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PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING

Adult and Young People's Quarterly

INTRODUCTION

To live well is the will of God for every one, but many poor people have found life to be a drudgery, yielding little besides misery and woe. The reason for this is that there has been failure in teaching people how to live. No one can continue to transgress the law of God and the laws of nature without suffering the penalties attached thereto. In this quarter's lessons, it is our desire to impart instruction on the subject of living, with the purpose in mind of helping the student to a happier and more successful life. Suffering is part of every normal and successful Christian, but the suffering is never more than we can bear and is always accompanied by confidence, assurance, and deliverance if we keep steadfast and our faith does not waver.

In reality, the end of all Christian endeavor is that we may live well in this world and live forever in the world to come. Let's study these lessons with the purpose in mind of applying to our own heart the truths that are brought forth.

“Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged” (Colossians 3:21).

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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PUBLISHERS OF CHURCH OF GOD LITERATURE

LESSON NUMBER ONE FOR OCTOBER 2
LIVING FOR CHRIST IN OUR HOME
(Attitude of Husband and Wife to Each Other)

Scriptures: Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 3:19; Genesis 2:23, 24; Proverbs 5:18; Ephesians 5:25; I Peter 3:7; Proverbs 31:27; I Corinthians 7:10; I Peter 3:1.

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Colossians 3:19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

Genesis 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Proverbs 5:18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the

church, and gave himself for it.

I Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Proverbs 31:27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

I Corinthians 7:10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband.

I Peter 3:1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.

Memory Verse: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.—Ephesians 5:31.

Aim: To show what God expects of those who take the marriage vows.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday **Ephesians 5**
Tuesday **Colossians 3**
Wednesday **Genesis 2**

Thursday **Proverbs 5**
Friday **I Peter 3**
Saturday **I Corinthians 7**

INTRODUCTION

It has been truthfully said that no nation can be better than its homes. If the structure of the individual home is on a tottering foundation, the nation also is in an insecure position. If we then, as a nation, would be strong and endure, we all must look well to the state of our homes. Over and over it has been proven that the following of the instructions to fathers and mothers, wives and husbands in the Word of God is the only guarantee of peace and happiness. Therefore, we must set before our people, with great clearness and persistence, the Bible standards. To do this involves some difficulty, since modern teachers go so far as to deny that there is a God who has the right to set forth laws for human conduct. We know better, so let us take up our task with courage and with the purpose of conquering for Jesus.

MEDITATIONS

GOD'S LEADERSHIP—Ephesians 5:23—Is the head—Many women have rebelled against God's law to their own destruction, at the same time generating confusion in their own homes and blighting the lives of them with whom they associate. As there must be a duly appointed and recognized power and authority in every society of men, so must there be in the home. God has declared that the man shall be the head in the institution of the home. His authority is as supreme in his family as Christ's is in His church. If the husband is what he should be, the wife (if she is what she should be) will not object to the leadership of the husband in the home.

THE HUSBAND'S PART—Colossians 3:19—Be not bitter—Daily association, as is the experience of the husband and wife in the home, is certain to draw out any differences that may exist. If each party insists on having his own way, friction is certain to result. Oftentimes the counsel and advice of the wife in the operation of the affairs of life are very valuable and can with great profit be followed; but if the wife does show lack of wisdom in managing the home affairs, the husband is still to manifest love and refuse to give any place to bitterness. Bitterness on the part of either is certain to injure the peace of the home.

HOME ORDAINED OF GOD—Genesis 2:23—Taken out of Man—The marvelous wisdom of God was manifested in His creation of man and woman and in His institution of the home. Every child has the right to be reared in a home atmosphere that is charged with love and tender consideration. From under the arm of Adam was taken a rib which God shaped into the woman, whom He again put back under the arm of Adam for him to protect. **Verse 24—Leave his father and mother—**God has ordained that when a man and woman take their vows of fidelity one to another, they at once start a new home. It is a mystery how God can make one flesh of two, yet it is so because God says so. He does not design that the union ever be dissolved, till death.

LOVE CONFINED TO ONE—Proverbs 5:18—Rejoice with—Humanity has great capacity for the expression of emotion. Man craves companionship and love. God has designed that an outlet be provided for this emotion; thus He said in I Corinthians 7:2, "Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." It is perfectly legitimate for every man to satisfy his desire to love in the wife that God has given him, but it is an abomination in God's sight for a man to make any approaches to any woman other than his wife.

DEGREE OF LOVE IN THE HOME—Ephesians 5:25—Love your wives—The measure of love that Christ displayed for His church was great and defies measure. He gladly laid down His life for her. That is the kind of love that God requires of a man toward his

wife. If a man is not willing to lay down his life for his wife, he does not deserve a wife.

HONOR WHERE HONOR IS DUE—I Peter 3:7—Honor unto the wife—With God there is no respect of persons; there is neither male nor female. In order to establish a new home, a woman must forsake all and cast her entire lot with that of her husband, even to the extent of taking his name. She deserves honor for doing this with the greatest regard that the husband can show. Such pleases God and opens the way for the blessings of God.

THE WIFE DOING HER PART—Proverbs 31:27—Bread of idleness—Idleness in the life of anyone is dangerous and must be avoided. In order for Christ to be honored in the home, the wife must diligently look after the affairs of the house. The children must not be idlers, but each must bear his part of the duties of the home.

HOME MUST NOT BE BROKEN UP—I Corinthians 7:10—Let not the wife depart—Women have sought and obtained, in our day, a great deal of what they call “liberty.” One of their liberties is to work in factories or elsewhere, making their own way, often obtaining divorces that they may marry one who has gained their affection where they were employed. This, God condemns. Terrible will be the penalty the woman will pay who breaks this command.

CHRIST REQUIRES FAITHFULNESS—I Peter 3:1—Be in subjection—By the wife’s living according to God’s will, there is a better chance to win the husband to God’s cause. There will be discomfort and persecution, but this is the Christian’s inheritance; and though the flesh may cry out for deliverance from it and desertion may become a temptation, still the Lord says, “Let not the wife depart from her husband.” The same goes for the husband; let him not depart from his wife.

CONCLUSION

Great suffering comes into the lives of the unfortunate men and women who do not live for Christ in the home. How carefully God has laid down His plan for the lives of men in the Word of God! But, oh, how little people know about this! How long men have tried in themselves to solve their problems, only to fail, generation after generation! It is the duty of every Christian first to live the Bible life in the home, and then to seek to enlighten other precious souls so they may know the joy of a happy home.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What is the man’s place in the home?
2. What is the wife’s place?
3. What will be the result of heart of bitterness in a wife or husband?
4. What is the right of every child who is brought into the world?
5. Why should a man honor his wife? How?
6. What is the woman’s part in the operation of a successful home?

LESSON NUMBER TWO FOR OCTOBER 9

LIVING FOR CHRIST IN OUR HOME

(Responsibility of Parents to Children)

Scriptures: Colossians 3:21; Deuteronomy 6:7; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4; I Timothy 3:4; Proverbs 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13.

Colossians 3:21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

Deuteronomy 6:7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Ephesians 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I Timothy 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.

Proverbs 13:24 He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

Proverbs 19:18 Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Proverbs 23:13 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

Memory Verse: Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.—Proverbs 22:6.

Aim: To show the responsibility of the parent to the child.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday	Colossians 3	Thursday	Ephesians 6
Tuesday	Deuteronomy 6	Friday	I Timothy 3
Wednesday	Proverbs 22	Saturday	Proverbs 13

INTRODUCTION

We are warned in the Bible that a child left to himself will bring his mother to shame. This has been proven true many times in every generation. Perhaps the situation is much worse now than it has ever been with the prevalence of television, the theater, the internet, and the availability of the automobile. Children are being given liberties that were unknown in other generations, and, as a result, moral character is fast decaying. To combat this, we must set forth the Bible standard and bring our children back under the blessed influence of the gospel of the Lord Jesus. The glaring fact of the depravity of every human being that makes his way into the world is overlooked by educators, religious leaders, and parents. A depraved human being is one who is morally degenerated from his original created state. No amount of education or training can restore a depraved soul to the original state. Education can only lead to the place that restoration is

possible by the blood of Christ. But only the proper education can lead in this direction.

MEDITATIONS

FAIRNESS TO CHILDREN—Colossians 3:21—Provoke not—Some parents develop a picking and critical attitude toward their children, criticizing every failure and never commending good points. This has a discouraging effect upon the children. A child is very sensitive and the greatest care should be used in giving him every advantage in developing a normal life.

DILIGENCE IN TEACHING—Deuteronomy 6:7—Teach them diligently—He who is successful in so rearing his child that he is faithful to God to the end has amassed an eternal fortune that is greater in value than the sum total of all existing things. Therefore, the greatest diligence should be used in imparting to the child the truth of the Word of God as it is in Christ Jesus. It is not enough to put a Bible in your children's hands and send them to Sunday school. They must be brought into contact with God and have developed in their heart fellowship with Him.

GOD'S PROMISE TO PARENTS—Proverbs 22:6—Will not depart—Any parent who trains up a child in the way he should go has assurance from God that the child will never forget what he was taught. This cannot mean that parents can raise a child that would never sin; in that case, the child would not need a Savior. But this is a promise parents can cling to in their endeavor to keep their children from going into deep sin. When we have done our best, then we must call upon God to do the rest.

REARING CHILDREN FOR GOD—Ephesians 6:4—Admonition of the Lord—Where can we get the admonition of the infinite God of heaven? By giving heed to the Word of God through the leadership of the Holy Spirit! It is the duty of the parent first to be fully instructed and led of the Spirit and then to cause the child or children to walk in his steps.

THE MINISTER, A FATHER—I Timothy 3:4—Ruleth well—A God-called minister must be an example in child-rearing. How far short many come on this point! So it isn't unusual that many lay members are unable to rule their homes well. A child left to himself defies authority. He must be kept in subjection to God-appointed authority.

USING THE ROD—Proverbs 13:24—Spareth his rod—The devil has been successful in removing bodily punishment from the schools and in many cases from the modern home. An unpunished child who is disobedient is unrestrained in transgression. Thus, our generation finds youth deep in sin. We do not help our children or manifest love when we let their disobedience go unpunished; rather, we harm them.

THERE IS A DEADLINE—Proverbs 19:18—While there is hope—From this scripture we are made to see that the time will come when correction will be impossible. How it makes our souls tremble to think that one of our children might be lost! With this startling truth before us, may God stir every heart to the performance of his duty toward his children.

STATE OF CHILDISH HEART—Proverbs 22:15—Foolishness is bound—A child has everything to learn and the parents, experienced by years of life, must act as a guide for the inexperienced child. They are more bent on foolishness than sobriety. The rod of correction will change this picture.

