREMACY OF GOD'S GIFT—

"God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." With all things that God has given to his creatures there is nothing that compares with his Son. Says Paul: "All things are yours." Of the, "all things," Jesus Christ is the dearest. It is difficult to illustrate the gift of God. Somewhat analogous is the beautiful trees which in summer are clothed with handsome leaves; but in winter are dark and bare. Their essential nature has not changed, but they have experienced a great outward transformation. So it is with Christ: In coming to earth he was stripped of his glory but not of his Diety. Added to his Diety, and in place of his glory, he took on the essential attributes of man. Thus he was perfect God and perfect man. As such he became our perfect Saviour. Let us all accept this supreme gift.

II. PROVISIONS OF GOD'S GIFT—

Love makes holiness possible. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,—and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Love is the impelling power in man's salvation, but grace is the saving factor. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Love has provided grace adequate to meet man's deepest need.

III. PERMANENCE OF GOD'S GIFT—

"Unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." The salvation that Jesus Christ has provided for the world will never fail. Jesus Christ in his essential personality is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." The power that is essential to man's salvation is just as available to us today by faith, as it was in the day of Paul and the Apostles. If we have not that power, the fault is with us and not with God. Let us at this Christmas season rediscover Jesus Christ in our lives and minister his saving power to a perishing world.

QUESTIONS AND PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Why do Scriptures make more mention of Christ's death than his birth?
2. How may we illustrate the gift of God?
3. Show that Holiness or Perfect Love is a provision of God's gift.
4. How may we rediscover Jesus in our lives?

OBITUARY

Mrs. John Golding, 85, passed away at Hartland at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Percy Barter on Thursday, October 17. Mrs. Golding was born in Millville, where she and her husband lived for some years and then moved to Peel, N. B.

She leaves to mourn, three daughters, Mrs. P. C. Barter, Mrs. B. A. Tompkins, and Mrs. G. W. McIsaac; three sons, Leigh, Hastings, and Kenneth, besides a large number of grandchildren.

Mrs. Golding was a member of the Reformed Baptist Church at Millville. The funeral service was in charge of Rev. A. D. Cann, assisted by Rev. P. J. Trafton who preached the funeral sermon, and Rev. H. S. Dow.

Sister Golding enjoyed her usual good health until near the last and was able to attend Riverside Camp meeting in August where she enjoyed the ministry of the Word and the fellowship of the people.

To the sorrowing ones we extend sympathy.