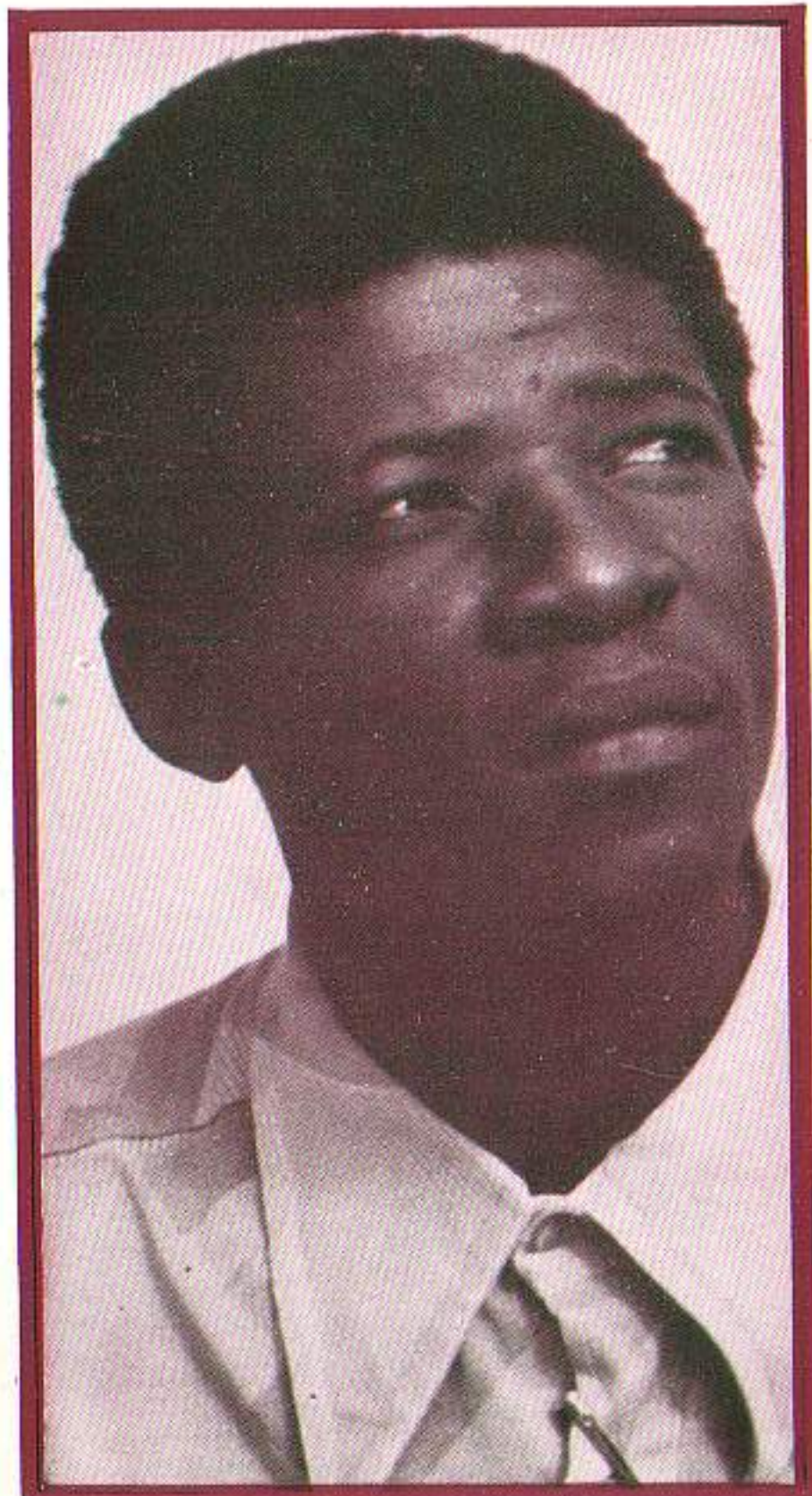


WHO AM I?



**BIBLE STUDIES FOR AFRICAN YOUTH
TEACHER**

WHO AM I?

IPS Archives

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Written by: Moses Ochwo

BIBLE STUDIES FOR AFRICAN YOUTH

Africa Coordinated Curriculum
for Bible Study

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CHAPTER ONE

MY CREATION

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Psalms 8, Colossians 1:16-17

Verses in Today's Lesson: Psalms 8:3-6; Acts 17:28

Memory Verse

"Know that the Lord is God! It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Psalms 100:3).

Lesson Aim: To help students know that God created them in his image and for his glory and companionship.

Teaching Aids: Chalk board or large piece of paper on which to write the topic. You also need a piece of cloth to tie over someone's eyes.

Background Study

The important point of Psalms 8 is God's being and his works on earth. The majesty of his name (his wondrous nature) is expressed in and through his works in all the earth (verse 1). Children and babies sing his praises, and his praises reach up to the heavens. He has victory over his enemies (verses 1-2).

Verses 3-8 describe how hard it is to understand the ways of God - especially the way he has treated man. Compared to the rest of creation, man is small and insignificant. And yet God treats him differently from the rest of the creation. God thinks of him and cares for him. The psalmist then goes ahead and explains the things that make man different from the rest of creation.

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He was made a little lower than God. He is lower in the sense that his body is perishable and like the other creatures that perish. But his soul is spiritual, immortal and has qualities that make him a creature of heaven. He alone was created in God's image.

God has crowned him with glory and honour. God has made him wiser than the beasts of the earth and the birds of the air. But he has other qualities such as righteousness, self-control, intelligence and self respect. All these qualities mark man as superior to all the other creatures.

Thou has given him dominion over the works of thy hands. God placed the world and all its forms of life under man's authority. God has also given the ability to rule them to man.

In Colossians 1:16-17 we are given more information about the created universe and its relationship to Jesus Christ. Jesus is the *source*, the *goal* and the *unity* of creation. All things were created through him. All things were created for him. All things are held together by him. Man was created through Christ. Man was created for Christ. We are held together in unity by Christ.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Today the topic of our study is ourselves. Who are we? Who are you? I want to begin by telling you a simple story. There was a school boy who was troubled every morning. He could not remember where he put all his things the previous night.

"One day he made a plan to solve his problem. He decided that he would write down all his things in a book and where he had put them before he went to bed. That

night he wrote in his book: 'My coat is on the table, shoes under the bed, I am on the bed.'

"The next morning he was able to find everything except himself. He was not on the bed. 'Where am I?' he began to ask. He started to cry. He could not find himself. Do you think this is a silly story or a problem for many people? Many people really do not know who they are or where they are.

"Now, I want one of you to come here and I am going to tie a cloth over your eyes. I want the other students to come forward to this one who can not see now and see if he can identify you by your voice. You should only say, 'Who am I?' "

After this simple game ask, "Do you think your question was answered to your satisfaction? Are you only a name? Read Psalms 8:3-6. What do you learn about man from these verses?"

Examination

Say: "We can give so many answers to the question, 'Who am I?' Somebody may say, 'I am Thomas. I am a son of certain parents. I am of a certain nation and tribe. I am a student in Form 3 of the local school.

"What are some facts you could give to describe a person to someone who does not know him?" In addition to the things mentioned some answers could be: education, social habits, political ideas, thinking ability, creativeness, interests and religious commitment.

