

Sunday School Lesson



By Bessie Wilbon

INTRODUCTION

Isn't it true that we love one another better when we understand each other? We really do not know others well enough to condemn them. That is what Jesus teaches us in our lesson for today.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus moved from the subject of talking about worrying about our daily lives to talking about condemning others. (Matt. 6:19-34). There is no connection. Worrying is due to lack of understanding, and condemning others is also due to lack of understanding. While worrying indicates that we are not content to allow God to be Lord over nature, condemning others indicates that we are not content to allow God to be Lord over our fellowmen. We want to have something to say about their punishment when they do not live up to our expectations. Christians should both quit worrying about provisions and quit condemning others.

THE LESSON

"Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you, for *God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and He will apply to you the same rules you apply to others. Why then, do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the log in your own eye? How dare you say to your brother, 'Please let me take that speck out of your eye,' when you have a log in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will be able to see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. Do not give what is holy to dogs--they will only turn and attack you. Do not throw your pearls in front of pigs--they will only trample them under foot. Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; Knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks will receive, and anyone who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks. Would any of you who are fathers give your son a stone when he asks for bread? Or would you give him a snake when he asks for a fish? As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more then, will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him! Do for others what you want them to do for you: this is the meaning of the Law of Moses and of the teachings of the prophets." (Matt. 7:1-12)

Some people think that "Judge not, that ye be not judged," means that we should make no evaluations of others and thus not seek to correct others. That is not what Jesus meant at all. Evaluations are essential if we are going to obey some of the instructions Jesus gave us. How are we going to know who the "false prophets" are if we cannot make evaluations?

Jesus is speaking against our having a spirit that finds fault with others in a rash, censorious, and cruel manner. We will be judged by the same manner and measure that we use to judge others. 1) If we are quick to find fault in others, they will be quick to find fault in us. Do we want to be prejudged without the facts being known? 2) God will measure judgement to us in accordance with how we measure judgement to others. Jesus makes it clear that if we do not forgive others God will not forgive us. If we show mercy to others, God will show mercy to us.

There are many reasons why condemning others is inappropriate for Christians. Here are four of them: a) We are not God. b) We are not the masters of others. c) We do not have all the facts. d) Any condemning we do is done too early. Condemnation awaits the coming of the Lord. (1 Cor.4:5) We have the responsibility to admonish one another, to build up one another, to pray for one another, but not to condemn one another.

Our condemning of others is always done with blurred vision. None of us is able to condemn others with totally clear vision. Our prejudices get in the way. Our perspectives and our feelings get in the way. Many times we have bigger problems in our own lives than what is in the lives of others that causes us to want to condemn those persons.

Jesus did not say we should do to others what we think they will do to us, nor did he say we should do to others what we know they will do or have the ability to do to us, nor what they've done to us already. He did say that we are to do to others what we want them to do to us. We should treat people the way we want to be treated. This is the summation of Christian ethics.

We must treat our fellowman not simply as the law allows, but as Christ's love in us demands. We must treat them as if we were treating ourselves. We must treat them as if by doing so we were treating Jesus. And this must be done not only in the church assembly, but at home, at work, at school, on vacation, on the freeways, in the check-out lines, on the telephone, at the airline or bus terminal--wherever.

Prior to our treatment of others we need to evaluate such things as would we want someone to say or not say the same things about us? Would we want someone to do or not do the same for us? Would we want someone to reach toward us the same as we? Would we want someone's body language to give off the same signals as our own? If not, don't do it. Anything we do with another, we are doing with a fellow human being who has feelings the same as we, who can be built up or torn down just as we can.

Whatever you would like others to do for you, do it to them, whether those other people ever think about doing it to you or not.

Father, help us to recognize our own faults before we ever look for faults in others. AMEN.

The Lost Church, Part I

By J. M. Little

The state of our churches today is one of a great tragedy. Why? Christ is not known nor worshipped there. Once I was in a church to attend a funeral. I eased in the back and took a seat on the very back pew. Just a few minutes after I was seated one of the ushers came over and asked: "Aren't you a preacher?" I said yes, but I would like to remain back here. She said she wanted me up front but I pleaded with her to let me remain back, which she did. I don't mind taking a back seat when I visit in a church. In fact I like to slip in and out without being noticed. One day I was a lost sinner and I had to take my place before God as an outcast, not knowing whether the Lord would save me or not. But I pleaded with the Lord that He died for sinners and if only one would be saved I wanted to be that one. But before the Lord saved me, He stripped J.M. Little of ALL his hellish pride. When I was in the religious world I was one of the proudest sinners that ever lived. But when the Holy Spirit was dealing with my heart He showed me that my pride would send me to Hell. Then I began to plead with the Lord to strip me of everything. And before the Lord saved me, I quit asking the Lord to save me, that may seem strange to you. Does it? But I did. I quit asking the Lord to save me. I know the question on your mind is: "What did you do then?" I began to cry unto the Lord; "Lord, make me lost. You said in your Word you came to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10). I knew the Word of God was true and God cannot lie. Since the Lord came to seek and save that which was lost, the concept of my heart was; if I can just get lost the Lord will save me because He said so. And bless your heart, when the Lord

got me lost, He saved me. Praise the Lord! I've been telling for 15 years now how the Lord saved this religious sinner who was lost in religion. I've been called crazy, beside myself, and every degrading name you can think of. But I praise the Lord from on High for His redeeming J.M. Little. Are you praising the Lord with me? I don't care what you think or say about me, Christ is my salvation. Is He your salvation? If you are ever to be saved you must meet the Lord in this life.

As I sat in that church I wept over their lost condition. There was no personal testimony of Christ. I noticed that the speaker was a stranger to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Repentance was the missing note also in his sermonette. What a tragedy! Is it possible for an entire church to be lost? Not only is it possible for an entire church to be lost, that is the sad state of practically 100% of our churches today. My late pastor, L.R. Shelton, used to preach that 95% of our church members, including preachers are lost. I've been saying lately that practically 100% of our church members, including preachers, are lost. Call me crazy if you wish, I know what I'm talking about and you will too just as soon as you draw your last breath. When a soul of the world dies, it's just one more face in Hell, when a soul in the religious world dies, it's just a leap into the dark. The spirit of the Antichrist has taken over in the churches today, and the present day ministry is preparing the way for the rise of the Antichrist. That's true whether you believe it or not. I wish you could just get your eyes open to see how Satan has taken over our churches. We are living in the darkest days ever, spiritually. In a lost church, the members are talking about worldly matters when

they gather, not about how Christ is a living reality to their hearts. In a lost church, there are no awakened sinners crying out: "I'm lost! What must I do to be saved?" When was the last time in your church a sinner came forth crying out over their lost condition? Your pastor will try to quiet him down by saying: "You made a profession of faith as a little child, you are already saved." No, preacher! That sinner is not saved. You are a murderer trying to convince him he is already saved. I realize preachers hate my messages. It's because they expose your lost heart which will not

acknowledge. Any preacher who does not understand an awakened sinner is lost, and you are pastoring a lost church. A church that will not have Holy Spirit Conviction (John 16:7-11) is a lost church. Do you have a lost church? How many are under Holy Spirit Conviction in your church? Have you ever been under Holy Spirit Conviction? If not, then you are not saved and you should immediately resign your office.

Please continue to listen to our late pastor, L.R. Shelton, with the VOICE OF TRUTH BROADCAST each Sunday morning at 7:30 over WAGI FM and at 8:00 over WAGL AM. It will bless your heart. A LOST CHURCH.

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