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IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

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LESSON FOR JULY 29

MATTHEW, THE PUBLICAN

LESSON TEXT — Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32.

GOLDEN TEXT—"I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."—Matthew 5:32.

REFERENCE MATERIAL—Mark 2: 13-22.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Matthew Invites Jesus to His Home.

JUNIOR TOPIC—What Jesus Did for Matthew.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Matthew Overcomes a Handicap.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Matthew, a Study of Conversion.

I. Who Matthew Was.

Of Matthew little is known, even his birth place is concealed. Our first sight of him is seated at the toll booth collecting taxes. The tax gatherer was hated by the loyal Jews because he collected taxes for the alien government under whose yoke they were galling. This hate was the more bitter because of the extortion usually practiced by those in rule. From the meager accounts we find that Matthew was:

1. A Man of Decision. We do not know whether he had ever seen or heard of Jesus before this time, but we note that he at once arose and followed Jesus. Without doubt, there were many things to concern him. It was no little task to break off from his business which apparently was very lucrative.

2. He Was a Humble Man. In chapter 10, verse 3, the order in which he gives his own name and the fact that he designates himself a "publican" would show that he did not overestimate himself.

3. He Possessed Force of Character. This is shown in the fact that he gave a feast and invited his friends in to see and hear his Lord.

He had two names, Levi, which means "attached" or "joined," and Matthew, which means "gift of Jehovah." Most likely Matthew was the name assumed after his conversion.

II. Matthew's Call or Conversion (Matt. 9:9).

1. As Jesus Passed By, He "Saw a Man." He saw the possibilities which were in Matthew. He saw through the hated profession of a tax gatherer the shining possibilities of his manhood and apostleship. He saw in him the man fit to perceive and portray the Messiahship of the Redeemer. The divine grace was revealed in this call. Jesus sees what is in man regardless of name or profession.

2. Matthew's Response (v. 9). He acted with decision and promptness; he left his business behind him. When Jesus said, "Follow Me," Matthew perceived that greater than man had spoken to him. May we yield ourselves unto Him and render such simple obedience that our actions may be but the echoes of the divine voice in commanding. Two things in Matthew's compliance prove the genuineness of his conversion:

1. "He Left All" (Luke 5:28). Real conversion always results in the forsaking of all that is contrary to Jesus, such as illegitimate business, wicked associates and worldly pleasures, etc.

2. "Followed Jesus." Following Jesus means the commitment of one's life to Him for full salvation, abandonment of the will to Him to do whatsoever He wills, and a willingness to suffer, and even die, if need be, for Him.

III. Matthew Made a Great Feast (Luke 5:29-32). This feast was made in honor of his newly-found Savior. His conversion was so real that he wanted his friends to become acquainted with his Savior. He was not ashamed to confess his Lord before them. He showed real tact in making a supper. Men will come to a feast much more readily than they will to a sermon. A great company of sinners came, who doubtless had been Matthew's companions in sin. He now desired them to become his brothers in Christ. The Scribes and Pharisees were astonished that Jesus would appear in company with such a motley crowd of disreputable persons. They were too cowardly to speak to Jesus but they came to the disciples. Jesus championed their cause and battled His adversaries. His reasoning was unanswerable. A physician's place is among the sick. Only those who are diseased should come to the doctor's house. Since spiritual matters are of more importance than physical, Jesus was more than justified in being in the center of those who were morally sick that he might heal them of their maladies. He came to call sinners to repentance.

Our Conscience.

If conscience smite thee once it is an admonition; if twice, it is a condemnation. Repose is as necessary in conversation as in a picture.—Hazlitt.

Intelligence and Charity.

The brightest blaze of intelligence is of incalculably less value than the smallest spark of charity.—W. Nevins.

The Ground of Joy.

We can do nothing well without joy, and a good conscience which is the ground of joy.—Sibbes.

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPIC

By Rev. Charles E. Schaeffer, D. D.

July 29. **Industrial Missions at Home and Abroad.** 2 Thess. 3: 6-13.