ACCOMPLISHING THE PURPOSE OF PUNISHMENT—Proverbs 23:13—He shall not die—From the cries of a child being punished, it would seem as if the child were being killed. The child soon learns that strong crying will stop the correction, for he is more interested in escaping the punishment than in arriving at the place where he is able to do right from choice. Therefore, the child must be corrected judiciously until his spirit of rebellion is broken. Of course, the “rod” is not the only means a parent can use in correction of a child. Seek God to know what method will be the most effective.

CONCLUSION

It is impossible for anyone to rear children as they should be reared unless he (the parent) has first been brought into subjection to the great Spirit of God. He who is outside of God is in rebellion against the government of God. He who is right with God can then begin to train his children correctly. Before a child is corrected, he should be told plainly the reason why—that he has disobeyed not only his parents, but God also. Then prayer should be offered that God may accomplish His purpose. If the child repents, he still must receive the punishment promised for disobedience. No parent should ever fail to keep his word in regard to punishment promised for disobedience. A child soon learns if a parent means what he says, and acts accordingly.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What will happen to any child who is left to himself?
2. In what way are parents often unfair to children?
3. How important a place should the teaching of the Scriptures have in training children?
4. What promise has God made to him who trains a child rightly?
5. How can we obtain the admonition of the Lord?
6. What is expected of a minister in child training?

LESSON NUMBER THREE FOR OCTOBER 16

LIVING FOR CHRIST AT OUR WORK

Scriptures: Genesis 2:15; 3:19; Galatians 6:5-8; Romans 12:11; II Thessalonians 3:10; I Thessalonians 4:11; Ephesians 4:28.

Genesis 2:15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

Genesis 3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Galatians 6:5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that

soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Romans 12:11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.

II Thessalonians 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

I Thessalonians 4:11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.

Ephesians 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Memory Verse: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.—Colossians 3:23.

Aim: To teach the Bible standard of rendering service to man.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday Proverbs 6:6-11
Tuesday Proverbs 20:1-13
Wednesday Ephesians 6

Thursday Ephesians 4
Friday I Thessalonians 4
Saturday Romans 12

INTRODUCTION

We will find instruction in God's Word for the conduct of man in every situation of life. This is necessary, for man within himself is not a moral power; he makes moral decisions only as pressure is brought upon him by outside forces. Though men know what the Bible teaches on any given moral issue, how often they are unable to do what it teaches! Any man who approaches God in the right manner is certain to receive assistance to perform every moral requirement. A great part of life is spent at work; consequently, many decisions are made of a moral nature. How necessary that we have Christ with His power in our lives that we may do our work well and conduct ourselves in the proper manner toward our employer and our fellow workers! Labor unrest would always be avoided if Christ were permitted to lead labor and capital.

MEDITATIONS

WORK BEFORE THE FALL—Genesis 2:15—To dress it and to keep it—It is nature's law to destroy him who is inactive and to prosper him who is industrious. Even in the Garden of Eden, before the curse was pronounced upon the earth and man, it was required that Adam "dress" the garden. We would assume that the "dressing" included the pruning of trees, and like chores. This was work and proved beneficial to the physical man.

THE FALL INCREASED LABOR—Genesis 3:19—Sweat of thy face—It did not consume all of Adam's time to dress a garden that was free of weeds and so blessed of God. But, after the fall, his labor was increased. Soil that is filthy with weeds will certainly bring sweat out on the man who faithfully tries to exterminate the weeds. To sweat is good for the body, but man, as a rule, tries hard to avoid this experience. Caesar, in training and using his army, made sure that his men sweat every day, summer and winter, for health's sake.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY—Galatians 6:5—Own burden—Every man has his own world in which he lives, and he has work to do that no other man can do. God's command is that every man bear his burden. Man is so created that he is able to do this and more. One man by his own labor is able to produce enough to care for himself and a family besides, often laying up a reserve. Some who disobey God's Word do not even produce enough for themselves. Such will come into condemnation at the judgment.

THE SUPPORT OF GOD'S MINISTRY—Galatians 6:6—Communicate—The man whom God calls to the ministry will usually need all his time in caring for the spiritual matters of those he serves; he will have little or no time to labor for his own living. *Communicate* means "to give." The giving is to be of "every good thing," not the refuse or least desirable. "Him that is taught" is the average Christian, and "him that teacheth" is the minister. God has ordained part of every man's work to the support of the ministry whom He has called.

RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD—Galatians 6:7—Be not deceived—Let no man think that he can hide any part of his life from God! Every man shall reap what he has sown! Be sure of this: if he sows sparingly, he shall reap sparingly. If he sows bountifully, he shall reap bountifully. (God loves a cheerful giver.)

USING THE FRUIT OF LABOR RIGHTLY—Galatians 6:8—Reap corruption—He who is so selfish that he spends all he makes ("sows to the flesh") is certain to reap despair and woe, and in the end, eternal death. He who gives properly to God's cause ("sows to the Spirit") shall reap joy and peace, and in the end, life everlasting.

DILIGENCE REQUIRED—Romans 12:11—Not slothful in business—God requires that “whatsoever we do,” we do it with our might. This suggests activity and accomplishment. “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings.” The carnal and unregenerated man too often rebels against labor. Christ in the heart delivers a man from laziness. There is no place in the kingdom of God for a lazy man.

WORK ENJOINED ON ALL—II Thessalonians 3:10—Should he eat—Again, it could only be the carnal or unregenerated nature that would cause a man to refuse to work for his support. If a man refuses to work, according to this scripture, he should not be given anything to eat.

TOIL—HONEST AND HONORABLE—I Thessalonians 4:11—Your own hands—In the days of Paul, it was customary to teach a student not only the popular educational subjects of the day, but also some handicraft. Paul had learned the trade of tent making, and it fit in well as a means of support in his ministry. Laboring with the hands is honest, and if it is done in the right spirit, it builds character.

RESPONSIBILITY TO OTHERS—Ephesians 4:28—Have to give—He who uses all he makes on himself is selfish, indeed, and is depriving himself of true happiness. Jesus declared that we would have the poor with us always. If we are so fortunate as to have a good, dependable job with a good income, we should show our gratitude by reaching a helping hand to the unfortunate. It is a drastic change to transfer from the life of a shiftless thief to the life of a charitable giver, but such is the power of the true gospel.

CONCLUSION

Much of our lives are spent in labor of one kind or another. Therefore, we should try to make every effort count for good. If we sell our time to an employer for a certain sum a week, we should make sure that we return value received in service. Any man who shirks on his job is certainly stealing from his employer. There is much strife between capital and labor, which is the result of men’s trying to manage the affairs of life outside of God! This will always produce failure. There can be no peace between capital and labor until Christ is invited to the conference table.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Is man by himself able to make right moral decisions?
2. Did Adam have to work before the fall in the Garden of Eden?
3. What effect did the fall in the Garden have upon the labor of man?
4. What is the command of God to the man who will not work?
5. What is the working man’s responsibility to the ministry?
6. What is God’s promise to the man who is diligent in business?

LESSON NUMBER FOUR FOR OCTOBER 23

LIVING FOR CHRIST AMONG OUR FRIENDS

Scriptures: Romans 12:10; II Samuel 9:1; Deuteronomy 13:6-8; Proverbs 17:17; I John 2:15; Genesis 31:38-44, 48, 49.

Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.

II Samuel 9:1 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

Deuteronomy 13:6 If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;

7 Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth;

8 Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him.

Proverbs 17:17 A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Genesis 31:38 This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

39 That which was torn of beasts I

brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.

40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

41 Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.

42 Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

43 And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?

44 Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.

48 And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galed;

49 And Mizpah; for he said, The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

Memory Verse: A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

—Proverbs 18:24.

Aim: To make clear our responsibility to our friends.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday II Samuel 9
Tuesday Romans 12
Wednesday Proverbs 17

Thursday I John 2
Friday Proverbs 18
Saturday Deuteronomy 13

INTRODUCTION

Someone said, "It is hard to find a true friend." This, doubtless, is true; yet many would outwardly act as if they were true friends when

the weather is fair. We Christians should show ourselves friendly to all, always being the same in fair or foul weather. However, at no time can we be partakers of men's sins or fellowship their wickedness. We are always true friends when we resist sin. When anyone accepts Christ, in the full sense of the word, he is no longer his own, but becomes the property of God (willingly), and God can do what seems good to Him. This was acted out in life and death by Christ Himself. Jesus proved true to His friends, but also He died for His enemies.

MEDITATIONS

MANNER OF CONDUCT—Romans 12:10—Kindly affectioned—This speaks of a good temper in all of our dealings. To put ourselves in first place and to honor ourselves always lowers us in the estimation of others. The atmosphere around anyone who is kindly affectioned is always wholesome and pleasant. We should strive to develop this characteristic of life.

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE—II Samuel 9:1—Shew him kindness—The old friendship between Jonathan and David was still alive, though Jonathan was dead. David tried to manifest it in a definite way by befriending someone who would have been dear to the heart of Jonathan. This was true friendship.

ATTITUDE TOWARD FALSE FRIENDS—Deuteronomy 13:6—Entice thee—The greatest possession we have is our soul. We should guard it with the most jealous care against the lure of false religion. We must turn our backs upon anyone, regardless of who it is, if he is set upon turning us from the worship of the true and living God. In our day the danger is the greatest it has ever been, because most false religions profess Christ, worshiping Him only after a form. If our friends entice us to go after false religion, we must not go with them. **Verse 7—Gods of the people**—The Jews were few in number compared to the nations around them; and then, as now, it was easier to go with the crowd than to stand out against it. Today a Christian is surrounded by the gods of many religions; they would try to be good friends, but friendship is not fellowship in Christ. In such a case, we must choose to suffer the affliction with the people of God and stay clear of sectarian bondage. It is popular to court the favor of Babylonish ranks, but it is not safe. **Verse 8—Neither shalt thou conceal**—We cannot be passive in this warfare. He who poses as a friend yet supports false religion must be exposed. If possible win him to the truth, but never consent to his error. Always stand for the truth.

TRUE FRIENDSHIP—Proverbs 17:17—Loveth at all times—He who loveth only when the weather is fair is a poor friend, indeed. A true friend is one who comforts when the skies are dark and helps even when the burdens get heavy. Such a friendship is nurtured by our sincere acts of friendship in return. He who would have friends must show himself friendly.

