

# The King's Highway

Rev. L. K. Mullen, Nov. 6

## AN ADVOCATE OF SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS

VOL. XXXVIII

MONCTON, N. B., OCTOBER 31, 1959

No. 473

### BETTER SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS — BETTER SUNDAY SCHOOLS

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The strategic importance of Sunday-school teachers in our modern world, impossible to pin-point in a sentence, must never be underestimated for several reasons:

1. The world will never be won for Christ without more dedicated and enthusiastic support of the Church by Sunday-school teachers.

2. Scores of teachers reach thousands of non-attenders of regular worship services. This in no way detracts from the great calling of a pastor. Ministers and Sunday-school teachers are integral parts of the most important opportunity on earth ... for "how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard ..." (Rom. 10: 14).

3. Teachers are often the first link with God for children. First impressions determine future careers. The formative years of instruction are of tremendous importance.

4. Men and women who sacrifice personal desires in order to teach from the Bible, in many cases, are more productive in winning others for Jesus Christ because their words are not clouded with complicated theology, a major cause of discouragement to those who drop from church because they cannot immediately understand the deep things of God.

5. Sunday schools are the training grounds for effective Christian personal workers, ministers, and missionaries—those who "put on the whole armor of God" as warriors for the front lines.

6. A pastor, largely, is effective because of his teachers in juvenile and adult classes. Ask him, if you doubt the statement.

These are just a few of many values attached to Sunday-school teachers. I could write a book and still lack space to express my true appreciation of their worth.

Cicero said, "What greater or better gift can we offer ... than to instruct our youth? Plato put his sensitive finger on missionary growth when he said, "Those having torches will pass them on to others."

Author James Hilton had this to say: "If I had a child who wanted to be a teacher I would bid him Godspeed as if he were going to war. For indeed the war against prejudice, greed and ignorance is eternal, and those who dedicate themselves to it give their lives no less because they may live to see some section of the battle won."

Responsibilities are many, for Sunday-school instructors are dealing seriously with human souls which will live forever either in Heaven or in a place Jesus called "hell." Charles V. Youmans, describing the seriousness with which each Sunday-school instructor should approach his task, expressed it like this: "God pity the (careless) teacher ... for in time, his students will raise a whole generation to curse him for his negligence."

What are some of the qualifications for these outstanding people who faithfully fill the gap? Current Concepts describes it well: "Select a young and pleasing personality ... pour over it a mixture of equal parts of the wisdom of Solomon, the strength of Samson and the

patience of Job; season with the salt of experience, the pepper of animation, the oil of sympathy and a dash of humor; stew for about four years in a hot classroom, testing occasionally with a fork of criticism ... When done to a turn, garnish ... and serve hot to the community."

Opportunities, however, are worth while and endless for service as Sunday-school teachers among young and old ... with elders providing invaluable wisdom and youngsters the essential enthusiastic vigor. Lasting results of their labors for Christ are without number. One outcome, for instance, gives the weekly stickability to Christian families. This makes the efforts worthy, if no other comfort is ever made known.

A. J. Cronin, the noted author said, "In this highly industrialized age, America has greater need of a strong and well-established family than in the early pioneering days. Now, the dangers are not thirst and hunger, or the attacks of hostile tribes, but they are as elemental—and far more formidable, because they spring from within." The indwelling Spirit of Jesus Christ is the only answer to such attacks. Arthur Collis and Vera E. Poole, in *These Our Children*, make it more emphatic: "Good family life is in the last resort the nation's most precious asset." And the faith of children in an "often-taken-for-granted-father" is immeasurable. As pointed out in the *North Carolina Churchman*: "He may have on a greasy hat, and the seat of his pants may be shiny or patched, but if his children have their noses flattened against the windowpane a half-hour before he is due home for supper, he can be trusted."

The following four points I consider necessary for every fruitful Sunday-school teacher:

1. Make it a primary duty to impress upon class members the absolute necessity of reading God's Word, the Bible, daily. Commit to memory many important verses.

2. Impress all to set aside a quiet time of devotion ... to pray over daily problems and offer thanksgiving for blessings received. Make known satanic demands to avoid this devotional period, and hit hard on the need of creating moments for God, regardless of outside interferences. And get across another key point—prayers are not something to be memorized, but are simple, ordinary words to use in talking with God. The prayer periods should be a "longed for" part of each day ... not a time to be endured.

3. Stress witnessing for Christ. This is the duty, and privilege, of every Christian, not just the minister. But underline witnessing when God provides the opportunity and burden. Then power will be present. Don't let members make the tragic mistake of trying to witness for Christ ... without living daily for Him, holding nothing back. The latter causes disappointing heartache, without adding glory to the Kingdom.

4. Give talks on being a faithful member of the

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