During this current year we have been considering various phases of missionary activity at home and abroad. There are different lines along which such activity is directed, such as the Evangelistic, the Educational, the Medical and the Industrial. They all belong to the one great endeavor to establish the Kingdom of God upon the earth, but the emphasis may be at times on one or on the other. Perhaps the Industrial phase of mission work is not as well known or as extensively carried forward as some of the other phases. Usually people think of mission work as consisting of preaching and teaching, the gathering of souls into the Church and the nurturing of them in their faith in God. Often the Medical and the Industrial features of mission work are not receiving the attention they deserve. This is especially true of the Industrial. Men sometimes have to stretch their imaginations and put a very liberal interpretation upon Christianity to convince themselves that farming and forestry, that weaving baskets and making aprons, etc., are real missionary work. But as a matter of fact they are such. We have come to recognize the fact that life is a unit, that it is not cut up into airtight compartments, one of which is for religion and another for the world. The old line between the sacred and the secular is growing fainter. We are coming to recognize that a man can be religious when he works at his bench as well as when he worships in his pew: In fact, if he is not religious at work he is not really religious at worship. So we have come to think of all legitimate work as work for God. We believe that when Jesus made beds and ploughs and yokes back there in Nazareth He was about His Father's business quite as much as when He lingered in the temple in Jerusalem after His parents had gone on their homeward journey. Religion embraces all of life. And the men and women who teach boys and girls how to earn a livelihood and at the same time to make a life worth living, are true servants of God and missionaries in a very real sense.

Now, Industrial Missions find their warrant and meaning in this larger interpretation of religion. We find this phase of work in the home land principally in rescue missions, in Indian missions, in missions among the colored people and among the Jews. Generally the work is carried on among the children, except in rescue missions. The Salvation Army does a fine piece of Industrial Mission work. Many people must be kept busy so as to keep out of mischief. "Satan finds mischief for idle hands to do." The dangers and temptations of leisure hours are great and grave. This is one of the dangers of the shorter hours of labor. This provides opportunity for idlers to get into bad ways and habits.

Industrial Missions go on the theory that work is a blessing, a means of grace, that through employment the soul of the man or woman is redeemed. And so our rescue missions and the Salvation Army and other similar agencies carry forward an industrial department which furnishes light employment for the people whom they seek to help.

Industrial Missions, however, are not confined to this class of people. There are industrial schools among various nationalities in which children are taught trades and occupations of many kinds. Thus boys are taught carpentering, photography, chemistry, painting, etc.; girls are taught cooking, sewing, typewriting and many other things which are of use to them later in life. In Louisville, Ky., there is a school for colored children where a fine piece of industrial work is being done. The same is true at Bowling Green, Ky., also among the Indians at Black River Falls and Neillsville, Wis., and also among the Jews in Brooklyn and in Philadelphia. These represent the work of this character done by the Reformed Church at home. It might be said that some local Churches have been interesting their boys in gardening and in the raising of corn and hogs and sheep.

When we look at Industrial Missions abroad we find considerable emphasis placed upon its importance. The idea is not simply to use this method to win heathen people to Christ, but to build up their lives and make them really worth something so that when they do accept Christ they may represent real value and true life.

To get boys to make a kite, for instance, in order to inveigle them into the Kingdom is as poor policy as to feed people a bowl of soup and thereby catch them for Christ. We feed people soup because they are hungry, they need it, not as a pretext to save their souls. So Industrial Missions are not a camouflage for the gospel; tney are the gospel in one form of its expression.

In the Reformed Church we have been carrying forward an enterprising Industrial work both in Japan and in China. In connection with the North Japan College, Sendai, Japan, there is an Industrial Home which is the center of a large agricultural work, where there is also a printing plant and where laundering is done. This affords splendid opportunity to the students not only to learn these occupations, but also to earn money to pay their way through college. This produces healthy bodies and a degree of self-respect and self-reliance which are prerequisites in building a good, strong character.

In China this phase of work takes on a more pretentious form. Recently more ground was secured by the Eastview Schools in Human, and this is now being used for a stock farm and a vegetable garden. Two full time workers are employed. On the stock farm there are pigs and goats and the intention is to secure a high class breed of cows for dairy purposes. The fields produce buckwheat and clover and the gardens foreign vegetables for the missionaries. Another phase of Industrial Missions in China is forestry. In the triennial report of the Board of Foreign Missions to the General Synod last May ocurs this statement: "The Department of Agriculture and Forestry is making splendid progress. Over six acres are under cultivation, affording self-help opportunities to 20 students. A one-story building 60x22 feet has been provided, and through the generosity of a friend American implements for farming and gardening have been added. Dr. Hoy says: 'The nursery of young trees is a delight to the aesthetic sense and from these little trees will grow an enterprise that must cover our neighboring hills with valuable forests.'" The significance of this statement by Dr. Hoy appears when it is remembered that the timber outlook for China is very serious. He who plants a tree renders a good service. So this Department of Forestry not only gives the boys a good knowledge of trees, but will also help to produce timber for the many purposes to which it can be put.

