

NEW TESTAMENT SPEAKS TO HUMAN CONCERNS



NEW TESTAMENT SPEAKS TO HUMAN CONCERNS
PUBLISHED JULY 1, 1984
BY BAPTIST PUBLISHING HOUSE
P.O. BOX 31995, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

Natuseko - 3 (7)

16

Lukanga - 1

Calvary - 2

Ngeenye - 2

NEW TESTAMENT

SPEAKS TO HUMAN

CONCERNS

3. Christians must be willing to help everyone and to permit others to receive the praise for the deed.

to someone who is in need of our help.

We can do things for people who are "great" and who have influence, so they may use their influence for us. But we can easily pass over the simple, ordinary person. Jesus said we should not seek those who can do things for us. We should seek those we can serve. At another time, he said that when we help others we are serving him. (See Matthew 25:40.)

Jesus also said in Matthew 25:45, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me."

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Think for a moment about Jesus' standard for being great. How do you measure up to it? Would your friends and family think of you as someone great by the way you serve? Are you willing to seek out someone whom you may serve?

If, indeed, you are willing to seek someone whom you may serve and help keep what you do for him a secret. Continue helping him until he can help himself. Or continue helping him until he needs no more help.

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. Jesus said that a Christian must serve others. He said the greatest ones in his kingdom are persons willing to serve.
2. Christians should not try to be recognized for service done for others.

NEW TESTAMENT SPEAKS TO HUMAN CONCERNS

FIRST PUBLISHED

July 1, 1984

BY THE

Baptist Publishing House

P.O. Box 31995

Lusaka, Zambia

PRINTED BY

Baptist Printing Ministry

P.O. Box 31995

Lusaka, Zambia

WRITTEN BY: Mrs. Molly Houser

Men who want to be great in Jesus' kingdom must be servants. (Verse 35) Men must not live for what they can do only for themselves. They should live for what they can do for others. A great person serves others. That is a universal truth.

Then Jesus called a little child to come to him. He took the child in his arms, and taught the people a valuable lesson. (Mark 9:37)

Most children are rather helpless. They depended on their parents and those around them in order to live. A child has little influence in local affairs. He is not able to help a man obtain a good job. He is usually not able to give things. In fact, a child needs many things in his own life. Someone must do things for him in order for that child to survive.

In the parable Jesus told the child stood for people who needed help. Christians should help those in need rather than expecting others to serve them.

Jesus taught his disciples that they must help the poor, ordinary people. He taught them that they must help those who are downcast. He said that his disciples must help those who have no money and no power. They were to help people who needed things done for them instead of wanting to be great.

It is easy to befriend someone who is nice to us and can do nice things for us. It is also easy for us to be unkind and unfriendly

Christians, but also should try to serve other people. A Christian should ask what he can do for others. Great people look for ways to serve. They do not look for ways to be served and appear important in the eyes of men.

JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES

Jesus asked a question of his disciples. Then he answered his own question. Read Luke 22:27 again. The person sitting at the table is thought more important than the who is serving. But Jesus turned things around. He reversed them, saying he was among them as one who served. He was their servant and Jesus' disciples should be the same. True followers of Jesus will always be ready to serve their fellow men.

(Read Mark 9:33-37 aloud.)

BECOME LIKE A LITTLE CHILD

Another time Jesus and his disciples were going to the town of Capernaum. When they arrived they entered a house.

Jesus asked his men why they were complaining with each other along the way, but the disciples said nothing. They were ashamed of what they were doing. They had been arguing about who of them was the greatest.

Then Jesus sat down and began teaching the disciples some needed truths. He said a person can be great in only one way. He must be last and he must serve others.

NEW TESTAMENT SPEAKS TO HUMAN CONCERN

LESSON	PAGE
1. A CHRISTIAN LIFE-STYLE.....	3
2. OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIVING IN SOCIETY.....	8
3. HOPE CAN OVERCOME DESPAIR.....	12
4. LOVE IN THE MIDST OF CRISES.....	17
May 5 ^{Ngungu} 5. JUDGING AND FORGIVING.....	22
6. HEARING AND DOING ^{June 2... Lukanga}	27
7. LOVE OVERCOMES BARRIERS. ^{May 26, '85 Natusako}	32
8. DISCOVERING TRUE SECURITY.....	37
9. GIVING YOUR BEST.....	41
10. PEOPLE ABOVE TRADITION.....	46
11. ACTIVE CHRISTIAN COMPASSION.....	50
12. CHRISTIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT.....	55
13. WHO IS THE GREATEST?.....	59

What is the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian?

LESSON 1

A CHRISTIAN LIFE-STYLE

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Titus 2;
Colossians

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Titus 2:1-8;
Colossians 3:12-17

MEMORY VERSE: "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."
Colossians 3:17

A person's "life-style" is the way he lives. In recent years, many people have moved from the rural section of the country, to the cities. The life-style (the way of life) in the rural section is quite different from that of the cities.

"Life-style" is a modern way of talking about how a person lives. When a person lives in the country on a farm, his way of life is completely different from the way ~~we~~ we would live in the city. "Life-style" means how you live in the place that you are.

Our pastor finished schooling at the seminary. When he accepted the call to the church in our town, he brought his family and settled into life in a town. Life at the seminary had been very different and was somewhat easier than in the town. The way of life in town was a new kind of life-style.

What a person believes can also affect

Juma gladly did all lowly jobs given to him.

(Read Luke 22:24-27 aloud.)

WHO IS THE GREATEST?

Jesus and His disciples had been observing the Passover Feast. Then Jesus started the Lord's Supper.

In a short time, the disciples began complaining about who was greatest among them. Jesus told them that they acted like pagans. (See verse 25.) The king was the greatest in the pagan world, but in Jesus' kingdom the servant was the greatest.

"The youngest" (verse 26) was the least important member of most homes. This child had to do many lowly tasks. He had to serve all the others. Jesus said the greatest must become as the youngest. If a person wanted to be great, he must serve others.

The disciples argued because they wanted high places in the coming kingdom. They still thought God's kingdom would be on earth. Perhaps when Jesus and his disciples ate together, the men ate wherever they were permitted. But each one wanted to sit as near to Jesus as possible.

Jesus showed his disciples what it meant to be great. He acted as a servant by washing their feet. (John 13:1-20)

A Christian disciple should not worry about being great. He should be happy to be servant. The greatest Christian serves other

LESSON 13

WHO IS THE GREATEST?

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 22:24-27;
Mark 9:33-37

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 22:24-27;
Mark 9:33-37

MEMORY VERSE: "If any one would be first, he must be
last of all and servant of all."
Mark 9:35

Juma, a boy eighteen years of age, was from a wealthy African family. He went to a Christian missionary hospital because he wanted to enter training to become a nurse.

Juma wore nice clothes. He was a proud boy. One day he refused to clean some shoes given to him to clean. He said he was a gentleman and a student. He would not do the work of a servant.

