

— THE — Sunday School Lesson

June 23, 1946

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STRENGTHENING BONDS OF FELLOWSHIP

Lesson: Luke 22:14-20; John 17:6-8-20-21

Golden Text: A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another—John 13:34

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

In the first group of Scriptures for our lesson today we have the observance of the last official Passover and the institution of the Lord's Supper. The latter Scriptures are extracts from our Lord's high priestly prayer.

I. EXHALIATION OF THE BLOOD: Luke 22:14. **When the hour was come**—It was on Thursday evening in the upper room in Jerusalem.

15. **With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer**—One has suggested three reasons why Jesus was so desirous of eating this last passover with his disciples (1) As a human friend who would make this his solemn last farewell (2) As the Divine Master who would gather up into his final discourse his most important, deepest teaching (3) As the founder of a great religion he purposed to transform the most solemn festal gathering of the Jewish people into a feast which should commemorate a far greater deliverance, not of the Jews only, but of every race under Heaven.

16. **I will not any more eat thereof**—This indicates that this is his last earthly meal before his death.

17. **Take this and divide it among yourselves**—Pouring from the cup suggests the pouring out of one's life. The disciples were to fill up that which was to follow of the sufferings of Christ.

18. **I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come**—The Kingdom referred to evidently is a visible kingdom and the Lord's Supper not only stands for an invisible, spiritual kingdom within but also for a coming visible kingdom and King.

19. **This is my body which is given for you**—The bread represents the body of Christ. As bread is indispensable to physical life so the body of Christ is indispensable to spiritual life. We partake thereof by faith.

20. **This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you**—The wine represents the Divine incorruptible blood of the sinless, holy Son of God. The blood is the source of salvation.

II. FELLOWSHIP BEFORE PENTECOST: John 17:6. **They have kept thy word**—They believed in Jesus as the promised Messiah and Saviour, therefore they obeyed His word.

7. **All things whatsoever thou hast given me**—This refers to Jesus' doctrine and teaching.

8. **They have believed that thou didst send me**—Their faith in the Deity of Christ was God given.

II. FELLOWSHIP AFTER PENTECOST: John 17:20—**Neither pray I for these alone**—The prayer of Jesus was not confined to his immediate disciples, but for us also who believe on him through their word.

21. **That they all may be one**—The harmony existing between the persons of the Trinity is possible to all believers through their entire sanctification. The union of the disciples with Christ and with each other was the secret of their unparalleled success.

QUESTIONS AND THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

1. Name three reasons why Jesus was de-

sirous of eating with the disciples at the last passover.

2. Discuss the manner in which blood redemption is set forth in this lesson.

3. A—What kinds of assurance did the disciples possess before Pentecost? B—After Pentecost?

4. Grace unites: Carnality separates: Shew the necessity of all believers being entirely sanctified in order to correspond with the standard advanced by Jesus in John 17.

June 30, 1946

JESUS' FRIENDS CARRY ON HIS WORK

Lesson: Mark 16:15-16-19-20; Luke 24:45-49; Acts 2:46-47; 5:42.

Golden Text: Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

Jesus gave the great commission to his disciples two or three weeks after his resurrection. It was just before his ascension that he reaffirmed the great commission and promised the gift of the Holy Spirit. The last Scripture selections demonstrate the disciples success when endowed with the power of the Spirit.

I. THE DISCIPLES' COMMISSION: Mark 16:15—**Preach the gospel to every creature**—To preach is to tell forth the gospel; every creature indicates that every man is a prospect for salvation.

16. **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved**—He that accepts the gospel in heart and life shall be saved. **He that believeth not**—“whether baptized or unbaptized, shall perish everlastingly”—Wesley's Notes.

19. **After the Lord had spoken unto them**—It was forty days after his resurrection that Jesus ascended up into Heaven.

20. **And they went forth, and preached everywhere**—When this was written the name of Christ was known throughout the then known world. **The Lord working with them**—was the secret of their unparalleled success.