Say: "The psalm you have just read gives us three important truths about man. First, it tells us that man was created in God's image. He was made a little lower than God himself. The meaning of that image is explained in

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your book. Turn to the Interpretation section of your book and read about that image." Allow about three minutes for reading.

Say: "Man had God's image in him, but that image was spoilt by sin. We are also told that man was crowned with glory and honour. Glory and honour refer to those qualities in man that make him very different from the rest of the animals. What do you think are the differences between you and the animals?" Wait for answers. "God has given man dominion over all other created things. Do you think man still has power over the other created things?"

Application

Say: "Look at the Application in your book.

1. What makes me different from the animals?
2. Why did God create me in his own image?
3. What is God doing to restore that image of God in me?
4. What must I do to allow the Holy Spirit to restore God's image in me?

"God created man in his image because of the relationship between God and man. This relationship was spoilt by sin, but through Christ it can be restored. We can then love God with all our heart, mind and soul, and love our neighbours as we love ourselves."

Help the students learn the memory verse. Call attention to Things To Do.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that the students will see that they have a high calling. This calling has to do with their relationship with God and with their fellow man.

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2. Pray that they will desire to live lives that correspond to the nature of their creation.
3. Pray that they will see this life in you.

CHAPTER TWO

MY BIRTH

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: John 1:11-13; Matthew 18:1-4

Verses in Today's Lesson: John 3:1-6; 1 Peter 2:2

Memory Verse

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Lesson Aim: To help students learn about the spiritual birth and Christian growth.

Teaching Aids: Paper and pencil (or pen) for each student, and chalk board or large piece of paper.

Background Study

The theme of Jesus' preaching was the kingdom of God (or of heaven). He taught many aspects of this kingdom. In Matthew 18:1-4 he teaches how one can enter the kingdom. It amounts to a conversion or a change of life. "...Unless you...become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (verse 3). You have to develop child-like qualities.

The child is naturally obedient. Sometimes they disobey, sometimes they grumble, but it is their instinct to obey. If you want to drink water, you naturally send a child to fetch it for you. You fear to send an adult because you don't know what his or her reaction will be. The kingdom of God is composed of men who obey God. If you want to enter that kingdom, you must be prepared to obey too.

A child possesses an amazing quality of forgiveness. Children quarrel with each other, and within five minutes they are friends again. To enter God's kingdom, we need to have our sins forgiven. This is the reason Jesus died on the cross. And he said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15).

Conversion also means entering into a special relationship with God as his sons. When we receive Christ into our lives, we are made new people. We have been born again (John 1:11-13). Without this experience we cannot enter God's kingdom (John 3:1-6). When we receive Christ he comes to live in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "This lesson is mainly about being born again. Most of us here would probably say that we have been born again. But would God agree? We want to find out what it means to be born again.

"To get started we are going to divide into small groups. Each group will have an assignment. You are to write a letter to a friend who has asked the question, 'What does it mean to be born again?' We will read the letters after we finish writing. In your letters include the following information: What does it mean to be born again? What does it not mean to be born again? How can a person be born again?"

After they have finished have someone read each letter to the class. If possible list their ideas on the chalk board. Have a student read John 3:1-6 to the class. Have them

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look for new ideas, points of interest or ideas that are difficult to understand. Discuss these.

Examination

Say: "Your ideas on this subject have been most interesting. Now let us look at John 1:1-6.

"Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews. Like all the Pharisees he was committed to the obedience of the laws of Moses. Pharisees were intensely religious people. But Nicodemus was not satisfied with that type of religion. There were so many laws that it was impossible to keep them all. He could not be sure of entering heaven with this.

"Nicodemus had seen Jesus doing mighty works and was convinced he was a man come from God. What he wanted most was to know how a man can enter God's kingdom. He did not ask the question directly, but Jesus knew what he had in his heart. Therefore Jesus told him what he wanted to know.

"He must be born again. This is another way of saying he must experience a total change in his life. He must become a new person. He must be born of the water and of the Spirit. Christians differ in their understanding about the water. Some think about it as baptism. Others think of water as a symbol of the Word of God (Ephesians 5:25-26; 1 Peter 1:23-25). Still others think of water as a symbol of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39). All these are necessary for the new birth. Repentance and receiving Christ are essential for the new birth. Baptism follows this for those who choose to obey Christ.

Application

Say: "If you are not yet born again, it means you have not yet entered God's kingdom. If you would die now you

would go straight away to hell. Surely you don't want that experience to happen to you. To avoid this you must be born again. Receive Christ into your life, repent of your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"If you are already born again, read the Application in your book on this topic and see what else you have to do in order that you may grow in the faith. Children need to be fed and taken care of before they can grow. Look at the things you have to do and see which of them you have been doing and which you have neglected. Will you begin doing all of them now?"

Have the students repeat the memory verse. Call attention to the Things To Do in their books.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray for the salvation of those members of your class that are not yet born again.
2. Pray that the students will be filled with desire to see others saved.
3. Pray that your church will fulfil the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

CHAPTER THREE

MY BODY

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Genesis 2:7; 3:19; Romans 1:24-25; 3:13-15

Verses in Today's Lesson: 1 Corinthians 6:13-20

Memory Verse

"I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Romans 12:1).

Lesson Aim: To help the students learn what the Bible teaches about the human body and its proper use.

Teaching Aids: Paper and pencil (or pen) for each student, a chalk board or large piece of paper on which to write the topic of this lesson.

Background Study

God is interested in our bodies and what we do with them. Genesis 2:7 tells us how the body of man was created. God formed man out of the dust of the earth. This can be proved by science. The body of man is made up of the same substances that we also find in the soil.

Genesis 3:19 tells us the effect of sin on the human body. The human body became subject to hard labour, sickness, old age and death. Romans 1:24-25; 3:13-15 tell us what people do with their bodies when they reject the rule of God in their lives. Paul mentions the wrong use of the tongue, feet and sex.

In 1 Corinthians 6:13-20 Paul rebuked those Christians who thought that Christian freedom means doing anything you like. That kind of freedom only leads to sin and the misuse of the body. Corinth was full of prostitutes and priestesses. These women were kept in the idol temple for the purpose of worshipping the goddess, Venus. Fornication was part of this worship.

Paul's message to the Corinthians was this: The body of a Christian belongs to God. God bought it with the price of the blood of his Son. Therefore Christians must glorify him in their bodies. The body of a Christian cannot belong to a harlot and to Christ at the same time. It cannot be an instrument of righteousness and evil at the same time. Christians must therefore run away from fornication. Most other sin is exterior to the body, but fornication is a sin affecting the body

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Today we are going to discuss the subject of the human body. What are some of the ways people abuse their bodies?" Some answers are: drinking alcohol, using drugs, smoking cigarettes, overeating, eating the wrong kinds of foods, lack of proper rest, lack of exercise, failure to keep the body clean, improper use of sex.

Say: "Here is a letter one young man wrote to his pastor about the subject of sex. He wanted some help. I want you to imagine that you are the pastor. You must reply to this letter. What would you write to him? The letter reads:

Dear Sir, Please help me, I have come to a point of frustration. Aren't the desires of the body to be satisfied? Why should the Bible forbid sex before marriage? Why is it

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wrong to use what God has made? Help me if you can.
Yours sincerely, Confused"

Let each person write a short letter of reply.

