

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

JOHN, PREACHER OF REPENTANCE

International Sunday School Lesson for August 20, 1950

Memory Selection: "Bear fruits that befit repentance."—Luke 3:8.

Lesson Text: Luke 3: 7-20

John the Baptist, after a solitary life of preparation, during which time he had ample time to meditate and think and develop his powers of communication with God, suddenly appeared to the Jewish people with startling effect. "Men were conscious that a new power had appeared among them," says Professor A. B. Davidson. "The soft livers in the cities wondered at the unkempt shaggy figure whose trumpet tones shook them."

Thus, about twenty-six, A. D., or, as Luke says, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, John began his public career as a preacher and reformer. His activity lasted but three years. That of Jesus was only three. How much can be accomplished in a short time if great spiritual force is behind the man and the message.

During his hermit life, John became acquainted with the cruelty and wickedness of society and witnessed the misery and affliction of the poor. Going farther in his consideration of these things, he realized that these things were the cause of sin and he was impelled by divine power to deliver a message of condemnation and warning to those who were heedlessly drifting through life.

Jesus, himself, paid high tribute to John the Baptist, saying that none had been born of woman greater than he, yet adding to this declaration that

the last Christian would be greater, meaning in faith, privilege and insight. However, John the Baptist is not to be neglected nor his message disregarded.

Before anyone can come to know the greater blessings of Christian faith he must pursue the nativity followed by John and pass through penitential experiences. John the Baptist traveled the only spiritual road open to him at that time and went until the road ended. Jesus was the engineer who constructed a further highway for you and men to us in our progress towards the Kingdom of God.

John's methods as a preacher were not such as would recommend themselves to the modern church pastor today. He was no purveyor of soft and silken phrases but stern in his frankness and uncompromising in his denunciation. One group, who approached him, he addressed as "vipers," his harsh severity being justified by their hypocrisy and insincerity.

We can't imagine a congregation hearing the Baptist preach and then smilingly walk out in conversation with their fellows: "Wasn't it a beautiful sermon?" Instead, his audiences were stirred to conviction of sin because he had the honesty and courage to frankly expose their souls to themselves. Hearing him, men and women wanted to know what they must do. The line dividing the preacher from the social reformer hardly exists if the preacher believes that religion concerns present day life. Why preach on the generalities of Christian virtues when glaring examples of sin and passion sit in the congregation familiar and known to many?

John, in his evangelism, never hesitated to put his finger on the weak spot and prescribe the medicine necessary to effect a cure. "Divide your coats and food with the poor," he said. Publicans were told to discontinue gouging the public for selfish gain; and soldiers were rebuked for their rowdiness, extortion and blackmailing

of defenseless civilians.

Notwithstanding the vigor of his denunciation of wickedness and the perfect assurance which he had for righteous principles, John realized his own position in regard to the expected Messiah. He had no pride or false conceit when he spoke of the One who would follow him. The Sanhedrin could ask if he was the Messiah, the crowds could throng around him to hear his message, but John made no pretense to be anything except one who made ready the way for the King to come.

While he baptized with water, John said, one would soon come who would baptize with the spirit and with fire. While John brought about conviction in the souls of men and awakened an admission of sin, he could not give the satisfaction and the answer to the cravings of mankind that would only be provided through faith in Jesus Christ.

Carelessness With Fuels Results In Tragedies

More tractor and truck fuel is used during the summer on farms than at any other season the local County Farm Agent with the State College Extension Service points out that the petroleum products can be a servant or destroyer. It all depends on how they are used.

Careless use of motor fuels or other flammable liquids leads to tragedy. The victims die prematurely and horribly. They ignored repeated warnings and waited until it was too late to change their habits.

If you want to avoid disaster here are some important rules recommended by the National Safety Council.

1. An underground tank with a pump similar to the equipment used in service stations provides the safest storage for large supplies of farm tractor fuels, gasoline or kerosene on

farms. 2. The next best method of storing gasoline supplies is in a well constructed steel tank located at least forty feet or more from farm buildings or from combustible material. If a separate enclosure is used it should permit vapors to escape in case of a leak or spill.

3. When necessary to bring gasoline inside, a red labeled container of an approved safety type and not more than one gallon capacity should be used. Kerosene for immediate use may be kept in a small safety type container that is labeled and different in size, shape and color from gasoline containers.

4. Never re-fuel a tractor while the motor is running or extremely hot. Check fuel lines frequently to avoid leaky connections.

5. The use of open containers or careless spilling of flammable liquids invites trouble. A dangerous feature of gasoline storage in elevated tanks

is the hazard of gravity flow, defective hose or the absence of self-closing valves and lock.

6. Never draw or handle flammable liquids in the presence of open flame or other sources of ignition.

ATTEND WASHINGTON MEETING

Mrs. Horace White and Mrs. Harry Crumme, members of Chowanoke Council, No. 54, Degree of Pocahontas, attended a meeting of the Pocahontas held in Washington, N. C., Friday night. The occasion was the official initiation of Mrs. Pauline Hurd, Great Pocahontas of North Carolina.

