

The Sunday School

Lesson

By Beale Wilbon

INTRODUCTION

God expects us to serve Him. What we do may seem to be of little significance, yet the Spirit of God may be able to use it to save someone from eternal punishment in Hell. You never can tell how many you will lead to Christ today by what you do to serve Him.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today, we are urged to express victorious faith and to maintain their communion with that invisible world, spoken of in Hebrews 12 by performing those practical, everyday duties that are consistent with such faith and communion. We are to serve God by unselfish loving, by submitting, and by worshipping.

THE LESSON

"Keep on loving one another as Christian brothers. Remember to welcome strangers in your homes without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them. Remember those who are suffering, as though you were suffering as they are. Marriage is to be honored by all, and husbands and wives must be faithful to each other. God will judge those who are immoral and those who commit adultery. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, 'I will never leave you; I will never abandon you.' Let us be bold, then, and say, The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me? Remember your former leaders, who spoke God's message to you. Think back on how they lived and died, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not let all kinds of strange teachings lead you from the right way. It is good to receive inner strength from God's grace, and not by obeying rules about foods; those who obey these rules have not been helped by them. The priests who serve in the Jewish place of worship have no right to eat any of the sacrifice on our altar. The Jewish High Priest brings the blood of the animals into the Most Holy Place to offer it as a sacrifice for sins; but the bodies of the animals are burned outside the camp. For this reason Jesus also died outside the city, in order to purify the people from sin with his own blood. Let us, then, go to him outside the camp and share his shame. For there is no permanent city for us here on earth; we are looking for the city which is to come. Let us, then, always offer praise to God as our sacrifice through Jesus, which is the offering presented by lips that confess him as Lord. Do not forget to do good and to help one another, because these are the sacrifices that please God". (Hebrews 13:1-16).

It is love that shows kindness, sympathy, and offers help. When Christians love one another, they will express their virtue in hospitality; they will open their homes to one another. They will invite their brethren to their house for a family meal and fellowship. This is what all Christians ought to do for each other.

The virtue of hospitality should be extended also to strangers. In the early years of Christianity persecution drove many believers from their homes. Traveling evangelists also needed lodging places. Hospitality by fellow believers would have been of great help.

Such virtue as purity, devotion, loyalty, affection, and obedience are all involved in producing a Christian family. All Christians must honor the marriage bond. But all those who violate this sacred institution will be severely punished by God. Since marriage is used by the apostle Paul to symbolize Jesus' union with His church and complete devotion to it, all fornication and adultery is a crime against God. Most probably whoremongers or fornicators refers to sexual impurity committed by unmarried people, while adulterers refers to sexual sins practiced by married persons.

In our day when immorality is crammed down our throats through television, rock music, and movies, let us stand up for the holy institution of marriage and the purity that goes with it.

Christians are citizens of a far better city than earthly Jerusalem ever was. They belong to the great commonwealth of the New Jerusalem, having a Heavenly temple with Jesus the very Son of God serving as their own high priest. We seek the Heavenly city, which will come to us either at death or when Jesus returns. We must turn our eyes away from the earthly Jerusalem toward the Heavenly home Jesus has prepared for us. Our Heavenly citizenship carries with it the twofold duty of gratitude and benevolence. It involves offering spiritual sacrifices to God through Christ; these take the form of words and works.

We who partake of Calvary's altar are holy priests who offer thanksgiving to God with our lips. Gratitude is the basic motive for everything we do and say for Christ. We do good works, not to get salvation, but to thank Jesus for already giving us salvation. This is the constant duty and privilege of the Christian priest, calling on the precious name of the Lord in prayer, in praise, and in telling others about Him.

Today's lesson text begins and ends with exhortation to all Christians to do good to others. And how can we do otherwise, considering the fact that we are the recipients of God's greatest blessing? For God sent His Son into the world to make atonement for our sins. All of the sacrifices of centuries past could not do what Jesus did when, crucified outside the city walls, He bore our sins in His own body. Let us, therefore, thank Him in the way He has requested: with the sincere praise of our lips and the practical and helpful expressions of love and concern for all who are in need.

