

Sunday School Lesson

December 29, 1946

A. D. Cann

PAUL CLAIMS THE WORLD FOR CHRIST

Lesson: Acts 9:15; 19:21; 23:11; 28:28-31;
Romans 1:13-16; 15:22-24.

Golden Text: I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. Romans 1:14.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

In this last lesson of the year we have a number of passages which set forth Paul's zeal for pioneer missionary work. This lesson emphasizes his desire to minister in Rome. This is no doubt because Rome was the centre of activity of the world. What London is to England and France to Paris, so was Rome to all the country on the Mediterranean. Being permitted to minister in Rome would enable him to reach people from all the then known world, with the possible exception of the East.

PAUL'S VISION FOR WORLD WIDE EVANGELISM

"I am debtor both to the Greeks and the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise". Not many people desire to be in debt. In fact debt is a terrible curse. It has caused sorrow and death to many, many homes. A person who has no money but attempts to pay his bills is perhaps excusable. One thing is certain however—a man is a rogue who has the money to pay his bills, but does not do so. Such is the case with those who have the truth and give it not to others. It is a spiritual paradox that not too many people understand, namely—we keep the truth by giving it to others and we lose it when we fail to give it out. If the wrath of God is upon those who hold the truth in unrighteousness, so likewise must the wrath of God be upon those who hold the truth from others. If we have the truth then we are debtors to those who have it not. If a blind man knows not he is walking over the edge of a precipice and I see him fall, and warn him not, then the responsibility of his death is upon me. So likewise is there tremendous responsibility upon us to give the truth to those that are spiritually blind. Notice Paul's diligence here—"to the wise and to the unwise". He shirked not his duty in any direction.

PAUL'S MINISTRY IN ROME

Paul was not the first to take the gospel to Rome. His reaching Rome as a prisoner was not according to his plans, however his being a prisoner was a definite advantage. As such he had the protection of the Roman law, and was not interfered by the Jews, as in almost all other missionary endeavours. He was given definite liberties, being able to stay "two whole years in his own hired house", and received all that came in unto him." Thus Paul had opportunity (1) To minister to the different soldiers who kept guard over him (2) Write a number of letters to the churches (3) Preach to both Jews and Gentiles who came to his dwelling place.

PAUL'S MESSAGE FOR THE WORLD

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth". While many of both Jews and Gentiles looked upon the gospel as weakness and foolishness, yet Paul stood unashamed of the cross of redemption. Everywhere he went, he proclaimed it as the power of God unto salvation. The word "power" comes from the same root word from which we get our words dynamite and dynamic. The gospel is the dynamic of God.

QUESTIONS AND PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. What is the spiritual paradox referred to in our lesson? Can you explain it?
2. "Our disappointments are often God's appointments". Does this not apply to Paul's imprisonment in Rome?
3. Give an exposition of Paul's message for the world.
4. Review Paul's missionary career and compare it the missionary work of today.

January 5, 1947
THE WORD MADE FLESH
Lesson: John 1: 1-18

Golden Text: No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. John 1:18.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

Our lessons for this quarter are taken from the gospel of John. In passing let us notice: Matthew writes to the Jews representing Christ as King; Mark to the Romans representing Christ as the irresistible Conqueror and Servant; Luke writes to the Greeks representing Christ as the "Beloved Physician", the Teacher, the Friend. John reveals Jesus as the "Word Made Flesh", "The Son of God", The Giver of Eternal Life. The gospel of John is sometimes known as the "spiritual gospel".

THE SON'S PRE-EXISTENT STATE

Let us consider prayerfully the first four verses of John's gospel. (1) Christ's eternity—In the beginning was the Word. Unlike all other human beings Christ always was. His nature was essentially the same before as after the incarnation. (2) Christ's fellowship with the Father: his distinction from the Father—The Word was with God. (3) Christ's Deity—The Word was God. A revelation to John, not from flesh and blood but from the Father. (4) Christ's agency in creation—All things were made by him. (5) Christ the Life—In him was life. (6) Christ the Light—The life was the light of men. Christ is still the LIGHT of men.

