

Sunday School Lesson

October 16, 1946

A. D. Cann

PAUL MAKES A NEW START

Lesson: Acts 26:9-18; I. Corinthians 15:8-10

Golden Text: This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I. Timothy 1:15

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

The main part of our lesson today is taken from Paul's address to king Agrippa. Being a Jew the king was familiar with Paul's language as he described the early part of his life in the Jews' religion.

I. PAUL BEFORE CONVERSION: Acts 26:9. **I verily thought within myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth**—Paul was following the leading of his unregenerated conscience. His attitude toward the followers of Jesus is abundant evidence that the unlightened conscience is not an accurate guide in the matters of moral choice.

10. **Many of the saints did I shut up in prison**—In Paul's own mind he was doing service for God.

II. Being exceedingly mad against them—Paul gave his consent to the death of Stephen and manifested extreme hatred to all the followers of Jesus.

12. **To Damascus with authority**—The Christians evidently had gone to Damascus with the gospel and Paul was going thither in order that he might have them destroyed.

II. PAUL'S CONVERSION: Acts 26:13: **I saw in the way a light from Heaven**—A supernatural light like unto that which guided the children of Israel out of Egypt.

14. **Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me**—Jesus identifies himself with his followers. To persecute them is to persecute Jesus.

15. **Who art thou Lord**—Saul recognized the Deity of Jesus.

16. **I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness**—Saul was not only to be a minister, but also a witness, for indeed it is impossible to minister to others that which we have not experienced in our own lives.

17. **Unto whom now I send thee**—This is Paul's commission to preach to the Gentiles.

18. **To open their eyes**—There are five senses of the soul which correspond with the five senses of the body. In our original state of sin these five spiritual senses are locked up. It requires the light of the gospel to open them.

III. PAUL'S CONSECRATION: I. Corinthians 15:8. **Last of all he was seen of me also**—Paul refers to his vision of Christ on his way to Damascus.

9. **I am the least of the apostles**—In his own estimation of himself Paul was the least of all the apostles, because of his once opposition to Christ's followers.

10. **I labored more abundantly than they all**—In the abundance and fruitfulness of his labors Paul surpassed all the other Apostles. This was both because of his unusual natural ability and consecration.

QUESTIONS AND THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is the conscience always a proper guide to follow in the matters of moral choice?
2. Why do you suppose Saul's conversion is recorded so many times in Scripture?
3. What accounts for Paul's outstanding success as an apostle?

October 20, 1946

PAUL TRAINS FOR HIS LIFE WORK

Lesson: Acts 9:19-22; 11:25-26; Galatians 1:77-24

Golden Text: Straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. Acts 9:20

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

It is preferable that every man have training for his life work and especially the preacher. In our previous lessons we have records of Paul's educational achievements. Shortly after Paul's conversion he went to Arabia for an unstated period. According to the opinion of Bible students he devoted considerable time there studying the Hebrew Scriptures in the light of his new knowledge.

I. PAUL THE PREACHER: Acts 9:19: **Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus**—A short period of time which was no doubt used for instruction in every Christian doctrine.

20. **Preached Christ in the synagogue that he is the Son of God**—The Jews as a nation did not believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ and hence did not accept him as Saviour. Saul was now convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and proclaimed him as such.

21. **All they that heard him were amazed**—Because Paul was known as the persecutor of Christ.

22. **Saul increased the more in strength**—"The events recorded in verses 20-22 must be taken as extending over the whole period from his conversion to his escape by being let down from the walls and his going to Jerusalem, which he declares (Galatians 1:18) was at the end of three years, and within that time occurred his retirement in Arabia"—Dr. Adam Clarke.

II. PAUL THE TEACHER: Acts 11:25. **Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul**—The church at Antioch now needed a teacher and Saul appealed to Barnabas as the man for the task.

26. **And taught much people**—The church today still needs a teaching ministry. **The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch**—It is accepted that the name Christians as applied to disciples originated from the heathen population at Antioch.

III. PAUL THE WRITER: Galatians 1:17. **I went into Arabia**—Arabia is south east of Damascus.

18. **After three years I went to see Peter at Jerusalem**—Doubtless three years after his conversion.

19. **Other of the apostles saw I none**—Evidently the other apostles were elsewhere supervising other churches.

20. **I write unto you**—Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. He is endeavouring to prove that his writings were given to him by direct revelation and independently of the other twelve apostles.

21. **I came unto the regions of Syria and Cilicia**—Paul was by this time feeling his call to preach to the Gentiles. This was natural since he was born in a Roman province. On leaving Jerusalem he goes to Tarsus, his home city in Cilicia. We may reasonably suppose that he did missionary work in Tarsus and in the adjoining Syria. The inference from the next three verses of the lesson is that they heard in Judea concerning Paul's work in Syria and Cilicia.

QUESTIONS AND THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

1. What doctrine did Paul preach at Damascus and why?
2. What caused Paul to go to Antioch? Why was he suited for labors in that place?
3. Why was it natural for Paul to associate a call to work among the Gentiles with his vision of Jesus?

LETTERS FROM OUR PASTORS

Moncton, N. B.

Dear Highway Friends:

Greetings to all in the name of our wonderful Saviour.

After enjoying Beulah Camp this summer we had the privilege of assisting in the Youth Camp, and a real privilege it was. In Rev. Earl Bull we had a fine worker and his teaching and preaching ministry were graciously owned of the Spirit. Rev. and Mrs. Wilbur Mullen, Randolph Nicholson, and Miss Campbell were efficient and zealous labourers and it was a real joy to us to be associated with them in this great work. We had a fine group of young people enrolled and they were responsive to the call of the Lord. It was indeed a blessed time.

During the summer we had the privilege of a week-end of fellowship with Rev. H. S. and Mrs. Wilson and the fine people of Black's Harbour and then a visit with the people of Seal Cove and Wood Island. While there we renewed acquaintance with those whom we had learned to love in the Lord in former days and thoroughly enjoyed being among them. We were most kindly received by Rev. G. R. Symonds, present pastor of these churches, and had the privilege of association with him in the tent meetings at Ingalls Head. We rejoiced to find the work in the churches at Black's Harbour, Seal Cove, and Wood Island in a very encouraging state.

We returned to Moncton September 6th. to begin our sixth year with the good people here. Rev. Norman Trafton had been supply pastor for the month of August and the first Sunday of September, and his ministry was fruitful. The people of the church and city appreciated his labours among them and the work flourished during a month that is usually regarded as difficult.

On the evening of September 11th. our people surprised us pleasantly by calling on us in a body and giving us a "welcome home" visit. During the evening, Brother James Bradley, in behalf of the friends assembled, presented us with a generous gift of money. It was just another kind act to be added to the many that have been shown us by these thoughtful people.

We have begun the new church year expecting victory. The blessing of the Lord is upon our services and we look for great things in the special services of the future. Please remember us in prayer.

Yours in Christian love,

B. C. and MRS. COCHRANE.

Presque Isle, Maine.

Dear Highway Friends:—

Several requests have come in of late for a report of the Lord's work here in Presque Isle's Inter-Denominational Tabernacle. A steady revival spirit prevails, with souls finding God. Five have been converted since Beulah, one fine brother finding God at Riverside Camp, Brother Tapley, who is steadily growing in grace. Seventeen candidates have been baptized. I might also mention the radio broadcast which is proving a great blessing to the work, with souls finding God through its influence. Our good friends of the church at Perth assist us at the broadcast with their fine singing. We feel our need of the prayers of God's people as we engage in a revival campaign with Rev. G. A. Delong, as evangelist, commencing **November 4th.**

In His Love, H. O. McGEORGE.