

By Mrs. Bessie Wilbon



Sunday School Lesson

Subject: Zephthah: Zeal Without Wisdom
 Scripture: Judges 11:1-12:7
 July 3, 1983

INTRODUCTION

A team without enthusiasm will win few ball games. A salesman without some excitement about his product will make few sales. A political leader without positive fervor in his proposals will gain few followers. By the same rule, few persons will be influenced for Christ by apathetic Christians. Of course, we must guard against arrogance and an overbearing attitude. They only serve to make us obnoxious. But unless one is zealous in his outlook and in his lifestyle as a Christian, he cannot hope to arouse the interest of others.

The Apostle Paul knew this. He was excited about the good news that is in Christ. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," he wrote, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth," (Romans 1:16). He admonished the Christians in Rome to be "fervent in spirit; serving the Lord," (12:1). In the same verse he urged that they "never be lacking in zeal." Let us be Christians who are enthusiastic! Let a church or a class demonstrate some zeal in worship and in life. Then others will take notice and will be interested to learn the reason for such enthusiasm and zeal.

The word enthusiasm comes from a Greek word meaning "God-insideness." Literally, it means a state of being in which the Spirit of God is actively at work within the individual. Is this not what being Christian is all about? Zealous of good works is the way Paul describes it, (Titus 2:14). The lukewarm Christian is unappetizing, (Revelations 3:16). There is a great need for zeal in the work of the Lord.

Paul not only exhorted the brethren at Rome to be fervent in spirit; he also cautioned them about certain persons who had "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," (Romans 10:2). Such persons as these can do more harm than good. They are certain that their zeal is a service to God when in reality it may be completely out of harmony with the purposes of God. Such zeal may be only the gratifying of an overweening pride. Without a doubt, some highly religious people are very zealous in misdirected ways. There have been many followers of Christ who have not possessed His true spirit and who have spoken and acted without wisdom.

Our lesson today is about Jephthah, one of the judges of the Old Testament. His zeal for the cause to which he was called is evident. Also, evident is the fact that his zeal led him to make a rash promise to God certainly not in keeping with the nature of God, and a promise that he would live to regret.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Following Deborah, several judges ruled in Israel. In time the people of Israel "did evil again in the sight of the Lord," and once again God "sold them" into the hands of their enemies.

This time the oppressors were the Philistines. As in times past, again the people cried out to God. The people confessed that they had sinned, and again God had compassion on them. He would raise up Jephthah to be their deliverer.

Jephthah was an illegitimate child, the son of a harlot. Evidently, he enjoyed the hospitality of his father's house until other children were born and grew to maturity. Then he was driven out by his half-brothers, disinherited, and forced to shift for himself. He gathered around him a band of "vain men" or "worthless fellows."

The attitude of Jephthah's people toward him changed from what it had been. Earlier he had been a nobody in their sight; now they were begging him to come back. Jephthah was aware of the embarrassment of their position, and he did not hesitate to make the most of it.

Judges 11:29 - "Then the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah. He went through Gilead and Manassah and returned to Mizpah in Gilead and went on to Ammon."

Jephthah promised the Lord: "I will burn as an offering the first person that comes out of my house to meet me when I come back from the victory. I will offer that person to you as a sacrifice."

What a rash promise! Verses 34-40 tell us that that person was Jephthah's daughter.

As we contemplate the dilemma of Jephthah we must admire his integrity in regard to his promise.

Let us have zeal to know the Word of God. Then let us be enthusiastic to make that Word known to others, and let us have a corresponding zeal to follow that Word consistently in our daily living.



Michael McDowell has recently completed the Allstate Sales Training course which was held for two weeks at the Allstate Southern Zone headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. McDowell is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Asheville and Isothermal Junior College. McDowell will work at the sales office located at 5701 Executive Center Drive in Kroger Executive Park, Suite 102 in Charlotte. The new agent is offering a full circle of protection including homeowners, life, auto, business insurance and motor club. He is also a representative of Allstate Finance.

Willie Stratford's Joy Is Working With Others

Continued from Page 1
 ideas." He continues, "The right reason for running for city council is to serve people, to serve the community that has been so good to me. The greatest honor I've ever had is to have people trust me."
 "I wouldn't attempt to run if I couldn't serve all people...We all live here together and we all need to work at narrowing the gap economically and socially."

Will he ever seek an office politically higher than city council? Stratford stated, "There's nowhere else I want to go. Given the opportunity, I want to serve on the council and serve well."

After speaking on his intentions and purpose for running for city council, Stratford spoke briefly on the present issue of voter registration drives.
 "Voter education is worked at all of the time here in Charlotte by the Voter Task Force. More attention is drawn to it during the election period. You ought to vote. Lots of people think it doesn't make a difference, but it does." Continuing, he said, "We need to incorporate the need for government into the minds of our children."

