

THE HARVEST CALL

BIBLE TEXT : Matthew 28:18-20. 9:38.

LESSON 365 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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

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

Matthew 9:38

³⁸ Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

**"Jesus loves the little children,
All the children are His care;
Red and yellow, black and white,
They are precious in His sight;
Jesus loves the little children everywhere."**

We who go to Sunday School every Sunday may not realise that millions of children in many parts of the world have never heard about Jesus. They do not have a Sunday School to go to. No one ever told them that Jesus died to save sinners, and wants them to live with Him in Heaven. They are sitting in darkness, waiting for the light of the Gospel to shine on them. Many will die and be lost. How can we stand before God, uncondemned, if we fail to tell them about Jesus!

Just before Jesus went to Heaven He called His disciples together and told them what their work would be. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19, 20).

Many missionaries have gone to foreign lands to tell the unenlightened people about Jesus, and Gospel literature has been translated into many languages and sent to the nations of the world; but it is estimated today that almost two thirds of the earth's population have never heard the story of Jesus. Are we doing all we can to fulfil the command of Jesus when He said, "Go ye into all the world"?

Power for Service

When Jesus commanded His followers to tarry in Jerusalem until they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, He said that they would receive power to be His witnesses in the "uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). What they were going to receive would enable them to tell the story of Jesus to many people far from the city of Jerusalem.

Persecution

Wonderful meetings followed the Day of Pentecost, when 120 of the disciples received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Peter became a great preacher at once, and 3,000 people were converted in one day. The disciples were enjoying the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and no doubt all the Christians would have been happy to stay in Jerusalem for more blessings. But Jesus had said, "Go."

The disciples may not have realised that it was time to go, but when the Pharisees began to take people to prison, and sometimes kill them, because they believed in Jesus, they scattered into many cities outside Jerusalem. "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mark 16:20). Jesus had said He would go with them, and He did.

The Call to Europe

After the Apostle Paul was converted he went on three

missionary journeys. Everywhere he went he told people of Jesus. One night while he was in Troas, in a vision he saw a man from Macedonia calling, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us" (Acts 16:9). Paul felt at once that it was a message from the Lord, and he and his helpers wasted no time in going to Macedonia. That was the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel in Europe.

Many people were saved under their preaching, but not every one accepted what they said. Some people were so angry that they put Paul and Silas into prison, but that did not stop their preaching. God had sent them to preach to people who did not know about Jesus, and they did what they could to tell the Good News, no matter how much they had to suffer.

Denying One's Self

Self-sacrifice has always been the spirit of the true missionary. He is willing to suffer for Jesus if necessary. He does not ask for any earthly reward. "Just to see a saved man smile makes the effort well worth while." He is willing to leave his home with its comforts, his friends and relatives, and go where God calls him to go.

In order to be a profitable missionary for Jesus, one must be saved himself (have his sins forgiven); and also be cleansed (made pure of heart) by sanctification. And he needs the baptism of the Holy Ghost just as much as the disciples needed it on the Day of Pentecost before they started out to be missionaries.

Then one must have a love for souls, a compassion for the lost ones. It has been said by missionaries in the field, that, a genuine love for the people cannot but be put on. One may pretend he cares for those to whom he is ministering, but the people can detect whether he really is ministering from the heart because he loves them as well as he loves their soul, or for some other reason.

The missionary must realise that the people to whom he is preaching are men, women, and children for whom Christ died. Jesus is not willing that anyone in all the world should be lost. He gave His life to save us, and he wants us to give our lives in service for others. We are blessed to be a blessing. We must be willing to suffer with those we are trying to help. That is not asking too much.

Jesus left His wonderful Home in Heaven where all the angels adored Him, and came to earth to live a humble life, not in palaces with kings or in mansions with the wealthy, but in humble cottages with the working people, the fishermen, those who were despised by the great of the world. He was our example, and he has asked us to follow Him.