CANNOT BE A FRIEND OF THE WORLD—I John 2:15—Love not the world—This does not mean that we cannot love the soul of the sinner nor be interested in his welfare. It means that under no circumstances can we love or partake of his ways. We are true friends to the people of the world when we, in love, take a stand against their worldly and sinful ways. So among the world we must let our light shine.

EVIDENCE OF FAITHFULNESS—Genesis 31:38—Have I been with thee—Jacob was able to point to his record and convince his father-in-law of his faithfulness and true fellowship. **Verse 39—I bare the loss**—Jacob had been true to his contract. We cannot lose in the end by being faithful. **Verse 40—Drought consumed me**—Weather conditions, though adverse, had not marred his faithfulness. **Verse 41—Changed my wages**—This had been unfair, but it had not spoiled the integrity of Jacob. **Verse 42—God of my father**—We may rest assured that God is faithful to him who is faithful in his business affairs. **Verse 43—Are my children**—In that day the hold a father had on a son or daughter was much stronger than today. However, legally, Laban had sold the daughters and sheep to Jacob, and Jacob had paid the price agreed upon. **Verse 44—Make a covenant**—Jacob won out by keeping a cool head and contending for the right. God was his Helper. **Verses 48, 49—Lord watch**—Friendship was re-established on a solid basis. This was brought about by the integrity of Jacob.

CONCLUSION

A man without friends is to be pitied. Being friendless shows the neglect of his moral training. Every man has within him great possibilities; and if he grows to manhood without their being properly developed, it is a tragedy. The first thing that should be taught is moral values, with all other education built around that. A person taught in this manner is certain to have, cultivate, and value friends. Around us on every side and of every age are human beings who hardly know why they are alive, having received almost no moral training. It is our responsibility to put forth the greatest effort possible to right this condition.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What constitutes a true friend?
2. Why is it some people do not have friends?
3. What does God say our manner of conduct shall be one to another?
4. Give an Old Testament example of true friendship.
5. What are the gods of the people today?
6. Why are Christians forbidden to love the world?
7. What do you think of Jacob's faithfulness to his father-in-law?

LESSON NUMBER FIVE FOR OCTOBER 30

LIVING FOR CHRIST IN OUR SPEECH

Scriptures: Matthew 12:34; James 3:5, 6, 10; Colossians 3:8; Exodus 20:7, 16; Ephesians 5:4; Matthew 5:34, 37; Psalm 39:1.

Matthew 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

James 3:5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Exodus 20:7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Ephesians 5:4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

Matthew 5:34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Psalm 39:1 I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

Memory Verse: But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.—Matthew 5:37.

Aim: To teach more carefulness in our speech.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday James 3:1-10

Tuesday Psalm 34

Wednesday Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Ephesians 5:1-21

Psalm 39:1-7

Proverbs 15:1-10

INTRODUCTION

The people of the world are surely very careless in their speech, and the professed Christian world are no better. Many earnest Christians have not learned the truth in regard to the words they say. It is necessary to have this lesson so that Christians may learn God's will on this subject, which will give them greater power with God and more effectiveness in testimony. To know how to say the proper words at the right time is worth more than silver and gold. It could be of great value to many to make a practice of saying fewer words. Divine Writ exhorts us to let our words be few: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin"!

MEDITATIONS

EVIL HEART PRODUCES EVIL SPEECH—Matthew 12:34—
Speak good things—It is certainly most foolish to think that a child

of the devil could be fluent in the things of God. Rather, he will give vent to the things that are in his heart. His speech will be loaded with sin. In this case Jesus accused the religious sect of the Pharisees of being evil; and, of course, His accusation was founded on fact. What would He say of the many religious people today who are so light and evil in their speech?

SMALL BUT DANGEROUS—James 3:5, 6—A little member—The tongue is small, indeed, compared to the hands or feet, but how often the words uttered by it cause great trouble! God gives power to control the tongue to any who ask for it; likewise, the devil compels the unregenerated to say things that will do great harm. He also suggests that Christians say things that are unkind and very unbecoming to them as children of God. Therefore, we should use great care in speaking. “Let your words be few.” If a man utters boastful, cutting words, they excite words that are more boastful and more cutting in another, until at times the situation ends in blows and even murder. Evil words arouse hatred, which is in God’s sight, murder.

RANK HYPOCRISY—James 3:10—Blessing and cursing—The man who with one breath defames the name of God and then with the next pronounces blessing is depraved, indeed. God does not have any fence-straddlers, neither does He have any half-hearted children.

LEAVING OFF EVIL—Colossians 3:8—Filthy communication—Paul exhorts us to “put off,” in other words, to free ourselves from, to cease from, fits of anger, wrath, the desire to hurt someone, by cutting words, malice, blasphemy, cursing, and filthy communication. Filthy stories, light, meaningless conversation, angry words—these all are destructive to the cause of Christ. They must be laid aside.

PROFANITY FORBIDDEN—Exodus 20:7—Not hold him guiltless—Men profane the name of God with such frequency that they are hardly aware of it. Such is the awful state of conversation today! Man is so little and helpless in comparison with God, it is impossible to make a comparison! How absurd for him to take such a great name so lightly! Our words pertaining to God should be words of praise and adoration only.

PRAISE COMMENDABLE—Ephesians 5:4—Giving of thanks—We have nothing except that which we receive from God. Therefore, we are constantly in a place where thanksgiving is necessary. It is a very ungrateful soul who will not remember God upon the receipt of daily blessings. Jestings of any kind is improper and injurious to Christianity. Foolish talking does not contribute to the edifying of the body of Christ. Whatsoever we do, we must “do all to the glory of God.”

JESUS FORBIDS SWEARING—Matthew 5:34—Swear not at all—As Christians, we should not swear (make oaths) by the Bible, heaven, etc., but should so live that our lives speak for themselves.

When we must take an oath before a legal officer, “I affirm,” rather than “I swear,” can be used.

GUARDING THE TONGUE—Matthew 5:37—Yea, yea; Nay, nay—Let our words be only those that are necessary. Some may rebel against this, but it is only a rebellious spirit that would do so; for a sincere child of God, who has more than a mere profession, delights to improve his conversation.

DAVID’S TESTIMONY—Psalm 39:1—Keep my mouth—Men seem to get some delight from giving unbridled expression to their feelings by way of the tongue. David saw the evil of this and made his decision to avoid it. Satan will bring great pressure upon all in trying to get transgression here, but let us be informed by the reading of the Word and order our conduct accordingly. **While the wicked**—The wicked before David would provide greater temptation.

CONCLUSION

God has given man the power of speech, which He has denied to the rest of the animal kingdom, unless we mention the very limited words of the parrot. What a blessing speech is! But the fact that it is a blessing opens the way for the devil to use it as a curse. A close walk with God will give us control of our words. James declared that a man who was able to control his tongue was also able to control the whole body. Thus, it is very necessary that we carefully guard the words that we speak. There is no ban on singing, except that we must sing psalms and hymns. There is no ban on offering praise to God, for “praise is comely for the upright.” This is one of the most important lessons; therefore, we should diligently apply ourselves to its teachings.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What will he who is given to many words be charged with, according to Solomon?
2. What kind of speech proceeds from an evil heart?
3. What are some of the evils that result from an unbridled tongue?
4. What is the state of a man who is given to both blessing and cursing?
5. What is filthy conversation?
6. Why is it foolish for men to take God’s name in vain?
7. Name some things that the tongue may be used for without harm.
8. What was David’s testimony in regard to his tongue?

LESSON NUMBER SIX FOR NOVEMBER 6

LIVING FOR CHRIST IN THE MIDST OF MODERN FASHIONS

Scriptures: I Peter 1:24; Genesis 3:21; I Timothy 2:9, 10; I Peter 3:3-6; Deuteronomy 22:5.

I Peter 1:24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.

Genesis 3:21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

I Timothy 2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

I Peter 3:3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

Deuteronomy 22:5 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.

Memory Verse: Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.—I Peter 3:3, 4.

Aim: To show how God expects a Christian to dress.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday I Peter 1
Tuesday Genesis 3
Wednesday I Timothy 2

Thursday I Peter 3
Friday I Thessalonians 5
Saturday I Corinthians 6

INTRODUCTION

It may seem to the average person that today's lesson is of little importance, but it is a sad fact that most people are held fast by the god of fashion. A woman does not want to appear on the street unless her lips are painted; she feels embarrassed if her hair is not in the latest style. Her dress must not be different from the latest fashion, and "whatever the Joneses do," that is the order of the day. It is sad that people are in such a state; however, we see that this spirit constantly tries to entangle everyone who is free from it and living for God. A sanctified man or woman has set his whole affection on God and must watch with diligence that he be not deceived by modern fashions.

MEDITATIONS

THE FRAILTY OF FLESH—I Peter 1:24—Flower of grass—Vegetation endures for the shortness of a fleeting season, then withers away to make room for new vegetation in a new season. So it is with man! How short is his span of life, and how vain it is to put trust in his weakness, or to seek the favor of man! He who is a slave to fashion is a slave to the whim of man that so soon fades and dies.

GOD ORDAINED CLOTHING—Genesis 3:21—Did ... God make coats—In the beginning God did not clothe Adam and Eve; they were in a state of complete innocence. But with the arrival of sin and guilt came clothing. Note the purpose of God in clothing the first pair was to provide a covering, and not an ornament. Highly ornamental clothing proceeds only from a proud and vain heart.

MODEST APPAREL COMMANDED—I Timothy 2:9—Women adorn themselves—It was not long after the fall until women found they could attract added attention to themselves by the clothing they wore. It gained such universal practice that it became necessary for God to give instruction on the matter in His written Word. Modesty is the rule. One who is truly modest does not seek to put self on display and is not trying to get the praise and admiration of the world. Christ is the One who must have first place, and His graces and beauties alone must beam forth from the Christian. This teaching is repulsive to the sinful and unregenerated heart, but it is the way of life. The wearing of gold as an ornament is forbidden; likewise, any other thing that is added solely for the purpose of bringing attraction to the person of man. The heart of sinful man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; therefore, it is necessary that the Christian closely guard his. **Verse 10—Professing godliness—**Godliness is what everyone should seek for, men as well as women. A woman who professes to have the nature of God must not seek to give place to herself.

PETER'S INSTRUCTION—I Peter 3:3—Outward adorning—Why should we seek to glorify the flesh when it is only a house of clay and soon will perish? Many have lavishly provided themselves with many changes of apparel. This is for the glory of man and not the glory of God. If a man seeks to honor himself, it is always in competition with someone else and is certain to gender strife.

MEEKNESS, DEATH TO PRIDE—I Peter 3:4—Meek and quiet spirit—The man on the inside of the house of clay is the important one, and it is he whom we should seek to adorn. He cannot be adorned with material things. His adorning is with moral values. If he is properly adorned with the graces of heaven, it will be an easy matter to adorn properly the outward man. God values highly the proper adorning of the inward man.

