

Professional Card

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D. R. F. YARBOROUGH
PHYSICIAN and SURGEON
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Office in Yarbrough & Bickett building. Night calls answered from T. W. Bickett's residence, phone 74.

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Will practice in all courts of Franklin and adjoining counties, also in the Supreme Court and in the United States District and Circuit Court. Office over First National Bank.

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Yours to please,
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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson II.—Fourth Quarter, For Oct. 10, 1909.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Acts xxiii, 11-24. Memory Verse, 11—Golden Text, Pa. xci, 2—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

The two great events of this chapter are Paul testifying before the Jewish council and his being sent to Felix, the governor of Caesarea. The chief captain, having rescued him from the Jerusalem mob and having given him permission to speak to them from the stairs before being taken into the castle, was greatly perplexed when, after a time of great silence and patient listening, the multitude suddenly became full of frenzy because of something he said. As Paul had spoken in Hebrew the chief captain knew not what he had talked about nor what stirred them so. He was about to exert from the prisoner by scourging the reason of their outcry when Paul told him he was a Roman citizen.

Paul's first utterance drew forth a rebuke from the high priest and a command to smite him on the mouth. Jesus was probably smitten thus (John xviii, 2), but he answered meekly, Paul not so meekly at first. Perceiving that some of those present were Pharisees and some Sadducees, Paul acknowledged himself a Pharisee and said, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question," for the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, but the Pharisees confess both (verses 6, 8). This led to a strife between the two parties, the Pharisees taking Paul's part and crying: "We find no evil in this man. Let us not fight against God." The strife between the two parties was so great that again the chief captain was compelled to rescue Paul from them by force and bring him into the castle.

Can you wonder that the church as seen by the world today does not draw men to God, through Jesus Christ? All sorts of religion, Trinitarian and Unitarian, Calvinist and Armenian, post-millennial and pre-millennial, are in the eyes of the world just so many opinions of men, one as good as another and none good for much, for where is He seen who has all power in heaven and on earth, the Righteous One, the Prince of Peace—will such religion ever win the world to Christ? The Scriptures do not so teach us, but God has a plan which He has revealed to us in His word, and every purpose of His shall be performed (Isa. xiv, 24). Verse 11 is certainly a light above the brightness of the sun in the midst of the surrounding darkness, not simply the darkness of the natural night, but the spiritual darkness of the times. "The Lord stood by him," and he never could forget it. Hear him as after many years, when he felt that the time of his departure had really come, he says, "The Lord stood with me and strengthened me" (II Tim. ix, 17); "Be of good cheer, Paul!" Imagine, if you can, the events of the past day or two and put yourself in Paul's place and say what such a visit from the Lord Jesus and such words might mean to you. Was Paul beginning to see that perhaps his coming to Jerusalem was a mistake, to say the least, and that he had brought all this on himself by not heeding the voice of the Spirit and the counsel of his brethren, and was he cast down and discouraged? Well, here is his blessed Lord, who loves to the uttermost and to the end, the one who said to Simon Peter: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice. Let not your heart be troubled." Oh, He is so full of compassion! He knows us thoroughly and loves us notwithstanding all the sin and weakness He sees in us. Whatever may have been your failure, dear reader, if you are truly His and do really desire to please Him, He is saying to you, "Be of good cheer!" Consider the other five places where Jesus, and He only, used this particular word, one word in the Greek (Matt. ix, 2, 22; xiv, 27; Mark x, 49; John xvi, 33), and whether you are utterly helpless physically, or your life seems surely going from you, or you think you will perish, or you can't see anything, or your trials seem too great. He is saying, "Be of good cheer."

The mob might howl and the religious ones contend, but the Lord in heaven had heard Paul testify to Him. If by word and deed we are testifying of Him, then it is truly the work of the Spirit in us (John xv, 26). Paul is assured that he must bear witness at Rome also, as he had desired. "The Lord will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him" (Ps. cxlv, 19). "Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. xxxvii, 4)—this verse is lesson enough for a lifetime. But let us look further. During the night Paul received these assurances from the Lord Himself: In the morning his sister's son brings him word that more than forty men have sworn that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him, God and the devil. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. I wonder how long they fasted ere they discovered the vanity of their oath and purpose. Paul did not disregard their purpose, but through the boy made it known to the authorities and then rested in the Lord to work out His purpose, part of which was evidently to send him to Caesarea.

Don't Worry

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