Born in Lancaster County, South Carolina, Stratford received a BA in history from Johnson C. Smith University. He has one son, Willie Jr. and one daughter, Pia Denise. He is now a retired manager of Retail Sales and Services and Public Information Officer for the U.S. Postal Service.

He attends church at Ascension Lutheran Church and is also a Sunday School teacher there.

Stratford has an impressive list of honors and affiliations. He is a member of the Black Political Caucus, the Urban League and the Mayor's Citizens

Safety Committee and Ex-Convicts Organization (ECO). His list of honors include letter of commendation from district EEOO office, a North Carolina state bridge named in his honor and a Distinguished Service Award from the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce.

Greek Festival

The Greek Affiliates Association announces that this year's Annual Atlanta "Greek Festival" is scheduled for July 1-3.

The main event will take place Saturday, July 2, at Rack-Away Ranch, Campbellton and County Line Road S.W. Vendor slots are still available. For more information, call 349-0359.

Class Reunion

The North Mecklenburg High School Class of 1973 will hold its ten-year reunion on Saturday, September 10, at the Holiday Inn on North Tryon Street in Charlotte.

Cost will be \$15 per person for dinner and dancing. Members of the Class of 1973 are asked to get in touch with the reunion committee for further details. Contacts are Players Sporting Goods (598-7966) during regular business hours; and Debbie Cantrell (392-5745) after 6 p.m.

Flood "Wise"

Citizens owning or renting property in any of the flood plains in Mecklenburg County need to become more informed about flooding. The Mecklenburg

County Engineering Department can provide someone to speak to your group or homeowner's association and give you specific information particular to the creek in your area and to give you ideas on how to reduce the potential of flood related damages.

LONG & SON MORTUARY SERVICE

"We Excel In Quality and Service."
 Employee of the Week



Alonzo Wilson

Mr. Alonzo Wilson has been an Attendant with Long & Son Mortuary Service since 1979. He is employed on a part-time basis. His duties include transporting the family of the deceased to the burial site, answering death calls and assisting the family during their bereavement. Mr. Wilson is sometimes on-call to assist after regular business hours.

Mr. Wilson is also employed as a Computer Operator at First Union National Bank.

"Alonzo Wilson - steadfast in his desire to serve those in need."

"We Invite Inspection of Our Facility"
 2312 Beatties Ford Rd.
 394-1111



Each of these advertised items is required to be readily available for sale at or below the advertised price in each A&P Store, except as specifically noted in this ad.

PRICES EFFECTIVE THRU SAT., JULY 2, AT A&P IN CHARLOTTE
 ITEMS OFFERED FOR SALE NOT AVAILABLE TO OTHER RETAIL DEALERS OR WHOLESALERS.

1234 CENTRAL AVE. 180 SHARON AMITY 4337 PARK ROAD
 1015 PROVIDENCE RD. 4459 CENTRAL AVE. 1600 WEST TRADE
 5831 S. BLVD.

JULY 4th SALE

DOUBLE COUPONS

FOR EVERY \$10.00 YOU SPEND, WE WILL DOUBLE 3 MANUFACTURER'S COUPONS. EXAMPLE: \$10 PURCHASE = 3 COUPONS, \$20 PURCHASE = 6 COUPONS, \$100 PURCHASE = 30 COUPONS. ADDITIONAL COUPONS REDEEMED AT FACE VALUE!

Between now and July 2, we will redeem national manufacturer's cents-off coupons up to 50¢ for double their value. Offer good on national manufacturer's cents-off coupons only. (Food retailer coupons not accepted.) Customer must purchase coupon product in specified size. Expired coupons will not be honored. One coupon per customer per item. No coupons accepted for free merchandise. Offer does not apply to A&P or other store coupons whether manufacturer is mentioned or not. When the value of the coupon exceeds 50¢ or the retail of the item, this offer is limited to the retail price.

Savings are Great with A&P's DOUBLE SAVINGS COUPONS!

MFC'S COUPON	MFC "CENTS OFF"	A&P ADDED "CENTS OFF"	TOTAL COUPON AT A&P
COUPON A	25¢	25¢	50¢
COUPON B	18¢	18¢	36¢
COUPON C	50¢	50¢	\$1.00
COUPON D	75¢	25¢	\$1.00

A&P Coupon



FREE

JANE PARKER (8 CT. PKG.)

Hot Dog Or Hamburger Rolls

LIMIT ONE PER FAMILY WITH COUPON AND ADDITIONAL 10.00 PURCHASE GOOD THRU SAT., JULY 9 AT A&P #670



U.S.D.A. INSPECTED

Fryer Leg Qtrs. 39¢ lb.

WESTERN GRAIN FED BEEF
New York Strip WHOLE

2.98 lb.

ARMOUR
Meat Franks

98¢ 12 oz. pkg.



Cantaloupe
 WESTERN GROWN

89¢ each only

Tomatoes
 RED RIPE



1.19 family pack



Viva Towels
 DECORATED · DESIGNER

69¢ big roll

Mayonnaise
 ANN PAGE

88¢ 32 oz. jar