

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

International Sunday School Lesson for February 23, 1947

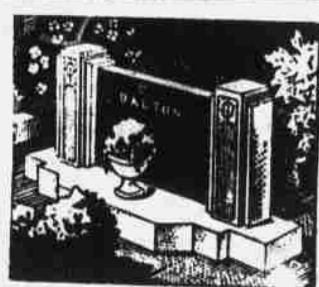
Memory Selection: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep."—John 10:11.

Lesson Text: John 10:7-18.

The words of our lesson were spoken by Jesus in Jerusalem while he was attending the Feast of the Dedication. It was immediately following the event of the healing of the man born blind, who was shortly afterwards excommunicated by the Jewish religious leaders because he professed faith in Jesus.

It was probably with this experience fresh in his mind that Jesus used the simile which constitutes our lesson. John's Gospel does not record any of the thirty parables but the present story of the Good Shepherd and that of the True Vine in chapter fifteen are somewhat the same in form and purpose.

With the injustice of the action of the religious leaders, falsely representing the church, Jesus used the an-



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alogy of the Good Shepherd in an effort to distinguish between such hypocritical religion and true "faith in God which he wanted to instill into men.

In picturing an eastern sheepfold, Jesus used an illustration which could be readily followed by those who heard him, although many of them were not able to make the application behind it.

In these verses, Jesus contrasts the care and devotion of the true shepherd with the attitude of a robber. One was actuated by a sincere desire to care for the sheep which followed him while the other was only acting a pretension in order to lure the sheep into disaster.

The latter class represented religious leaders who went through the outward motions of religion without the inner feeling. These proud and exclusive religious leaders oppressed those who followed them and were mainly solicitous for their own position and comfort.

By way of contrast, Jesus pointed out that the good shepherd cared properly for the sheep in his flock and, if necessary, would lay down his life in their defense. Such a shepherd recognized the intrinsic value of the sheep and usually knew the name of each. In event of danger from robbers or wolves, he would be their natural protector. In every way the true shepherd sought the welfare of the sheep.

This illustration was meant to picture the solicitude of God for his children. As Charles Kingsley asked, "Is it not wonderful news that God should care for men; should lead them, guide them, feed them condescending to call himself their shepherd? But what a wider, deeper, nobler, more wonderful blessing that the shepherd should give his life for his people?"

Later on in his talk, Jesus likened himself to the door of the sheepfold. As W. L. Watkinson points out, many have been offended by Christianity's ecclesiastical door, having come to Jesus through some inconsistent or hypocritical Christian or through a church lacking in Christian sympathy and devotion.

Others have entered through the dogmatic statements and doctrines of church councils and theologians. Those have been discouraged and repelled at times but if any man enters through the door of the character of Jesus, there is no danger of disappointment or offense.

"The purpose of Jesus coming was to give life," says Joseph Fort Newton, "and to give it abundantly. Jesus never once used the word 'religion', as far as we have record, but always the word 'life' instead. With him whatever makes for a deeper, purer,

truer, more radiant life is religious; whatever dwarfs, retards, or pollutes life is irreligious."

With him religion did not consist in a few acts, such as prayer, worship, and solemn ritual words, but in the spirit, the faith, the motive and gesture with which we do everything; and today we are rediscovering his insight. Religion is a power by which to live the day through more deeply, more bravely, more fruitfully. Religion is no longer a thing apart from life; it is life itself at its best—the life of God in the soul of man."

### SCREW IN LUNG 17 YEARS

Baltimore, Md.—X-rayed for tuberculosis, after she had suffered with occasional bleeding and deep coughing, Mrs. Myrtle Money Penny, of Camden, W. Va., was surprised to be told that a half-inch rusty screw was imbedded in her lower left lung, perhaps for the past 17 years. It was removed in a local hospital by the use of tiny wire-operated forceps inserted through a bronchoscope, guided into

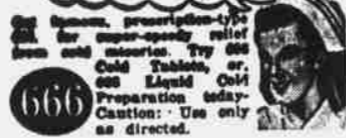
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position through a biplane fluoroscope which gave the position of the screw and the forceps from two angles. Mrs. Money Penny has no recollection of how the screw got into her lung.

### FIRE HOUSE BURNS

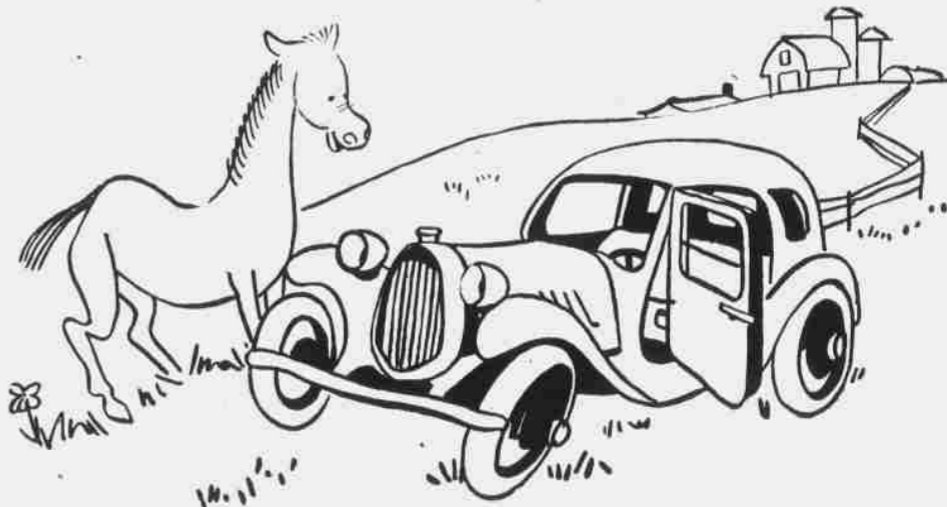
Rockville Center, N. Y. — The Eureka Fire Company—oldest of Rockville Center's six volunteer fire-

fighter groups—has been collecting trophies for its fire-fighting skill for the past 51 years. Recently, however, while no one was in the fire house, the trophies, fire records, a pool table and other accessories went up in flames.

To love for the sake of being loved is human, but to love for the sake of loving is angelic.—Lamartine.

### "RESCUES" SELF

Seattle, Wash.—A frantic mother called firemen to rescue her two-year-old son, David Wyman, 2, from the bathroom, in which he had locked himself. However, when the firemen arrived, the boy was outside to greet them. The lure of the approaching siren had been too much for the child and he came out on the run to see them.



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This Space Contributed in the Interest of Good Health by the North Carolina Committee—United States Brewers Foundation.



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