Many Languages

When missionaries began going into heathen lands many years ago, they found many, many people who had no written language. They could not read Bibles or Christian literature. The missionary had to live among a tribe of people until he had learned enough of their language to talk with them. Then he had to put the words into letters, so the language could be written. Next, he translated the Bible, or a part of it, into what he had written. Words of the Bible sometimes have to be suited to their surroundings. For instance, there are no sheep in Iceland. The natives would not understand what was meant by calling Jesus the Lamb of God. So the early translators used the word "seal." There were many seals in the waters around Iceland, and the natives could understand the comparison, "the Seal of God." Then the missionary had to teach the people to read the Word of God. It was a long, slow process; it took many years of intensive

study and much prayer and help from God to reduce a language to writing, and then to give the people of that language the Word of God to read. The missionaries did it because they loved the souls of men, and wanted them to know the way of eternal life. People of hundreds of languages and dialects are reading God's Word today because of the faith-fullness of early missionaries. We can send our literature to them to help them become Christians because someone else taught them to read.

That work goes on. Year after year new languages are added, and the full Bible is translated today into well more than 197 languages and dialects. Well over one-thousand-and-fifty-nine languages have at least one Book of the Bible. But yet it is estimated that quite well over 1,700 languages have not a word of Scripture.

Some missionaries have felt a burden to tell the heathen about Jesus with phonograph records. Some of their representatives have gone into out-of-the-way places where the language is not written, or where they do not have a Bible translation, and they have found a person who could speak that language and also one that the missionary spoke. He would then translate the Gospel message onto a tape recorder, from which phonograph records are made and sent back to those who have not heard the Gospel in their language. Other missionaries take portable phonographs and play the message of the Gospel of salvation from sin to those lost ones who did not previously understand.

The Spirit Speaking

Whatever the method used to tell people about Jesus, the Spirit of God must speak to the heart in order that the listener may be saved. The Spirit needs no interpreter. A missionary may be praying with an unlearned heathen, neither one able to understand a word the other says, but the Spirit of God can melt their hearts together and they feel the peace that Jesus gives when He forgives the repentant sinner.

Missionary Work at Home

Our missionary work may begin in our own back yard. Our neighbour may be waiting for someone to tell him about Jesus. What if we should fail to tell him that Jesus will save him from his sins, and he should be lost in hell? May we all pray earnestly that God will show us someone to tell about Jesus, to invite to church. When we start our day, let us ask Jesus to guide us to someone who wants to be saved and help us to say the right thing. Above all, let us live so that others can see that we are the children of God. We represent the Kingdom of Heaven. Do we act like citizens of Heaven?

Some of us may feel that we would be willing to go to a foreign land to give our lives to help others to be saved, but no way opens for us. What can we do? We can pray for those who do go, and we can give of our money to help support them, and to print Bibles and Gospel literature in other languages. Many children have savings banks for missionaries. They love the children of other lands because Jesus loves them, and they want to help them to be saved.

Our prayers must be earnest and faithful. May God help us to shed tears over the lost ones, and plead with God to send someone to help them before Jesus comes. And let us pray unselfishly, "Here am I, Lord; send me."

A young man was working zealously to interest other young people in missionary work. He prayed, "Here am I Lord; send my sister." He thought his work at home was too important to leave. However, no one would volunteer to go to the mission field until one night he cried, "Here am I, Lord; send me." Then others

followed his example and volunteered to go wherever the Lord would send them. He held to his consecration, and then had served God in India, telling the lost ones of Jesus.

Early Preparation

None of us are too young to prepare ourselves for missionary work. After we have the three initial spiritual experiences, we can keep praying that God will help us to learn more of His Word, and give us His wisdom, that we will understand that people for whom we feel a burden. We can study the customs and language of the country we feel God is calling us to. But always we must pray that God will lead us. There are many lessons that God will teach us through time and experience. The more we yield to God, giving ourselves to Him for whatever He wants us to do, the sooner He can prepare us for that work.

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38).

QUESTIONS

1. To which nations did Jesus send His disciples?
2. For what reason did Jesus tell His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem?
3. What caused the disciples to leave Jerusalem?
4. What was the Macedonians call which Paul heard?
5. Name some of the qualifications of a good missionary.
6. How much did Jesus give for us?
7. In what way have many of the heathen been given the Bible?
8. Where may our missionary work begin?
9. How can we do missionary work at home?