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 \* International  
 \* Sunday School  
 \* Lesson  
 \* —for—  
 \* NOVEMBER 15, 1959  
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**THE COST OF CONVICTIONS**

Memory Selection: "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."  
 —(Revelation 2:10)

Lesson Text: Acts 6 and 7.

This lesson discusses whether or not we can win security and be well adjusted to others and still be truly Christian. What is the cost of our Christian convictions.

In the lesson before us today, we read of the trials and tribulations of Stephen, who although set upon by his fellowmen, nevertheless stood by his convictions even unto death. This account of his courage in the face of adversities brought upon him because of his belief cannot but fail to inspire all those who read it.

We all have two great human longings in common: the need for security and the desire for the approval of our fellowmen.

The words "security" and "conformity" play a big part in modern American life. Can we win security and be well adjusted to others and still be truly Christian? What is the cost of our Christian convictions? That is our main question today, and there is no denying it is a big one.

History contains the record of men and women who have had the power to stand for something other than their own security and popularity. The decadence and fall of nations comes when there are not enough such people. The progress of the human race comes only through the courageous ones who, like Stephen, are willing to die for their convictions. Here is another way of saying that there is a deeper need in our human life than the desire for security and the desire for conformity. Jesus put this need in the great paradox. "For whoever will save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it" (Mark 8:35). There are other considerations in our human life more important than safety, comfort, pleasure, and the acceptance of the crowd.

But how can we determine the value of our convictions? It is obvious that all convictions people have are not Christian, neither are they worth defending. There is a close relation between stubbornness and the holding of convictions that are worthless and unimportant. Most wars have been fought over stubborn convictions held in hatred and the desire for revenge. How may we

know whether or not our convictions are foolish or wise, selfish and prideful, or Christ-like and helpful? There is one simple test indicated in this story of Stephen's martyrdom. "Full of the Holy Spirit," he looked into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God! (Acts 7:55). The meaning of these words is significant. Stephen was seeking not his own glory, but the glory of God. At the basis of his convictions was the spirit of Jesus, "the Holy Spirit," by which he tested everything.

We have heard it said, "He has the strength of his convictions." Well, this is next in importance to being sure that our convictions stand the test of love. How strong are they? Again the answer comes from this beautiful account of the way Stephen stood for what he believed. "And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.'" (Acts 7:59.)

Here we find the reason for his strength. Like us, he was frail and afraid of himself. Like him, we do not have the power within ourselves alone. It is given to us. The purely self-centered, self-dependent person cannot withstand in the evil day. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit," says the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

Suffering for one's convictions deepens and extends one's influence. For instance Stephen's martyrdom had a profound influence in the conversion of Paul. If one looks at a cause in the light of

**Devotional**  
 from  
**The Upper Room**  
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Read Luke 6:46-49

Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Luke 6:46.)

To all Christians, it is easier to call on Jesus in trying times than to be obedient to Him always. Obedience is a spiritual quality which we can cultivate. When we disregard this noble quality of obedience, we are at a loss. Obedience to Him is no imaginative thought only; rather, it must be practiced.

In His words, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Jesus admonishes His listeners to be obedient in carrying out His instructions. This implies that no matter whatever of time, labor, and energy it may cost us, we must remain absolutely obedient to His

divine teachings. Christ has commanded us to be loving and helpful, prayerful and forgiving. Not many of us are obedient enough to the Master's spiritual injunctions. Let us put on the cloak of obedience to the divine call.

**PRAYER:** O Lord, plant it in our minds to be obedient unto Thee. Even as Thy Son was obedient unto Thee throughout His life, help us so to be. For the sake of Jesus, who taught us to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven . . . Amen."

**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:** I shall strive to be obedient to Christ, no matter what it costs me in word, thought and deed.

—Francis G. Oshin (Nigeria)

**Mrs. Ova Shook, 45, Passes Tuesday; Rites Today**

Mrs. Ova Shook, 45, of Marshall RFD 2, died Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 10, 1959, at her home.

Services will be held today (Thursday) at 2 p. m. in Peeks Chapel Baptist Church.

The Rev. N. H. Griffin will officiate, and burial will be in the Ramsey Cemetery.

Surviving are the husband; three daughters, Jerlene, Mary Belle and Betty of the home; two sons, J. D. and Pender of the home; the father, John Anders of Mars Hill; a brother, Walter Anders of Weaverville; three half-brothers, Lee Sams of Weaverville, Ervin of Horse Shoe and Bob of Virginia; and a grandchild.

