

Sunday School

Lesson For Sunday, Oct. 15th

By Dr. Paul Caudill



THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MAN

Bible Material: Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8; Matthew 12:1-21

No more important theme could be presented for our consideration than that of the present lesson: The Christian View of Man. Certainly, within the last few years, we have had ample opportunity to consider the pagan view of man. That has been presented over and over by the totalitarian form of governments that we are now opposing in our colossal struggle for liberation. In the totalitarian state man is but a vassal, a slave of the State. He is subject to every petty whim of the dictators that sit above him upon their thrones of power which they have attempted to make secure by ruthless disregard of human values.

THE ORIGIN OF MAN

Any worthwhile consideration of theme of our lesson must, of necessity, begin with an explanation of man's origin. From whence did he come—this creature that we call man?

The Christian world view of man stems from the Old Testament. In the words of the sacred writer his origin is explained thus: "And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." That is to say, man's origin is divine. Whatever else may be said of him, God is his Creator. His genesis springs from the purposes of God.

The Scriptures clearly teach that God created man as the last and highest stage of his creative activity. He did not come into the world by accident; his presence is due to the deliberate, creative activity of God.

The Scriptures are clear in their claims at this point: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heaven, and over the cattle,

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and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth".

THE NATURE OF MAN

In the above quoted passages from Genesis we have another glorious fact set forth, namely, that man is a moral, spiritual being. Dr. B. H. Carroll has suggested that man, by virtue of his endowment by creation, possesses an immortal soul, is a free moral agency, is blessed with intuitive knowledge and reason, has a conscience, is capable of uprightiness and holiness, and has the capacity for marriage, labor and speech.

In the eighth division of the Psalms, a further insight into the nature of man is given in the study of his exceeding great dignity. The entire Psalm is a psalm of praise setting forth "Jehovah's glory and man's dignity".

"For thou hast made him but little lower than God", said the Psalmist, "And crownest him with glory and honor". The glory and majesty of man outdistances all of the wondrous beauty of the physical universe. Even the dazzling brilliance of the heavens is not to be compared with the mighty mystery and crowning glory of man.

So wonderful is his nature, and so excellent is his character, and his role in the universe, that God made him "to have dominion over all things: All sheep and oxen, Yea, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the heaven, and the fish of the sea, (whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas"

Man not only has a divine "likeness", he also has a responsibility that is of divine character. He has a mission in the world to fulfill. He has a dominion over which he is to preside in accord with the holy will of God.

It is difficult to understand how man, in the light of the creative purposes of God, could depart so far from his mission as he has departed during these last few years. Somehow man has failed miserably to understand his own origin, his own nature. If he had had a better understanding, the tragic conflict in which he is now engaged could hardly have come to pass.

THE WORTH OF MAN

In the passage from Matthew 12, we have set forth the teachings of Jesus with regard to the value of a man.

The scene takes place in a synagogue, and the principle character, in addition to Jesus, is a man with a withered hand. As usual, the critics of Jesus (Scribes and Pharisees) are on hand and diligently seeking some basis whereby "they might abuse him". They ask him, therefore, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?"

In the later Jewish writings, says Dr. Broadus, there is much discussion concerning the propriety of healing on the Sabbath. One finds in the Talmud "A host of directions for different cases, with many absurd distinctions". For instance: "One who has a sore throat must not gargle with oil; but he may swallow oil (for food), and if that cures him, all right". While the law said nothing specifically with regard to the healing

of diseases on the sabbath, there were many Rabbis who took the position that it was "work" (Exodus 31:14).

In order to appeal to the reason of his critics, Jesus uses a homely illustration—that of a sheep: "And he said unto them, what man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath Day, would he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath Day". Upon saying this, Jesus requested the man to stretch forth his withered hand and as he did so, "it was restored whole, like the other".