The Matron of the hospital called for Juma to come to the office. While he watched, she took the shoes and cleaned them. Then she read him the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet. Juma listened carefully. His face showed a look of embarrassment. The last words of the story were: "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."
(John 13:14)

The boy's eyes filled with tears. He said, "May Jesus forgive me for being proud. Jesus did the work of a servant." After that

his life-style. So how should a Christian live? What kind of life-style should a Christian have?

"Life-style" means how and where one lives. It also means one's beliefs that affect how he lives. We live in a time of changing life-styles.

(Read Titus 2:1-8 aloud.)

PAUL WROTE A LETTER TO TITUS

Titus was a Greek, not a Jew. He went with Paul on a trip to Jerusalem (Galatians 2:1-3). Titus helped Paul to settle certain problems in some of the churches. He first helped Paul in Corinth among the Christians there (2 Corinthians 8:6). In this lesson, Titus was on the island of Crete (Titus 1:5).

Paul wrote Titus to help him know how to do the work of the church. He also wanted to tell Titus how to deal with the Judaizers who were troublemakers. They said they knew God but their actions denied it. The way they lived did not show others a true Christian life-style, or way of life.

Titus was also to teach older men to be serious, sensible, self-controlled and wise. Older men need a strong faith in Christ. They must love others just as Christ loved.

Older women were honoured and respected in the early church, as they are today in Africa. Paul said that God expects them to live a holy life. They should not tell false stories or use strong drink. They were to

teach the younger women who did not go to school. Younger women studied with their mothers at home and married at an early age.

Young women should love their husbands and children. They should be good housewives, obeying their husbands. They should control themselves and live pure lives. Women were brought up in this way from childhood. Young men should control themselves also. (Verse 6). In Ephesians 5:25-29, Paul also teaches that husbands should love their wives as Christ loves the church.

TITUS WAS TO BE AN EXAMPLE

Titus' way of life was to be a good example for the church to follow. He should be an example in doing good works, should be serious, devoted to teaching. If he wanted to be effective, he must live the way he taught others to live. No one should be able to find fault with what Titus taught or preached.

(Read Colossians 3:12-17 aloud.)

PUT ON CHRIST *Go back to Col. 2:20; then begin with VI. of Ch. 3.*

Paul calls the Colossians and all Christians the "chosen people of God" (verse 12). God loved them so much that He gave them a new kind of life. This new life should help the Colossians live more like Christ. So Paul listed several character traits that a Christian's life should show. A Christian should:

1. Put on the character of Christ. He should

that were his. Christians should pay tribute gladly to their governments.

Citizens owe more than money to the government. Christians should honour and respect elected and appointed government officials. Christians should be good citizens in every way. By doing so, they honour God.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

If you are given the privilege of voting in your country, is it your Christian responsibility to do so? If your government taxes you, should you pay them gladly?

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. God has all power and authority. He gives every country its right to govern.
2. Christians should obey God and the laws of their land.
3. Christians who love and obey God want to obey the laws of their country.

(1 Timothy 2:1-2.)

Paul's strongest statement about the Christian's responsibility to the government is in Romans 13. Here he said that Christians should obey the government for God gave it power. Paul said that God put all governments in power. (Romans 13:1) Paul urged all people to obey the government.

Those who refused to obey the laws of the land refused to obey God! Those are very strong words but very true. Such people would be punished both by the government and by God.

People who do right are not afraid of a police officer. He is their friend and protector. Only those who do wrong fear an officer of the law. Again Paul said that a police officer is sent by God to help people. But the wrong doer certainly should be punished.

A person should obey the laws for two reasons. First, he should obey in order to keep from being punished. Second, he should obey just because he knows he should do so. A Christian's good behaviour should not come from a fear of being punished but from a strong desire to do what is right.

Paul told the Christians to pay taxes for the same two reasons. People do not want to be punished and they know it is right to pay taxes.

Paul told the Roman Christians to "pay all of them their dues." Remember, Jesus told his followers to give to Caesar the things

vs. 8-9 - things Christians should take off -
vs. 10 - things Christians should put on -

have compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience (verse 12).

2. Put on the example of Christ by forgiving people who do wrong (verse 13).
3. Put on the ^{love} ~~law~~ of Christ. Let Christ's love guide your life in every thing you do (verse 14).
4. Put on the peace of Christ. The peace that Christ knew and gave is to rule the Christian's heart (verse 15).
5. Put on the word of Christ. This really refers to the public worship services of the church. These include preaching, teaching, and singing the Word of God.
6. Put on the name of Christ. Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.

^{and}
A SINGING, [^]THANKFUL CHURCH

The church was a singing church from its beginning. Paul told the Colossians to sing all kinds of spiritual songs. They were to sing to the Lord with thankful hearts.

Everything a Christian does or says should be in the name of the Lord. Everyone should give thanks to God the Father through Jesus Christ the Son.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

What did Paul mean by a Christian life-style? Are the things Paul wrote about needed today? By God's grace, will you choose one Christian character trait and try

to develop it in your own life everyday?

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. Christians should be serious, sensible, wise and self-controlled.
2. Christian husbands and wives should love each other. They should love their children also.
3. Christians should be Christ-like examples for other Christians, as well as non-Christians, to follow.
4. Christians should love all people. They should praise and thank God for all things. They should do everything in the name of Christ.

These religious leaders watched Jesus and tried to trick him. They even paid men to trick Jesus by asking him a question about taxes.

Rome controlled most of the known world at that time including, Israel. Roman Government taxed people in Israel. No Jew wanted to pay taxes to a heathen country such as Rome.

If Jesus told them not to pay the tax, he would be arrested. If Jesus said to pay the tax, the people would stop following him. How did Jesus answer their question? Read verses 23-25 again.

Did the Jews trick Jesus? No! Jesus answered his enemies in a wise way. Most men thought a leader had the right to put his picture on the money. Then he had the right to tax the people also. Jesus said that because the Jews used Roman money, they should pay Roman tax.

Jesus said more words. He told his enemies that they should give God what belongs to him.

(Read Romans 13:1-7 aloud.)

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE STATE

In several of his letters, Paul said that a Christian should obey the state or government. (See Titus 3:1 and 1 Peter 2:17.) Paul urged Christians to pray for kings and all others who are in authority over us.

LESSON 12

CHRISTIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 20:19-26;
Acts 5:27-32;
Romans 13:1-10

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 20:20-25;
Romans 13:1-7

MEMORY VERSE: "Pay all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom is due, respect to whom respect is due, honour to whom honour is due."
Romans 13:7

Most people in today's world pay taxes. Many times, tax money is paid to a city, town or community. This money is used to pay the salary of town officials, to tarmac roads, and to provide many other services.

A man who is able to drive a vehicle must pay money to obtain a driver's license. He must pay money in order to obtain a permit for his vehicle. There are many services that the local government renders to its citizens for which the citizens pay.

(Read Luke 20:20-25 aloud.)

