

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST
International Sunday School Lesson
For January 23, 1949

Memory Selection: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matthew 3:2.

Lesson Text: Matthew 3:4-17

If an eccentric character were suddenly to appear in your community and begin denouncing you and your neighbors for wickedness and sin, what would be your reaction? If this stranger were convincing enough he could probably persuade you that there were things in your life that needed correction. He might be able to inspire you to better living.

John the Baptist, after a solitary life of preparation, during which time he had ample opportunity to meditate and think and develop his powers of communication with God suddenly appearing to the Jewish people with startling effect.

His activity lasted but two years. That of Jesus was only three. How much can be accomplished in a short time if great spiritual force is behind the man and the message.

Jesus, himself, paid high tribute to John the Baptist, saying that none had been born of woman greater than he, yet adding to this the declaration that the last Christian would be greater, meaning in faith, privilege and insight. However, John the Baptist is not to be neglected nor his life disregarded.

Before anyone can come to know the greater blessings of the Christian faith he must pursue the pathway followed by John and pass through penitential experiences. John the Baptist traveled the only spiritual road open to him at that time and went until the road ended; Jesus was the engineer who constructed a further highway for you and me to use in our progress towards the Kingdom of God.

John's methods as a preacher were not such as would recommend themselves to the modern church pastor today. He was no purveyor of soft and silken phrases but stern in his frankness and uncompromising in his denunciation. One group who approached him, he addressed as "vipers", his harsh severity being justified by their hypocrisy and insincerity.

We can't imagine a congregation hearing the Baptist preach and then smilingly walk out in conversation with their fellows: "Wasn't it a beautiful sermon?" Instead, his audiences were stirred to conviction of sin because he had the honesty and courage to frankly expose their souls to themselves. Hearing him, men and women wanted to know what they must do.

John in his evangelism never hesitated to put his finger on the weak spot and prescribe the medicine necessary to effect a cure—divide your coats and food with the poor, he said; publicans were told to discontinue gouging the public for selfish gain; and soldiers were rebuked for their rowdiness, extortion and blackmailing of defenseless civilians.

Notwithstanding the vigor of his denunciation of wickedness and the perfect assurance which he had for

(Concluded on Page Two)

The Snowman that lived



Johnny built a snowman! From white, cold snow he made it. It was hard work, and Johnny was just proud.

Johnny built a snowman—in a day! He packed the snow hard, put in coals for the eyes and nose, and Daddy's hat was placed on top.

But far more of Daddy than just his hat went into this snowman. Just as Johnny worked hard to build the snowman, his father is hard at work too . . . building Johnny. Daddy's greatest dream is to see Johnny moulded into a man of strength, vision, and character.

Luckily for Johnny, Daddy is a wise father. He realizes that the most important single influence upon his son's life is the teaching of Christ. Daddy will see to it that his son receives that teaching by sending him to Church services regularly. In making certain that Johnny knows the beauty of God's words, father will see his greatest dream come true.

THE CHURCH FOR ALL . . . ALL FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.

Sunday Isaiah 44:12-17
Monday Isaiah 40:26-31
Tuesday Psalms 115:1-9
Wednesday Matthew 17:1-8
Thursday Acts 9:1-6
Friday Mark 4:13-20
Saturday John 10:1-9

For schedule of yearly readings, write American Bible Society, 450 Park Ave., N. Y. 22, N. Y.

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Be a Better Citizen! Go to Some Church Next Sunday

CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
A. H. Outlaw, Pastor.
Sunday School, 2 P. M. every first Sunday.
Church Service 3 P. M. every first Sunday.
Sunday School at 11 A. M. every second, third and fourth Sunday.

BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST
Walker Perry, Pastor
Bible School 10:30 A. M., except first Sunday, at 10 A. M.
Morning worship on first Sunday at 11 A. M.
Evening worship first Sunday at 7 P. M.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
E. T. Jilson, Rector
Holy Communion, 9:00 A. M.
Every Sunday except first Sunday at 9:00 A. M.
Church School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Prayer and Sermon, 11:00 o'clock.
Holy Communion first Sunday at 11 A. M.

HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH
D. L. Fouts, Pastor
Church School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Youth Fellowship, 6:45 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.
Mid-week Fellowship, Wednesday at 7:30 P. M.

BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM
Coy S. Saunders, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

Go To Church Your Church Any Church But Do Go

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