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE—I Peter 3:5—After this manner—Regardless of how meager may have been the light that shone upon their pathway, the Old Testament saints walked with a good enough example that the New Testament saints are referred to them and admonished to follow in their steps. Today women are throwing themselves in great disfavor with God by their refusal to be subject to their own husbands.

DAUGHTERS OF ABRAHAM—I Peter 3:6—Daughters ye are—If the women of today follow the example of Sarah, they are declared to be the daughters of Abraham, and, consequently, heirs according to the promise that was given unto Abraham. She who follows the fashions of the day is not the daughter of Abraham, but the daughter of Belial.

DECLARED AN ABOMINATION—Deuteronomy 22:5—Abomination unto the Lord—This command is more transgressed by women today than by men, for women are seeking to fill the place of men more than ever before. God designed that women remain in the home and take care of the home duties. We need to consider well this admonition, for no one can afford to be an abomination unto the Lord. Modern life demands that woman fill the place of a man, but modern life is far from the will of God. Let us carefully consider the Word of God on this point and be instructed by it.

CONCLUSION

It is easy to follow the trend of affairs in life and to drift with the tide. The devil is a real artist in making it appear as if it is all right. He who makes heaven his home and inherits an eternal reward will do so because he has given heed to the Word of God and lived according to the divine will. So, in this age of great darkness we who are saints must walk according to the brilliant light of the truth of the Word of God, regardless of what the world may say or do. Modern fashion seeks to aggrandize the man, giving no place or glory to God. Every thinking person can readily see that such practice can lead only to the bottomless pits of eternal hell. Therefore, it is of the greatest importance that we be moved by the Word of God on this subject and seek God's help in making it real in our lives, for he who misses heaven misses everything good.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Do you consider today's lesson of importance? Give a reason.
2. Why did Peter say that all flesh is as grass?
3. Why were Adam and Eve clothed?
4. For what purpose were the first clothes made, and of what were they made?
5. Who is it that receives attention by immodest clothing? (Consider I Corinthians 10:31.)
6. What is the meaning of shamefacedness?

LESSON NUMBER SEVEN FOR NOVEMBER 13

WHEN THE CHRISTIAN MARRIES

Scriptures: Genesis 2:18, 24; 24:26, 27, 40, 50, 57, 58, 60, 67.

Genesis 2:18 And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Genesis 24:26 And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord.

27 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.

40 And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house.

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered

and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth.

58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

60 And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

Memory Verse: Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

—Matthew 19:6.

Aim: To teach that God is interested in our happiness and has a plan for our lives.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday	Genesis 2:1-18	Thursday	Luke 1:67-79
Tuesday	Genesis 2:19-24	Friday	Proverbs 3
Wednesday	Genesis 24:1-27	Saturday	James 1

INTRODUCTION

Man frequently has to make important decisions, and his life is influenced much by those decisions. The most important decision he makes is in regard to his relationship with God, and the second most important decision is in his choosing of a life's companion. In making this choice he certainly needs assistance that only God is able to give. But how few people seek the help of God in this matter! With many, marriage is only an adventure and, thus, is as easily forsaken as it was taken up. God holds man responsible for his marriage contract, and since marriage is His institution, man will answer to Him for the things that he does in regard to it. Companionship is beautiful indeed, if the Lord is in it; therefore, we should earnestly seek His

guidance, and take Him into consideration in our quest for a companion.

God made the world and all that is in it. Man and woman are the crown of His creation. Since He placed man above everything else, it is only reasonable to think that He gave the greatest care to make all things that his happiness would be complete. It is certain that if men and women will abide by the commands of God, life has great things to offer. Everyone should feel his responsibility to God, to his nation, and to his fellowmen. First, we should deeply desire to carry out the will of God, and we should desire that our nation before God should prosper. If we allow the institution of the home to be broken down, then we may expect that the nation will soon fall. Selfishness in the married life will be reflected in the ill effect it has on the nation. We hope that the importance of this lesson may make its impression upon everyone.

MEDITATIONS

GOD RECOMMENDS MARRIAGE—Genesis 2:18—Not good that the man should be alone—Due to the natural makeup of man, it is not good that he should live by himself. His happiness cannot be complete without a wife. God recognized this fact and proceeded to create for him one whom He was pleased to call a help meet. So for Adam He created Eve. In making the institution of the home, He also made laws to govern the conduct of the home, which, if followed, bring the greatest degree of happiness, and, if broken, end in disappointment and sorrow.

STARTING A NEW HOME—Genesis 2:24—Shall a man leave—When a couple marry, there is formed the nucleus for an entirely new home, and God ordains that they shall leave the old roof and establish an entirely new home. Christ is ordained to be the spiritual Head of this new establishment; and if He is given His rightful place, the home is certain to be successful. God mysteriously unites them together, and their purposes and aims and efforts become one. If sin is permitted to enter and Christ is deprived of His rightful place, the purposes and aims are not one, and division and trouble are certain. Only God can mend such a condition.

AN UNUSUAL ERRAND—Genesis 24:26—Bowed down his head—Abraham sent his servant to search for a wife for his son, Isaac, who was forty years old. The servant evidently knew God, as we see from his conduct, and he leaned heavily upon Him in carrying out his mission. He considered that he had been prospered in his journey by God to this present point, and he did not fail to give God the praise.

Genesis 24:27—Not left destitute—The men of that day had a sense of truth and valued it highly. It is the same truth that Pilate

asked Jesus about and of which he was so ignorant. The truth of the Word of God has not changed through the years. We have more of it in our day than men had in that day. They were responsible only for the light of truth they had; we are responsible for the truth we have. Obedience to the known will of God always brings favor with God, regardless of the time or the people.

CHOOSING WISELY—Genesis 24:40—Shalt take a wife—Abraham saw the inadvisability of choosing a wife of the people who surrounded him. They were given over to idolatry, but his servant must return to Abraham's people and there select a woman of his relatives. These people, without doubt, had some knowledge of the true and living God. So it is today. Christians should choose companions who are of the Christian faith, having the sound teachings of the Word of God in their hearts. To marry into false religion is disastrous, indeed. Avoid catastrophe by marrying a saint.

ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S HAND—Genesis 24:50—Proceedeth from the Lord—It is evident that these men had some knowledge of God, or they would not have been able to recognize the hand of God in the matter. Knowing it to be the Lord's working in it, they would not dare to say anything against it; yet they desired to keep Rebekah and would say nothing for it.

REBEKAH DECIDED—Genesis 24:57—Inquire at her mouth—Usually women had little to say in those days about such matters. As Rebekah was allowed to have a say in the matter, she must have been highly esteemed and considered capable of making her own decision.

DECIDING FOR LIFE—Genesis 24:58—Wilt thou go—We are prone to think that Rebekah had contact with God, or she would have been hesitant about going with this stranger to such a distant land in those days of slow travel. It would be difficult for her to return, should she be desirous of doing so. How beautiful it is to have the mind of the Lord in such matters! If God be for us, who can be against us? She was making a decision that would bind her for life and, doubtless, would change her manner of living altogether. But she knew that if God was in it, it would be a change for the better and not for the worse.

GOING WITH A BLESSING—Genesis 24:60—The mother of thousands—We note here that it was considered a blessing to be the mother of great posterity. How different things are today! The devil has been successful in magnifying the sorrow, discomfort, and inconvenience of motherhood until women try desperately to avoid this God-given privilege. God closed the womb of Rebekah, and she did not bear children for some years; however, from this union was carried on the line of the Israelitish nation, which became a power in the world and greatly affected the history of mankind. The history of the world

today would be quite different if all women had yielded their bodies to the Lord without reserve. **Verse 67—Became his wife**—Abraham’s wife, Isaac’s mother, had died, and the need of guidance in the home was very evident. Rebekah filled this place, and it was one of great responsibility, for the family of Abraham was great and widely known. But she (as is the case of anyone who walks into a life of responsibility) did not find a life of ease. Difficulties surmounted build character, and difficulties unsurmounted bring disaster. Every person, when he or she marries, walks into a place of great responsibility; therefore, the need of great consideration when the step is taken.

CONCLUSION

Marriage should NEVER be entered into lightly! It is one of the most serious parts of your life. It will affect your life as nothing else will. In importance I would put it second only to the soul’s salvation. That is why marriage is not for teenagers. I say kindly, but truthfully, teenagers, especially those 16, 17 years of age, just simply do not realize, as yet, the seriousness of life; they do not understand the problems of life. And many of us as parents have failed to teach them, even at that age, the things they need to know, and, sad but true, many of the children and young people won’t listen when they have parents who do try.

God’s plan is for marriage to be for LIFE! “Till death parts.” That is God’s plan, and it will be so if His will is carried out. God has not provided for “trial marriages,” as some ungodly people are talking of now.

I trust the study of this lesson will be a help to each student. Whether you be married, or one who plans to get married, study the Scriptures and let them be your guide.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What are the first and second most important decisions in life?
2. Why is it necessary that we have God’s approval in our choice of a companion?
3. Why should a man forsake his old home when he marries?
4. Why did Abraham send his servant so far to get a wife for his son?
5. What method did the servant use in arriving at the right choice?
6. In return for the help received, what did the servant do?
7. What was the blessing that was given to Rebekah as she departed?
8. What responsibility do men and women have to their God and to their nation?

LESSON NUMBER EIGHT FOR NOVEMBER 20

BUILDING A CHRISTIAN HOME

Scriptures: Titus 2:5; Joshua 24:15, 16; I Timothy 5:14; Psalm 127:3-5; 144:11, 12.

Titus 2:5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Joshua 24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods.

I Timothy 5:14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

Psalm 127:3 Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

Psalm 144:11 Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood:

12 That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.

Memory Verse: And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.—Joshua 24:15.

Aim: To show God's plan and purpose for the home.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday Titus 2
Tuesday Joshua 24
Wednesday I Timothy 5

Thursday Psalm 127
Friday Psalm 144
Saturday Proverbs 31:10-31

INTRODUCTION

It takes much more than a house to build a home. To build a home as it should be built takes much time and the close cooperation of all who are concerned. Even though we gather together all that goes to make a home and fail to let Christ take His place in the home, we do not have a proper home. The world might call it a home when Christ is absent, but the results of such a home are, in the end, entirely vain. So the first thing in building a home is to make sure that Christ is in the hearts of all concerned. Then we are in a position to build a home that will be a praise to God in the earth and a blessing to the nation of which it is a part. It is the work of Christianity to see to it that its homes are built over the divine pattern. The reward of building a Christian home is great indeed. To live in a Christian home is a bless-

ing. Then to be successful in pointing the children to Christ is to accumulate a reward that cannot be estimated. Then a Christian home is certain to leave behind an influence that will live on into the next generation and possibly into many others.