THE QUESTION ABOUT PAYING TAXES

Jewish religious leaders were Jesus' enemies. They became angry when He told the parable recorded in Luke 20:9-18. They knew Jesus was talking about them and they wanted to kill him.

LESSON 2

OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIVING IN SOCIETY

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Titus 3; 1 Peter 2:13-17

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Titus 3:1-11;
1 Peter 2:13-17

MEMORY VERSE: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."
Romans 12:2

As we were driving down a dual carriage-way, we approached a one-way road marker. We noticed all traffic was supposed to go to the left on that cross-road. No right turns allowed. Suddenly people who were walking began jumping for the side of the road. A car was coming down that cross-road from the wrong direction and entering the dual carriage-way just in front of our car. The driver had broken the laws of his country by driving too fast, by not stopping for people in the cross-walk and by driving the wrong way on a one-way street.

Many people do not obey the laws of their country. What does the New Testament say about obeying the Government? Paul said that people should obey the laws of the land.

Paul wrote, "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that

exist have been instituted by God" (Romans 13:1).

(Read Titus 3:1-11 aloud.)

RULES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

Paul wrote to Titus, who ministered to the people of Crete. Crete is an island south east of Greece. The Cretans were known for not obeying their government's laws.

Paul gave Titus rules for Christian living. One was to be subject to the government. Christians then and now were to live under the laws of their land. A Christian was subject to the government as a wife was subject to her husband (Ephesians 5:22).

In reading Titus 3:1-2, we find other rules for Christians to live by: 1) obey government leaders and officers, 2) help people in need, 3) do not speak evil of other people, 4) do not quarrel or fight, 5) be kind and considerate of others and 6) be gentle.

CHRIST CHANGED IT ALL

Paul admitted that he was once foolish. He did not obey the Law in Christ. He was a servant to evil pleasures and wicked desires. His life was full of ill will. He hated others and they hated him.

Then Christ changed it all. Jesus Christ died on the cross for man's sins. God saved Paul by grace through Paul's faith in God's Son. We are saved in the same way.

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. People live all around us who are in need. Christians should help them.
2. We are able as Christians to help many of these needy people. Being kind and listening to them helps many times.
3. We should read, study, and follow the teachings of the Scriptures while we are alive.
4. We cannot help, or seek help, after we have died.
5. The time to believe in Jesus is while you are alive and able. After death, it is too late.

good life with Christ.

The rich man could look from hell and see Lazarus in heaven with Abraham. Dives shouted to Father Abraham to have pity on him. He wanted Lazarus to put his finger in water and cool his tongue, for indeed the rich man was greatly suffering in hell!

Abraham reminded the rich man that he had all he wanted during his life on earth. Lazarus had nothing. Now life was good for Lazarus, but the rich man was suffering. Besides, no one was permitted to go from heaven to hell, nor could they go from hell to heaven.

Then the rich man begged Abraham to send Lazarus back to earth. He had five brothers who lived in his father's house. Dives wanted Lazarus to warn them about the place of suffering. He did not want his family to go to hell.

Abraham told Dives that his brothers had Moses and the prophets to warn them. Dives thought they were not sufficient. His brothers would listen better to a person who came back from the grave. Abraham told Dives that his brothers did not listen to the Scriptures. Therefore, they would not listen to someone who came back from the dead.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

What did Jesus say about the place to put one's treasure? Do you think that the reward that both Lazarus and Dives got was just? Why?

When we trust in Jesus Christ, God pours out His Holy Spirit on us. We are filled with the Spirit and God forgives our sins.

A "Christian" is a person who knows that God has forgiven his past sins. He lives with Christ in the present life and has the hope of a greater life to come.

NEED FOR CHRISTIAN ACTION

Paul wrote to Titus that all who profess to be Christians should do good deeds. In fact, a person will show what he believes by the way he lives. Christians will do thoughtful acts for others because they love them (1 John 4:7-8).

Christians should practise Christian teachings in their daily work. They should live daily so that the Church will grow in every way and have good testimony.

TOO MUCH TALK

Paul warned against useless talking. Jewish leaders spent many hours talking about what "good Jews" do on the Sabbath. They argued over what was clean and what was unclean.

Today some men think they are Christians if they talk about religious matters, but they really show outwardly by their lives what they are like inside. Talking does not make a person a Christian.

Christians should be kind, understanding,

helpful and honest. If Christians do not act on what they believe, they waste time talking about it.

AVOID THOSE WHO CAUSE DIVISIONS

Paul wrote Titus that Christians must warn a man who causes divisions in the church. (Titus 3:10-11). They should warn the man at least two times, then they should have nothing more to do with him. Such a man is sinning and he knows it. True faith does not divide men; it unites them.

(Read 1 Peter 2:15-17 aloud.)

LIVE AS "LAW-OBEYING" CITIZENS

Peter said that a devout Christian will obey his country's laws. He reminded Christians that God let their country have government and they should obey its laws. Government has the responsibility of keeping order. A Christian must cooperate in his government's affairs; but he must also obey God, rather than men, if his government orders him to disobey God. (Acts 5:29).

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

How did Paul intend for us to live in today's world? How will other people know that we are Christians? As a Christian, how can I fulfill my duty to the government?

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. God permits men to have governments.

called out to God in his need, and God heard him.

THE REWARD OF THE TWO MEN

Because of the conditions under which Lazarus had to live, it is surprising that he did not die sooner. Finally, he did die. Then angels carried him away to heaven to be with Father Abraham. This was the way Jews thought of heaven. Lazarus did not go to heaven because he was a poor beggar. He did not go to heaven because Dives did not treat him well. Lazarus went to heaven because of his belief and trust in God.

When Dives, the rich man died, we can surely imagine that his funeral was well attended. Probably many great and rich men attended the funeral. Probably many people of high position in the community attended the funeral. But, all these people could not help Dives. For the Bible tells us that his soul went to hell!

Dives did not go to hell because he was rich. He did not go to hell because he did not give Lazarus better food to eat. Dives' sin was that he thought only of himself and meeting his own needs. He did not believe in God. In fact, he thought he did not need God!

Eternal life for the two men was just the opposite. On earth, Dives had the good things. He had good clothes, good food and good things surrounded his life each day. But in hell, he had only suffering. On earth, Lazarus, had nothing. In heaven, he had the

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

Jesus told a parable about two men. One was a very rich man who is usually called Dives. He dressed in expensive clothes every day. He probably wore nice robes like the high priests wore. His food cost very much money.

Every day he ate only the foods that were to his liking. He always ate all the food that he desired. In fact, he ate more than his body needed in order to be healthy.

He had the best of life, as far as material goods were concerned. In fact, he possessed everything that his heart desired. He did not feel any need for God.

A poor man named Lazarus lived in the same town with Dives. The name "Lazarus" means "God is my help." Lazarus had nothing to eat. He had to beg for his food. Friends brought him and placed him at the rich man's door.