Say: "Now let us read 1 Corinthians 6:13-20. Make a note of points in this passage which would help you to improve your letter of reply to the young man."

Examination

Say: "One important truth which you must have noticed in 1 Corinthians 6:13-20 is that God cares about our bodies and how we use them. In fact, the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. God dwells in it. He bought it with the price of the blood of his Son.

"In that passage what are we told about the proper use of the body? We must glorify God with our bodies. That means we must use them as instruments of righteousness. We must use them to do things which please God. We must serve others, and thereby we serve God.

"We must not use our bodies as instruments of sin. Fornication is one of the sins that defile the human body. Sex is not a bad thing, but sexual intercourse outside marriage is sin.

"Jesus took upon himself the human body. It was this body that he used to do the works of God here on earth. Even after the resurrection, he was still wearing the same body, but this time it had been transformed. It had a different nature and was never subject to any more death. Christians will experience the same thing at the resurrection. Their bodies will be transformed."

Application

Say: "The Bible gives us several warnings about the wrong use of sex and of our bodies in other ways. Let us

look at some of these warnings." Have a different student to read each of the following verses: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Colossians 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; Hebrews 13:4.

"Now read the Application in your book about this topic." (Allow a few minutes for reading.)

Ask: "Which point in the passage has interested you most? Is there anything you have to correct in the use of your body? What do you think should be the attitude of a Christian who is invited to such occasions as marriage or funerals at which beer is drunk? Is there anything we can do to help people keep their bodies free of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes and other things that are harmful to the human body?" Let them give suggestions.

"It is time for action. Jesus said to a man, 'Follow me.' The man said, 'Lord, let me first go and bury my father.' But Jesus said, 'Leave the dead to bury their dead, but you go proclaim the kingdom of God.' We must act at once when our hearts are stirred within us."

Have the students repeat the memory verse until they know it. Call attention to the Things To Do in their books.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that the students will see the importance God attaches to the use of the body.
2. Pray that those who have been misusing the body will see their sin and turn away from it.
3. Pray that they and you will recognize ways to serve God with their bodies.

CHAPTER FOUR

MY WORLD

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Romans 8:18-23; Revelation 4:11

Verses in Today's Lesson: Genesis 1:26-31

Memory Verse

“For ‘the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it’ ”
(1 Corinthians 10:26).

Lesson Aim: To help students see their responsibilities over the world (God's creation).

Teaching Aids: Chalk board or large piece of paper on which to write the topic of this lesson.

Background Study

There is a strong connection between man and the created world. Genesis 1:26-31 says that *man was made the king of creation*. God gave him dominion over the rest of creation. The world and all its forms of life have been placed under man's authority.

Creation was intended for man's benefit. It was to provide for man's needs and his complete development. In fact, God made the whole universe to be the home for man. Read Genesis 1:29-30. *When man sinned, creation was affected.* (Genesis 3:16-19) The earth was not so fruitful. Man had to work hard to make it provide food. There was pain in childbirth. The earth began to provide useless weeds. The bodies of men were no longer completely subject to their souls. They began to experience fatigue, suffering and death.

In Romans 8:19-22, Paul states that man and nature are so closely related that, as by man's sin nature suffered with him, so man's salvation will also mean the salvation of nature. Nature was affected by the sin of man related in Genesis 3:17: "...cursed is the ground because of you..." So in the Romans 8 passage Paul sees nature waiting for liberation from the death and decay that man's sin had brought into the world.

God the Creator willed the existence of all things. He has the right to deal with them in any way he desires. All creation should acknowledge its subjection to him and give him the glory and honour.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Today we are going to consider the created world. You may remember that we talked about creation in the first lesson of this book, the creation of man and his relationship to the rest of God's creation. Today we are going to look at the created world and man's use of it."

Have someone read the Introduction from the pupil's book. Ask: "Would you agree with the father's answer to his daughter's question? Have you had any experience in which the created world helped you be more aware of your Creator?"

"Think of all the changes that have taken place since God created this world. Can you name some?" List these on the chalk board. Ask: "Are these changes good or bad?" Now have someone read Genesis 1:28. Ask: "What do you see that relates that verse to the changes we have mentioned?"

Say: "One of you please read Genesis 1:26-31. Then someone else read Psalms 8:3-6. We will write some similarities between the two passages on the chalk board."

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Examination

Say: "There are three important ideas we get from reading Genesis 1:26-31.

1. *Man is the crown of God's creation.* He alone was created in God's image. This accounts for the big difference that exists between man and the rest of the animals. Psalms 8 says that God has created man little less than God. He has placed a crown of glory and honour upon man's head.
2. *Man was given authority to rule and develop this earth.* This explains the reason why there are changes in this world. Man is using the authority God gave him to develop this earth. Because of man's sin, we have noticed many bad changes too.
3. *Creation was intended for man's benefit.* It was to provide for man's needs and his complete development. This does not mean that the world is completely man's possession. In 1 Corinthians 10:26 we read that the earth is the Lord's and everything in it. That means that man is only the steward of God's property. The world is still under God's supreme sovereignty. All creation should acknowledge its subjection to God and give him glory and honour. (Revelation 4:11)

Application

Say: "Someone read the Application section of your book to the class." Ask: "Were some of these ideas new to you? Had you heard of some of them before?" (Allow time for answers if they want to speak.) "What can we learn from the attitude of Job in the verse quoted?"

"What do you think should be a Christian's attitude toward science?" Allow time for discussion.

Say: "We have seen that God has supreme sovereignty and ownership of the created universe. We should use his creation to worship him. We must encourage helpful changes and resist harmful ones."

Have the students repeat the memory verse until they can say it without help. Call attention to the Things To Do in their books.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that your students will see that the world is not bad in itself, but the wrong use of it is bad.
2. Pray that they will surrender their money, property, time, hopes and all to the Lord and use all to worship him.
3. Ask the Lord to show himself to you through his creation.

CHAPTER FIVE

MY TIME: HIS OR MINE

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Exodus 20:8-11; Romans 14:5-6

Verses in Today's Lesson: Ephesians 5:15-20

Memory Verse

"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Lesson Aim: To help students see that our time is God's and each moment is a gift from him.

Teaching Aids: Take watches and clocks if you have them. Perhaps you could cut pictures of watches and clocks and paste them on a large piece of paper. Chalk board or paper.

Background Study

God is the Creator and Owner of all things. Man is merely a steward of God's property. He is steward of his body (1 Corinthians 6:20), of his time (Psalms 90:12) and of his money (Luke 16:9-11). What is required of stewards is that they be found faithful. One day each person will give account of his stewardship.

According to the Old Testament teaching, God requires one-seventh of our time. "Six days you shall labour, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work..." (Exodus 20:9-10).

This Sabbath commandment was to keep a day of rest. It means to Christians that a day is set aside when they do not

do their normal work. They do not have to meet the demands of a school time-table or the orders of an employer until Monday morning. We are free to use that day for worship and pleasure.

God intended this simple law for man's benefit and happiness. It gave him the chance to rest from his labours and to worship God. But by the time of Jesus Christ, the Jewish teachers had added on to this commandment many things that a man could not do on the Sabbath day. It is not surprising, therefore, that we read in the Gospels that Jesus was often in conflict with these leaders over this particular commandment. Jesus taught that Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Man-made restrictions and rules had made the Sabbath a day of fear and petty inconvenience.