MEDITATIONS

CONDUCT OF THE WIFE—Titus 2:5—Keepers at home—The words of instruction as contained in this verse are very essential to the operation of a home that is a blessing to the nation. To be discreet means to be wise in making decisions and in the guiding of the affairs of the home. *Chaste* means “pure in moral conduct.” To be a keeper at home is to employ oneself with the duties of the home, and leave the matter of earning the living to the husband. Good is the absence of all evil. The husband is the head of the wife; therefore, obedience to his leadership in the family is necessary. Inasmuch as this is the command of God, to break it in any point is to cause the Word of God to be blasphemed. Before marrying, every woman should make sure that she is getting a man whom she can respect and who has the proper qualifications to be the head of the wife.

CHOOSING ARIGHT—Joshua 24:15—We will serve the Lord—It has been said that decision is half the battle. Certainly, it is a great part of it. Joshua made the decision that he did because he knew the Lord and concluded that it was the only right way to live. Not only was he going to serve God himself, but also he was going to see to it that the house over which he had been made the head should serve God. Such is the attitude that every head of the house should take, for he must answer to God for the responsibility that he has taken upon himself when he instituted a new home. **Verse 16—Forsake the Lord**—There is a constant pressure being brought upon people by Satan in trying to get them to leave the worship of the true God and to serve him by one means or another. Therefore, it is always necessary that there be a strong leader, as was Joshua, in keeping the people on the right track. When the leader fails, it is not very long until the people follow in the same failure. The pure gospel cannot be lived a week at a time, but must be lived each passing day.

HOME INCOMPLETE WITHOUT CHILDREN—I Timothy 5:14—Bear children—The modern woman and man, having been taught to seek pleasure in modern amusement, have found that children hinder them, both in the element of time and in the financial outlay. Therefore, to accommodate them, modern society has made it acceptable for a woman to abort her unborn child when she so desires. But the command of God is that the younger women marry and bear children.

THE HERITAGE OF GOD—Psalm 127:3—Children are an heritage of the Lord—There will be no babies in hell, for they who die in infancy shall be found in heaven. We are told, too, that unless

we become as little children, we will not make it through. Children add an atmosphere to the home that nothing else can. Any heritage from God is good, and God has entrusted us with the responsibility of training the heritage that He has placed in our hands. Parents should seek God daily for the strength and wisdom to teach the children aright. They must be taught not to set their affection on things of this earth, but on things above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God.

THE CURSE OF EVIL CHILDREN—Psalm 144:11—Strange children—We are told by the Word of God that a child left to himself will bring his mother to shame. A child left to himself is certain to grow up under the influence of Satan and will be found giving expression to the base desires of the flesh. God has designed that His kingdom advance by the agency of teaching. Therefore, if we fail to teach a child the truth in regard to life and God, his life is going to be filled with evil by the wicked forces of Satan. The strange children spoken of here by David were those from the surrounding kingdoms who had been nurtured in the false religions of his day, chiefly paganism. Their morals were completely degenerated, and their knowledge of the true and living God, the source of all good, was very small indeed, and possibly nothing. We are approaching almost that same place in our great nation today. Due to the fact that the average religion is teaching only a theoretical doctrine, few people have an experimental salvation that reaches the heart. The commission that was given unto us as Christians that we should go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature needs to be heeded now more than ever. Time is short, and what we do we must do quickly.

POLISHED DAUGHTERS—Psalm 144:12—Be as corner stones—There is only one thing that can give the polish to our sons and daughters that they should have, and that is the pure truth of the Word of God. We cannot expect the morals of our children to be what they should be if we are going to permit them to frequent the moving picture houses, spend hours in front of the television, and keep late hours in questionable places of amusement. These things are of the world and for the world, and they who do such things are building a character that is on a faulty foundation. Only one thing will stand the shock of the great judgment that is so soon to come upon us, and that is the soul's being nurtured in the Word of God. Let us seek to train our children in the things of God so that they may shine forth in the kingdom of our God as polished stones.

CONCLUSION

God looks down on a well-ordered home with pleasure. Satan revels in a home that is built upon sinking sand. It is sad to have to admit it, but most of our homes are built upon the sinking sand. Therefore, Satan is gleeful. Fathers and mothers have been heard to say, "I don't want my children to know the hardship that I have known," and they provided for them a life of comparative ease. A life of hardship builds

character if we let it, and a life of ease ruins character. Children in the home must be taught not only to work, but also to value work and consider it honorable. God has not changed His mind in regard to the fact that man shall gain his living by the sweat of his face. A child is very quick to pick up the trend of existing conditions; and if the parent is seeking an easy time, such will be the disposition of the child. A well-ordered home is one that provides something for each child to do and sees that the chore is done on time and in a workmanship-like manner. A well-ordered home is one that is not a stranger to the family altar and prayer; the Bible occupies the important place that it deserves, and the name of Christ in reverence is frequently heard.

I would like to conclude the comments on this lesson with the words of the late J. Grant Anderson:

“Children should be taught that life is not merely moving and breathing; for all thoughtful people know and see that life is a battle—a conflict between good and evil; good influences drawing us upward and onward, bad influences drawing us down to the brutish, mean, and vulgar. It is in the daily home life that parents can teach the child to love the good and true and beautiful, and thus weave into its life thoughts and feelings, grand, rich, and noble, which will make all afterlife brighter and better. In those households where a form of worship is prevalent we find it is an agency that softly enfolds the homestead with its hallowed, smoothing power. It is in such homes that the mind of the child is expanded, the heart softened, hopes elevated, and pursuits ennobled. Earnest, tender, and reverential worship is one of the great factors that make for the foundation of the moral and religious training of the child. There can be no more important theme in this busy day, this perilous age, to claim the attention of thinking parents than those of home harmonies, the responsibility of keeping alive the home feeling in the hearts of children, and the teaching them of the fundamental laws of love, life, and duty they owe to each other.

“Some parents seem to have forgotten that silence is a dangerous thing when it consists of neglect in warning their children against the wrong. It has been said that a little learning is a dangerous thing, which may be true in part. We are inclined to believe that it is more dangerous to be left in ignorance.”

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Name the things that it takes to make a true home.
2. What is the place of Christ in the home?
3. What is the place of the man in the home?
4. What is the place of the woman in the home?
5. What are the responsibilities of the children in the home?
6. What do you think of Joshua's choice? Did he assume more authority than was his?
7. What will happen to a child who is left to himself?
8. What did the early disciples sacrifice?

LESSON NUMBER NINE FOR NOVEMBER 27

ACCOMPLISHING LIFE'S PURPOSE

Scriptures: John 17:18; Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8; Ecclesiastes 9:10; John 4:34; 6:26-29.

John 17:18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither

thou goest.

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Memory Verse: Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.—John 6:27.

Aim: To point out the true purpose of living.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday John 17
Tuesday Matthew 28
Wednesday Acts 1

Thursday Mark 16
Friday John 4
Saturday John 6

INTRODUCTION

Doubtless, we all agree that God is a God of order, and everything that comes from His hand is a part of a definite plan. So we may say with safety that God has a definite plan for each one of our lives when He created us; and if we will find out what it is and live according to His teachings, we will have a life that is full and complete and satisfactory in every detail. But few people find what their purpose in life is, and spend their lives in riotous living; in many instances interfering with those who would do the thing that God would have them to do. Again, it is necessary that men be taught what is expected of them and how to arrive at the accomplishment of what is expected. Confusion comes from Satan;

order comes from God. So wherever we find confusion, we may always be certain that Satan has the upper hand, and his wicked devices are being accomplished. In all that we do we must work toward the goal of eternal life, for this is the final reward of living.

MEDITATIONS

THE HEAVENLY CALLING—John 17:18—I also sent them—Everyone naming the name of Christ should feel the weight and purpose of the last commission of the Lord, when He said to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Not everyone can go across the sea, nor can everyone preach; but everyone must learn what he is able to do and what God expects him to do in this great undertaking, and then perform it faithfully. We all find ourselves in a world that is very sinful and among people whose purposes are bent, not upon accomplishing the will of God, but in realizing as much pleasure in the flesh as possible. He who denies himself for the cause of Christ is an oddity and target for ridicule and persecution. So right in the start we can see that the purpose God has in mind for each one of us is that we be faithful witnesses of the cross.

TEACHING ALL NATIONS—Matthew 28:19—Go ye therefore—Marching orders are given as soon as the recruit is made. It may not be to the pulpit nor to a foreign land, rather it may be to the place of prayer, to the sickroom, or the jail, or to some discouraged, down-and-out soul. The life of a Christian is not a life of idleness, but one of tireless and continual service. We cannot be partial in the spread of the message. Everyone in the world needs it, and we must sow beside all waters, trusting God to give us the increase. Again, teaching is the great method by which the story shall be told. Every Christian is either a home or a foreign missionary.

WHAT SHALL WE TEACH?—Matthew 28:20—Observe all things—Our work by example and precept is set forth to the world in the life and work of Jesus Christ, not in a sectarian way, but under the direction and leadership of the Spirit of God. The sectarian plan and principle has done much harm to the kingdom of God, for it has given to the world the wrong impression of Christianity. This serious error must be corrected, and we cannot correct it by going along with it; we must set the true example along beside error so that the world may see for itself. We have this marvelous promise from the Word of God that Jesus Himself, by the Spirit of God, will be with us, even to the very end. If we have Christ, we are certain of success.

RECEIVING POWER FOR SERVICE—Acts 1:8—Receive power—The scripture is wrongly interpreted by many these days, and we deeply desire that the right understanding proceed from these pages. The power received is the Holy Spirit of God or the Spirit of Truth. The power that He imparts is the power to live a holy life at

home, among the neighbors, and in foreign fields. At no time does anyone receive power for the purpose of putting himself on exhibition by lying unconscious on the floor, and many like things that are done today in the name of religion. We are to have power also to represent Christ in the proper way. The Holy Spirit is the Master of every situation of life and can be relied upon, even as Paul relied upon Him in the Philippian jail and was miraculously delivered.

DILIGENCE REQUIRED—Ecclesiastes 9:10—Whatever—All things that are done for Christ must be done with the whole heart. There is no time to play religion. The devil is on the job day and night and never loses an opportunity. So must we never lose an opportunity, and what we do, we must do heartily as unto the Lord. Our life-span will soon end, and the chance of doing good will soon be ended; therefore, Solomon wisely admonished us to do with our might all our hands find to do. We must find a joy in defeating the powers of darkness and doing things for our God.

