

Sunday School Lesson



Rev. Wallace

Greetings fellow bible student! Our lesson for this week is, "Wholeness in Relationships". Our scriptures for the lesson are: Matthew 5:10-12; James 3:6-14; Exodus 20:16. If Christ has come into the world that we might experience the whole, abundant life, how do we realize this wholeness in relation to our dealings with others and their dealings with us?

Matthew records our Lord as saying that we are to be congratulated when we are persecuted for righteousness sake. Of course we must keep in mind that the Lord is addressing his own followers. He is setting before them the ideal life of the citizens of his kingdom and the righteousness that it demands that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus says to them that many suffer for nothing in the world and many are persecuted as a result of their own wrong doings. But, Jesus warns them that they will suffer if they choose to live for him. Still, their suffering will be for their own upbuilding and perfection, while serving as a preservation of the world.

The early Christians had to suffer! Every area of their lives was disrupted. For many of them, their Christianity conflicted with their occupations, they characteristically chose faithfulness to Christ over their manner of earning a living. Their Christianity conflicted with their social life. During that time and in that part of the world, most feasts were held either in the temple of some false god or in honor of some false god. The early Christians felt as though they could not be loyal to Christ and participate in such activities. Their Christianity often conflicted with their family life. Many of the early Christians had to choose between families and the Lord. But, Christ had warned them that he had not come to bring peace but a sword.

Now, the early Christians suffered persecution and torture beyond our ability to describe because of these choices. As a result of their choices, they were lied on and slandered. It was said that they were cannibals; for in their communion services they drank blood and ate flesh. It was said that they were participating in sex orgies; for they held weekly services called Love Feasts. It was said that they were political revolutionaries; for they spoke of a king other than Caesar, a new kingdom and the end of the world. It was said that they deliberately set out to break up homes and families. Ultimately, they were persecuted because they refused to place Caesar above Christ.

How could they experience the wholeness that Christ had come to bring under such circumstances? They could do so, first of all, by realizing that their suffering was a demonstration to the world of their

loyalty to Christ. They experienced wholeness throughout their suffering because they realized they were sharing in the same sufferings as the prophets before them. When they realized that they were a part of something great, their suffering did not disturb their wholeness. One of the greatest encouragements that they experienced was the realization that they were making things easier for those Christians who would follow. But, the greatest wholeness producing experience was realizing the near presence of Christ.

When we compare our experiences with those of the early Christians, it seems that we do not really suffer at all. But whatever suffering we may endure should not prevent us from experiencing the wholeness that Christ came to give us. We may only possess it and realize who and what we are suffering for, as we realize who we are suffering with. Let us realize that if the church will be the church, part of which means being the conscience of our community, it will suffer persecution.

James, the brother of Jesus, draws our attention to wholeness within the church fellowship itself. If individual members of the church family will experience wholeness among themselves, they must learn to control their tongues. James' writings on the subject are very helpful. He compares the tongue to the bit in a horse's mouth and the rudder of a ship, saying that the tongue can direct the course of a person's whole life. James calls upon us to control our tongues. The tongue's potential for damage is to be compared with a small flame that sets a whole forest ablaze. Just as the fire in the forest is swept uncontrollably in every direction by each passing wind, so do the words we speak leave us unguided, never to return.

An uncontrolled tongue makes sin look attractive and is hostile toward God. An uncontrolled tongue can destroy a person's whole life and reputation. It can prepare a place for us in hell.

James observed that the same mouths that bless God curse their fellowmen. He declared that this was wrong and unnatural. He calls upon us to see to it that our tongues do not contradict themselves. If the church would be whole, even with its numerous denominations; those who have been blessed with greater educational opportunities must not practice arrogance toward those of lesser accomplishments, those who differ on points of doctrine must not become bitter with one another.

Finally, we are exhorted in the passage from Exodus not to commit perjury against our neighbors. We would include in this commandment slander as well as gossip. The emphasis is upon telling the truth.

Church News Briefs

Gethsemane AME Zion To Sponsor Thanksgiving Vesper

by Sherleen McKay
Post Staff Writer
The Home Missions Circle of Greater Gethsemane AME ZION Church will sponsor Thanksgiving vesper on November 12 at the church at 7 p.m. The theme for this reverent occasion will be "Come Ye Thankful People, Come."

