

The Sunday School Lesson SUNDAY, JULY 24, 1949

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION Golden Text—

For thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive, and abundant in loving kindness unto all them that call upon thee.

Lesson Text—Ps 32 1-5, 51: 1-2, 7-13.

Exposition—I The Blessedness of Sin Covered by God, Ps 32 1-2

This is a didactic psalm. David is beyond question the author of it (Rom 4: 6-8). He had known in his royal position all worldly joys but the highest joy that he had found was that of transgression forgiven and sin covered. This joy is open to every one (Ac 10: 43) if there was forgiveness for one who had sinned so grievously as David we may conclude that there is forgiveness for us all. The Psalmist multiplies words for sin, "transgression" means rebellion "Sin" missing the mark (Rom 3: 23) "Iniquity" crookedness or curvature. To "forgive" means literally to take away (Jno 1: 29; Ps 103: 12) God "covers" sin (Ps 85: 2). He covers sin from view. He covers it with the blood of Christ (Hev 17: 11). When God covers sin no man nor devil can uncover it. God does not impute or reckon to the penitent sinner his sin. He reckons to the penitent and believing "righteousness apart from works" (Rom 4: 6, 7), even His own righteousness.

(2 Cor. 5: 21). The first three points regarding the blessedness of forgiven sinner have to do with his standing, the other two with his repentance and restoration.

II The Misery of Sin Covered by Self, 3, 4.

In the first verse we see God covering sin; in the third and fourth the sinner covering his own sin. The former is supreme blessedness, the latter supreme misery. The sinner seeks to cover his sin from God (Gen 3: 7, 8). This no sinner has ever succeeded in doing (Prov. 28: 13). David sought to keep silence, but only succeeded in "roaring all the day long"—His lips kept silence but his bones roared. He tried to escape God's hand by keeping silence, but day and night God's hand was heavy upon him. There is nothing that man can do more foolish than to refuse to confess his sin unto God. These days of unconfessed sin were days of great cruelty on David's part (2 Sam 12: 31).

III Sin Uncovered to God and Covered Up by God, 5.

David did at last with his sin what he ought to have done first. God's heavy hand had accomplished its loving purpose. David acknowledged his sin to the right person, to God. He stopped covering (hid) the same Hebrew word as covered in v. 1, his sin. When he stopped covering his sin himself then God covered it for him. It was a good thing that David said in v. 5. To "confess" does not mean merely "to own up" but "to point out" or "to fully declare." The trouble with much that is called confession is that it is not full and frank and free. The result of this confession was that God forgave the iniquity of his sin. That will always be the result of full, hearty, confession unto the Lord (1 Jno 1: 9; Job 33: 27, 28; Luke 15: 20-23). A hearty confession of sin is always accompanied by a thorough turning away from sin (Prov 28: 13; Lev 26: 40-42). Though God forgave David's sin, David did not escape all the consequences of his sin (2 Sam 12: 13, 14).

IV The Penitent's Confession, Ps 51: 1-13.

This psalm never grows old. It is the true expression of the penitent's experience in all ages. David

was the original author, but it will serve for the prayer of us all. Its opening prayer is one that we all need to utter. We have not all sinned just as David did, but we have all sinned (Rom 3: 22, 23). A true Christian experience begins with the substance of this prayer. Our only hope is not in our desert, but in God's loving kindness and in the multitude of His tender mercies (cf Ex 34: 6, 7; Num 14: 18, 19; Dan 9: 9, 10; Eph. 1: 6, 8; 2: 4-7). When God has mercy and forgiveness, it is as if it never had been (Isa 43: 25, 44: 22; Ac 3: 19). David longed "not" prayed to be completely washed and cleansed from the evil that he had committed. God does this thoroughly cleansing from the vilest sin (and all the sin) we have committed (1 Cor 6: 11; 1 Jno 1: 7-9).

David cannot bear the thought that the holy eyes of God should look upon his sin (v. 9), and God does hide His face from the penitent's sin (Isa 38: 17; Mic 7: 18, 19). That requires a new creation, a "clean heart." And this too God can do and will do (Ezek 36: 25-27; 2 Cor 5: 17; Eph 2: 10). David felt the need of a total renewing, just what the gospel provides (Tit 3: 5; Rom 12: 2; Eph 4: 22-24; Col 3: 10). Unforgiveness involves casting away God's Presence. Sometimes this casting away is temporary, sometimes it is permanent (2 Ki 13: 23, 17: 18, 23; 27: 2; Thos 1: 9). David prays that he may not be thus cast away.