Those Left Behind

Part I

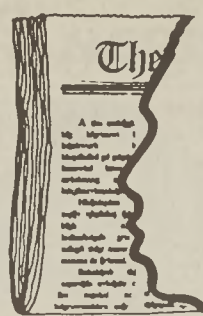
By J. M. Little

The Second Coming of the Lord could occur any moment. When Christ comes, he will quietly and secretly take His blood bought bride out of this world. Now, if I didn't know that, I would have no hope. The coming of the Lord is my hope, without Him I'd have no hope. How is it with you? Do you know the Lord? Are you looking for His coming? I do, and I am looking for Him. You can laugh and make fun of me all you want to, it's your soul that is at stake, not mine. There is no neutral ground! You are either for Christ or you are against Him. You are either saved or lost. You are either on the road to Heaven or Hell. Since it is a fact that the multitudes are not saved, then what about those left behind when Christ comes? Have you ever considered this truth. What will happen to my loved ones and associates who are left behind? The Bible is very clear. When you say the Bible doesn't teach enough about the end times for people to know what is going to happen, you are just skinning your ignorance. On His way to the cross, the Lord preached one of the greatest messages in the Word concerning worldwide conditions just before His Second Coming. "Then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matt. 24:40-42). In this physical description given by our Lord here in Matthew 24 we see the sad case of a soul being left. "LEFT" when Christ comes. Oh, I wish it would dawn upon you the tragedy of being left. To be left means, first, that you will not share in the glorious translation of the saints when Christ comes. I am glad the Lord saved me and when He comes I'll share in that glorious translation. Will you?

I hope you are tuning in and listening to THE VOICE OF TRUTH BROADCAST with the voice of our late pastor, L.R. Shelton, each Sunday morning at 7:30 over WAGI FM and at 8:00 over WAGL AM. Now you need to hear those warning messages. When I first listened to those messages given back in the early 1960's I was not saved. And I was afraid the Lord would come before I got saved. Now I rejoice and thank the Lord for saving me knowing that all my judgment fell on Christ and the Lord, Himself, has delivered me from the wrath to come (the Great Tribulation). When Christ comes and the unsaved are left behind, what will be your immediate response? Now, I realize I'm giving you some things I've given you before, but be wise and take heed. I may be talking to someone about the coming of the Lord, and you are rejecting the truth, rebelling against His coming. You may turn your head away for just a split second, when you look back, I'll be gone. Shock, fear, and grief will grip your heart immediately. You may call out after me, and look for me. But then the truth will settle in on your heart; "yes, he's gone as he said so many times." A man who refused to turn to Christ and was making fun of his wife at the evening meal when she, for the last time pleaded with him to turn to Christ. He began to curse her for mentioning Christ again. And he turned his head away from her as he let out another foul statement against her warnings. Suddenly, when he looked in her direction, after letting out his foul curse, he discovered her chair at the table empty. There was total astonishment on his face. Where could she have gone that quickly, he asks out loud. He calls out for her to come back to the kitchen table. When he gets no answer after several frantic calls, in his rage he goes into the

his hatred against her repeated warnings about the return of the Lord. When he has searched the house over without finding her, he goes back to the kitchen table and sits there pondering in much disgust; "Is it really true that she has been taken out to be with her Lord that she talked so much about?" Fear grips his heart, he turns the radio on and hears this voice; "We interrupt this program to bring you this special bulletin; recent reports have come in from every country and island around the world of missing persons who vanished instantly, or were caught up by some strange and unknown power, the world has never seen anything or heard and witnessed such before, wives have reported their husbands vanishing from their beds, buses wrecked when the driver suddenly disappeared, a plane was coming in for a landing, but instead of landing the plane went right over the airport it was discovered a few minutes later by one of the crew members that the pilots were not at the controls, a preacher who was holding a Wednesday night service, he has started out preaching on the imminent coming of Christ, someone in the audience stood up and said: 'preacher, the old folks said in their time that the Lord was coming back because of the end of times, it hasn't happened yet, and you still keep harping on it, the world is made out of wonderful things and may go on for another two thousand years, tell us something else.' When the man sat down in his seat and then looked up to the rostrum where his pastor had been standing, his pastor was gone, vanished."

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Home Economics Extension Agent Deborah Crandall (center) receives her certificate after finishing the Extension Executive Development Institute. Making the presentation is Assistant Extension Director Paul Dew (right).