In the Talmud there are many interesting discussions on the part of the Rabbis concerning the treatment of a beast that has the misfortune to fall into a pit. Some of the Rabbis held that it was all right to give such a beast food; others held that it would be quite all right to put something under it to lie on, even though such assistance should make it possible for the beast to climb out. In other words, there were all sorts of "silly evasions" by which men were taught "to convert morality into a mere system of rules".

In his appeal to common sense, and to reason, Jesus left his foes without ground to stand on. Nevertheless, inasmuch as the actual healing occurred on the Sabbath, they "went out and held a council against him, how they might destroy him".

MAN'S ONLY HOPE

In the closing passage of the Scripture lesson we have a glorious picture of the Savior, man's only hope. In healing the man with the withered hand Jesus had actually fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the Messiah. He had manifested his "quiet and gentle character" even as the prophetic utterance had portrayed him: "Behold, my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor try; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And his name shall the Gentiles trust".

No gentler picture of the redemptive mission of Christ could be painted than that of the ancient prophet. Ever ready to minister unto the needs of God's children, careful to attend to their physical need wherever opportunity presented itself, he drew men unto himself, and thereby unto the Father. To know him was to know the Father. To see him was to see the Father: "I and my Father are one", he said.

The clamant need of the world today is for sinful man to stretch forth the withered hands of his moral and spiritual self unto the Father.

CARD OF THANKS

We wish to express our thanks to our friends and neighbors for their kindness and sympathy during the death of our beloved husband and father and brother, and we also want to thank them for the beautiful flowers.

MRS. MARY L. BAUGUSS AND CHILDREN

NOTICE OF SALE

North Carolina, Wilkes County.

Under and by virtue of an order of the superior court of Wilkes county, made in the special proceeding entitled Robert Baily, et al, vs. Raymond Baily, the same being No. — upon the special proceeding docket of said court, the undersigned commissioner will, on the 6th day of November, 1944, at 12 o'clock, noon, at the courthouse door in Wilkesboro, North Carolina, offer for sale to the highest bidder for cash that certain tract of land lying and being in Wilkesboro Township, Wilkes county, North Carolina, adjoining the lands of — and others, and more particularly described as follows, to wit:

Beginning on a small gum, the northeast corner of John S. Cranor's 60 acre tract, running South 103 poles to G. W. Hayes line, East with said line 90 poles to the main Salisbury road leading from Wilkesboro, N. C., Northwest with said road 53 poles to a small gum, South 27 degrees East 48 poles to the beginning, 50 acres be the same more or less.

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Summit News Of Past Week

Mr. and Mrs. Winslow Fletcher, Miss Eva Bungarner, and Miss Valeria Fletcher, all of Purlear, were visitors in the home of Mrs. Fannie Church, Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Coy Church spent Saturday night with Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Nichols, at Purlear.

Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Blackburn and children, of Purlear, spent Sunday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Greene.

Mr. and Mrs. Royce Mikesal, of Kannapolis, spent the week-end with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. U. C. Mikesal.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Church spent Saturday with Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Greene.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Welborn and son, James, and Helen Faye, spent Sunday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. T. F. Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Coyet Dyer, of Cricket, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Sebastian Phillips.

Mrs. Nina Church and children have spent the past two weeks with her sister, Mrs. Rose Greene.

Miss Juanita Keys spent Sunday afternoon with Miss Helen Church.

Messrs. Coy and Presley Church

spent awhile Sunday with their uncle, Mr. C. C. Mikesal.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Russell Ferguson a son, on Friday.

Mrs. Martha Mikesal spent Sunday with her daughter, Mrs. Fannie Church.

Mr. Alonzo Watson was very ill Friday night, but now is getting better.

Mr. James Mikesal spent Sunday evening with Mr. Johnson Church.

Production of the four principal feed grains during 1944, on the basis of Sept. 1 conditions, is expected to total 117 million tons, says a recent report by S.A.S.

Forest fires have been known to overtake rumping deer and men on horseback.

State acreage goals for rye harvest in 1945 totaling 2,515,000 acres for the country as a whole, are announced by War Food Administrator Marvin Jones.

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