

## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL BETWEEN SUNDAYS

By Rev. B. F. Ireland

The topic on which I am writing seems to clearly infer that the weekly Sunday school session is not all there is to making the Sunday school a real success. It is possible that many Sunday school workers limit their labors to Sunday alone. In such cases its field is greatly limited and its success hampered. The Sunday school was so named because it holds its sessions on Sunday, but in no case is its service to be limited to that day alone. Therefore, the attendance, interest, and success depends almost entirely on what is done through the week. The Sunday school will no more run on effortless ease than the household, business, or the farm. Many are making very little progress because they are trying to operate on that basis. Sunday schools that succeed command the respect and admiration of all observers and they begin to be curious about how it was accomplished. In every case it will be found that there was strenuous effort and enthusiasm, as well as perspiration involved. The progress of the Sunday school bears a close analogy to the success of great men. The poet said: "The heights of great men gained and kept, were not obtained by sudden flight; but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night." In my judgment, regarding the progress of the Sunday school, there are four general principles which govern its success.

**The first of these I would mention is prayer.** Prayer is as vital in building the Sunday school as it is in building Christian character. It will enlarge our vision of human need; increase our faith to help meet that need; and increase our courage and determination to attempt great things for God and successfully carry them to a final conclusion.

Some, alas, have their goal set for Canaan but like Terah die in Haran. The woodsman is wise enough to spend much time in grinding his axe to a keen edge. He realizes that he is not only eliminating useless effort, but that he is adding to the joy of his labor and greater accomplishment at the end of the day. How much more is it necessary for us as Sunday school workers to go forth with a keen edge of faith, inspiration, and enthusiasm. The fact that we are workers together with God makes it imperative that we commune often with Him to obtain clear direction and guidance in the great work which He has called us to do. Sincere, heartsearching, prevailing prayer will cause us to do more than pray. It will cause us to put feet to our prayers that we might be an instrument in fulfilling the great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**The second thought I would advance is that of planning.** Failure at this point will greatly narrow our field and curb our usefulness. A Sunday school which is conducted without planning usually runs in a rut. When this happens we circumscribe our course just as the little electric train that runs round and round, but never reaches out beyond the little circle. This is probably the greatest contributing factor to the defeat of the Sunday school. When we think, pray, and plan an interesting program with zeal and enthusiasm, it becomes a natural thing to want to share it with others. Likewise, when we are beaming with interest and enthusiasm, others will

want to enjoy it with us. Planning requires a great deal of consideration and forethought. It is a universal law that we seldom, if ever, accomplish anything beyond our plans. Planning is not the goal, but it is the means by which we reach the goal. If we do not plan for success, we most likely will not achieve it. A varied program is interesting and impressive. To achieve this it is extremely important to have a Sunday school board meeting once a month, or at least once a quarter. In these meetings problems may be confronted and solved. Conclusions may be reached on the observance of special days. Committees may be selected to carry out a program which will be both attractive and helpful. Plans should always be made to reach prospective members and absentees. Many knotty problems can be solved by planning. This planning and carrying out the plans keep us busy between Sundays.

**Then the matter of visitation is worthy of our consideration.** After prayer and planning have made their contribution toward success, that which we have to set before the people will only benefit those who are present. But what of the vast multitude of disinterested ones who never attend Sunday schools? There is not a more successful way of reaching this group than by personal visitation; however, this cannot all be done by the pastor and superintendent. The matter of reaching the disinterested for Christ is a task of such magnitude that it requires every constituent of the Sunday school working seven days a week. A new era would dawn in the Sunday school if we could get every member to accept the challenge to make every contact with the world count for Christ and the Sunday school. We are enjoying great privileges; we have much to share. Our contacts with others, in business and social relations during the week, affords a great opportunity to let them know we are glad to share with them the blessings we enjoy and that we have a keen interest in their welfare. Let us pray for more weekday religion which will drive us out into the highways and hedges to reach the lost for Christ.

**The last thought I will bring is that of preparation** as it is related to our efforts for the Sunday school. We often see the work of God cheapened by those who seem to feel that little or no preparation is needed for service which we render the Sunday school and church. The less we put into our preparation the less effective it will be, and the less we will influence souls for Christ. Jesus plainly inferred that one soul is of more value than the wealth of the world. This being true, the Lord will require our best in preparation for His service. The officer or teacher who habitually makes little or no preparation to render acceptable service will some day most likely see his works going up in smoke. When we are charged with the solemn responsibility of feeding the hungry multitudes, we must not be like the man Jesus tells about whose friend came at midnight and he had nothing to set before him. One of the greatest contributing factors to the success of the Sunday school is teachers who, from week to week, search from every source available to prepare their hearts and minds to successfully break the bread of life to the hungry. Visitation and special programs may get people out to the Sunday school, but interest will lag when there is poor preparation on the part of both teacher and scholar. Let us join hands and hearts in helping our Sunday school to succeed by

## THE GOSPEL: DEATH AND LIFE

By L. W. Godfrey

The savour of death unto death; and : : : the savour of life unto life (II Cor. 2:16).

She had been using her lovely new electric stove for just a few weeks. What a time-saver and how much easier to prepare a meal with this one than with the old worn-out range! She was thankful over and over that her husband, who worked long and hard hours for Central Power, had surprised her with such a wonderful gift on the tenth anniversary of their marriage.

And then, tragedy struck! While he was working on a high line following a storm, something went wrong. No one will ever know just how it happened, but John was found limp and lifeless by his co-worker. A surge of electric current had literally burned its way through his body, causing instant death.

After recovering somewhat from the shock, the grief-stricken wife began to utter these words, "The same thing, the same thing! Oh, the irony of it all!" Later she explained: "My new stove is beautiful and serves me so well. Electricity is a marvelous servant and a great blessing; but the same current, misdirected, has taken the life of the one dearest to me on earth."

Yes, it is ironical. The same electric current which helps us so much in our homes, if misused and misdirected, snuffs out life. The same kind of gas which warms us in rigid weather may cause the death of a loved one. The water which slakes our thirst in summer may come down a river valley as a raging torrent, sweeping those in its path into a watery grave.

Paul said, "To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life" (II Cor. 2:16). He realized that many would hear his message and some would turn away as did the rich young ruler, sorrowful. To Herod the gospel was a savor of death unto death. Judas could have accepted eternal life, offered to all alike by his Lord. But these chose willfully to reject the offer, causing the thing of supreme blessing to become an eternal tragedy.

Friend, think of God's great love to you; accept the wonderful grace and pardon so freely offered. Receive the Light of the World, drink of the Water of Life, and taste of the Living Bread, that eternal life might begin at this moment to spring up forever in your soul. Then will His great salvation be to you "a savour of life unto life" and you can say with the Apostle, "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved" (II Cor. 2:15).—Herald of Holiness.

## ENDURANCE

Satan tempts in order that he may destroy. God allows him to tempt in order that we may grow stronger through resisting temptation by His grace, and through discovering in Jesus Christ the infinite resources that there are to enable us to confront temptation and to win through to a new liberty and a new joy in the Lord.—J. Russell Howden.

proper emphasis on prayer, planning, visitation, and lesson preparation.

—Pilgrim Holiness Advocate