II. THE DISCIPLES' DOCTRINE: Luke 24:45—**Then opened he their understanding**—By explaining the Scriptures relative to his death that hitherto the disciples did not understand.

46. **Thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day**—Three facts were hard for the Jews to accept (1) That their Messiah should be crucified (2) Salvation is possible without the ceremonial law of the Jews (3) That Gentiles can be saved as well as the Jews.

47. **Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations**—Repentance is not sorrow for the results of sin, but sorrow for sin itself. It is a hatred for sin that turns from it.

48. **Ye are witnesses of these things**—They were eyewitnesses of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

49. **Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be indued with power from on high**—“The energy of the Holy Ghost was to be communicated to them for three different purposes (1) That he might be to them, a sanctifying comforter, fortifying their souls, and bringing to their remembrance whatever Jesus had spoken to them (2) That their preaching might be accompanied by this demonstration and power to the hearts of their hearers, so that they might believe and be saved. (3) That they might be able to work miracles to confirm their pretension to a divine mission, and to establish the truth of the doctrines they preached.” Clarke's Commentary.

III. THE DISCIPLES' SUCCESS: **Breaking bread from house to house—Thus they demonstrated their love for each other and their zeal for the glory of God.**

47. **The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved**—The early church had (1) Spiritual blessing (2) Numerical blessing (3) Financial blessing.

QUESTIONS AND THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

1. What was the disciples' commission?
2. Describe the disciples' doctrine.
3. What three facts relative to salvation were especially hard for the Jews to accept?
4. Name at least three purposes for which the disciples were to be endowed with power from on high.
5. Name the three forms of blessing enjoyed by the early Christian church and shew that each is essential to Christian progress.

THAT BLESSED HOPE

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A Meaty Sentence

See how rich and full was the grace provided. Christ “gave himself for us,” cried Paul, “that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works.” Crack open that remarkable sentence, as you would some meaty and inviting nut, and out roll four great things that Christ died to give us and without which we are poorly prepared for His return. Look at them:

“That he might redeem us from all iniquity”! (“Purchase our freedom from all iniquity,” so reads Weymouth.) There is Liberty.

That He might purify us! There is Purity.

“A people who should be peculiarly His own”! (Twentieth Century New Testament.) There is Identity.

“Zealous of good works”! There is Industry.

But this is not all. These things—Liberty, Purity, Identity, Industry—are to be worked out daily in your life and mine. Here is the “watchful waiting,” the unceasing discipline of holy living, that is required to keep us in readiness for our returning Lover and Lord, our Saviour Christ. What must that daily discipline be? I am fond of the way Moffatt translates it: “the grace of God. . . schools us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions and to live a life of self-mastery, of integrity, and of godliness in this present world.”

Are You Ready?

My friends, you can date your conversion. Your choice of Christ is the act of an hour or a moment. You can date one phase of your sanctification. For a Christian to lay his all on the altar and to experience the in-filling, the cleansing and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, this, too, can be described as the act of an hour or a moment. But mark it well, the discipline of a holy and victorious life cannot be dated. It is now and tomorrow and next week and next year, and—“until he come!” We are being forever “schooled” to renounce, and to keep on renouncing, the things that are unworthy and ungodly. On the other hand, we are to “live a life of Christian self-control, of stainless honor and of spiritual devotion to Christ and His cause.” Only so can we be adequately prepared for the breaking of that bright dawn in which our King and Saviour shall turn our hope into vision by His glorious appearing.

READ THE BIBLE

“Read the Bible, and it brings you into the association of the best people that ever lived. You stand beside Moses, and learn his meekness; beside Job, and learn his patience; beside Abraham, and learn his faith; beside Daniel and learn his courage to do right; and beside Isaiah, and learn his fiery indignation toward the evildoer; beside Paul, and catch something of his enthusiasm; beside Christ, and you feel His love.”—*Spurgeon*.