

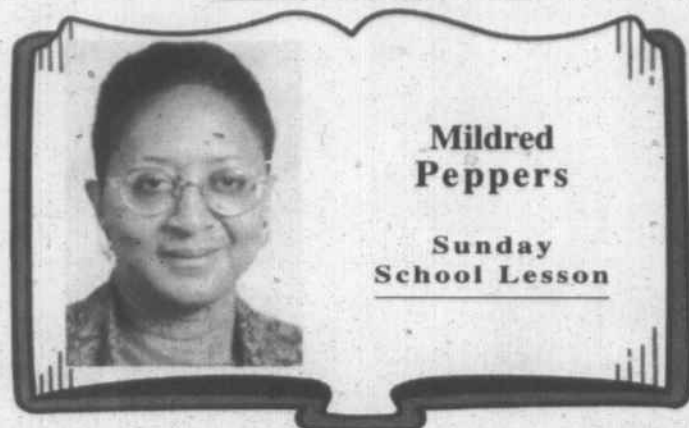
Seek ways to overcome evil with goodness

Lesson Scripture: Luke 6:27-36

Lesson Aims: to demonstrate agape love by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to understand that true love builds relationships, and to seek ways to overcome evil with goodness.

Background: Last week's lesson ended with Jesus returning to Nazareth with His earthly parents growing in wisdom, stature and favor with God and men. The teachers in the Temple were amazed at the Twelve-year old's level of understanding. Now some 18 years later, He practiced the true meaning of the Law. Chapter three opened with the ministry of John the Baptist and ended with the baptism of Jesus (age 30) and the genealogy of Mary. Luke speeded things

up in chapters four and five. After the baptism, the Spirit led Him into the desert where He fasted for 40 days. His encounter with the devil followed and His public ministry began. Last week Jesus told His parents that He was about His Father's business. What exactly did that mean? Read Luke 4:16-21 which quoted Isaiah 61:1,2. Miracles were performed and disciples selected as He debated with the Pharisees. His level of understanding the Law far exceeded the religious hierarchy. Simply put, He bucked the system to reveal God's purpose for the Law. Chapter 6 opened with Him going through the grain field on the Sabbath eating kernels of grain. Jesus also healed a man in the synagogue on the Sabbath. His teachings were designed to present a way of



Mildred Peppers

Sunday School Lesson

life for the believer. As we delve into this lesson today keep in mind that Luke's audience is Gentile while Matthew's was Jewish.

Lesson: Scholars refer to today's text as the "Sermon on the Plain." The emphasis is on ethical living based on God's love. What does that

love look like? First of all He attacks the narrow minded exclusivity of the Pharisees. They keep the letter of the Law but their hearts are cold. The Pharisees approve hatred toward one's enemies. He shatters what they stand for by boldly proclaiming to His followers "to love and do good to those who hate you."

A believer is to look for the good in everyone. Don't forget that "there is some good in the worst of us and some bad in the best of us" (the late Dr. Samuel Austin). Obviously He isn't speaking about romantic love. Instead the reference is for agape love. This love is undeserved, non-judgmental always seeking the best for others. To make sure that they understand, He gives three illustrations in verses 28-29. In each case the believer reaches out in love not revenge. The world would indicate this as a weakness but God's standards do not! So what if you love those who love you - that's easy. Stretch and extend love to your friends and enemies alike. Do right by people without expecting repayment. Agape love is sacrificial and goes much deeper than sur-

face actions. Verse 35 sums up the lesson - the Golden Rule.

Application: Accepting God's Call also inspires us to love as He loved. Believers must recognize that this is contrary to the world and can only be achieved by relying on the Holy Spirit. Too often we become like the Pharisees and shoot ourselves in the foot as we evangelize. God's love is kind, forgiving and merciful! It doesn't set traps for people or seek revenge. If humanity had not been sick, would Jesus have had to come? As believers it is important to give an accurate portrayal of God's love. How can we accept His love and perpetuate any kind of standards that exclude, overlook, or put down fellow members of the human race?

Money and marriage to be discussed at upcoming meeting

'Money Habitudes' program has helped many couples

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment will meet at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 15 at Maple Springs Church, 2569 Reynolda Rd., in Winston-Salem.

Syble Solomon, the founder of LifeWise Consulting, will present "Money Habitudes" at the open program meeting.

"Money has traditionally been a very private topic," states Solomon. "Although most of us didn't hear our parents talk about money, we got clear messages from everything we observed as we were growing up. Understanding our own attitude about money



Syble Solomon

makes it easier for couples to understand how our differing habits affect relationships and to make more intentional financial decisions.

Solomon, who has taught in the School of Human Environmental Sciences at UNCG, created a practical "Money Habitudes" deck of cards to help couples start talking about money in a productive way. Money is identified as a major cause of couples'

conflict, but frank talking about money seems more personal and difficult for most people than is talking about sex and intimate relationships.

The Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment is an international, non-profit, non-sectarian organization whose purpose is educating couples for lifelong relationships. Couple partici-

pation is a focus of all ACME meetings but individuals are welcome to attend without partners. There is no registration and no cost for the "Money Habitudes" presentation.

For more information, visit www.moneyhabitudes.com or www.bettermarriages.org or call 336-724-1526.

Calendar

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disability or gender? Those topics and more will be covered by experts in their field on Saturday, Jan. 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Winston Salem First Assembly of God located at 3730 University Parkway. For more information call Norma at 759-8014. There is no cost for the seminar, but registration is required.

Jan. 20

Celebration service
The public is invited to attend Celebration 2007 on Jan. 20 at 4:30 p.m. in the Dennis W. Bishop Full Life Center.

This is a special celebration service held annually to honor their new members for the year, new converts, and graduates of the new members/new convert classes. The word of God will be delivered by Dennis W. Bishop, Sr., pastor. The center is at 838 Moravia St.

A Celebration of Life
Revelations of Faith Church will hold a Celebration of Life for the late Evangelist Maria Rowdy Earl on Sunday, Jan. 20 at the church at 4 p.m.

Maria Rowdy Earl was a 1979 graduate of North Forsyth High School and was employed for over 20 years at Wachovia Bank. She was a giver who gave a lot of herself to help others. She ministered to so many people in so many ways, she will not be forgotten. Her last sermon will be played at the celebration.

Those who want to participate in the service should contact her mother, Pastor Sarah Hauser at 336-777-8092 or 782-2794. The church is located at 3710 Maverick St.

Pryor

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Moravians have a strong tradition of ecumenical work and are best known for their missionary work and rich musical heritage. The Moravian Church in North America is comprised of the Northern and Southern Provinces. The Northern Province has around 28,000 members in 13 states in the U.S. and two Canadian provinces. The Southern Province includes nearly 20,000 members in 58 congregations, which are located primarily throughout the Southeast. The worldwide Moravian Church consists of 19 provinces with nearly 789,000 members, half of which live in Africa.

Breakfast at church
On Sunday, Jan. 20, at 8:30 a.m. Holy Trinity Full Gospel Baptist Church, 651 Akron Dr. is inviting the public to join them for breakfast and for their morning worship. The Sunday morning breakfast takes place every first and third Sunday of the Month. Call 744-9293 for more information.

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