

Sunday School Lesson

THE WORTH OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

International Sunday School Lesson for March 14th, 1948

GOLDEN TEXT: "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."—Philippians 3: 14.

Lesson Text: Ephesians 5: 8-21

Ephesians was written by Paul while he was a prisoner in Rome, addressed to the Christians of the church in Asia Minor.

Paul directs attention to the Gentiles walking "in the vanity of their mind," advising his converts to a higher life. "It is not surprising that Christians in the first century, just emerging from paganism and surrounded by degrading customs, should need such warnings and admonitions," says Charles R. Erdman, but he adds, "it is humiliating to admit that believers of the present day, with all their advantages of inheritance and culture, need similar exhortations."

Paul wants the new converts

to be "new" men in "righteousness and holiness of truth." What effect was their religion if they were no different than in their days of paganism? What advantage is our faith to the modern professing Christian who lives and acts with no difference in his life from that of an unbeliever? Hypocritical religion will not avail one in the last judgment. "Righteousness in man," says Dr. Andrew Murray, "includes all God's will for our duty to Him or our fellow men; holiness, our relation to himself."

In his practical suggestions Paul directed attention to many little things of conduct, nor was he wrong in doing so. "It is usually little things that cause us to stumble," comments J. H. Jowett, "I do not fall over a beer-barrel, but I slip on a piece of orange peel. I have never stumbled over a bale of cotton, but if one flag in the pavement projects a third of an inch I may be brought to grief. I can avoid the higher things; I am careless about the trifles." How true is the thought. Many lives are wrecked and ruined, physically and morally, by negligence towards little things—which eventually grow!

One of the so-called "little things" against which all should be warned is taking the first drink. So often the first taste awakens a desire for more and then more, until the victim finally realizes that he, or she, is in the clutches of an awful habit, which, if not broken, will ruin him, physically, morally and economically.

In this country, it is estimated that there are 40,000,000 adults who use alcohol and that a large percentage of the 40,000,000 are either alcoholics or are destined to become alcoholics. Money is being spent for alcohol which might better go into constructive effort. Time is lost by workers and families are denied the necessary things of life. Drink causes much home friction and is a leading factor in broken homes. The addiction of a person to alcohol finally breaks down his, or her, character and can lead to total personal collapse.

There is nothing more helpful in reinforcing the foundations of one's Christian character than to live with a consciousness of the presence of God. Someone has suggested that he would live rightly should "practice the presence of God." That is, one should realize always that "Thou, Lord, seest me." If this is always kept in mind, we will be careful of all of our deeds, realizing that none of them is hid from the scrutiny of God. Thus, many of the things that we might consider important enough to cause us to compromise our characters assume a different stature in the light of the Lord's presence.

Finally, Paul advises the new believers to "give thanks" to God through the medium of Jesus

Democrats To Gather May 20th

Raleigh — Governor Cherry told the state Democratic executive committee that "if measures are adopted in congress that our people do not like, there will be abundant time to frame our issues and make our plans before the November election."

The governor followed this obvious reference to President Truman's civil rights program with the admonition:

"A high degree of patriotism and a reservoir of common sense are needed during the current days. . . I am one of those who confidently believe that . . . the Democratic party through the years has proven to be the best vehicle of good government that has served our state and the nation."

The governor was the only one at the committee session to make a reference to the civil rights program. One committee member, however, asked that the governor's statement be included in a resolution praising Cherry's administration. He was quickly out of order by Chairman Wilkins P. Horton of Pittsboro.

The committee then quickly got down to the work for which it was called into session, setting a date for the party's convention. As expected, it decided to hold the state convention in Memorial auditorium here on May 20. Precinct meetings were set for May 8 and county conventions for May 15.

PUP CAUSED IT ALL

Kane, Pa.—Swerving his truck to avoid a puppy which was playfully running alongside, Donald Bathurst, of Clerenton, Pa., caused the truck to skid and it collided with the car of Vernon Ludlow, of Bloomsburg, Pa. The truck then left the road and crased into the home of Kenneth Kemp, knocking out the front steps and a porch support. The puppy disappeared.

Christ. "A cheerful face, a contented mind, a grateful heart, belong to those who give their confidence, and love, and loyal service to the Lord Jesus Christ," rightly says Dean George Hodges. A true Christian is not a grouch; he works for a better day in faithful assurance of its coming, but he accepts the conditions which confront him without complaint or distrust.