It is along lines such as these that the Industrial Mission work of the Reformed Church is being carried forward at home and abroad. It is a worthy piece of work. It needs to be encouraged and supported. It is in keeping with the larger interpretation of religion and a part of that great effort to bring every life and all of life under the sway and the Spirit of Christ.

ARGUMENTS



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Some admirers of jazz music are fond of hymn tunes when they get sick.

Just the Difference

By MORRIS SCHULTZ

(©, 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

CLARA ABINGDON sat facing Charles Kean over the table of the restaurant in which she had sat with him twelve years before, wondering whether it was all a dream, those twelve years.

She was studying his face, noting the changes that the years had wrought. Kean's hair was thickly sprinkled with gray, there were lines—but lines of command—about his mouth and eyes. He looked stouter, he looked prosperous. And he was prosperous, she knew. Yes, he was a different man from the one whom she had refused—to her eternal regret—in 1911.

Then she had been full of her stage career. She was to be a wonderful actress. To that career everything was to be sacrificed. She might, she thought, marry, later, some famous man—never a young business man like Charles Kean.

Now—she had learned wisdom with the years. She knew now the travail of hard work that never leads very far. She knew she would always be mediocre. She had saved a little money, and she would probably eventually amass enough to open a teashop with. She would do almost anything to escape the drudgery of stage life.

Except marry an impossible man. There was, of course, a limit. But Charles Kean was on the right side of that limit. She wished that she had known it twelve years before.

He had pleaded so hard, too. He had been madly in love with her. She had not loved him, but she had pitied him.

"It's no use, my dear boy," she had told him. "I have my career to think of. I am not going to consider marrying for years to come."

"I shall wait forever if need be," answered Charles Kean.

A few days before she had met him again. He told her that he had never forgotten her. He had simply waited until he felt the time was ripe. Would she dine with him in the restaurant where they had talked and parted?

Clara had felt a very warm thrill at her heart when he said that. Of course she had assented. And in the intervening days she had decided to marry him. She would be more than satisfied to be the bride of a prosperous man, and not the usual stamp of business man, but one who had traveled, who understood things.

Yes, it all seemed like a dream, those twelve years that had passed. And she saw her own face reflected in the mirror opposite her. She had changed too, of course; her face had grown mature; she was thirty-five; but still she was a woman worth the winning. She realized that. She was not throwing herself away—neither was he. Well matched, both of them.

Charley was speaking:

"I waited, Clara, dear, for many reasons. But there has never been any woman in my life whom I cared for as I did for you."

"It was wonderful of you, waiting all these years, Charles," she answered in low tones. "If I had really understood."

"You—you refused me, Clara. Our lives might have been so happy."

"Can't they be happy yet?" she ventured.

He was looking at her thoughtfully. "That's what I dared to dream," he answered. "Only—"

What was that he was saying? She listened, and at first she did not understand. He was gathering courage as he went on.

"I was hopeless. I thought you were gone out of my life forever. And then—well, Mildred and I cared for each other in a way, though I am sure she cared more than I did. I wanted a home and children. It was all so unsatisfactory, Clara, that marriage of mine, for you were always in my heart."

So he had been married!

"Never mind the past, my dear," she said. "We have only each other to think of."

"That's what I hoped you'd say. I can take an apartment for you—Mildred will never find out about you, and—"

She looked at him in horror. "You mean—your wife's alive?" she asked. "And you are suggesting that—I didn't understand—Oh, no, no, Charles, that isn't in my line at all!"

And, looking at him in dumb terror she realized that fate had always destined their separation; twelve years before, because she would not marry, and now because he could not. That was the only difference; all the rest was a dream.

Moros Kind to Children.

The Moros are kind to their children, says Sydney A. Colman, in World's Work. When a child cries, the mother clasps it in her arms, coos to it and smells its head until it is pacified. The act of kissing seems to be reserved entirely for the father. The women seem to be of a lower scale than the men and are simply domestic servants. No one ever saw them doing anything but hang about and contribute to the state of their masters. The chiefs are usually rich men, and, in fact, that is the principal reason why they are chiefs. If a man cannot pay his debts the chief may add him to his household as a slave.

Most crimes concerning property—and this includes women—are punished by death. Tempers are frail and there are continual homicides as the result of quarrels.

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