Holcombe Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

**Walnut Free Will Women To Have Supper Nov. 14**

The Walnut Free Will Baptist Church Ladies' Aid Society will hold their annual supper Saturday, November 14, from 5 p. m. to 8 p. m., in the sewing house. Proceeds are for charitable causes.

**GIVE The United Way**

the scars, he may give up the cause. But if one looks at the scars in the light of the cause, the cause may be glorified.

Christ calls on us to live in the light of the best that we know. We ought also to be diligent in seeking for greater truth. In all things we should seek humbly to manifest the mind and the spirit of Christ.

The courage to stand comes to those, who, like Stephen, learn how to pray, to see clearly through the dark clouds of hate and selfishness into the heaven where Jesus and his spirit are truly "at the right hand of God." Surely, if we are "faithful unto death," we will receive from him the "crown of life."

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 \* **This Is The Law** \*  
 \* —by— \*  
 \* **ROBERT E. LEE** \*  
 \* For the N.C. Bar Association \*  
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**Traffic Lights**

Taylor's automobile entered an intersection with the green light in his favor. Butler's automobile entered the intersection from Taylor's left while the traffic control signal facing him was red. Taylor's car was greatly damaged. May Taylor recover the amount of the damage to his car from Butler?

Not necessarily. You are not always without fault just because the lights are with you.

Traffic signals are designed to prevent accidents and not to excuse them. It would be absurd to assume that a green light gives the driver the privilege to willfully and recklessly run down people or automobiles with impunity. Reasonable care must be exercised at all times for the safety of others.

The Supreme Court of North Carolina has said: "A motorist facing a green light as he approaches and enters an intersection is under a continuing obligation to maintain a proper lookout, to keep his vehicle under reasonable control, and to operate it at such speed and in such manner as not to endanger or likely to endanger others upon the highway."

If he fails to exercise such care, he is guilty of contributory negligence and cannot recover from the other party even though the other party has crashed through a red light and is more at fault than he.

The motorist must keep watch for possible dangers even when the green light is with him. To fulfill his obligation, the motorist must not limit his observation to that which is immediately ahead; he must look to the sides — the right and left. In many situations common sense will dictate in which a driver should look first.

The driver must not only look, but the purpose of looking must be accomplished. To look and fail to see what could have been seen by keeping a proper lookout is as negligent as not to have looked at all.

When a driver sees, or by the exercise of due care should see, that an approaching driver cannot or will not observe the traffic laws, he must use such care as an ordinarily prudent person would use under the same or similar circumstances to avoid collision and injury.

Nevertheless, in the absence of anything which gives or should give the motorist notice to the contrary, he has the right to assume and to act on the assumption that another motorist will observe the rules of the road and stop in obedience to traffic signal.

**SUES NON-COOKING WIFE FOR DIVORCE**

Los Angeles — Charging that his wife ordered him to cook his own meals, Sam Liberman, 77, got a divorce from her. He also told the court that when his wife did the cooking, the food she prepared upset his stomach.

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**Bluff News**  
 MRS. DEMPSEY WOODY, Correspondent

The Rev. Estel Strickland filled his regular appointment at Zion church Sunday morning. The Calvue Quartet from WMTN, Morristown; the Rev. and Mrs. Ray Webber, and the Rev. and Mrs. Lee Robertson did some wonderful singing. Other visitors were the Rev. Leonard Barrett and the Rev. Homer Tally, all of Morristown. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful service.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Waldroup and boys, the Rev. and Mrs. Estel Strickland and family took dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Dannie Gillespie.

Mr. Charlie Henderson and Gertha and Misses Margaret Russell and Stella Carver visited relatives in Balfour last Sunday.

Mr. Quay Smathers and daughter, Cynthia, and Violet Ann Woody of Canton visited Mr. and Mrs. Dempsey Woody last Sunday. Mrs. Sue Smathers and small daughters stopped to visit in Bluff.

Mr. Warren Gillespie was very ill last week.

Mrs. Lillie Lankford, Mrs. Blanche Martin, Mrs. Shirley Russell and Alene and Glenna Waldrup visited Mrs. Hattie Woody Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. David Finley and daughter, Shirley Ann, visited Mr. and Mrs. Tom Finley for two days last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Finley attended the funeral of her brother, Mr. Charlie Holt, in Tennessee Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Carter Smeltzer and family of Swannanoa visited Mrs. Lydia Bright and Helen Sunday. Lydia and Helen returned home with them for the week; also to visit Mr. and Mrs. Jennings Beasley.

Mr. Dempsey Woody and Eugene visited Mr. Edd Lankford and Eddie Sunday afternoon.

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