Baptist Youth Week Being Planned Here

The young people of the First Baptist Church are making their plans for another Youth Week program. This year the program will be launched at a banquet March 20. A committee composed of Sonny Williams, Joyce Gragg, Annie Mae Carroll, Charles Blackburn and Mildred Tunnell presented to the church last Wednesday evening the following to serve as officers of Youth Week:

For Deacons: J. V. Caudill, Jr., Perry Greene, Hoyt Edmisten, Cecil Greene, Von Hagaman, Finley Norris, Gene Reece, Phil Vance, Roger Wilson, William Wilson, Charles Younce, Charlie Blackburn, Cecil Farthing, Ted Hagaman.

Sunday School department heads: Adult, Carrie Lee Farthing; Young Peoples Dept., W. B. York; Intermediate Dept., Joyce Gragg; Junior Dept., Jimmy Cook. The six adult classes will be taught by Sonny Williams, Charlie Blackburn, Rozella Hampton, Annie Mae Carroll, Mary Sue Greene and Fred Miller.

The youth officers will perform March 21. A great deal of the work will be done by the following committees: Feature committee, Joyce Gragg chairman; music committee, Sonny Williams chairman; publicity committee, Jimmy Cook chairman. Services to which the public is invited will be held in the auditorium of the church March 22, 23, 24, 25th.

Only 28,500,000 turkeys are expected to be raised this year compared with about 34,700,000 in 1947.

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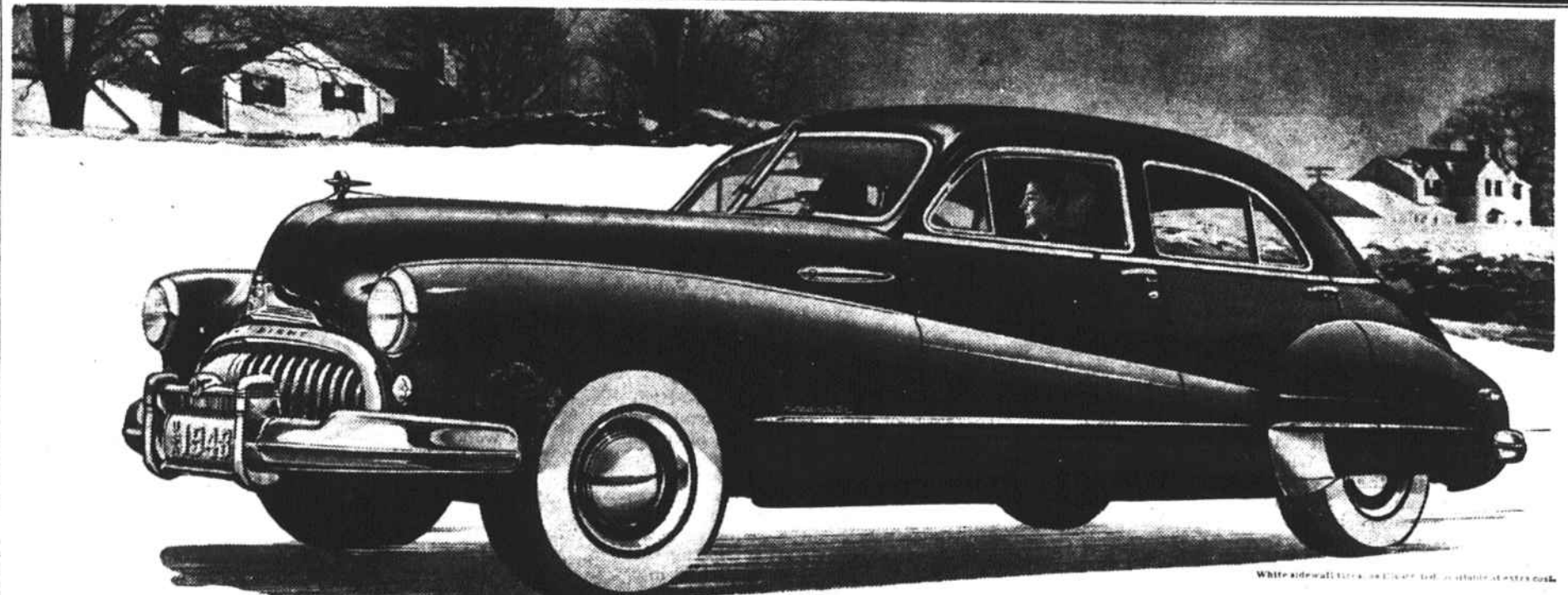
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