THE SON'S ASSUMPTION OF HUMANITY

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." When the Son became flesh he did not cease to be Divine. While it is true he laid aside his glory, yet he did not lay aside it all, but retained more than humanity had yet before seen. The glory referred to was his immaculate character. Because of his assuming humanity and living a sinless life, he was able to offer himself as a perfect atonement for sin. This perfect combination of humanity and Deity enabled him to satisfy the demands of Justice. Thus the Son of God became the Son of Man that we might become the sons of God.

THE SON, THE BEARER OF TRUTH AND GRACE

"And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" John the Apostle distinguishes John the Baptist from Christ. Says he—John the Baptist was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light. Light is a symbol of grace and truth, and darkness is a symbol of wickedness and sin. As light dispenses darkness, so grace dispenses sin. The righteousness of Christ is original while the believers is wrought by the Holy Ghost. Thus John distinguishes Jesus Christ from all others. Of all that have been born of women Jesus Christ is the only absolutely perfect one. The fulness of Christ as received by the believer is only as related to this present life, and that only in relation to sin. In other words the fulness referred to is not fulness of knowledge, not necessarily fulness of physical health, but fulness of love and grace. Yes, Jesus Christ is now the bearer of perfect moral and spiritual health, to all who believe in him. He has grace upon grace for every spiritual need. In the resurrection the saints will have physical perfection.

QUESTIONS AND PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. What do we know of the Son of God before the incarnation?
2. For what purpose did the Son of God become the Son of Man?
3. Distinguish Jesus Christ from John the Baptist.
4. Shew that Jesus Christ is the bearer of truth and grace.

Letters from Our Pastors

Jonesport, Maine

Dear Highway Readers:

Greetings in Jesus' Name! I wish to report from this part of God's vineyard. Our special services, with Rev. N. E. and Mrs. Trafton assisting, began November 3rd and continued over three Sundays. Rev. P. J. Trafton accompanied them and was with us over the first Sunday, giving us great help in prayer and song leading. The interest and attendance was good throughout the entire meeting. Our brother gave of his best in preaching the Word and leading in chorus singing. The special music was a great blessing, the burden of which was borne by Brother and Sister Trafton, assisted by the church people.

Conviction was in evidence in nearly every service. A number knelt for pardon, or to be reclaimed and the closing Sunday morning most of these came forward for cleansing and testified to victory.

We enjoyed the fellowship of Brother and Sister Trafton in our home and feel to praise the Lord for the privilege of having their assistance in these services. We believe that seed sown shall yet bear fruit. In fact we saw one soul, to whom God had been speaking in the services, pray through to victory the Sunday night of the Quarterly which followed.

Much prayer had been made before the meetings began and a prayer chain was formed during them. The good people of the church stood behind in their support of pastor and evangelist, and may the Lord reward them for their faithfulness.

We give God the praise. Amen!

Mrs. Hilyard joins me in wishing all the readers the Season's Greetings.

S. G. HILYARD

Havelock, N. B.

Dear Friends of The Highway:

We take this privilege to report from this part of the vineyard.

Since coming here we have been encouraged in many ways, and feel God's presence with us as we try to minister to the good folk of this circuit. We planned on having special meetings before cold weather but were unable to secure the services of an evangelist; but God has been very real to us especially in our prayer meetings, where He meets with us and gives us the assurance of victory.

The dear folk here have been very faithful in the welfare of their pastor, in seeing that he has sufficient for the material needs. On Saturday evening, Nov. 16th, they gathered at our home, and presented us with cash, vegetables and groceries, for which we tried in our humble way to express our appreciation and gratitude.

We wish to thank you all again and pray God's richest blessing upon you as we fellowship and work together for the furtherance of His kingdom.

B. D. and MRS. PRICE

Fredericton, N. B.,

Nov. 24, 1946

Dear Highway Friends:

It was the privilege of the Fredericton Reformed Baptist Church to have Brother F. A. Dunlop with us in revival meetings Nov. 3-17. He brought us some fine messages and labored faithfully and as a result God owned our meetings with a good number of seekers and

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