CHRIST'S PURPOSE—John 4:34—My meat—Jesus at all times put first the work that His Father had given Him to do. If it were mealtime and He had a task to perform for His Father, He did it; material things could wait. How often have we pushed the things of life aside to accomplish something for ourselves? Then it would seem perfectly in order to make the things of life second in our search for the accomplishment of the will of God! As the Father had assigned to Jesus a certain work to do, so has He assigned us a work to do. May we be able, when it comes our time to leave this world, to say as Christ said, "I have finished the work that Thou gavest me to do." He who enters wholeheartedly into the work of the Lord, laboring in the place that Christ has called him, has the "meat to eat that the world knows not of."

WRONG OBJECTIVES—John 6:26—Ye seek me—Jesus could read their hearts. He knew that these people were interested more in getting something to eat than they were in receiving the hidden manna that came from heaven. Today, some say they do not care who heals them, God or Satan, just so they can be well. The purpose of being well is for the purpose of reaping pleasure from the flesh. If it should be such a thing that we know God does not want to heal us, then we should seek help neither from the physician nor the devil. The rule is, however, that God desires to heal all. Unbelief stands in the way except, perhaps, in a very few cases.

RIGHT OBJECTIVE—John 6:27—Meat which perisheth—No man may devote the whole of his energy and time in the quest for the things that satisfy the flesh. We must labor for these things enough to satisfy the needs of the flesh, and the rest of the time must be put into looking after the needs of the spirit. This is the advice of Jesus, who certainly knows what is best.

RESPONSE TO TEACHING—John 6:28—What shall we do?—Too often, when men get interested in the work of the Lord, they reserve the right to go as far only as is convenient to the desires of the flesh. This is not acceptable with God, for He requires that we go all the way.

THE ROCK OF OFFENSE—John 6:29—Believe on Him—He was too humble for the proud Jews, and so He is today for the high-minded man. It is true that a few of the Jews did receive the Master when He came, but the great majority of them rejected Him. They are still rejecting Him, declaring Him to be an imposter and thus bringing upon themselves the damnation of eternal hell. Believing Him does not mean a mere head belief, but the believing in the heart that brings about a new life.

CONCLUSION

The true purpose of living is little realized by the great multitudes of the earth. How often has it been uttered by a bewildered soul, "What is it all about anyhow?" Such statements point out ships without rudders, sailing an uncharted sea. Such can never reach the haven of rest, but rather are headed for the rocks of destruction. The responsibility for such a situation can be placed squarely upon the faithless sectarian ministers who have divided and scattered God's people for the purpose of personal gain. It is the duty and purpose of life, in part, for every true child of God and every God-called minister to cry aloud and tell the world the state of false religion. We could be more happy in our life of holiness if more and more poor lost souls were made to see the light and glorious freedom that is in Christ Jesus.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Have you considered the fact that God has a definite purpose in your creation? Have you found that purpose?
2. What is every man called to do?
3. What shall the Christian teach?
4. To whom are we to carry the message?
5. For what does the Holy Spirit empower our lives when He comes in?
6. In what manner must we apply ourselves in working for the Lord in His great kingdom?

LESSON NUMBER TEN FOR DECEMBER 4

THE CHRISTIAN'S PRAYER LIFE

Scriptures: Psalm 55:17; 95:6, 7; Matthew 21:22; Hebrews 4:16; Acts 12:5, 12; I Thessalonians 5:17.

Psalm 55:17 Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

Psalm 95:6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice.

Matthew 21:22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come

boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Acts 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

I Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

Memory Verse: And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

—Mark 1:35.

Aim: To show that prayer is absolutely essential to the Christian life.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday Psalm 55; 95

Tuesday Matthew 21

Wednesday Hebrews 4

Thursday Acts 12

Friday I Thessalonians 5

Saturday Mark 1

INTRODUCTION

We have an erroneous practice today—and it seems to be increasing—that of using written prayers coming from the pens of theologians, as a means of the heart expression of the soul before God. This is only another of the wicked devices of the devil in keeping a soul from the divine presence of God. Prayer is that direct communion of the soul with God. We may just as well write out a conversation with a friend and then read it to him when we go to see him, as to read a prayer when we come into the presence of God in prayer. To some, prayer is an opportunity to make their wants known to God and nothing more. Prayer involves far more than this! Prayer is communion with God, or having fellowship with God, meeting Him as a Friend who is all-powerful and full of compassion and love. To come to God only for the things that we want is to know little about Him. The greatest joys that the human heart can know are experienced when he feels the Lord's presence the strongest. This is oftentimes in prayer.

MEDITATIONS

DAVID'S PRAYER HABIT—Psalm 55:17—Evening and morning and at noon—David occupied a place of great responsibility and

needed much divine aid. He was in a place where Satan could attack him violently, from which attacks only God could deliver him. David seemed to be accustomed to lifting up his voice in prayer. We know that God can hear the faintest cry of the inward man as easily as He can hear one who cries aloud.

CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP—Psalm 95:6—O come, let us worship—Here David, out of the depths of his heart, made a call to all around him to come and to bow down before God and worship Him. He truly recognized God as his Maker and felt his responsibility to Him. We are no less responsible than was David. **Verse 7—The sheep of his hand**—David was a shepherd and knew how dependent the sheep were upon the shepherd. He felt a like dependence upon God and was not slow in expressing it. Solomon, in his writings, reminded us that if we would acknowledge God, He would direct our paths. Unseen, unheard, and not felt does He often direct the path of him who puts his full trust in God, and the devil is helpless in trying to mislead him. God does not direct the feet of a rebellious soul. He is the property of Satan.

BOUNDLESS POSSIBILITIES—Matthew 21:22—All things whatsoever—To the average mind, this promise is so great it is passed by untouched. But it is just as true as God is true. He who made the heavens and the earth by speaking the word is fully able to carry out every promise that He has made. God did not design to give us the desires of our hearts if our desires were for the things of the flesh. This would not be for our welfare. But all things that we might need in the work of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth would be forthcoming if we dared to believe. Certainly, there is much need today that the gospel go to the ends of the earth. This verse does take in the needs of healing in our own body and in the bodies of others. We are living far below our privileges in this matter. Also, we are failing to accomplish as much as we should in salvation work because we are not asking in believing faith.

MANNER OF APPROACH—Hebrews 4:16—Come boldly—We must not come with arrogance, but with stubborn opposition to the suggestions and interferences of the enemy, and with humble submission to the great and divine wisdom and will of the true and living God, who has all power in heaven and in earth. It is wonderful that in Jesus Christ we have a Friend with whom nothing is impossible. The events of life often bring us into places that we see no way out of, but no event ever comes to man out of which the Lord is not able to help. In order to have favor with God, we must keep His commandments.

AGREEMENT IN PRAYER—Acts 12:5—Of the church—Some things are more difficult to obtain than others. It seems that the devil has more power to oppose in some cases than in others. If we are unable to get our prayers through by ourselves, then we call on other saints to help us. There is no mention made that Peter made any sup-

plication to God for deliverance, but the church was upon its face way into the night, pleading for the deliverance of Peter. God did surely hear and answer. He sent an angel from heaven and miraculously delivered him. What God did for the early church He will do for us if we will but believe. In Matthew 18:19 Jesus gave us this wonderful promise, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father." Are we not, according to this scripture, living below our privileges? In the midst of plenty, let us arise and give to the world an example of faith in God! When plenty is on hand, it is easy to quiet down and take it easy. If we are lukewarm, God will spue us out of His mouth. **Verse 12—When he had considered—**To Peter it was a great miracle that he was walking on the streets free. Upon his release, the only place that interested him was the place where the saints were gathered together. When he arrived, he found them still up and praying for his deliverance. There is nothing impossible today to the church that has learned how to pray. Today, as in the days of the early church, we are confronted with the violent forces of paganism that seem to be increasing every day. If we do not rise up against this awful flood in the power of the Spirit of the living God, practically all Christianity will be banished from the earth. Millions will go down to a devil's hell.

UNINTERRUPTED PRAYER—I Thessalonians 5:17—Without ceasing—There is no place in the Christian race we dare sit down along the way and rest ourselves from the exercise of prayer, the study of the Word and the faithful attendance unto all our Christian duties (visiting the sick, doing personal work, assembling with the church for worship, and giving to them who have need). To "pray without ceasing" means that we form a definite habit of prayer for each day and carry it out faithfully. There is need every day that we come before the throne of grace in prayer. Prayer is as necessary to the soul as food is to the body. If we do not eat natural food, it is because the body is sick; if we are deprived of food, the body soon becomes weak. To let up on prayer produces illness in the soul and will hinder spiritual health.

CONCLUSION

The subject which we have had before us in this lesson is vast, indeed, and in so short a space and time, the dealing with it has been meager. Well might we spend a whole quarter in Sunday school lessons dealing with this subject, but this is not possible, so we will just have to trust the dear Lord will help us to get the portion for our souls that is needed at this time. Millions, down through the ages of time, have found help at the throne of grace. The sick have been healed; the dead restored to life; daily problems have been solved; armies put to rout; and mountains removed. Millions have been brought to the feet of Jesus by prevailing prayer. These things are all in the past, and heaven is looking for us in our generation to give to the world a continuation of the things that are possible through prayer.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Does the prayer book have any place in the life of the Christian?
2. Give a definition of prayer.
3. Describe David's habit of prayer.
4. What are the possibilities to the Christian in prayer?
5. In what manner are we encouraged to come to the throne of grace?
6. What shall we do if we are not able to get our prayer answered by ourselves?
7. Give an example of prayer answered in your life.

LESSON NUMBER ELEVEN FOR DECEMBER 11

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP (Tithes)

Scriptures: Genesis 14:20; 28:20-22; Malachi 3:7-12.

Genesis 14:20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

Genesis 28:20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God:

22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

Malachi 3:7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of hosts.

Memory Verse: Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.—Matthew 23:23.