The rich people wiped their greasy hands with pieces of bread. Then the servants threw away the bread. They usually threw it out off the door. Dogs often ate the crumbs. Lazarus kept himself alive by eating the bread crumbs that had been thrown away.

Lazarus could not stand up, nor could he even sit up. He had to lay outside the rich man's door. His body was covered with sores. He could not keep the dogs away. They came and licked his open sores. But Lazarus

2. A Christian should respect the government and obey its laws.
3. A Christian should be kind and helpful to others.
4. A Christian should love and obey God first of all.
5. Talk is cheap. Actions should show our love for God.

LESSON 3

HOPE CAN OVERCOME DESPAIR

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 6:12-26;
Romans 8:18-39

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 6:17-26

MEMORY VERSE: "We know that in everything God works for good with those who have love him, who are called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28

Despair shows loss of hope. Hope always believes things will get better. Hope shows faith. Despair believes the future is dark, with no hope. Hope thinks the future is bright with meaning and purpose. Despair denies that God cares. Hope says that God loves.

During Idi Amin's regime in Uganda,

there were many bleak and despairing days for the people of that country. They always hoped for freedom. The Christians there knew that God loved them and would care for them. By God's grace, the people of Uganda were freed from the bondage of such a dictator.

(Read Luke 6:17-26 aloud.)

CROWDS FOLLOWED JESUS

Jesus spent the night in prayer. Then he chose his twelve disciples. After that, Jesus and his disciples went down from the mountain.

Three groups of people followed Jesus. First, the twelve disciples followed him. They were his closest friends. Next a large crowd of friends came. Last, a large crowd of ordinary people came from all over the nation. People came from all over Judaea. They came from as far north as Tyre and Sidon. The crowds came to hear Jesus teach. They also came to be healed of their diseases.

Jesus told the good news of salvation to the poor in spirit. He healed the sick and those troubled by evil spirits. Everyone tried to touch him. Power went out of him, and people were cured.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Both Luke and Matthew recorded Jesus' sermon on the Mount. Luke showed how hope can overcome despair.

The verses which begin with "Happy are you" show God's saving power. The verses which

LESSON 11

ACTIVE CHRISTIAN COMPASSION

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 14:12-14;
16:19-31;
James 2:1-7

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 16:19-31

MEMORY VERSE: "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."
Luke 3:11

A Christian man once visited a very rich farmer. After they had eaten together at the farmer's home, they walked around the farmer's plot of ground. He began to point to various things that he owned. He pointed to the large fields of grain that were his. He pointed to his cows, sheep and goats. He pointed to his forest of trees. He continued to show his wealth of material goods by showing the Christian man his fine home.

The rich farmer also pointed to his wives and his educated children. Then, he said, "All this is mine! Twenty-five years ago, I had nothing. Today, I am a very rich man!"

The farmer thought the Christian man would be very pleased and praise him. But the Christian man took the farmer's hand, and said very gently, pointing to heaven. "My friend, how much do you own up there?"

(Read Luke 16:31-31 out loud.)

be heard by many more people. He received a great blessing when he saw people become Christians.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Did Paul put people above traditions? How did Jesus show mercy to a cripple? It is wrong to help a person on the Sabbath? Are we willing to serve people so that we can win them to faith in Christ?

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. Jesus was never too busy to help people in need.
2. A person is more important than laws and traditions.
3. Christians should love all people and help those who need help.
4. Christians should tell others about Christ and his love.
5. Christians should become servants to all people so we can win them to believe in Christ.

begin with "Woe" show God's call to repentance.

HAPPY ARE YOU

Jesus was speaking to people (verse 20) who possessed little money and little material things. He was telling them to put their faith in him, Christ, rather than in wealth and things. A Christian possesses the Kingdom of God as soon as he believes in Jesus. God lives in him so he is spiritually rich.

Jesus was also speaking to those who recognized their own spiritual poverty. They recognized their poor spiritual condition. They were truly sorry because of their evil ways and wanted God to forgive them. God promised them they would receive forgiveness when they responded to Jesus.

Verse 21 refers to a hunger that is spiritual more than physical. Physical hunger can be satisfied by food. Spiritual hunger can only be satisfied by God himself through his Word and through the working of the Holy Spirit. Only spiritual food can satisfy spiritual hunger. Even when Christ lived, people were hungering for things of Christ that satisfied them spiritually more than for physical things.

Those people wept over many things. They cried over their own sins and the sins of others. They cried because of the evils of the world. They cried because they cared. They will be able to laugh in the end, because Christ's way will win. They will be happy then. (6:21).

Jesus said Christians should be happy when men hate them for his sake (verse 22). They should be happy when men say evil things about them.

If a person is treated badly, it should be because of his love for Christ, not because he did something bad. When any disciple of Christ's is treated badly, it is time to be glad. Happiness comes when one suffers for the sake of Christ. Acts 5:40-41 says, "So they took his advice, and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. They then left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the name." Every Christian who suffers for Christ will have a great reward in heaven.

God gives his kingdom. He satisfies hunger, causes laughter, and rewards those who are hated. Happy are those who receive God's salvation.

Jesus said that Christians who are mistreated will be in good company. Prophets of the Old Testament were treated badly, too.

Then Jesus began speaking to people who loved the things of the world more than the kingdom of God.

WOE TO YOU

"But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation." (verse 24) It is not wrong to be rich. It is only wrong

Paul let only God control his life through Jesus Christ. He followed in Jesus' steps in being a servant to all men. Paul became a friend to men in order to win more people to Christ.

Paul was a free man. (See verse 19.) He was no longer a slave to sin but was free in Christ. He might lead others to Christ if he became a servant to them. He was willing, therefore, to serve them.

Paul was a Jew by race and by religion. When he was with Jews, he lived like the Jews. Paul could win Jews to Christ.

When Paul was with Gentiles, he lived like Gentiles outside the Jewish law because he wanted to win the Gentiles to Christ. Paul did not disobey God's law, however, because he lived under Christ's law, as a Christian.

Some Jewish Christians were weak in regard to eating food sacrificed to idols. They believed it to be sin. Some Gentile Christians refused to eat food sacrificed to idols. They wanted no part of their old life. Paul respected both groups. They would mature in Christ as the years passed and know that what one eats does not affect his spiritual life. Paul wanted to win both groups to believe in Christ.

Indeed, Paul really did become a servant to all men. He did this so that he could tell everyone about Jesus Christ. Paul wanted all who heard the gospel message to be saved. He was willing to serve so that the gospel might

People thought she had ^a on evil spirit.

Jesus called to her and told her she was free from the sickness. He laid his hands on the woman and at once she stood up straight. She then praised God and thanked Him.

all The leader of the synagogue became very angry because Jesus broke a Jewish law (tradition) by healing on the Sabbath. Jews said that healing was work. They had a law against working on the Sabbath. But it was allright for them to pull an ox out of the ditch on the Sabbath. That action was not thought to be work because it saved their oxen which cost them money.