In Romans 14:1-12 Paul gave directions on how to treat those who are weak in faith. They must not be despised, and their conscience should be respected. They must never put temptation in the way of the weaker brethren by parading their own freedom in the matter of eating, drinking and special days. Each person must settle in his own way regarding such matters so long as it is unto the Lord. One man holds the sanctity of special days. Another man considers all days the same.

The important thing is to remember that a Christian should regard all his time as belonging to God (Ephesians 5:15-20).

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Today we are going to look at the word, *TIME*. You have heard people talk about time: Don't waste my time. Please keep time. Arrive on time. Don't be late.

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"People say time is precious. Today we want to consider time as a gift from God.

"One of you read your Introduction to us." Allow for reading. "The story does not seem to have much to say about time. It is a lesson on stewardship. But man is a steward of God's time.

"Some of you have watches or clocks. (Show your pictures or watches or clocks if you have them.) What do you think is the importance of these? Why do people spend a lot of money buying clocks or watches?

"Think of yourself. How important is time to you? Do you waste time, or do you use it well? Someone please read Ephesians 5:15-20 to the class. Let us all watch for important ideas about time in this passage. Perhaps we can discuss these ideas."

Examination

Say: "Three important truths come out of Ephesians 5:15-20.

1. *Time is a gift from God.* A Christian should therefore regard all his time as belonging to God. He is therefore a steward of God's time. He must not waste time. This does not mean, however, that a Christian must work all the time. The Bible teaches that there must be a balance between work and rest.
2. *There is no room for thoughtless living.* A Christian must not live as so many people unwisely do. He is to watch for and resist temptations. Verse 18 mentions the sin of drunkenness. This was common among the heathen, and it is a sin that does not exist alone. It is usually accompanied by foolishness, abusive language, sexual sins and many others.

3. *We must use our time to do good.* We should not be foolish but use our time to understand and do the will of God. We have spiritual gifts, natural talents and various abilities. Let us use them to serve others and to serve God.

Application

Say: "Turn to the Application section in your book on this topic. Read that section and write down the four points listed there. After each point write the things you are going to do to apply it to your life." Allow several minutes for this work.

Say: "Maybe you have been one of those who have never taken time very seriously. You have been wasting time or 'killing' time. Now you know that time is a gift from God. You need to repent of your sin of wasting time and ask God to help you from now on to use your time as he directs. You will use every opportunity to do good.

"Finally, you have to resolve to fight against carelessness, laziness and lateness. You remember that many Christian activities are not as effective because many people arrive late and so the program must be shortened. Those same people can manage to arrive at their place of employment on time. Is it less important to give the effort needed to arrive on time to worship God?

Have the students repeat the memory verse. Call attention to the Things To Do in their books.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray about your own use of time. Ask God to show you if you are guilty of wasting time.

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2. Pray that your students can learn the importance of using time wisely. Pray that they will learn the importance and use of leisure time.
3. Pray that your example and that of your students will spread to others in your church so that they will use time wisely.

CHAPTER SIX

MY NATURE: HIS OR MINE

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Genesis 1:26-27; Galatians 2:20

Verses in Today's Lesson: Ephesians 4:22-24; Galatians 5:17-25

Memory Verse

"And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Lesson Aim: To help students learn to live in the likeness of God.

Teaching Aids: Chalk board or large piece of paper. If possible, make some small pots of clay (not burnt) and take small dry sticks.

Background Study

Genesis 1:26-27 tells us that God made man in his own image, after his likeness. This was not a physical image. God is Spirit, and he does not have a physical body. Man bears the image of God in his natural, moral faculties and in his social nature. God gave man the freedom of will.

Because we are made in the likeness of God we can know him. If we were not like God, we could not know him. Ecclesiastes 7:29 says that God made man upright.

Man was morally perfect when God created him. There was no such thing as lust, greed and hate in the beginning.

His thoughts were good. He had right feelings, and he reasoned before he acted. He made right choices until the day he used his power of choice to choose evil instead of good.

In the beginning God and man were good friends. They walked and talked together. They made great plans as to how this planet was to be populated and developed. The earth was to show God's glory to the entire universe. Man was to be God's closest friend, his partner in the cultivation and development of the earth. God did not intend to force man to obey him or to love him. But he promised to reward man with the tree of life if he obeyed.

The present condition of man is not his original condition. Sin has spoilt the image of God in him. Sin has affected every part of his personality - body, mind, soul and spirit. But through Christ the image of God can be restored in man. This is achieved by receiving Christ in our lives, so that it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us. Read Galatians 2:20.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Today we are going to study what the Bible says about our nature. We have already gone through some of the points. We have learnt that man was created in God's image. He is the crown of God's creation. He was given authority to rule and develop the earth. No other creatures in the universe are comparable to man.

"We also know that the present condition of man is not his original condition. Sin has spoilt the image of God in man. But now, through Christ, the image of God can be restored in man. In this lesson we are going to learn how that can be achieved.

"Here are a few small pots of clay. I want you to take them and destroy their shape, then restore shape to them again. Make them as much like the original ones as you can. Also take a stick and break it. Restore it to its original shape (unbroken)."

Allow a few minutes. Say: "You have done well in following instructions, but you do not seem to be able to restore these things to exactly their first condition. They seem different in some ways. Now let us look at Ephesians 4:22-24 and Galatians 5:17-25. What ideas in these verses are similar to what you discovered from breaking the sticks and beating the clay pots out of shape?"

Examination

Say: "These two passages tell us how God's image can be restored in us. We are commanded to put off our old nature and put on the new nature. We are to walk by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh. Let us look closely at these two words - the old nature and the new nature.

"The old nature. This is our self-centred nature. When God created man, he gave him the ability to love. This love can centre on God, self or other creatures. The love of self above God and above fellow human beings is sin. See Galatians 5:19-21. This selfishness must be taken out of our lives before God can restore his own image in us.

"The new nature. This is God's nature - the fruit of the Holy Spirit. When we receive Christ as our Saviour and Lord, he comes to live in us in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who produces in us the Christ-like characteristics listed in Galatians 5:22-23.

WHO AM I?

Application

Say: "We are commanded to put off our old nature and put on the new nature. What does this mean in real practice? To put off the old nature means that we must resist all selfish tendencies. The greatest commandment, Jesus said, is 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' The second is, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' See Matthew 22:35-39. There is no other commandment greater than these. Love is the opposite of selfishness.

"Read the Application in your book and find out what it means to put on the new nature. (Five minutes are enough for this reading.) Which of those points mentioned have you been practising? Which ones are you going to start practising? (Do not require answers, but let the students think about their answers.)

"Now let us look at Galatians 5:22-23 once more. How would someone know that you have put off the old nature and put on the new nature?"

Have the students repeat the memory verse. Call attention to the Things To Do section of their books.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that your students will see that becoming a Christian is not the end of the battle against sin, but it is the beginning.
2. Pray that they will see the fruit of the Spirit in your life.
3. Pray that they will desire that fruit in their own lives and allow the Holy Spirit to produce it.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MY WILL: HIS OR MINE

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: 1 Samuel 15:1-29; Acts 5:29;
Romans 6:16

Verses in Today's Lesson: Matthew 6:9-10; 7:21; Colossians
3:12-17

Memory Verse

"Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work' " (John 4:34).