David has had the sweet consciousness of the Holy Spirit's presence and power. The loss of that consciousness is the inevitable consequence of sin. He knew how the Spirit had been taken away from Saul when he sinned and he prays that He may not be taken from him also (cf 1 Sam 16: 14). He had lost the joy of salvation and asks that it may be restored, and it was (Ps 32). For the future he must be upheld or he will fall back into sin again (cf Isa 41: 10; 1 Pet 1: 5; Jude 24). It is by the Spirit of freedom (Rom 8: 15; 2 Cor 3: 17; Rom 8: 2) that we are upheld. Forgiven, cleansed, restored, rejoicing upheld himself, he will now teach and convert others (cf Luke 22: 32; Ac 9: 17-22).



SPORTS CAMERA

By H. Coles

WITH THE FINAL GAMES of the Halton County Intermediate circuit rapidly approaching, this space is inclined to think it might be time for a review of the strength of individual teams, to sort of analyze them before play-offs commence. As the County loop is in the unprecedented position of having three classes of Int Baseball functioning under one banner it makes this particularly pertinent because Acton's cream clad club will have terminated their part in league play before we have occasion to write another column. We'll attempt to restrict our remarks to brief and impartial comment given in the approximate order each club stands in at the present time with one exception—Acton A's. We'll reserve them till last as there is some conjecture afloat where in heck they do stand.

FERGUS VICTORIAN This club a new addition to the loop is our selection to review first. By virtue of their consistent stream of victories they have set the pace through the season. They are not a particularly brilliant team but they have a penchant for playing steady baseball when the chips are down. Three times they came through with wins over Acton after apparently being well beaten in early innings. Their strongest point is pitching. Vics have two remarkably good hurlers who seem to get better as a contest progresses. However, their Achilles heel is obviously their hitting. In most of their wins Fergus have managed by diligent application to the task and good fortune in various guises, to scrape through by slight margins. If in the play-offs with Georgetown in the Int B category, their pitching staff should weaken it is our guess Vics will receive a rude jolt from the unpredictable Papermakers.

MILTON RED CAPS Despite a slump in mid-season we can't ignore Milton as the logical finishers in the second slot. The County Town took the precaution of sprinkling a few veterans in their line-up early in the season to steady the most youthful squad in the league. The move is beginning to pay dividends. A considerably weaker club last term went to the Ontario semifinals and we think they'll advance into the playdowns again this year. Milton possess power at the plate, have mediocre pitching but their trump card is their ability to play "heady" baseball in the pinches, capitalizing on every available break of the game.

WATERDOWN MERCHANTS—For their first year in baseball the Waterdown club have done what few clubs can do—beaten every team in the league at least once. Although we believe Milton's experience will decide the Int C issue the tremendous batting power of Merchant is a formidable threat to the Red Caps. They have two better than average hurlers—a fork sifter and a righthander and Milton will find they have a tough battle on their hands in subduing Russ Brush's prodigies. The infield is fast, especially at the positions and at short, and can reel off twin kills like greased lightning when the occasion demands. We put them ahead of Georgetown for they probably will win more games than the Papermakers before the season is finished.

GEORGETOWN RAIDERS —The versatility of many of the Georgetown players at playing several positions has been a deciding factor in their favour. They have won three of three games played with Acton which is in itself startling news. Chappelle, a southpaw, is the rock on which the team is founded. Should he flounder, the rest would probably follow suit. As inconsistent as ever we think Fergus will eliminate Georgetown in straight games unless they get more pitching help. Patterson, apparently, isn't keen about twirling this term, preferring to renege with the umpires instead.

HAMILTON JAPANESE RECS —The reverses these diminutive men have suffered have in no way affected their old college try. It is disconcerting to see them take everything in their stride compared to most clubs who hum and huggle over every run. They have won only one game, that from Georgetown, as far as we can discover. Never a threat, they might be a model of good sportsmanship to their opponents. Rees are avid advocates of the old maxim, "Win or lose, play the game."

ACTON A'S —Last but not least, Acton since they've added their quota of imports, are a tremendous improvement over the roster which started the season off

especially on the mound. Information reaching us last week said they have finally signed Don Ryder to hurl. As then have at least five pitchers to hurl into a contest. They'll probably need that number when they step into the Ont Int A playdowns. It's significant to note that since the addition of the Guelph players, they have won three games from the top teams in the league.

HEAVEN CAN WAIT

She greeted her husband affectionately when he returned from the office. "Poor darling," she said "you must be tired and hungry. Would you like some nice soup, tender chops, with golden-brown potatoes and green peas, and mushrooms on toast?" He shook his head firmly and said, "No, let's save the money and eat at home."

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Sure It's Hot. And Vacations are in order. You can keep up with the Home Town news while on your vacation if you arrange before leaving to call at the office and arrange for your copy to be sent to your vacation address this week. There's no extra charge. Speaking of Vacations. We'll be on ours next week and there'll be no issue of The Free Press on July 28th. We've tried to complete most of the commercial printing required before going on holidays. Back Again on August 2nd.