The Jewish leader told the crowd that there were six days of the week to work and Jesus should heal on those days. The Lord should not help people on the Sabbath. Read the Lord's answer in verses 15-16. He reminded the Jewish leaders that they helped animals on the Sabbath. Why shouldn't they help people also?

What Jesus did and said shamed his enemies. The people were very happy with Jesus' words and actions. People are more important to him than traditions.

(Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 aloud.)

LIVING FOR OTHERS

When Paul was writing to Christians in Corinth he told how he felt about being a preacher. He told the people in Corinth that he was a servant to all men.

if faith in riches is put ahead of faith in Christ. Some people seek only values that the world offers. Jesus said that is all they will get. The rich do not realize how spiritually poor and in need they are.

"Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger." (verse 25). Those who laugh now get their happiness from shallow things. They do not worry about the hurts of their fellow human beings. They think only about having a good time now and do not think about eternal life.

"Woe to you, when all men speak well of you." (verse 26) The people of the Old Testament also said good things about false prophets. Those who live godly lives must fight evil. When they do, evil people will say bad things about them. A Christian who does not attack evil is not living a life like Christ. Christ's followers will be hated but they can hope for good things to be said about them in heaven.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

How can we encourage a person to remember his hope in Christ? What did Jesus do before he chose His twelve disciples? (He spent the night in prayer.) Do you have hope in Christ? Does Jesus say to you, "Happy are you?" Or does he say, "Woe to you?"

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. God loves us and he wants us to be happy.

2. He wants us to live full and happy lives. He tells us that there is more to life than just the life here on this earth.
3. We must not let life's future glories keep us from living our best here on this earth.
4. Our hope for all of eternity with Christ will cause us to live for him here on this earth.
5. True and lasting happiness comes from committing our lives to follow God's way.

LESSON 4

LOVE IN THE MIDST OF CRISES

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 6:27-36;
Philemon

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 6:27-36

MEMORY VERSE: "But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."

Luke 6:27-28

In our world today, there are many people with needs. These people have hard times with many crises in their lives. Sometimes they are filled with hate; sometimes they are sick; sometimes they are hungry and have no place to live; many times, they have no one to love them and care for them.

LESSON 10

PEOPLE ABOVE TRADITION

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 13:10-17;
1 Corinthians 9:19-23

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 13:10-17
1 Corinthians 9:19-23

MEMORY VERSE: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

Luke 6:36

Tradition has much to do with our lives. We do things a certain way because our parents taught us that way. People in each country have traditional ways of doing things such as cooking food.

In Bible times, the Jewish people had many traditions. Some of these were based on God's laws. Some traditions resulted from doing something a certain way over many years.

Traditions came to be ^every important during New Testament days, even as they are in our own day, especially here in Africa. Many of the New Testament traditions centered around the Sabbath, the Jews' day of rest. They were more interested in their traditions than in helping people in need.

(Read Luke 13:10-17 aloud.)

JESUS HEALED A CRIPPLED WOMAN

One Sabbath day Jesus was teaching in a synagogue when he saw a badly crippled woman.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Does Jesus expect us to be faithful, doing our very best for him? What did James say would happen to people who trust in riches? He warned about being selfish with what we have. Do you pay those who work for you honest wages? Are you always honest about money?

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. God judges our actions. He expects us to be faithful.
2. Now is the time that we have to do God's will. We must be ready when Jesus returns.
3. Money is not sinful, but we are wrong when it becomes too important to us.
- 4: We can never please God and do our best for him when money is our main purpose in life. We should be willing to share what we have with others.
5. Christians must put Christ first in every part of their lives.

These people need love and understanding. They need Christian friends. What can we do to help one of these people?

(Read Luke 6:27-36 aloud.)

Our Lord Jesus was giving his teachings which we call the Sermon on the Mount. (See also Matthew 5-7.) In this lesson, Jesus told his disciples how to treat other groups of people. What group did Jesus mention first?

ENEMIES

Jesus said his followers should love their enemies. This is one of the hardest things the Lord asks us Christians to do!

Corrie Ten Boom lived in the European country of Holland. During World War II, she and other members of her family were persecuted because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. During much of this time, Corrie Ten Boom spent many months in prison.

Years later, after the war had ended, she saw a former German soldier at a Christian meeting. Miss Ten Boom thought about the first time she saw him. She, her sister and a large group of prisoners arrived at the German prison camp. This man made the women take off their clothes in front of him. She had thought she could never forgive him.

The former German Nazi soldier did not know her, but he stood in front of her at the Christian meeting with his hand extended to her. At last, Miss Ten Boom took his hand. The

ex-soldier begged her to forgive the bad things all German soldiers did. Her love for Jesus Christ made it possible for her to forgive him.

Our world has many people who have been mistreated during wars. They need Christian friends to help.

Jesus said if you love your enemy, he will become a friend. The word Jesus used for "love" means an active feeling of goodwill toward others. It means thinking that others are worthy of the best in life. It means helping and forgiving others.

We must do good to those who hate us. We must do more than wish the best for those who hate us. We must be good and kind to them. We must work toward helping them get the good things in life.

We must pray for those who mistreat us (verse 28). Jesus said we should desire the best for those who desire the worse for us. We should seek God's blessings on those who hurt us. Jesus was our best example. On the cross he prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34) He was asking God to forgive those who killed him.

Jesus also taught about trying to "get even" (See Luke 6:29). The Old Testament taught "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (Exodus 21:24). Jesus said to act gently instead of treating a person as he treated you.

First, they could buy grain. But grain could spoil. Secondly, they could buy rich and expensive clothes. But bugs ate clothes of all description. Men with very much money could buy silver and gold. In time, these too, would rust or be stolen.

Jesus warned against people loving money. Rich people must answer to God for the way they use their riches.

Riches come from God. They should be serving God's purposes in their use. Poor people will also answer to God for the way they use their money.

THE REWARD OF THE SELFISH

James showed how wrong it is for people to use their riches selfishly. He warned selfish people that their reward would be terrible. He also told the reasons for judgment against the selfish rich.

First, the rich men did not pay their labourers enough. Labourers had to be paid daily wages, or their families would not have food to eat for that day. The cries of the labourers reached the ears of God.

Second, the rich men used their riches selfishly. They paid no heed to those in great need. James reminded the selfish, rich people that they would be destroyed.

Third, the rich men killed men who were helpless before them. They had no power to defend themselves.

time and money.

Sometimes Christians think that God, their Master, is away. Sometimes they never think of God at all. But if they are faithful Christians, they will know that their Master is never away. Christians live and work forever in God's presence. He lives in the hearts of Christians and with us every moment of every day.

The unfaithful servant made a second mistake. He said, "I have plenty of time to put things right before the master returns." But there is never "plenty of time." The master came back when the servant did not expect him and found the servant wasting time. The servant did not do what the master told him to do. The unfaithful servant knew what the master wanted him to do, but he just did not do it, so he received a terrible beating.