Aim: To teach that one-tenth of our income belongs to God.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday **Genesis 2**
Tuesday **Genesis 14**
Wednesday **Genesis 28**

Thursday **Malachi 3**
Friday **Hebrews 7**
Saturday **Matthew 23:1-33**

INTRODUCTION

Never since the creation of the world has there been a time when God has not required humanity to return unto Him a portion of the fruit of their labor; not that He needs it for Himself (although it is necessary to the promotion of His work), but that mankind might constantly be reminded of their dependence upon God and that it is from Him that every good gift comes. In the Garden of Eden God demanded that Adam and Eve care for and dress the garden, but among the trees was one from which they were not to derive any benefit. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, and Jacob vowed a vow that he would tithe if God would prosper and protect him. Soon after, the law required a return of a proportional part of man's income to God. This teaching was also adopted by the heathen nations, and they paid, in many instances, a tithe to the support of their heathen worship. Little is said about the tithe directly as a requirement in the New Testament; but even so, that does not detract from the fact that it is required by God. In the days of Jesus and the disciples the law of tithing was practiced rigidly. The Pharisees were very faithful in this, but neglected the weightier matters. If the people as a whole observed the practice of tithing, there was little to be said about it except in the way of commendation. Let it suffice here to say that if God required the tithe under the less glorious covenant, the ministration of the law, how can anyone expect to please God if he contends for a lesser standard in this more glorious covenant?

MEDITATIONS

ABRAHAM'S EXAMPLE—Genesis 14:20—He gave him tithes of all—Abraham was called by God His friend. He found friendship with God because of his humble obedience to God. Abraham paid one-tenth to God's servant, and we may wonder where he learned this practice; for before this, tithing is not mentioned in the Bible, and no part of the written law was given either. So the doctrine of tithing precedes the written law and beyond controversy continues after it. Abraham was careful to make sure that he gave one-tenth of all. Tithing is a moral obligation of man to God; it cannot be abolished.

JACOB'S VOW—Genesis 28:20—Jacob vowed a vow—Jacob was running away from home and friends, driven by the threats of his brother, whom he had injured. The presence of God seems to have convicted him, and now in an effort to regain some relief from his guilty conscience, he makes some promises to God. **Verse 21—Then shall the Lord be my God**—It is evident that he had strayed away from God, and here, under these unusual circumstances, he decided to return to the Lord. **Verse 22—Give the tenth unto thee**—It is evident that Jacob knew well the doctrine of tithing but had failed to practice it; he was condemned for it. He knew that he could not have peace with God unless he did. He declared he would give the tithe to God. We

have no doubt but that he kept his promise, for he prospered greatly. This incident occurred also before the giving of the written law.

WHOSOEVER WILL MAY COME—Malachi 3:7—Return unto me—God has always sought to get mankind to turn away from the breaking of His commandments to walking in His truth. Isaiah declared, “Whosoever will, let him come and drink of the water of life freely.” When a man gets deep in sin and disobedience, it is often hard, due to his blindness to see the error of his way.

ROBBING GOD—Malachi 3:8—Will a man rob God?—To rob God means to take something that belongs to God. If the tithe belongs to God, then the returning of the tithe to Him is not an act of giving, but the meeting of an obligation or a debt. It is more dangerous to steal from God than from your groceryman. Also, according to this verse, God can call for an offering whenever He wishes and the amount He desires. To fail to respond is to rob God. Giving on our part then would be an imparting freely over and above that which God asks.

FAILURE TO TITHE ACCOMPANIED WITH A CURSE—Malachi 3:9—Ye are cursed with a curse—Failure in our day to meet our obligation to God will bring a curse upon us the same as it did upon the people to whom Malachi was talking. The only way that God can carry on His work in the earth is by tithes and offerings. If we fail to tithe and give offerings as God requires by His Word, it is certain that the Word cannot go forth as it ought, and the failure of the Word to go forth will most surely bring a curse upon the people.

DISPOSITION OF THE TITHE—Malachi 3:10—Into the storehouse—It is evident from this verse that God intends that the tithe be brought to the place where we worship (get our spiritual food). It is not our privilege to scatter it out in various places where we know of a need. (We are at liberty to give offerings in such places.) A reward is promised for obedience to this command that should entice every reader.

GOD IS ABLE TO REWARD—Malachi 3:11—Rebuke the devourer—God in very short order prepared a worm to destroy the gourd of Jonah. He likewise is able to bless or curse the efforts of our hands. This I am sure He does. Let us obey His Word.

GOD’S WORD FINAL—Malachi 3:12—Saith the Lord of hosts—God never needs to reverse His judgments, for He never makes a mistake. We must, therefore, always scrupulously obey Him because He is always right.

CONCLUSION

Abraham is called the friend of God; he is also known as a man of faith. There is something else about Abraham we need to remember. The gospel was preached to him (Galatians 3:8), and under the gospel

he paid tithe. So tithing was, and is, a part of the gospel. Now in the days of Moses the law was “added ... till the seed should come” (Galatians 3:19). That which was added to the gospel is what was taken away—when Jesus died and brought in the New Covenant—the gospel remained. Abraham is the “father” of the Christians. He paid tithes to Melchizedek, a type of Christ. So under the gospel we pay tithe to Christ.

When a man is employed by another for a certain amount of money per hour or day, he sells to his employer a part of his life. Since our lives belong to God (every moment), why should we think it strange that we should be required to return to God one-tenth of the money for which we sell our time? If He gives us increase from our fields, why should we object to returning unto Him one-tenth? Would He not have a right if He desires to demand all? Could He not bring us all into a state of slavery if He so desired, and yet be within His right? Yes, He could. But He does not want us to be slaves. He wants us to be free, and He has so devised the financial system in His Word that we can without the iron hand of imperialism impart that portion of our substance that is necessary to carry on His work and still have an abundance for ourselves. Those who withhold that which is justly God’s do not realize that God has a thousand ways in which He can either subtract from our income or He can add to it.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. How long has God required men to return unto Him a portion of their substance, in one way or another?
2. Where do you think Abraham learned of tithing?
3. What do you think prompted Jacob to make his vow to God?
4. In what way is it possible to rob God?
5. What will be the result if we fail to tithe?
6. What can God do to mar our income?
7. Do we have a right to say where our tithe shall go after we put it in the “storehouse”?

LESSON NUMBER TWELVE FOR DECEMBER 18

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP (Offerings)

Scriptures: Proverbs 3:9; Malachi 3:8; Luke 6:38; 12:15; 21:1-4; Acts 2:44; 11:29; 20:35; I Corinthians 9:11.

Proverbs 3:9 Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.

Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Luke 21:1 And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

Acts 2:44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common.

Acts 11:29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea.

Acts 20:35 I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

I Corinthians 9:11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

Memory Verse: Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.—Proverbs 3:9.

Aim: To show the Christian's responsibility of giving to the Lord's work.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday

Proverbs 3

Thursday

Luke 12

Tuesday

Malachi 3

Friday

I Corinthians 9:1-11

Wednesday

Luke 6

Saturday

Acts 20

INTRODUCTION

Since the Lord's work in the earth must be carried on by men and women and the work is of such an extensive and important nature, it takes a great deal of time and involves much expense in building, operation, and efforts in charity. If the proper and sufficient amount of funds is not available, then the certain result is that the work of the Lord will be neglected and souls will be lost in the never-ending eternity. No child of God wants to see anyone lost; therefore, he is ready to do his part in responding to the biblical instructions on paying tithes and to the occasional call of the Lord for offerings. Our business affairs should be adjusted so that we always are in a position to give whenever the Lord calls. Many do not properly manage their business so they can do this. We need training on this point. It is very easy to

get into the habit of spending everything on ourselves and then not being able to satisfy the desires of the flesh. Self-restraint and discipline are very good for all. Money spent on ourselves will yield no reward in eternity, but every penny that is spent on the work of the Lord will bring a proper reward from the hand of the Lord in the day of judgment. Giving is a grace of God, and if we seek the Lord for His help, the grace will be forthcoming that will enable us to do a great work for the Lord in this direction.

MEDITATIONS

HONORING GOD—Proverbs 3:9—With thy substance—Our substance in this instance is the amount of material things that God has put into our hands, whether it be in the form of money or increase of the land. To give to God of the things that God has prospered us with, honors God. It is not pleasing to God for us to give the left-overs or imperfects, but the great and kind God that He is, is deserving of the very best that can be given. The following verse carries a promise to all who honor God with their substance. God will bless the increase in a real way. Today, America is wonderfully blessed with material things. Such things come only from God, for He alone has the power to give from the bountiful storehouse of nature. He sends His rain on the just and on the unjust. Those who live in other lands and do not have as much in a material way still need to give to the Lord's cause. Let everyone give unto Him that which is rightfully His.

TAKING GOD'S PORTION—Malachi 3:8—Robbed me—Some think that it is impossible to rob God. It is because they do not know God and have received no teaching from the Word of God on the question. It is true that God does not need anything from the hand of man for Himself. If He did, He would not ask man, for everything already belongs to Him—cattle and all—but He does need help from the hands of man that His work may be carried on unhindered. All the money that goes into the treasury of the Lord is for the purpose of defraying the expense of the Lord's work; and the wisdom of God has been such that He has properly gauged the amount so that there will always be meat in His house, if men do not rob God. But now, as in the time of Israel, men rob God, and the work of the Lord suffers. This ought not to be. If God gives all, surely we can return unto His work not only the one-tenth, but also the offerings He calls for occasionally.

MANNER OF GIVING—Luke 6:38—Good measure—In dealing with our fellowmen, we should always demonstrate a spirit of liberality. This always denotes a gracious spirit in the one who shows generosity. He who gives short measure displays a small and stingy nature. In time the measure that he has given will be returned unto him, for there is an unseen hand that constantly overshadows him that cannot be deceived. So let every measure, regardless of what it may be, be full, pressed down, and running over.

THE OPPOSITE OF GENEROSITY—Luke 12:15—Beware of covetousness—We are told in the Word that covetousness is idolatry, and God hates idolatry. In this scripture it is made plain that life is not made up of material things; therefore, it is a great mistake to put too much emphasis upon them. Material things will pass away at the ending of time, and he who has put all his affection upon them and lived for them alone will be destitute when the end comes.

GOD ALWAYS SEES—Luke 21:1—Looked up—Little did men realize that in the person of Jesus was an eye that could see without looking up. He knew the hearts of men perfectly and the deepest secrets that were there. How little did these rich men realize that the One who was watching them was the One who had prospered them! So it surely would do us all good if sometimes we could see ourselves as God sees us.

THE WIDOW'S MITE—Luke 21:2—Casting in—This small amount of money was little noticed by anyone of this earth, but being poor did not remove from the widow's heart the conviction that she had in supporting the work of the Lord. The amount she gave did not tell the world that she had any love for the work of the Lord, or that she felt any responsibility; but had everyone given as liberally according to his ability as she did, there would have been more money in the treasury than they could have used.

