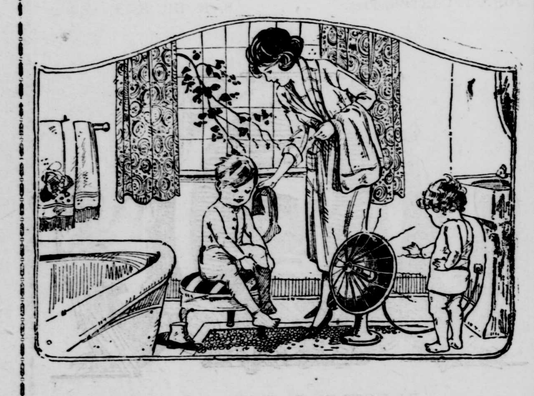


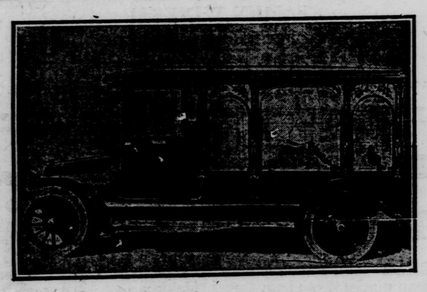
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Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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LESSON FOR OCTOBER 23

PAUL'S LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.

LESSON TEXT—Acts 20:1-21:7.
GOLDEN TEXT—Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.—Gal. 6:9.
REFERENCE MATERIAL—Rom. 16: 3-16, 21-23; II Tim. 4:19-21.
PRIMARY TOPIC—How Paul's Friends Showed Their Love.
JUNIOR TOPIC—Paul and His Friends.
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Paul and His Friends.
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Paul Reviews His Ministry.

I. Paul's Visit to Greece and Miletus (20:1-6).

Two incidents marked this trip:

1. The Jews laid wait for him (vv. 1-5). This plot obliged him to retrace his steps through Macedonia instead of a more rapid sea voyage.

2. Fellowshiping the Disciples at Troas (vv. 6-16). He met with them around the table of the Lord and spoke words of encouragement. While preaching here, Eutychus, in a deep sleep, fell from a window and was killed. Paul restored his life, thus giving to the disciples a sign of divine power which was greatly needed at that time.

II. Paul's Farewell to the Ephesian Elders (20:17-38).

His object in this address is to impress upon them their responsibility.

1. Review of his three years' ministry (vv. 18-21). (1) The spirit of ministry (v. 19). He was humble, tender and faithful in spite of the many trials which befell him. (2) The faithfulness of his ministry (vv. 20, 21). He made known unto them everything which was of profit, taught them both in public and in private. He neglected no class, Jews or Greeks. He was impartial in all his ministry. (3) The theme of his ministry (v. 21). Repentance and faith. This is the pre eminent note in the message of true ministers today.

2. The present state of things (vv. 22-27). Having reviewed his ministry, he now points out the present state of things. (1) His immediate purpose was to go to Jerusalem (v. 22). (2) Bonds and afflictions were lying across his path (v. 23). Despite these he went forward with undaunted courage. He knew that God was leading him, so he went forward. (3) His fixed purpose (v. 24). He was determined to complete his ministry at whatever cost—even giving up his life. (4) His consciousness of obligation discharged (vv. 25-27). Knowing that they should see his face no more, he called them to record that he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God; therefore was free from the blood of all men.

3. His charge to the elders (vv. 28-35). (1) The ground of (v. 28). The flock for which they must care was purchased by the precious blood of Jesus, and they had received their commission from the Lord. (2) The impending evils (vv. 29, 30). False teachers would arise from their own number. Grievous wolves would devour the flock. The most deadly foes of the church are those ministers and Sunday school teachers who are unfaithful to their trust. (3) Incentives to faithfulness (vv. 31-35). His own example of watching night and day for three years is held up before them; his unselfish service, laboring with his own hands night and day that he might be free from suspicion of selfishness.

III. Paul Tarrying Seven Days at Tyre (21:1-6).

His point of destination was Jerusalem. He was pressing onward thither with all speed, but on account of the unloading of the ship he was obliged to wait at Tyre for seven days. During this delay he searched out the disciples who lived in that city. While here certain disciples said that Paul should not go to Jerusalem. The information which these disciples received by the Spirit was doubtless the same as that given to Agabus (vv. 10, 11). Agabus told exactly what the Spirit said, which sets right what the Tyrian disciples seemed to say. The same Spirit which showed to these disciples that suffering awaited Paul, revealed unto him the same suffering and sent him forward into it.

IV. Paul Tarrying in Philip's House (vv. 7-14).

Resuming their journey, they paused briefly at Ptolemais to greet the brethren there, after which they went to Caesarea. Here they took up their abode with Philip, who had so successfully wrought in the early days of the church.

V. Paul at Jerusalem (vv. 15-17).

The brethren at Jerusalem gladly received them. Paul's lodging place was with an old disciple.

Blessings of This Day.

Enjoy the blessings of this day, if God sends them, and the evils bear patiently, and sweetly; for this day is ours; we are dead to yesterday, and are not born tomorrow.—Jeremy Taylor.

Near Him.

We come too near Him when we search into His counsels. The sun and the fire say of themselves, Come not too near. How much more the Light which none can attain unto?—Bishop Hall.

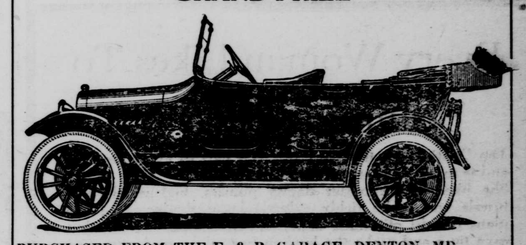
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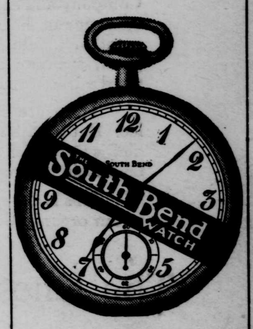
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