The unfaithful servant who knows he is doing wrong will receive a terrible punishment. But anyone who does not realise that he is doing wrong will be punished lightly.

(Read James 5:1-6 aloud.)

RICHERS ARE WORTHLESS

James wanted to keep men from placing their hope in earthly things. In Bible times, as is true today in some parts of the world, rich men could not make money in many ways.

The rich men could, however, invest their money in at least three kinds of things.

Jesus also said, "and from him who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt." (Verse 29) A coat usually was large and very warm. At night, it was used as a covering for sleep. Jesus wants us to share what we have with those who are in need.

A Christian should give freely to all who ask him. The one who asks for help probably has more needs than the giver. We may find it hard to love someone who steals what is ours. But this is part of what it means to love your enemy.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Verse 31 is called the "Golden Rule." This is a rule or law that Jesus gave to his followers. The meaning of this law is worth as much as gold is worth. It is so costly because it tells people how to live at peace with other people. We must treat others as we want to be treated. This is the Golden Rule.

UNUSUAL LOVE

Jesus said that his followers should show love for others in unusual ways. Read verses 32-36 again. Christians follow the example of Christ, not the example of other people.

People who have never heard of Christ love those who love them. Christians should do more than people expect them to do, Jesus said. We should love our enemies and do good to them.

Christian love also causes a Christian to

share what he has with people in need. This person gives without trying to find out if the loan will be paid back. He helps because there is a need.

In this section of Luke 6:32-36, Jesus named several unusual ways that Christians should love. He said to us: Do more than unsaved people do. Love your friends, of course. Love your enemies too. Do not expect to be paid back when you help someone. Remember that your reward will be great in heaven. You will be God's child. That is enough reward for anyone.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Can you invite a neighbour in for ten after hearing her gossip about you? Can you help a fellow worker in his garden after he has lied about you? What are somethings you can do to help people in need? How does Jesus want you to treat others?

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. Jesus Christ is our example in loving, giving, and forgiving.
2. Christian should love their enemies and pray for them.
3. We should do to others as we want them to do to us.
4. We should act toward others the way Christ would do. Our actions should not depend on what others do first.

Jesus.

(Read Luke 12:41-48 aloud.)

TWO KINDS OF SERVANTS

Jesus told a parable about two servants. One servant was faithful and the other servant was unfaithful. One was wise and the other was not wise. The faithful servant had control over the other servants. The master trusted him very much.

The trusted servant had charge over the master's house. He gave the other servants their share of the food. The faithful servant was in charge of all his master's property and did a good job for his master. He gave his best in his master's service. When his master came back from his journey, he would reward the faithful servant. He would pay his servant well.

In verse 45, Jesus began to talk about the unfaithful servant. This unwise servant made at least two mistakes. He said, "I will do what I want to do while my master is away." He took unfair advantage of his master while he was away from home for such a long time. He forgot that his master would return some day.

He failed to remember that his master would expect him to be faithful. While the master was gone, the unfaithful servant mistreated those people in his care. He beat the other servants, both men and women. He spent his time eating and drinking too much. He did not do his work. He wasted

4. We can help to meet the needs of those who do not know true security.

LESSON 9

GIVING YOUR BEST

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 12:35-48;
James 5:1-6
2 Corinthians 5:10;
Revelation 20:12-13

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 12:11-48;
Zechariah has Lk. 12:41-48 James 5:1-6

MEMORY VERSE: "Everyone to whom much is given, of him will much be required."
Luke 12:48

Life is made of time. Each person in our world today has the same amount of time. Each person has twenty-fours a day. If we use our hours and days wisely, our lives will be much more effective.

Jesus told his disciples that he would return and take them to himself. But they must be ready for his return to this earth, whenever it may be. Then Jesus told two parables about the need to be ready. These stories help us to know that time belongs to God. We must be ready when Jesus Christ returns to earth!

Read today's scripture passage, and look for ways that Christians can do their best for

LESSON 5

JUDGING AND FORGIVING

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: John 8:1-11;
Luke 6:37-42;
Romans 14

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: John 8:3-9;
Luke 6:37-42

MEMORY VERSE: "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive and you will be forgiven."

Luke 6:37

Some of the leaders of a village were sitting around a camp fire talking one night. One of the leaders had recently trusted Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour.

The leader said, "I want to tell you something. Recently, I was saved. I took a public stand for Jesus Christ. That means that I must not hate anyone. For a long time, I have been hating a certain leader who is here with us tonight. He did a lot of wrong to me and I did him a lot of wrong. I want to say, I am sorry. I want to ask him if he will forgive me. I stand ready to forgive him."

Quickly, the other man jumped to his feet. He said, "I will forgive you, and I am very glad you are forgiving me!" Then the two leaders embraced one another and cried for joy. What a beautiful scene that was!

The actions of these two men help us understand this lesson. In the Scripture

lesson look for Jesus' teaching on judging and forgiving.

(Read John 8:3-9 aloud.)

MERCY NOT JUDGMENT

While Jesus sat in the Temple and taught the people, the Jewish leaders brought to him a woman caught in adultery. The woman had broken the Jewish law. "If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbour, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death" (Leviticus 20:10). They dragged the woman into the middle of the crowd of people.

The Jewish leaders had no right to tell everyone about the woman's sin. However, they were testing Jesus wanting him to speak against the Jewish law. Adultery was such a serious crime that Jesus could get into trouble if he spoke against the law.

If Jesus said the woman should die, he was not merciful and forgiving. He also would go against Roman Law. If Jesus forgave the woman, he was against the Law of Moses and would also favour serious sins. It seemed that anything Jesus said would be held against him!

What would Jesus say? He leaned down and wrote on the ground with his finger. We do not know what Jesus wrote. The Jews demanded an answer. Jesus said for them to go ahead and stone her to death. But added, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." (Verse 7) He leaned

for themselves, yet King Solomon did not have clothes as beautiful as the flowers. He was the richest man in the world. God will surely provide for your needs, said Jesus.

Now read again verses 29-31. Christians should not worry about things such as food and clothing. In fact, Christians should not worry at all.

Jesus said, "For all the nations of the world seek these things; and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things shall be yours as well." (verse 30-31)

We should use our time in helping others. We can witness to the unsaved people in our community. We can help to find food and clothing for the needy in our community.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Are you more concerned about getting "things" than you are about being faithful to God? What can you do now to help you put God first in your life.

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. When we put God first in our lives, we will not worry. We will then have true security.
2. We will depend on God to take care of us. We can trust him.
3. True security comes from knowing that God is in control of our lives.

FAITH IN GOD'S CARE

Then Jesus spoke to his disciples, talking about the problem of not having enough money. He considered the problem of worry. (Read Verses 22-23.)

Jesus was saying that life is too important to worry about food and clothing. Do not waste your time worrying about such things, Jesus said.