Lesson Aim: To help students know how to choose between serving self and doing God's will.

Teaching Aids: You need a candle and matches. Chalk board or large piece of paper.

Background Study

Saul was anointed king of Israel by Samuel, the prophet and judge, under God's directive. To some extent, Saul was a successful king. He defeated Israel's enemies, the Ammonites, the Philistines, the Moabites and the Amalekites. Saul, however, had one fault in his life. He did not take seriously the commandments of God. He obeyed them when he wanted and disobeyed when he wanted.

One day he offered a burnt offering, the work which was given to the priests alone by law. Samuel warned Saul that he was in danger of losing his kingship by his disobedience to God's commandments.

WHO AM I?

1 Samuel 15:1-29 describes another example of Saul's disobedience and his loss of favour with God. God told Saul to go and destroy the Amalekites. This was the final test after the warning of 1 Samuel 13 which produced no repentance. The destruction of the Amalekites was pronounced long ago for their wickedness toward Israel (Numbers 24:20; Deuteronomy 25:17-19).

When Saul went to fight against the Amalekites, he only fulfilled part of God's commandment. He destroyed the Amalekites but spared Agag, their king, and their animals. God regarded this partial obedience as disobedience. Samuel rebuked the king for his disobedience and announced that his kingdom had been given to another. The kingdom was given to David.

The importance of obedience is taught in the New Testament. God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey him (Acts 5:32). The apostles of Jesus knew the importance of obedience. They preferred to suffer torture than to disobey God. Obedience to God was more important than obedience to the human authority (Acts 5:29).

Paul was proud to call himself a slave of Christ. A slave can do nothing more than to obey his master. We are either slaves of Christ or slaves of sin. You are a slave to the one you obey (Romans 6:16).

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Everybody stand up. Put your left hand on your right shoulder. Put your right hand on your right knee. Lift your left foot off the ground (or floor). Now run five steps. Now return to your seats.

"Before I tell you what I am doing let me ask you a question. Whose will controlled you just now? (Accept all answers.) Some of you say your own will controlled your actions. Some of you say that my will controlled you. Well, then, if I am so powerful, let me try again. Here is a chandle. (Light the candle with a match.) Now, all of you come and hold your finger in the flame for one minute. Why is no one coming?

"The point is this. You don't do everything I tell you to do. It has to be a combination of two wills, yours and mine. And you know, we do the same thing with God. Sometimes we obey him - if it does not cause us to do something unpleasant. But sometimes we refuse to obey him, thinking that the cost of obedience is too great. We can obey him or we can refuse to obey. We have to choose whether to do God's will or our own will. Now let us read Matthew 6:9-10; 7:21; Colossians 3:12-17." (Choose students to read.)

Examination

Say: "The theme of Jesus' preaching and teaching was the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is when God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. To belong to the kingdom you must be prepared to do God's will. Those who don't obey Christ cannot belong to his kingdom (Matthew 7:21). Jesus taught us to pray, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10).

"It is God's will that we put off the old nature and put on the new nature (Colossians 3:12-17). These verses talk of the garments of holiness. We are the new Israel, and we must live like the new Israel. The new characteristics we will have include compassion, meekness, patience, forbearing one another, forgiving one another and love. These belong to those who belong to the kingdom."

WHO AM I?

Application

Say: "Now maybe you are saying to yourself, 'This all sounds wonderful, but how do I do it?' Here is what you must do:

"You must receive Christ as your Lord. What does this mean? It means that he is 'ruler' in your life. When we accept Christ as Lord, we give him the right to control us, to be our Master. We yield to him. We turn over to him the control of various areas of our lives: our attitudes, values, emotions, relationships, thoughts, habits, motives, desires and any others. How does Christ control our lives?"

1. *"Through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does many things in the lives of Christians. One of them is to lead us into all truth. Another one is to convince us of sin (John 16:8). When we are in danger of going wrong or falling into sin, the Holy Spirit will tell us. He will make us feel uncomfortable until we repent of sin.*

2. *"Through the Bible. 'All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work' (2 Timothy 3:16-17).*

3. *"Now let us all turn to the Application section of your books to get further help on this subject. Looking at this, in what other ways does Christ control our lives?"*

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that the students will understand how to know God's will.
2. Pray that when they discover God's will, they will be prepared to do it whatever the cost.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCIPLINE

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:2-5

Verses in Today's Lesson: Hebrews 12:5-11

Memory Verse

"It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? (Hebrews 12:8).

Lesson Aim: To help the students see the purpose, means and results of discipline.

Teaching Aids: Chalk board or large piece of paper on which to write the topic.

Background Study

In Deuteronomy 8:2-5 Moses called on the people of Israel to remember the lessons of the past and particularly the way God treated them. He reminded them of their experiences in Egypt, the journey to Mt. Horeb and from there to the banks of the Jordan River. This took 40 years in the wilderness.

The wilderness wanderings were punishment and a humbling experience. God gave them food, but it was not always the type of food they wanted. It sustained life, but it did not please their tastes. God did this to show them that true life is not to be derived from material things but from the Word of God. Jesus quoted the same passage during his temptation in the wilderness.

God also took care of their clothes and health. Though they travelled on foot in a dry country, the way was rough and yet their feet did not swell. God preserved them from being hurt. This was to show them that God is not only the Creator. He is also the Preserver. They must trust such a powerful and good God.

During those years of education in the wilderness, God kept his children under strict discipline. "...As a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you" (Deuteronomy 8:5). Fathers discipline their children because they love them, and God does the same to his people whom he loves. God corrected his children in the wilderness with a fatherly love. For 40 years they had been disciplined and fed with manna. Their clothes did not grow old, and their feet did not swell. All this was to teach them to trust God and live by his Word.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Today we are going to consider the word, *discipline*. Discipline means to 'train to proper conduct or action.' It is to train character. This training can take many forms. But today we are going to concentrate on one of the forms. That form is called *punishment*. We are going to consider the role of punishment in the training of character.

"Nearly everyone of you has been punished. You received the punishment of a parent, teacher, headmaster or prefect. How did you feel about that punishment. Did you blame yourself, or did you blame the one who punished you? What are your feelings now toward someone who punished you a long time ago? Do you love them or hate them?

"Someone please read the Introduction in your book to the class." Allow time for the reading.

Ask: "In what ways do you think John's father was right? In what ways do you think he could have been wrong?"

"Someone read Hebrews 12:5-11 to the class."

Examination

Say: "The passage we have just read tells us clearly that God as a loving Father uses trials and sufferings for the education of his children and for the training of their character. The Christians of the early church were experiencing all kinds of trials and sufferings. They were bound to feel discouraged. Some might have felt that God did not love them. The writer to the Hebrews is telling them not to be discouraged by their sufferings. God is treating them as sons.

"The writer gave a human example. Here on earth we have earthly fathers to discipline us. They know that if children are left without discipline, they become spoilt. Fathers don't punish their children because they hate them. They do it because they love their children. God does the same. He loves his sons and must discipline them.

