

CHURCH

Sunday School lesson

GETTING READY FOR THE LORD'S RETURN

(1 Thessalonians 5:1-23)
 "The very God of Peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

The greater part of the Scripture text for last week's lesson was taken from 1 Thessalonians, the fourth chapter, and for today's lesson we move forward into the fifth chapter. It is easy to see when we read the closing verses of chapter four that Paul did not intend for them to be separated from the opening verses of chapter five.

They are all talking about Christ's return. In the former passages Paul had assured his readers, the Christians in the church at Thessalonica, that their dead loved ones would be

part of Christ's triumphant return.

In these passages for today, he continues in this theme and reminds them that they need to be ready for this great event — since no one knows when it will happen.

JESUS IS COMING

(1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)
 Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ. He had been selected by Jesus, Himself, and taught the Gospel by Jesus, Himself, during the weeks, or months, immediately following Paul's conversion experience, while he was in the wilderness.

During this time Jesus revealed to Paul the events that would transpire when Christ returned for His church. Therefore, Paul could state with complete confidence and authority that Christ is coming again.

Of that fact, the Christians of the first century, and the

Christians of all the centuries since, may be absolutely sure. When? No one knows, only God, Himself. But Paul says that the time is relatively unimportant to Christians because they are "Children of Light."

He has called Christians "out of darkness into His marvelous light." So the "children of light" are those who live in the light of God's truth.

Then Paul speaks of others, "they" refers to the unbelievers who do not expect Jesus to return. He describes this in verse 3; when they settle in, secure in their feeling of peace and safety, then Jesus will appear, "And they shall not escape." The "children of light" however, are people of destiny.

While they await the Lord's return, they are to busy themselves in the Kingdom's work, for which they are called and live in faith, love and the hope of salvation.

ENCOURAGING

(1 Thessalonians 5:12-15)
 Paul continues in the thought concerning how Christians should act while awaiting Christ's return. In these verses of Scripture, he admonishes them to encourage the leaders, and encourage one another. Everyone needs to be lifted up by encouragement from time to time.

The leaders, which he speaks about here, are the the Christian leaders in the church.

Mr. Orrin Root, writing for the Standard Publishing Co., describes them this way. "You know who they are — those hard-working Christians who take the lead and keep prompting the rest of us to do our part."

In the various churches they have different titles, but we know them as ministers, pastors, elders, deacons, stewards, teachers and leaders of other groups and organizations in the churches.

They are busy in the Lord's

work, and they are out front leading others. Secondly, Paul said they were to encourage one another. This is a worthwhile and needed ministry in itself. Christians cannot always live on the mountaintop, for there are valleys in our daily lives as well. "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 15:16-17)

For Your Information

Dear friends,

This Thanksgiving Day, consider the many blessings that the Creator has showered upon this country — and consider how we have used these gifts for the good of all His creatures. We thank the Creator for providing us the resources and the will to work for prosperity for all Americans.

Respectfully,

Marian Curdill

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Card of Thanks

The family of Helen Newbold Skinner would like to express our appreciation to the many friends for their expression of love during her death. The food, cards, flowers, memorials, sharing of prayers and concerns mean a great deal to our family.

The family of Charles T. Skinner, Jr. I wish to express my sincere thanks to those of you who showed your concern during my recent stay in the hospital. The flowers, cards, visits and other acts of kindness were greatly appreciated.

Roy Perkins

Mitchell crowned queen

Mrs. Hannah Perry Mitchell was crowned queen in the St. Paul A. M. E. Zion Church King and Queen Rally which was held October 28.

Mrs. Mitchell was crowned by Mrs. Anita R. Tillett, the previous queen.

Mrs. Mitchell, a member of Saunders Grove Missionary Baptist Church was declared the winner during the financial report given by Mrs. Hazel O. Beamon, reporter for the rally.

In order for Mrs. Tillett to secure the crown back for St. Paul A. M. E. Zion Church, she will have to be declared the winner in the next King and Queen Rally.

Mr. Percy Brothers was successful in keeping the king's crown for St. Paul A. M. E. Zion Church.



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