This coming Sunday, November 5, the Deaconess Board will present Napoleon Brown, James Maxwell and the Southern Sisters in concert. The special guests will be the Tonnetts from Greensboro. This special event will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Rev. George E. Battle is the pastor of Gethsemane, located on 531 Campus Street.

NAZARETH PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
Rev. and Mrs. James A. Frieson traveled to Chicago last week to present a plaque to Joe L. Dudley for his Men's Day speech and to the Fuller Products Company for a generous gift of \$1,000 towards the church's building fund.

Rev. Frieson said that they were able to see Dudley's factories, one of the only completely owned black cosmetics factories in the country.

The North Carolina-Virginia Baptists State Convention convened in Salisbury (East Spencer) on Thursday, November 2 and will continue through Sunday, November 5.

The ladies will conduct the services on Friday. The Sunday School and the Ushers will be in charge of the services on Saturday.

GETHSEMANE BAPTIST
Gethsemane Baptist Church will be observing their pastor's Appreciation Day on Sunday, November 19 at the church at 3 p.m.

Recently the church just completed adding a new education building to their present structure.

Rev. C.E. Dewberry is the pastor of Gethsemane, located at 2670 Dr. Carver Rd.

Sacred Heart Will

Hold Its Annual

Bazaar November 11

Sacred Heart College will hold its annual bazaar on November 11 at the college gymnasium from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.



Rev. James A. Frieson
...Nazareth Pastor

GREENVILLE AME ZION
All Charlotte area churches and friends are invited to attend a concert at Greenville Memorial AME Zion Church on Sunday, November 5 at 6 p.m.

The concert, sponsored by the Willing Workers Club, will feature the J. A. Gospel Singers of Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church.

Dr. R. B. Phifer is president of the Willing Workers Club. Greenville Memorial is located on 6116 Monteith Drive and is pastored by Rev. Hunnicutt.

The UNCC Children of the Sun Gospel choir will present their Founder's Day program on Sunday, November 5 at 3 p.m. in Rowe Recital Hall.

FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN
The Tutorial School of First United Presbyterian Church is meeting every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 4-6 p.m.

The school now has a regular attendance of 28 students. In order to give these students more individual attention, the

The Gethsemane Enrichment Program is applying to HEW Office of Education for a grant under the Emergency School Aid Act, an act designated to deal with those problems brought on by school desegregation. This grant will deal with problems related to minority group isolation in Charlotte-Mecklenburg County.

Pursuant to the act, an Advisory Committee is being formed. All persons interested in serving on this Committee are welcomed.

For further information, call Gethsemane AME Zion Church (375-3900). Rev. George E. Battle or one of his staff members will be able to answer all questions.

Mr. Fred Alexander has requested that his name not be used in the ad below. However, on the advice of our legal counsel, under present laws and regulations as it relates to political advertisement, it is in the best interest of this newspaper to run the ad as written.

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Rev. J.C. Robinson
...Mount Moriah Pastor

tutorial program is in need of more volunteer teachers. Any teachers who are interested in the advancement of these young people who are seeking academic assistance are asked to come and render their services.

Dr. C. A. Hood of Johnson C. Smith University was the guest lecturer last Tuesday in the School of Religion class which meets weekly to study the Bible. The timely subject dealt with superstition and religion.

The classes of this particular School of Religion will end next Tuesday. Although the members of the class will not receive a certificate or anything of that nature, their time and effort has been well-spent for they received worthwhile information that will richly enhance their spiritual growth.

Dr. Raymond Worsley, Jr. is the pastor of First Presbyterian, located on 201 N.E. 7th Street.

MOUNT MORIAH BAPTIST
Mount Moriah Baptist Church will observe their 28th annual Homecoming service on Sunday, November 5 at 2:30 p.m. at the church.

Rev. L. D. Parker, pastor of St. Luke Baptist Church here in Charlotte, accompanied by his choir and congregation will be the guests for this occasion. Dinner will be served in the lower auditorium of the church after the services.

The public is invited to attend and share in the services. Rev. J. C. Robinson is the pastor of Mount Moriah.

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