"There is no doubt about the pain of discipline. Nobody likes it, but what it produces is precious. It is worth the cost of the pain. The precious thing is '...the peaceful fruit of righteousness...' (Hebrews 12:11). God wants us to share his holiness."

Application

Say: "Let us look at verse 5 again and consider the exhortation, 'My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord.' To 'regard lightly' means to evaluate the reasons for which one should suffer thus, and not the way in which the measure of discipline is applied.

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"The purpose of God is that we should share in his holiness. He will use even austere means to achieve this purpose. Christians who fail to see this truth often attribute their sufferings to Satan. Satan can do nothing to God's children unless God allows him.

"The first important thing is for each of us *to recognize God's purpose in discipline*. We should realize suffering is a part of the Lord's will and purpose for us. But we must be very sure to understand that *it is never the will of God that we suffer because of our disobedience or sin*. The Lord Jesus in his great mercy may use such suffering to teach us a lesson. But he takes no pleasure in our sin.

"Read the Application in your book on this topic. Write some different measures of discipline a Christian may receive from God. You must remember that these are only a few examples. There are many more."

Have the students repeat the memory verse. Call attention to the Things To Do in their books.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that your students will accept God's discipline as part of normal Christian living.
2. If there are any of your students who are experiencing various trials and sufferings, pray that this lesson will be a comfort to them.
3. Pray for Christians all over the world who are undergoing sufferings.

CHAPTER NINE

WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING?

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 14:28-30

Verses in Today's Lesson: 1 Corinthians 3:5-15

Memory Verse

"According to the commission of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it" (1 Corinthians 3:10).

Lesson Aim: To help students see the responsibility we all have to build upon the foundation God has laid in our lives.

Teaching Aids: Wet clay soil and chalk board or large piece of paper.

Background Study

Jesus and the New Testament writers used the illustration of building houses to teach many spiritual truths. Matthew 7:24-27 is an example. Two men planned to build houses. One man, looking for a site for a house, found an inviting stretch of sand and built there. When the wind and rain came the house quickly fell because it had no foundation.

The wise man searched for rock, and he built his house on it. When the rains and wind came, his house stood firm, strong and secure.

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The parable teaches us the importance of laying the right foundation for life. The only true foundation for life is obedience to the teachings of Jesus.

What made the foolish builder choose unwisely? *He wanted to avoid work.* He wanted the easy way, the more attractive way, the way of less trouble. It may be easier to take our own way rather than Jesus' way, but the end is ruin. It may seem hard to take Jesus' way, but it is the way to security now and forever.

The foolish builder was also short-sighted. He did not think about the future. He thought about the present. Happy is the man who sees things, not in the light of the moment, but in the light of eternity.

In Luke 14:28-30, Jesus used another illustration of a building to convey another spiritual truth. The truth is about counting the cost of following Jesus. A man started to build but was not able to finish the tower. He did not have enough money. This is also foolishness. He should have realized at the beginning that he could not finish the tower with the material he had. The result was that he wasted his time and money. People laughed at his foolishness. It is a Christian's first duty to count the cost of following Christ.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Our lesson today is about building our lives on the foundation of Jesus Christ. How many of you have been involved in building houses? Was it your own house or someone else's house? Can you tell us what was done in the beginning? Was the house completed, or did you leave it unfinished? If you completed it, is the house still being used today?"

"Many of you have seen what we call permanent houses. Why do we call them permanent? How are such houses built?

"I have clay soil in this container. What if I told you to build a simple house? You could make it as beautiful as possible and in any style. Would you regard that small house as a real house a person could use? Some people's lives are like that toy house in some ways.

"Someone read the Introduction in your book to all of us. What one important lesson about life do you learn from this story? Now read 1 Corinthians 3:5-15.

Examination

Say: "In 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, Paul uses the illustration of a building to describe the nature of the church and the work of each individual Christian. The church is the building. The foundation of that building is Jesus Christ. The work of every individual Christian is to build upon the foundation.

"The Christian life begins with the receiving of Christ into a believer's life. This is like laying the foundation of a building. From there a Christian must grow. There are things he must do to help himself grow. Some of those things are prayer, Bible study, witnessing to others about what Christ has done for him and attending worship services and other meetings at the church. This is like building upon a foundation.

"What Paul was most concerned about in this passage was the material we use for building upon the foundation. Paul compared the works of Christian ministers to gold and silver (verse 12). Some of those acts are precious, durable

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work. Some are worthless and will not stand the test. Gold, silver and precious stones can pass through fire unharmed. Wood, hay and stubble are destroyed by fire. So the works of some Christians stand; those of others disappear. Some Christians build their lives upon the true teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are building with materials that are durable.

Application

Say: "There are three important questions that each of us must answer:

1. *Upon what are you building your life?* If you don't have Christ in you, and if you do not take obedience to the teaching of Christ seriously, then you are building your house on sand. You need to build your life upon the firm foundation, Jesus Christ.
2. *Have you counted the cost of following Christ?* The Christian life has its share of difficulties, problems, trials and sufferings. Some people make decisions to follow Christ without knowing that such things exist. When they meet them they are surprised and give up.
3. *What materials are you using for the building? Will your materials stand the test when it comes?"*

Have the students repeat the memory verse. Remind them of the Things To Do in their book.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that your students will understand the importance of building their lives upon the right foundation.
2. Pray that they will understand clearly the cost of discipleship and be willing to pay the price.

WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING?

3. Pray that they will understand their responsibility in building their lives upon that foundation and helping others to do the same.

CHAPTER TEN

ARE YOU A SERVANT?

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 17:7-10

Verses in Today's Lesson: Mark 10:35-45

Memory Verse

"And whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:27-28).

Lesson Aim: To help my students learn that to serve man is to serve God.

Teaching Aids: Chalk board or large piece of paper on which to write the topic.

Background Study

In chapters 24 and 25 of Matthew Jesus taught about his second coming and the judgement. The teaching ends with an impressive description of the judgement that the Son of man will exercise upon earth.

All peoples will be summoned to judgement. The judgement will be concerned with the works that men have done. The people will be divided into two groups like a farmer divides his goats from the sheep.

Who are the "sheep"? These are the people who served their fellow men with food, drink, clothes and companionship. They met people's physical and emotional

needs. Jesus considers these works of mercy as something that has been done to himself. To serve others is to serve God.

Notice the humility of these people. They were not conscious of the good things they were doing for others. It was just a normal thing to do good. It was not something to be proud about.

Who were the "goats"? These are the selfish people who don't consider the needs of others. By their actions they demonstrate that they are against Jesus himself, although they themselves are not aware of it. Therefore, they are excluded from the joy of the kingdom.

Are you beginning to think that salvation is earned by works? This is not the case. It was God who changed the lives of those who loved others. Service is the result of such a change. They were not doing it in the power of their own strength, but in the power of Christ.

Luke 17:7-10 teaches us the lesson of humility. We are not to be proud of the good things we do in the name of Christ. When we have done our best, we have only done our duty.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "As you have seen on the chalk board, the topic today is the question, 'Are you a servant?' Let us begin with a story.

"In a certain secondary school a boy was given the responsibility of serving food in the dining hall. The system in that school was that each table in the dining room would have a bowl of food and a bowl of soup. One of the six

students at that table would be appointed to serve the food. Every student was to get the same amount.

