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INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By O. E. MILLERS, Director of Even-
ing Department The Moody Bible Insti-
tute of Chicago.

LESSON FOR JUNE 14

THE FRIEND OF SINNERS.

LESSON TEXT—Luke 18:11, 13-14.
GOLDEN TEXT—"I came not to call
the righteous but sinners." Mark 2:17.

The first section of our lesson is the beginning of a new paragraph (see R. V.) and contains one of the Master's best-known parables. Immediately preceding this is the parable of the unjust judge and the importunate widow. We are plainly told (v. 9) why the Master spoke this parable. It is easy to say that those who trusted in their own righteousness and "set all others at naught" (R. V.) were the Pharisees, but such is not the case; and this parable is a warning to us, lest we also trust our own righteousness (Isa. 64:6). Using this particular class as a background, Jesus paints, in words of simple grandeur, a picture quite familiar throughout the ages. In it he reveals the falseness of human standards and declares the judgment of heaven. The contrast is vivid. Let us look at (1) the Pharisee. The illuminating phrase is in the words "he prayed with himself" (v. 11). Ostentatiously the Pharisee separated himself from their fellow men and this separation seems to have extended even into his prayer life, and he is withdrawn from God also. This is an appalling picture of the man who trusts only himself. Examine his prayer and we see the supposed prayer is really a psalm of self-exaltation.

Humility of Heart.
(2) The Pharisee regarded himself as "the sinner" (v. 13 R. V. marg.). He knew he was a great, an irreligious offender against law and grace. He had sacrificed everything to acquire money. He comes with no outward show except an abundant evidence of the shame and humility of his heart. He also was excluded from men but not from God. Burdened with the sense of his sin, he casts himself upon the mercy of God. He is absolutely devoid of any trust in himself, any contempt for others, and makes a straight, earnest, passionate abandonment of himself and his need to God. He goes away "justified" (Judged right). Why? Because he had taken the right place, a sinner's place before God, and found pardon.

The Second Section is a story and deals with an individual case, Zaccheus, who was a "chief Publican." Jesus sought him (see Golden Text), whereas Zaccheus was animated by curiosity, and the writer informs us he was small of stature, hence the necessity of climbing the sycamore tree. He went up the tree because of curiosity, he came down because of conviction. He wanted to see this man in the center of the crowd and was amazed to hear Jesus call him by name.

Must Yield Wealth.
Zaccheus was rich, dishonest, dissatisfied, but desperately in earnest, and a man of prompt decision. The estimation of his fellow-citizens is indicated by v. 7. Notwithstanding all of this Zaccheus was not so wedded to his money as to let it keep him out of the kingdom. In chapter 13 we read of the rich man who "lacked one thing." He was lost—"went away"—because he would not yield his wealth (see also 18:26, 27). What took place within the house of Zaccheus we are not told, but for the Master to enter was looked upon either as amazing ignorance of Zaccheus' character or else extreme carelessness concerning the maintenance of his own character. Jesus was dealing with one man, not the multitude, hence he leaves them to their amazement. While this is true, yet we can surmise something of that interview by the result (v. 8) for Zaccheus seems to have made a public avowal of his ethical and moral change of heart. Note the steps: (1) He "sought to see Jesus," John 3:14, 15; Isa. 45:22. (2) He was very much in earnest, "climbed a sycamore tree," Luke 13:24. (3) He made no delay, "make haste" Isa. 55:6. The result was that of great blessing to the people and joy in the heart of Zaccheus. (4) He was obedient, joyously and promptly. The genuineness of his transformation was evidenced by the way it affected his pocketbook. He made abundant restitution and gave bountifully to the poor. The love of God shed abroad in the heart of a miserly, selfish man or church will promote honesty both to God and man.

From the combined parable and story we can read the lesson that Jesus is the friend of sinners and not of sin.

Thus the friend of sinners seeks and saves men. He sees the acts and the attitude of men and is ready to justify those whose attitude is that of humility and supplication. He seeks men even as he sought Zaccheus, and as he saves he produces in them those fruits of righteousness which are the evidence and demonstration of their salvation. The scribes and the Pharisees saw Jesus eating with the publicans and expressed this disapproving surprise only to receive his rebuke. "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous."

STANDING ON THE VERGE

Many Women Fall Into the Abyss of Disease

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A Hail Storm of 30 Years Ago.

Many people will say that the hail storm of Saturday was the worst ever, but not so. Many Statesville people recall a hail storm on March 25th, 1884—30 years ago last March. The landmark of March 28, 1884 has this to say of that storm:

"A little after 5 o'clock last Tuesday afternoon a black, angry-looking cloud was seen approaching Statesville from the West. To the south of it was a peculiar-looking, copper-colored cloud. It was not long before a terrific rainfall began here, accompanied by vivid lightning. The air was still and there was no sound of thunder. The rain poured in one straight torrent for perhaps 15 minutes, when hail began to fall, first in very small stones, these increasing in size as the fall continued. The hail storm lasted probably not longer than 15 minutes, and with the fall of each stone people wondered what was to follow, as each was larger than the last. When it ceased the streets looked as if there had been a snowfall. The stones were of divers shapes, most of them, however, flat and doubly concave, resembling large tomatoes. Some were lemon-shaped and fully as large as turkey eggs. The largest of which there is any reliable account measured seven inches around. Some weighed a fraction over four ounces. More hail has fallen here, probably, but never any such stones. Many of the lights were broken out of the tobacco warehouses and the sky-lights of other buildings were broken."

"This hail storm of 1884 was a part of a cyclone that did great damage at Newton. The windstorm passed around Statesville, going down Third creek. It knocked a story off the White mill, damaged other buildings in that vicinity and destroyed great quantities of timber. The landmark of the date named had an account of the storm more than two columns long, written by the late J. P. Caldwell.—Statesville Landmark.

THE RIGHT SPIRIT.

Our good friend E. R. Preston of Charlotte takes his defeat in spirit of a true and gentlemanly Democrat which he is. Before Mecklenburg's convention last Saturday, Mr. Preston arose and made the motion which was seconded by Col. T. L. Kirkpatrick, that his county's full strength be voted for Mr. Webb at the district convention at Hickory June 10th. Chairman Williams overruled the motion, however, because the rules say that the primary strength of each candidate must be brought into the convention. This is a wise rule because the votes which a candidate gets do not belong to him, but to the people who cast them. However, in the Hickory convention, the nomination of Mr. Webb will no doubt be made unanimous. Mr. Preston submits gracefully to the will of the people and acknowledged that the promotion of Mr. Webb to the chairmanship of the judiciary committee convinced him that the people could ill afford to keep Cleveland's brilliant son at home.

The editor appreciates this kind note from Mr. Preston: "This is merely to write and thank you for the fair and kindly way in which you treated me throughout the contest. After the judiciary chairmanship arose and the various candidates for the United States Senate and for Congress dropped out, and it appeared that this would not be a contest here, I realized the situation and what I was up against, but my friends wanted me to go ahead and I did so.

"You know what kind feelings I have for your father and all your people, and I therefore particularly appreciate your fairness towards me."
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