

Sunday School Lesson

September 29th, 1946

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JESUS AND THE LAW OF LOVE

Lesson: Psalm 119:33-38; Matthew 5:43-48
Golden Text: Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 13:10

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

The first Scriptures in our lesson today deal with God's law. The second portion taken from the sayings of Jesus show the place of love in the fulfilling of the law. Law is essential to holy living, but love is also essential to obedience and service that is acceptable to God. No one can keep the law of God without Divine love, and all may keep it with the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

I. LOVE FOR THE LAW OF GOD: Psalm 119:33. **Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes**—The Lord is our teacher and the Bible is our text book. Let every Christian be teachable and desirous of learning.

34. **Give me understanding and I shall keep thy law**—Understanding of the law is essential to proper observance of it.

35. **Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight**—It was knowledge of the law that the Psalmist requested for his heart already delighted in doing it.

36. **Not to covetousness**—"Let me have no inordinate love for gain of any kind, nor for anything that may grieve thy Spirit, or induce me to gain my happiness here below." Dr. Clarke.

37. **Quicken thou me in thy way**—This quickening is (1) Divine. God's people are not slaves, but sons and daughters who delight in doing the Father's will, (2) Progressive by continually enlarging and developing the soul and all the faculties of our being. (3) It is for special service: "In Thy Way" not man's way but God's way.

38. **Stablish thy word unto thy servant**—God's word is not on trial, it has never failed, it is the only basis for present or future hopefulness or usefulness.

II. JESUS AND THE LAW OF LOVE: Matthew 5:43. **Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy**—"God spoke the former part and the scribes added the latter." Wesley's Notes.

44. **Love your enemies**—Repay love in thought, word and deed to all who hate you and show it in all your conduct.

45. **That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven**—Divine love is the badge of sonship.

46. **If he love them which love you what reward have ye**—We must love those who do not love us if we are to gain the soul winner's reward.

47. **If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others**—Let us advance at least to embrace our brethren in Christ of whatever denomination they are.

48. **Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect**—In the beginning of this chapter our Lord refers to holiness as happiness and now in the close he refers to it as perfection. The sanctified Christian is perfect in a limited, restricted sense; while God is perfect in an unlimited, absolute sense. God's holiness is original while the Christian's is inwrought by the Holy Ghost. Love is a motive or intention and it is in this realm that the sanctified must claim perfection. In Matthew 5:46 Jesus is preaching on love or intentions. He condemns those who cherish hatred and exhorts his followers to go the extra mile, to give the extra coat, and to resist not evil, etc. God is love. Therefore let Christians be perfect in love even as is their Father in Heaven perfect in love.

QUESTIONS AND THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

1. State at least one reason why it is so important that Christians know the Word of God.
2. Why is it necessary for men to be quickened in God's way?
3. Show from Matthew 5:46 that if our enemies are to be won for Jesus we must at least love them.
4. What did Jesus mean when he commanded Christians to be perfect?

October 6th, 1946

PAUL'S BACKGROUND AND EARLY LIFE

Lesson: Acts 21:39; 22:3-27-28; 26:4-5; Philippians 3:5-6
Golden Text: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Ecclesiastes 12:1.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

This is the first lesson of the fourth quarter and it gives an incomplete record of Paul's early life. During this quarter we will study the life of this great Apostle.

I. PAUL'S BIRTHPLACE: Acts 21:39. **I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus**—Tarsus was the capital of Cilicia and was a prosperous Roman province during Paul's ministry. It was a great educational centre corresponding with Athens and Alexandria.

II. PAUL'S EDUCATION: Acts 22:3. **Brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel**—Gamaliel is considered to this day as one of the greatest of all the teachers in the history of the Jews. Paul had the best theological training of his time.

III. PAUL'S CITIZENSHIP: Acts 22:27. **Tell me art thou a Roman**—The chief captain wanted to know if Paul was not a Roman, because Paul had been bound for scourging, which was not lawful for a Roman.

28. **Paul said, but I was free born**—Paul's nationality enabled him to claim the highest civic privileges of his day. Citizenship in the Roman Empire was often gained by purchase, reward for military service and not infrequently as a token of imperial favor. Because of Paul's birthplace he had a right to appeal for justice from the court at Rome.

IV. PAUL'S RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND: Acts 36:4. **My manner of life from my youth**—Paul had gone to Jerusalem at a young age to study under Gamaliel, and because of this and also his leadership in persecution of the Jews he was well known by the leading Jews in Jerusalem.

5. **After the most straightest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee**—Paul is endeavouring to convince his accusers of his purpose to live according to the ideas of the narrowest and strictest of the Jews. Any change in his thinking was only after receiving the most convincing evidence. In our lesson next Sunday Paul tells what this evidence was—an appearance of Christ to him.

Philippians 3:5. **Of the stock of Israel**—He was of genuine Hebrew stock and not a Jewish proselyte.

6. **Persecuting the church**—He persecuted the followers of Jesus because he thought they were trying to overthrow the Mosaic system.

QUESTIONS AND THEMES FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do you know of Paul's birthplace, education, citizenship and religious background?
2. What advantages did Paul have as a Roman citizen?
3. What was responsible for the radical change in Paul's attitude toward the followers of Christ?
4. Why did Paul persecute the followers of Christ?

Temperance Column

"LET'S REGULATE LIQUOR"

That's what the Wets are saying. Many leaders among the brewers and distillers have said that they are in favor of regulation. Sam Morris, militant crusader for prohibition, has a good answer for that one. He says, "Regulate the liquor traffic! Yes! Regulate it like you would regulate a rattlesnake! Cut its head off! Trample it in the dust!" Sounds pretty drastic; but how else can we handle the liquor traffic adequately?

There are now laws regulating the traffic in intoxicants. Sales may not be made to minors; liquor must not be sold after certain hours of the day; certain areas may not have liquor sold in them at all. Would it not be senseless to have a law saying, "Murder must not be committed within two blocks of a school," or a statute to the effect that rape must not be allowed after midnight? How would people like to have the law protecting property rights in effect only for a certain age group?

The category in which liquor is placed by these suppositions is not original with the writer. God Himself is authority for the company kept by liquor. We read, in Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Immediately the Wets will cry out, "It isn't our fault if people drink too much and make drunkards of themselves." We quote from an article in a recent issue of a popular magazine (in which there are twelve liquor ads): "Up to a point, they (the liquor interests) must help the Drys fight their battle, for the reputable liquor manufacturer or seller would be among the first to admit that excessive drinking is harmful. But on the other hand, good business practice makes him try to sell at least enough liquor to earn a profit on his business." (The bold face is this writer's). It is the desire to make money (as easily as he can and as fast as he can and at whatever cost to the consumer) that causes him to manufacture and sell liquor. That spirit of selfishness is at the root of many evils in the world today.

Let us admit, for the sake of argument, that it is a man's weakness that causes him not to know "when he has had enough" it is his lack of will-power that makes of him a drunkard. Shouldn't the fact that there are many who lack the will-power to stop before drunkenness claims them; that a vast multitude of drinkers exceed the "moderate" rate, cause every right thinking person to desire to keep from them that which betrays them?

Regulate the liquor traffic? Yes! in just the way that we regulate murder, theft, rape, adultery and liquor's other noisome relatives—by outlawing it completely.—National Voice.

It is not a good plan to be in haste to perform any action that it may be the sooner over. On the contrary, you should accustom yourself to do whatever you have to do with tranquility, in order that you may retain the possession of yourself and of settled peace.—Madame Guyon.