“One day it was James’ turn to serve. After he had finished dividing the food it was obvious that his plate had much more food on it than the other plates. The other students began to complain, and James felt very ashamed. He even left the dining room without eating.”

Ask: “Would you call James a servant?” Allow a few minutes for discussion. Say: “Now let us turn to Mark 10:35-45 and follow as one of you reads. Let us all notice ways we think the behaviour of James and John in this passage was similar to James in the story. Let us also look for the greatest lesson we can learn from Mark 10:35-45.”

Examination

Say: “Jesus had spoken so often about the suffering he was going to endure, but still the disciples were beginning to think again of positions of authority which they hoped to occupy in the kingdom of Jesus.”

“As they walked along the road Jesus talked again of his suffering, and in the midst of this discussion James and John, the sons of Zebedee, made their way to him. They asked him for a personal favour. Then they asked for the best positions in his kingdom. Jesus asked if they were ready to suffer with him, but even before he asked this he told them they did not know what they were saying. They said they were ready to drink Jesus’ cup of suffering. Then Jesus pointed out to them that God has reserved for himself the right to distribute the places in his kingdom.

“When the other disciples heard this conversation, they became angry. Why? It was because they too wanted the places of honour. They were angry because James and John asked before they got a chance to ask.

“Then came the lesson. Humility is the only characteristic that befits disciples of Jesus. There is no room for pride in that position. Each disciple must put aside pride and be ready to serve others. The more one serves, the greater he is in the kingdom of God. The purpose of Christ’s coming to earth was to serve. This service demands of him that he should give his life for the sake of others. Only through the self-surrender of Jesus, even his death, can our lives be redeemed.”

Application

Say: “The important lesson we learn in this passage is service. The world needs servants, not masters. Someone read the Introduction of your book to the class.

“To serve means to meet other people’s needs. Now let us read the Application in your book and find out some kinds of needs we should meet. Which one of these needs is the most important? Is it possible for you to meet everyone’s needs? No, you cannot do that. But we must meet some needs. We must do our best where we are. It is especially good when we can help people to help themselves. We are not to encourage them to be lazy. Read Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13.

“There is a difference between needs and wants. People want many things, but we often need very few of them. The wise man needs very few things, but nothing satisfies a fool. We are called to serve and not to satisfy people’s wants.”

Teach the memory verse, and call attention to Things To Do.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that your students will want to serve others.

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2. Pray that they will understand that God's kingdom is of love, not power.
3. Pray that they will understand what it means to be a servant.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

HOW DO YOU RELATE?

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Luke 6:27-38

Verse in Today's Lesson: Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:21

Memory Verse

“Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God” (1 John 4:7).

Lesson Aim: To help students learn how to relate to others

Teaching Aids: Chalk board or large piece of paper. Write the topic on it.

Background Study

In Luke 6:27-38 Jesus gives us a few ideas to govern our relationship with others.

1. *Love your enemies.* Here Jesus teaches us to keep our hearts free from resentment, no matter how we may be mistreated. Not only that, we should actually seek the welfare of those who seek to hurt us. This looks impossible, but with the help of God, it is possible. We can love those who hate us.

2. *Do to others what you would wish them to do for you.* This commandment does not say that we should treat people as they treat us. We should treat them as we would want them to treat us. Christian behaviour has no room for doing bad things. We must actively do good things.

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3. *How different are you from sinners?* Jesus described the common ways of sensible conduct - like loving those who love you. He dismissed them with the question, "What credit is that to you?" So often people claim to be just as good as their neighbours. Very likely they are. But the question is not "How much better are you than the ordinary person?" It is not our neighbour with whom we must compare ourselves. It is God with whom we must compare.

4. *You will be the sons of the Most High.* What is the reason for Christian conduct? It is that it makes us like God, for that is the way he is. He is kind to the man who brings him joy and equally kind to the man who grieves his heart. God's love embraces the saint and the sinner alike. It is that love that we must copy.

5. *The way you treat others is often the way they will treat you.* If you judge and condemn others, this is the way they will respond to you. If you are kind to them, they will be kind to you. If you love them, they will love you. Try it and see.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Someone read the Introduction in your book to the class." Allow time for reading. "Have you ever experienced that kind of problem in your life? You might have difficulties in relating to other people and yet you need them. You may quarrel with your brothers and sisters at home, but at the same time you long to see them and enjoy their love. Those who don't have brothers and sisters wish they had them.

"Let us go into groups of four or five people and discuss some questions. They are: Why do people have difficulties

in relating to each other? Why do people quarrel and fight each other? Make a list of several answers to the first question." Allow a few minutes for group discussions.

Say: "Now read Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:21. One person read it aloud. What are the things mentioned in these verses that make it hard for people to relate to each other? What are we told to do which can help us to relate to each other in love?"

Examination

Say: "One obvious truth should have come to your minds as you read the Ephesians verses. Sin is the thing that makes it difficult for people to relate to each other in love. Love is the thing that makes it easy for people to stay together in peace.

"The passage tells us to get rid of certain sins, especially anger. Since the church is a body, it is necessary that its members be very considerate of one another. Paul thought it was a little too much to tell them not to get angry at all. So he cautioned them to be careful not to hold anger. Perhaps some of them had tough characters, but now they must respect the rights of others.

"However, it is not enough just to get rid of sin. We must put on love. Forgiveness is required in Christian fellowship. "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15).

Application

Say: "Two things can help us to improve our relationships with each other.

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1. *Repentance.* Repentance means a turning away from self and sin and turning to God. Selfishness or self-centredness is a root of all sin. It is the greatest enemy of man.

“When man fell and chose to make himself instead of God the centre of his life, the effect was not only to put man out of fellowship with God. It also put man out of fellowship with his fellow man. The story of man’s first quarrel with God in the third chapter of Genesis is closely followed in the fourth chapter by the story of man’s first quarrel with his fellow man. Cain murdered his brother, Abel.

“If I want my own way rather than God’s way, it is quite obvious that I shall want my own way rather than the other man’s. A man does not assert his independence of God to surrender to a fellow man. But a world in which each man wants his own way cannot escape being a world full of tensions, barriers, suspicions, misunderstandings, clashes and conflicts.

2. *Put on love.* The nature of this type of love is fully described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and Galatians 5:22. Please read these verses when you go home today.”

Have the students repeat the memory verse. Remind them of the Things To Do section of their books.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that you can help the students to understand that ambition is good, but their greatest ambition should be to serve others and to serve God.
2. Pray that you and your students will follow Jesus Christ’s example of service.
3. Pray for specific opportunities to serve this week.

CHAPTER TWELVE

READY TO LEAD?

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: Psalms 23; Matthew 28:18-20

Verses in Today's Lesson: John 13:12-17; 10:3

Memory Verse

"Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians to feed the church of the Lord which he obtained with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

Lesson Aim: To help the students learn the meaning of Christian leadership.

Teaching Aids: Plain paper and pencils for each student, chalk board or large piece of paper. Write the topic there.

Background Study

Psalms 23 tells us about God's guidance and protection through the various changes of life. God is compared to a shepherd who knows how to give his animals food, protection and satisfaction. The psalm covers various aspects of human life: in the house (verses 5-6), out of the house (verses 1-2), the protection of the soul from evil (verses 3-4), bad times (verse 4), good times (verses 5-6), life of stable security (verse 6). In this same psalm God is also compared to a host, and we are his guests. God provides food for his guests.