Man, created in God's likeness, will live beyond the grave. Eternal life is important, not the things of this world. A Christian must do his best by working for the things he needs and leave the rest to God.

Jesus told His disciples a truth that we need to remember. Look at the birds, He said. They do not plant seeds or gather the crops. They do not have barns to store grain in. The birds get along because God feeds them. You and I are far more important to God than birds. God will surely take care of us. He will provide for our day to day needs.

We know that worry does not add anything to what we have. Our lives are in God's care. What good will worrying do? It will not make us live longer! In fact, worry will shorten our lives but it will not help us find food or clothing.

Jesus asked his disciples if they could make themselves taller by worrying. (See verse 25.) He told them to "consider the lilies" (verse 27). Flowers can do nothing

over and wrote on the ground again. "But when they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the eldest, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him." (Verse 9)

Only Jesus was left standing with the woman. He was the only one without sin in his life and thus had the right to throw a stone. But did he throw a stone at the woman? (Read John 8:10-11.)

(Read Luke 6:37-42 aloud.)

RECEIVING WHAT WE GIVE

We often receive the kind of treatment that we give to others. If we judge, we are judged by others. If we say evil things, evil things are said about us. If we forgive, others will deal with us kindly. If we give much, much will be given to us. We will reap what we plant.

"Judging" means to decide for or against anything or anyone. Judging is necessary and normal part of life. Jesus does not mean for us not to make a decision, but he is against judging in the wrong way. We should not make judgements that only God should make. Jesus said we will be judged when we judge others. Our judgement of others is really against ourselves.

"For the measure you give will be the measure you get back." (Luke 6:38) Your gift will return unto you full and overflowing. If you want real gain, then you must

give. The most unhappy people are those who never give to others.

PARABLES

A parable is a short saying or story that teaches a religious truth. In Luke 6:39-42, there are three parables. Jesus spoke more to the disciples than to the crowd around him. He offered advice to those who were leading, teaching and judging others.

In verse 39, Jesus asked, "Can a blind man lead a blind man?" The answer, of course, is "No." It is foolish for people to follow blind leaders. Here "blindness" means the loss of spiritual sight that comes from God. A person cannot lead another where he cannot see.

"A disciple is not above his teacher." (Verse 40) In fact, when he is taught he will be like his teacher. Jesus' pupil will hear about love and see love and truth in action. He will be like Christ.

Jesus' questions (verse 41-42) should make us see our own sins. We look at the little faults of others and judge them harshly but do not see our big faults! Jesus wants us to look at ourselves first and correct our faults. When we are concerned about our own sins, we will act lovingly toward others who sin.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

You must be careful about judging others. You must have a forgiving spirit. Ask your-

So the man said to himself, "What will I do with this grain? I may need it next year. Oh, I know. I have always wanted big new barns. I will tear down my old barns and build much larger barns. I will have the largest barns in this country. And they will be filled with my big crop of grain."

This rich man was very selfish. He wanted everything for himself. He did not once think about people who were hungry. He did not think about sharing some of his grain with people who needed it.

He planned to have a good time for many years. He thought he was so fortunate because he had his large barns filled with grain. This idea is opposite of the Christian way of life. He had forgotten God!

GOD WATCHED THAT MAN

Read verse 20 again. Say it in your own words. What did God tell the rich man? God said to him, "Fool! Tonight you die. Then who will get it all?"

That man trusted in the wrong things. His life and plans did not include God and he did not think of eternal life. He thought that true happiness depended on what he could get on earth! Jesus called him a fool.

Jesus ended his story with these words, "Yes, every man is a fool who gets rich on earth, but not in heaven." (Verse 21).

LESSON 8

DISCOVERING TRUE SECURITY

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 12:13-31;
1 Timothy 6:6-21

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 12:16-31

MEMORY VERSE: "As for the rich in this world, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God who richly furnished us with everything to enjoy."
1 Timothy 6:17

Today most people want "things." We seem to think that having things can make us live better and safer in this world. We seem to think that having an abundance of things, such as nice cars, big beautiful houses, much furniture to furnish this big house, and many expensive clothes can give us true security.

What did Jesus have to say about where we are to find true security?

(Read Luke 12:16-31 aloud.)

A RICH FATHER

Jesus often spoke in parables. They were stories about people's lives which helped people understand God's truths. The parable in this lesson was about a rich farmer.

A rich farmer had good land that bore much grain. His crops were always good and his servants harvested the crops. They filled his large barns, but the barns were not big enough to hold all the crops.

self: Am I always willing to forgive others? Do I ask others to forgive me when I offend them? Do not forget to thank God for forgiving you!

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. God is the only one who really can judge people.
2. Christians who judge have missed Jesus' call to discipleship.
3. We will receive the same treatment we give others.
4. God is willing to forgive us. We must be willing to forgive others.

LESSON 6

HEARING AND DOING

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 6:43-49;
James 1:22-27

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 6:43-49;
Luke 8:19-21

MEMORY VERSE: "But be doers of the word, and not
hearers only deceiving yourselves."
James 1:22

The world keeps watching the church, but the world does not understand it. The church sometimes teaches one thing and does another.

We in the church have to do more than just talk about love. The world must see our love in action. We in the church have to do more than fight sin with talk. The world must see that we overcome sin in our own lives. "Christian talk" does not influence most people. Many of them, however, are influenced by "Christian action." The world is looking for someone who lives his Christian beliefs.

People meet on Sunday in some churches to talk about God. They talk about how good God is. They talk about sin and how bad it is. They talk about the world and how terrible it is. They pray, go home and continue to do the same things in the same way. Their lives are not changed. Should Christians live this kind of life? Read this Scripture passage to find out how to know a "Jesus-Christian."

(Read Luke 6:43-49 aloud.)

Perhaps the priest and Temple helper felt pity for the poor man, but they did nothing. The Samaritan showed his love by his actions.

Jesus' real lesson came when he said, "Now go and do the same." (Verse 37) The Samaritan became an example for all who love God. The teacher could not forget Jesus' words: "Go home and do the same." No reader of Luke's Gospel can forget them either. What Jesus said to the teacher of the Law, he says to us: "Do the same. Help people who have a need."

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

This week, look for someone who needs your help. This person may live near you. You may not even know him. Plan to help any person who needs you. You can help some persons just by taking time to listen to them and talk to them. Many people need to know someone loves them.

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. God wants us to put him first in our lives.
2. If we love God, we will love others as we love ourselves.
3. We will help others who have needs without regard to their race, religion, tribe or colour.

A Samaritan, who was hated by Jews, came down the road. He saw that the man needed help and felt pity for him. He showed his love by what he did for the man. He poured oil and wine on the hurt man's wounds. He tied cloths around the man's cuts, then put him on his own animal.

The Samaritan took the wounded man to an inn where he could rest and get well. Next day, the Samaritan gave money to the innkeeper, telling him to take care of the wounded man. He said if he had to spend more money, the Samaritan would pay for it on his next trip.