JUST JUDGMENT—Luke 21:3—More than they all—The poor widow had no reserve. That which she had in hand was that which she needed for that day's living. She denied herself and gave her living; therefore, according to the just judgment of God, her offerings, though only two mites, was greater than the large offerings of the rich men, and her reward in heaven will be greater. It is only true loyalty and devotion that can cause anyone to give as the widow did. Men often give out of their abundance to be seen of men. True humility acknowledges God as the Giver of every good and perfect gift, giving Him the glory for the blessing of wealth. The carnal heart seeks to draw attention unto himself through the display of riches.

COMMUNITY OF GOODS—Acts 2:44—All things common—Some have tried to teach that the practice of the early church as related here is the pattern for all time, but such is not the case. The spirit of it should apply to the church at all times, but not always the letter. The early church had such love for the work of the Lord that they found it a pleasure to give for the furtherance of the kingdom of God. They felt that the survival of the church was far more necessary than their own personal business or ambitions. Generally speaking, God expects Christians to build homes and live an entirely normal life, contributing to the welfare of the community in which they live. Why should we not have Christian businessmen and school teachers and such like? There is no reason, and to this end we as Christians should labor. It is very unreasonable that we should be sending

Christian children to be taught of men and women who may be atheistic, or sectarian in attitude.

WORK OF CHARITY—Acts 11:29—Send relief—We never know what another day will bring. It may be wealth or poverty, sunshine or rain. At all times we should be prepared, as much as possible, for that which may happen. Of course, the first thing that everyone should make sure of is that he has favor with God and then do with all his might what his hands find to do. Diligence does not fail to catch the eye of God, and He gives proper reward. There is always somewhere someone who stands in need and always will be, for Jesus declared that we would have the poor with us always; and as far as we are concerned, according to the teachings of Christ, it is always more blessed to give than to receive. So if we desire to add to our present blessings, we must develop more fully the art and grace of giving to the poor and to the furtherance of missions.

CHRIST'S ATTITUDE—Acts 20:35—Support the weak—Sin is at the bottom of all sickness, weakness, and failure. Some do not have the capacity to make it through life and must be helped, but the average person has more than enough ability to make his way through life. Therefore, the Lord knowing this has decreed that he who has and is able to produce with his hands more than he actually needs should divide with the unfortunate. This present age of machinery, in which man's hands in production have been greatly strengthened, should provide much more to be given to worthy causes than ever before.

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE MINISTRY—I Corinthians 9:11—Sown ... spiritual things—According to the Word of God, the preachers who bring the truth of God and look after the spiritual welfare of the people should receive from the ones who are taught the material things of which they may have need.

CONCLUSION

The church has a responsibility to give offerings from time to time to help reach the lost with the soul saving gospel. The saints also have a responsibility to help the poor and needy. But we also need to be aware of where we are to give. We are not to give to support false religion. And Paul said if a man won't work neither shall he eat. So we need to make sure our giving is actually helping God's cause and those we give to are needy and worthy. We have no responsibility to help support sin and wrong.

It is to be hoped that the study of this lesson has brought to the forefront, not only our responsibility as custodians of health and wealth, but also our opportunities really to do something in the great work of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth. The speed of spreading the gospel today is hindered because men do not catch the vision of what is possible to be accomplished through the proper use of their money. Schools need to be established with a Christian teaching staff.

Radio stations should be erected which give preference to the gospel message; orphans' towns should be established, built exclusively over the Christian pattern. Lack of consecrated funds hinders this great work, and it is to be hoped that there shall be a great awakening along this line.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What is God's plan for the carrying on of His work as far as finances are concerned?
2. What is wrong when it is hard for people to give to the cause of God?
3. How was it that the widow gave so much when she gave so little?
4. What does covetousness in the heart indicate?
5. What prompted the early Christians to give so liberally?
6. What should our attitude be toward the unfortunate?

LESSON NUMBER THIRTEEN FOR DECEMBER 25

GOD'S UNSPEAKABLE GIFT

Scriptures: II Corinthians 9:7, 15; Matthew 2:1-12.

II Corinthians 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

Matthew 2:1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a

Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Memory Verse: Every man accordeth as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.—II Corinthians 9:7.

Aim: To set forth the truth concerning God's gift to mankind.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Monday	Matthew 2	Thursday	II Corinthians 8
Tuesday	Luke 2	Friday	Psalm 100
Wednesday	II Corinthians 9:1-15	Saturday	John 3

INTRODUCTION

We have through the years accepted the observance of Christmas as a matter of fact, but there are some things to which we need to be alerted. First, it is quite evident that the Lord was not born at the time of year that is celebrated as His birthday. Second, the time celebrated is the time that was originally observed by the pagan world in their celebration of their worship of the sun god. There can be no doubt that this was a result of a large number of pagans who came into the Christian faith when Christianity was declared to be the state religion by Constantine in 313 A.D. Third, it is absurd to be giving gifts to everyone but the One who has the birthday. The wise men did not give gifts to Mary and Joseph, but to the Babe Himself. Their gifts were given to Him because He was King and not because it was His birthday. Then businessmen have made this season of the year a time of great money-gathering. They are little interested in the Child who was supposedly born on this day. The money they can gather unto themselves is the thing in which they are interested. When the angels brought the message, "Peace on earth; good will toward men," it was not to be limited to December 25. It is a principle for all times. Nothing could be more pleasing to the Lord than that we devote this time to the humble worship of the Lord.

MEDITATIONS

THE GIFT OF GIFTS—II Corinthians 9:15—Unspeakable gift—The gift of Christ, the perfect sacrifice, and the gift of eternal salvation are so inseparable that they cannot be dealt with apart. You cannot have the one without the other. So if we say that Christ is the unspeakable gift, or if we say the salvation of our souls is the unspeakable gift, it makes little difference. The gift of both is great indeed, and without them, what would man do? There would be no hope for man. He would, indeed, be most miserable. The hope of this present life is little. Riches so frequently take wings and fly away. Friends so frequently fail and turn out to be bitter enemies. Health, which is one of the greatest blessings of natural life, fails often without a moment's notice. There is nothing in this world that we can build on with any certainty, but the gift of God gives us hope for eternity and smooths out many of the rough places in this world. It is a disturbing fact, how-

ever, that the vast majority of people are paying little heed to the unspeakable gift, trampling it underfoot to get the meager blessings that the time world has to offer.

A GREAT EVENT IN HISTORY—Matthew 2:1—Jesus was born—This is one of the greatest events of history, and the happenings that surround this event have influenced the family of man more than anything else. For centuries men knew that a Child would be born into the world to fulfill a great purpose. Job prophesied of it when he declared that he knew that his Redeemer lived and should stand upon the earth in the latter day. Many a Jewish mother, without doubt, looked upon her baby boy's crib and wondered if her child might be the promised and anointed One. Over 2,000 years have gone since this event, and the story is still thrilling, and the glory of the event still lives.

THE ONE GREAT KING—Matthew 2:2—Where is he?—Some sought Him for the purpose of worship; others would have destroyed Him. Rejected by the Jews because He did not fill their idea of a king, He became actually the true King of every heart who beholds the spiritual reality of His eternal kingdom. Today He resides in every heart who has been born again of the Spirit. There He reigns as the true and righteous King that He is. **Verse 3—Was troubled**—There was something in the air that could not be explained, and the uncertainty of it caused both Herod and the people of Jerusalem to worry. Herod looked at it from a natural sense. He could not allow anyone to arise who would threaten his throne. If he had accepted the Christ who made His way into the earth as a Child, he would have been greatly benefited and enabled to do the tasks properly that were his in life. **Verse 4—Demanded of them**—He held a place of authority and held a commanding position. Little did he realize that there was One watching over this newly born Babe who towered so high above mankind that before Him all nations became as a drop in the bucket! **Verse 5—By the prophet**—Students of the Old Testament had an understanding in regard to the promised Christ and were able to answer Herod's question correctly. Yet their spiritual understanding in regard to His mission was clouded and darkened to the point that they rejected Him when He appeared.

CHRIST, THE RULER—Matthew 2:6—Rule my people—Israel in general looked for a material king who would rule from a throne in Jerusalem. They could not understand that He was to be the invisible moral ruler who would lead them to victory over the mighty enemies, sin and the devil. These are the greatest enemies that man has, and when he wins over them, he gains the greatest victories that are possible to be won.

DIVINE GUIDANCE—Matthew 2:9—Went before them—It is a great honor indeed to have the high God of heaven delegate one of His celestial bodies to lead to the desired location. However, we do not see God sending one of His stars to direct King Herod. We who know

Him are encouraged to command Him concerning the work of His hands (Isaiah 45:11). We are His children and of His family; therefore, He will do great things for us if we ask and believe.

CAUSE FOR REJOICING—Matthew 2:10—When they saw the star—Only the guiding hand of God could make known to them the purpose of the star and its presence, rather than causing fear (as it might have for some), produced great joy.

TRUE WORSHIP—Matthew 2:11—Fell down—He who really finds Christ is going to fall down and worship Him and also is certain to offer Him gifts. First of all, everything that he has and everything that pertains to him is going to be put entirely at the Lord's disposal, and the ensuing life will be one of a continual living sacrifice.

OBEYING GOD RATHER THAN MAN—Matthew 2:12—Another way—We can and must be obedient to our rulers as long as their laws and commandments are not contrary to the laws and commandments of God. The wise men regarded the Lord as King of kings, and His command was to be obeyed ahead of all others. We who are true followers of Christ will always be found doing the very same thing.

GIVING FREELY—II Corinthians 9:7—Not grudgingly—A heart that is fully committed to the will of God will be led of God in all things, not by outward manifestations but, usually, by an inward conviction. So when there is a financial need, an inner conviction will present itself in regard to what should be given. That will be what has been purposed in the heart. Do not fail to do according to what you have purposed and do it gladly, for it is being done not as unto man but unto God. How perfectly God knows our hearts and understands if we are giving willingly or not. He is grieved if we give with a grudge.

CONCLUSION

We see no evidence about us today of any world-wide working of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men. Most religion is formal and being entered into half-heartedly. Far more zeal and energy is being thrown into the pursuit of the things of the world. One reason for this is, we are not worshiping God in the beauty of holiness as commanded in His Word. One avenue of our departure from such worship is plainly brought out in this lesson. The Christian spirit of love and helpfulness should be shown throughout the year. Our devotion and service to Christ should flow very evenly the whole year through.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What is the nature of most of the Christmas celebration today, especially in those cases where strong drink is introduced?
2. What is the "unspeakable gift"?
3. What event in history has had the greatest influence on mankind?
4. How would you describe Christ as King?
5. Were the wise men justified in disobeying Herod?

Name _____

Class _____

Practical Christian Living

ADULT & YOUNG PEOPLE

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