
International Sunday School Lesson
 —for—
FEBRUARY 24, 1963
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THE CHRISTIAN'S CONFESSION

Memory Selection: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." —(Mark 8:34)

Lesson Text: Mark 8:27 through 9:1.

In this lesson we consider Peter's confession and examine our own beliefs about Christ.

This passage is the shortest in our study of Mark. But it is extremely important. The confession of Peter and of the disciples that Jesus was the Christ brought his previous ministry to a climax and constituted the point of transition into the final events of his death and Resurrection.

This account of Peter's confession is the pivotal point in Mark's Gospel. All that has happened before culminates in this experience. Jesus is the Messiah, and

now the disciples can affirm this faith. But notice that Jesus waited a long time to ask them: "Who do you say that I am?" It was only after a sharing of life — after the disciples have been with Jesus, listened to him teach, watched him work among the people, and been in his company — that Jesus asked this question. And it was only as a result of his total impact upon the people that they were able to answer.

It is always this way in the Christian life. The first requirement is not that individuals be able to quote creeds or say the correct words. The first invitation is that of a Person to persons. It is an invitation to share life, to live in community with Jesus. When this has taken place, then one can answer the question of who Jesus is. There are no heaven-shattering signs — only a Person. No tremor of the earth — only a Life among men. But in meeting this Person and in sharing this Life one comes to know who he is. He is the Christ.

This confession is the turning point in the Gospel account. Jesus has set his face toward Jerusalem. He begins to indicate that suffering is a part of his messianic role. The final events of his life are coming fast upon him, but in obedience he embraces his task.

Upon the basis of their confession, Jesus leads the disciples a step further. Immediately after Peter speaks, Jesus invites them to share with him in his suffering. And what did Jesus mean

by "taking a cross?" To "carry a cross" means obedience. Jesus' perseverance was due to his loyalty to the will of God. We, too, are to be obedient — even in the face of a cross, and through a cross.

To "carry a cross" means humility — to set oneself at the disposal of God and to walk in his way. To want what God wants and to want it God's way is the humility that is implied in cross-bearing.

To "carry a cross" is to express love and concern for others. There is redemption in the cross-bearing of Jesus. To "carry a cross" means to carry with us what we find at Jesus' cross; willingness to be a servant, obedience, humility, and concern for others. No wonder so few followed Jesus! And even the disciples were not fully equal to the challenge until later.

Simon Peter had spoken for the disciple group and said Jesus was the Christ. But they had yet to learn that messiahship didn't mean prestige. They had yet to understand that Jesus was a "suffering servant." But the disciples still followed. Uncertain about future events, they were growing in trust in their Lord. Not yet free of self-ambition, they loved this One more than themselves. And as a result, they were willing to go — even to Jerusalem — and to dare the threat of the authorities.

This call is still being issued. Jesus invites us into his company. He invites his present-day disciples to share all of his life. He invites those who follow to "carry a cross." He asks that they grow in his likeness and become fellow servants with him. Jesus does not simply set an example. He asks that we share a life. He does not simply express an ideal way of life, he presents himself and invites us to come to him and then go with him.

NEWSPAPER Advertising HAS STOOD THE TEST



Horace Metcalf Passes Sunday; Rites Tuesday

Funeral services for Horace Metcalf, 67, a farmer of Rt. 4, Marshall, who died at 12:05 Sunday morning, Feb. 17, 1963, in a Greenville, Tenn., hospital after a brief illness, were held Tuesday at 2:30 p. m., in the Spillcorn Community Church. The Rev. Champ Rice officiated and burial was in the Lisenbee Branch Cemetery. Friends served as pallbearers.

He is survived by the widow, Mrs. Evia Fender Metcalf; three sons, Earlis of Rt. 4, James H., of Goldsboro, and Vernon of Plano, Ill.; two daughters, Mrs. Matthew Norton of Rt. 4 and Mrs. Willie Moore of Carterville, Va.; two brothers, Cager of Rt. 4 and Johnny of Greenville, Tenn.; one sister, Mrs. Henry Cuthall of Greenville, Tenn.; 32 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. Bowman Funeral Home was in charge.

Eisenhower Asks Support for 1963 Heart Fund



EACH AMERICAN has a highly personal stake in the conquest of heart diseases, according to former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Honorary Board Chairman of the American Heart Association. In a special statement, he said: "Your Heart Association is mobilized for the conquest of heart disease and I urge you to join with me in aiding the Heart Fund."



Unusual rail car has been bought by the Southern Railway System from Halliburton Company. The car uses air pressure and flexible hose to unload its 3200 cubic foot load in one hour. Southern plans to use the car to haul cement from mills and unload at any rail siding.

Today's MEDITATION
 From The World's Most Widely Used Devotional Guide



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Read I Peter 3:13-22

God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. — (Romans 5:8 RSV)

The minister's wife was discussing sin with some juniors. She explained that God could not be holy and overlook sin. Neither could he tolerate it. To be certain they understood, she repeated once more, "Everyone sins." Bill looked stunned. "Does everyone sin?"

"Yes," she replied. "Does even your husband sin?" "Yes." "Well," he said desperately, "how are we going to get to heaven then?"

We could never be saved from our sins were we dependent upon any human being, no matter how godly. God Himself came in the

person of His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the sinless one.

We may not be able to understand how Christ can save humanity from its sins, but our part is to accept in faith that Christ died for us. This is an individual matter. Do you and I believe in Christ as our personal Savior?

Prayer: We thank Thee, Father,

that Thou didst care enough for us to send Thy Son to die for us. We ask Thy forgiveness for our sins. Help us to believe in Him. In His name we ask. Amen.

Thought for the day: Only the Son of God was good enough to pay the price for our sin.

—Iris Weber Martin (Washington)

Some Good Advice

- IF You Have To Carry Water To Wash—
 - IF You Have To Wash All Day or Even Longer With Only One Washing Machine—
 - IF You Use Up All Your Hot Water Doing the Family Laundry—
 - IF You Are Employed And Too Tired When You Get Home To Tackle This Drudgery—
 - IF You Seem To Never Have Enough Time—
 - IF You Need Some Clothes Washed & Dried In 1 HOUR—
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