JESUS TAUGHT HIS LESSON

The teacher of the law realized that the Samaritan showed love to his fellowman. He was neighbour to the wounded man.

When Jesus asked his question (See verse 36.) What did the teacher say? (See verse 37.)

Jesus' answer has three parts. First, as Christians, we must help another person, even if he caused his own trouble.

Second, any person who has need is our neighbour.

Third, we must help a person who needs our help. We must not just feel sorry for him and walk off without helping him in his time of need. We should do every thing we can to help meet his needs.

GOOD FRUIT

Luke 6:43-45 is a parable about trees. Everybody knows that a good tree does not bear bad fruit. A "good tree" means a Christian life, deeply rooted in the things of God. The Christian's life is like a tree. It offers to the world spiritual beauty and food.

The Christian grows through study of God's Word daily, worship with other Christians, physical work and prayer. The Christian life bears the fruit of right living.

A "bad tree" means a selfish life outside of Christ. Life outside of the Lord Jesus Christ is worthless. The fruit is bad because actions, thoughts, and words are bad.

Jesus said in Luke 6:44, "each tree is known by its own fruit." A person will be judged by what he produces. If a man is evil, he will think evil thoughts. He will do evil deeds. He will speak evil words.

A good man will think good thoughts. He will do good deeds for those in need. He will help other Christians and non-Christians. Jesus wants every Christian to produce good fruit.

In Luke 6:45, Jesus said, "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart produces good." The "heart" means the innermost part of one's being. The "good treasure of his heart" means good thoughts, deeds and words. The person whose heart is evil brings evil things from his heart's treasure.

"For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks." (verse 45) Jesus said that a person's words show whether his heart is good or bad.

THE BEST FOUNDATION

Verses 46-49 form the last part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. He used a beautiful parable to show his meaning.

Jesus said in verse 46, "Why do you call me, Lord, Lord and not do what I tell you?" Jesus means a person is foolish to call him "teacher" and not follow his teachings. Jesus wants his followers to live for him daily, obeying his teachings.

Verse 47 has three important words. They tell what Jesus needs from everyone who wishes to call him Lord. The first word is "come." We must come to Jesus for salvation. We must come for his love, forgiveness and power.

The second word is "hear." We must listen carefully to what Jesus says to us. The third word is "do." We must do the will of God just as Jesus did God's will. The result of our coming and hearing is our action (what we do). Our actions speak a louder message about what we believe than the words we say.

Jesus compared one who comes, hears and does, to a man who built a house. One man dug deep and laid his foundation upon rock. The waters rose and the storm winds hit that house, but could not shake it. It was built

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

The teacher of the law asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbour?" (verse 29). Jesus answered with a parable. We call it, "The Parable of The Good Samaritan. This story tells how God wants us to love and care for one another.

A man was travelling down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. The man travelled alone. The road was narrow and went between big rocks. Caves were on both sides of the rocky road. People who travelled were advised to travel in groups.

As the man went down the road, robbers ran from the caves and beat the man. They knocked him down and hurt him badly. The robbers took his money and even took his clothes. Then they left him lying beside the road, half dead.

The first man who came by was a priest. Perhaps he was on his way to Jerusalem to serve in the Temple. (See verse 3.) Any Jew who touched a dead person or animal became ceremonially unclean and could not enter the temple. (See Numbers 19:11-12.) When a priest served in the Temple, he had to be ceremonially clean. We do not know why the priest did not help, but he passed by the wounded man on the other side of the path.

Next a Levite, a Temple helper, came by. He too, looked at the man and walked by on the other side of the road, not stopping to help.

expected.

Love and kindness are very much part of the Christian religion. He said, "How different this is from my pagan religion. There is no love in my religion!" The carpenter became a Christian because Christians were loving and kind to him.

From today's Scripture, find out how you, too, can be loving and kind.

(Read Luke 10:25-37 aloud.)

THE LAW OF LOVE

A Jewish lawyer or teacher came to Jesus to test him. The teacher knew Moses' law and asked a question about it.

"Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He asked Jesus. The lawyer thought that he could be saved by doing something good.

Jesus said, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" (Verse 26) Find the lawyer's answer in verse 27. And Jesus said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." (Verse 28). Jesus' words show that love is the key to religion. Love began with God's love for us. We should love God with all our being as stated in verse 27. We must also love our neighbour as much as we love ourselves. "He who does not love does not know God; for God is love" (1 John 4:8).

on rock.

Another man heard Jesus' words and did not obey them. He is like a man who built a house on the sand without a foundation. The waters and storm winds hit the house. The house fell. The noise of the fall was terrible.

The wise man builds his life on the foundation of Jesus Christ. The foolish man builds his life on the evil of the world. The man who hears the message of Jesus but fails to act does not build his life on a good foundation.

(Read Luke 8:19-21 aloud.)

JESUS' REAL FAMILY

God's work was very important to Jesus. When he was twelve years old, he told his mother he must be about his Father's business.

One day while Jesus was busy with his work, his mother and brothers came to see him. They could not get into the house where he was teaching because of the large crowd.

Someone told Jesus that his mother and brothers were standing outside. They wanted to see him. Jesus' family thought that he would stop everything and visit with them. But Jesus was about his Father's business.

Jesus was busy teaching. This teaching was part of the reason he came to earth. Jesus knew the crowd of people wondered why

he did not go to his mother.

So he spoke to the crowd, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it." (Verse 21) Jesus was not showing disrespect to his natural, earthly family. He loved his mother. John 19:26-27 tells us that he did. But Jesus taught a larger idea of Christian family. We all belong to a natural, physical family. However, Jesus' true family are those who hear and do the will of God.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

What service can you do for your neighbours and friends in Jesus' name? Is "giving a cup of water" in Jesus' name a service? Are you a hearer only? Do you hear God's teachings and do as he says to do? Are you building your life on the foundation of Jesus' teachings?

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES US

1. Church members should show their love of Christ by their actions. Our actions say more to people than our words.
2. The true Christian bears the fruit of a good life.
3. Jesus said we must come to him for salvation. Then we must hear his teachings and do them.
4. We Christian should build our lives on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

5. Jesus taught that people who love him and obey his teachings are his family.

LESSON 7

LOVE OVERCOMES BARRIERS

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY AT HOME: Luke 10:25-37;
1 John 7:7-21

SCRIPTURES FOR TODAY'S LESSON: Luke 10:25-37

MEMORY VERSE: "If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar, for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen."

1 John 4:20

A young African man was a carpenter by trade, but he was a pagan by religion. He did not worship the true God.

One day someone invited him to go to a Christian church. He went but he could not find the songs in the hymn book. The man who sat next to him helped him turn to the correct pages. The man liked the preaching and the singing. He liked the kind way the people treated him. He went to the Christian church again and again.

This African man thought he must return the kindness. He asked a Christian friend what gifts he should give his new friends. He was surprised to hear that no gifts were