What should be man's response to such a God? David is expressing in this psalm his complete dependence on the

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Lord as a sheep depends on its shepherd. There is calm and mental ease when one understands God's strong care. Anxiety is impossible when God's strong care is evident. Sometimes the journey is rough, and we are surrounded by enemies, but this cannot shake the faith of the person who trusts in God.

When David turns to the picture of God as a host, he says that God is the perfect Host. The host provides food and enjoyment and protects the guest from his enemies. The rich relationship with God is unlimited. The Lord is the Leader who serves.

In Matthew 28:18-20, we read of the leadership of Christ, All authority in heaven and earth has been given to him. He promised to lead his people wherever they would go, to be with his own at all times. No matter how weak we may be or how unimportant our task may seem, Jesus is our Friend and Companion. We do not see him with our physical eyes, but he is there to guide, to lead and to protect. He is the good Shepherd.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "Today we are going to study about leadership and especially about leadership as it is taught in the Bible.

"Leaders exist in all types of societies: families, industries, schools, countries, churches. It seems no society can exist without leaders. Our business today is to find out what the meaning of leadership is from the biblical point of view.

"Someone please read aloud the Introduction from your book. What do you think is the reason why people want to lead others? What do they expect to gain from it? What

about you? Would you want to be a leader? What would be the reason for this desire?

"Suppose your school or village follows the democratic means of choosing leaders, prefects or chiefs. Imagine you are one who wants to be elected. What would you say in a speech to those who would vote so that they would vote for you? Make a list on your paper as we all give answers." Let the students offer reasons they should be elected.

"Now let us read John 13:12-17. Who would like to read this?" (Allow for the reading.)

Ask: "What two important lessons was Jesus teaching his disciples? How do these lessons compare with the lists you wrote a few minutes ago?"

Examination

Say: "The two lessons are:

1. *A leader is a servant.* Jesus was the leader. Yet he washed his disciples' feet. When we think of leadership, many of us think of power, honour and the privileges we shall get from that leadership. Do we think of the people we are leading? What are their needs and problems? What can we do to help them?

"Jesus is the good Shepherd. He knows his people: their names, needs and problems. He calls them and leads them out to places where their needs can be met (John 10:3).

2. *A leader is a humble man.* He is prepared to do even the dirty job (like washing feet) if that will help his people. He is free from pride and self-seeking.

"Remember that this is not the world's view of a leader. The world sees a leader as one who is served, not one who serves."

Application

Say: "From this lesson we learn that *every Christian is called to lead*, because every Christian is called to serve. This does not mean that every Christian is called to be an administrator. An administrator is someone who has the gift of organizing others. But a Christian can lead others by showing them good examples - especially the example of service. The world does not need masters. It needs servants. Every Christian can serve, and we have been given gifts to help in this service. Are you ready to lead?

"Every leader must be humble. Humility does not just mean doing the dirty work. It includes being teachable, open to the leadership of the Holy Spirit and being willing to listen to others. Jesus had chosen the twelve apostles as church leaders. In John 13 he was teaching them and leading them. They had to listen and be willing to learn."

Have the students repeat the memory verse. Call attention to the Things To Do section in their books.

Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray that the students will understand the meaning of true leadership.
2. Pray for each one to have a desire to serve and to be humble.
3. Pray that you will set a good example before them of service and humility.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ALL IS GOD'S

PREPARING TO TEACH

Background Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; Colossians 1:9-10

Verses in Today's Lesson: Philippians 2:12-15

Memory Verse

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

Lesson Aim: To help students seek God's will and know how to do it.

Teaching Aids: Chalk board or large piece of paper. Write the topic on it.

Background Study

First Corinthians 3:21-23 is a warning against giving glory to men. The Corinthian church was divided because of the various Christian leaders who had gone to Corinth to minister to them. Obviously there were differences in those ministers, but the differences were not meant to cause divisions. They were to complete each other's ministries. The Corinthian Christians did not understand this. Instead they divided themselves into opposing parties. Each group was clearly claiming for itself a portion of truth and wisdom, boasting in a particular leader whom it appreciated.

WHO AM I?

But these leaders were really servants and each belonged to the whole church. By permitting such groups to flourish, the Corinthian Christians were showing that they had no idea of the fact that they all belonged to Christ and not to men. They were the property of Christ as we are today. He is the Master in whom all must glory, to whom all belong. Glorifying in man is a root of division in our churches even today.

It was Paul's prayer that the Christians of Colossae be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding (Colossians 1:9). The aim of all this is practical, that they may walk worthy of the Lord. In Colossae the Christians were faced with false teaching. It was because of this threat to the truth that Paul prayed for them as recorded in Colossians 1:9-10. Doing the will of God is the most important thing in the Christian's life. How can you know what that will is?

TEACHING THE LESSON

Introduction

Say: "It is God's will that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." Have someone read 1 Timothy 2:3-4.

Say: "Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us how to be saved. Salvation is just a gift from God. It is by God's grace that we are saved.

"What do you do with things you are given? You accept the gift and use it.

"Someone please read Philippians 2:12-15. What do you understand about the comment, 'work out your own salvation'? Do you think that verse disagrees with Ephesians 2:8-9? Are we saved by grace or by what we do?

"We are saved by grace which is the gift of God to us. We can not work enough to earn our salvation. Any work we do for God's kingdom is because we have already been saved. It is never for the purpose of saving us. Our part in salvation is simply to accept the gift of God. Once we are saved then we will want him to use us to help other people be saved also. Read Philippians 2:15 again."

Examination

Say: "We are God's sons, once we have received Christ into our lives and believed in his name. God has a plan for each of his children. Our duty is to find out that plan and do it. A successful Christian is one who does God's will. We have already discussed in Chapter Seven how to find out God's will for our lives. Our problem now is to achieve God's plan for our lives.

"In Philippians 2:12-15 we are told that it is God's will for his children that they be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish. How can we achieve that? How can we become perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect? We will not find the answer in this passage, but perhaps you can remember from lessons we have studied earlier. If you do not remember, look quickly at the Application section of chapters one and two to see if that will remind you. How can we become perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect?"

Application

Say: "This is the time for action. The Lord Jesus wants disciples today. He wants people who have separated themselves from sin and self. He wants people who are ready to do his will. He wants people who are ready to be servants. He wants children who are blameless and innocent. We are not saved because of our good works.

WHO AM I?

Salvation is a gift from God. But we are saved for good works, for serving other people.

“In fulfilling the Father’s will, two things are necessary. We must know his will, and we must do it. Knowledge and obedience are key words in the New Testament. If we are to be disciples of Christ we must start from a firm foundation of knowing God’s will and doing it. God has a plan for your life. The plan is for you to become perfect as he is perfect. You can only achieve that plan by a close personal relationship with God through prayer, Bible study and seeking him.”

Have the students repeat the memory verse until they can say it without help. Call attention to the Things To Do section in their books.

Prayer Suggestions

- 1. Pray for growth and maturity in the Christian faith for every student.**
- 2. Pray that each one will desire to be a disciple of Christ without concern for the cost.**
- 3. Ask God to lead you to be more perfect as you walk close to him.**

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