A very interesting and informative meeting was reported by the Edenton ladies.

Poor Man

She—In India, when a man dies, they bury his widow with him! That is cruel.

He—Yes, poor man!

UNEXPECTED COMPANY NO PROBLEM HERE



This wise housewife is prepared for such emergencies. Her International Harvester seven-cubic-foot freezer, known as Model 70, is stocked with 245 pounds of frozen foods. It has more than 17½ square feet of sub-zero fast freezing surface. A steel wire basket keeps the foods she wants handiest near the top of this new kitchen-size freezer.

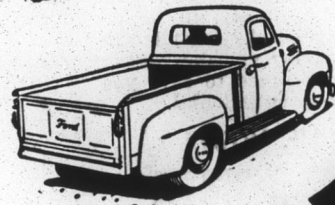
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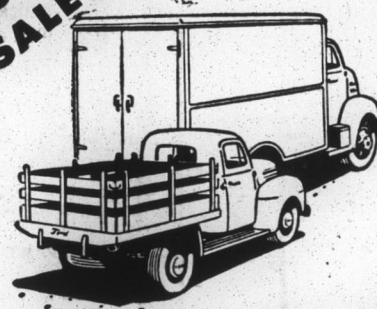
Ford is No. 1 in Sales Gains

Latest available registration figures show Ford Trucks score biggest sales gains than all other makes combined!

R. L. Polk & Company 1950 new truck license registrations report—latest available 5-month period (January through May) versus 1st 5 months, 1949—shows Ford Truck sales increased 73% ... compared to a decrease of 6% for the rest of the truck industry.



FORD TRUCK SALES UP 73%



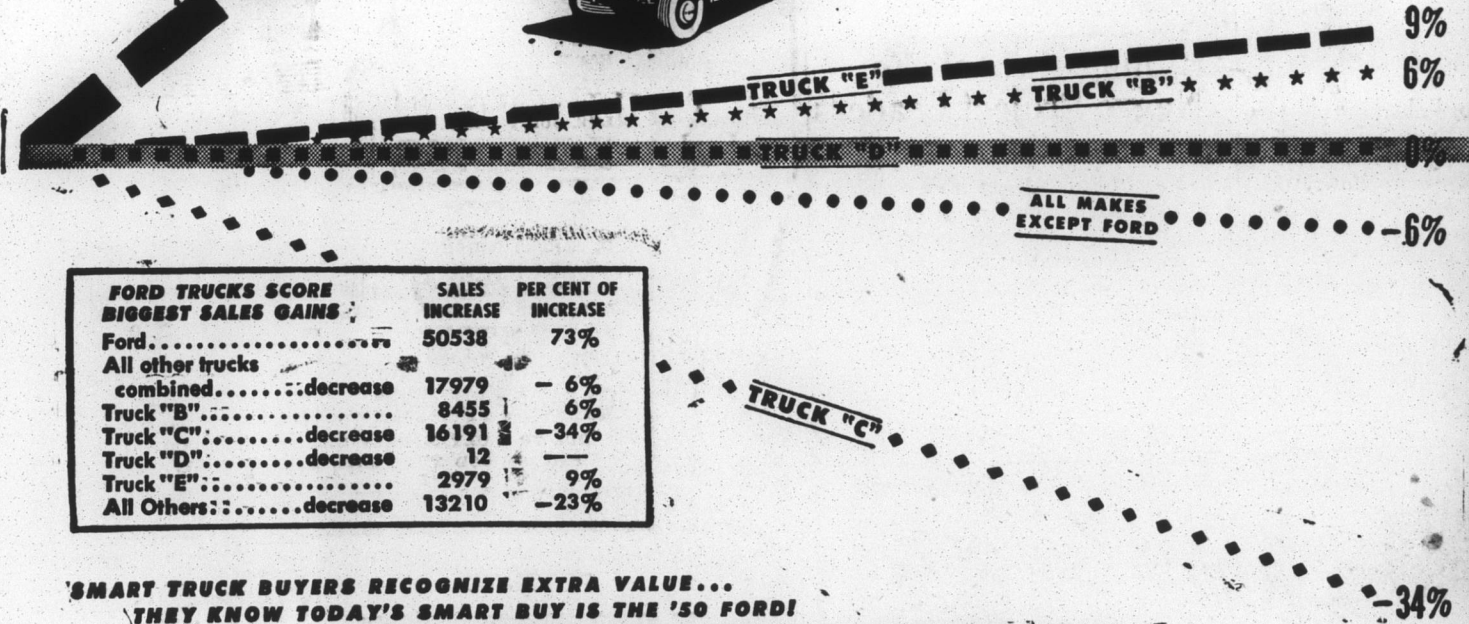
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- ★ BONUS* BUILT Construction—which means big reserves of strength and power!
- ★ Ford longer truck life!

*BONUS: "Something given in addition to what is usual or strictly due"—Webster.



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