THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

by Riev. R. C. Todd JESUS INTERVIEWED BY NICODEMUB

. . John 3: 1 -'In studying this lesson, one should read John, 2; 23-36 along with story of Moodemus' interview with Josus, Evidently Jesus' miracles had attracted the attention of many Jews in Jerusalem, and they believed miracles were genuine; possibly He was the promised Messiah should restore the Kingdom to reel." To instrute the state of mind of these people in Jerusalem to whom Jesus would not "commit himself" John selects the case of Nicodemus. (John 3:1-31).

Nicodemus was a member of the Senhedren, the ruling body of the Jeros, which almost from the first opposed Jesus and finally was approprietate for his death. It is evident that the Sanhedrin was impressed by Jesus at the first, reflecting the popplay state of mind in Jerusalem mentioned above. This council was keen to sense and measure the popular state of mind with regard to any po-

poles. figure purporting to be or rumored to be, the Massish. Their condidate for that God-siven commission, so long as his pretendons seemed genuine enough and be promisest to further their political aspir attons. At one time they had sent deputation to John the Baptist, ask ing if he were the Messiah, and received an answer definitely in th negative as well as a scattling denum ciation. Micodemus may have a deputation of one sent to Jesus the Sanbedrin to sound him out. comes evident that he may have been one of the deputation that had falled so meserably with the Buptist, for he certainly knew the results of that deputation and was aware that a crisis in the national history had arrived. He probably went to Jesus to sound him out and to urge him to a certain plan of action in proclaiming Kingdom of God. Modestly, and as speaking for others as much as himself, and very smoothly and diplomatically he says: "Master, we know that thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles except God be with him." Jesus cuts

him off promptly; knowing what pol-

we may well imagine :"The | It marked his cleansing from his Mingdom of God is quite another defiled self as a Gentile, disappear thing to me than you and your crowd ing under the water from men's sight are thinking of; and the way to es- as a Gentile; and rising a new man, tablish at is very different from the a Jew. He was thus born of water, way you have in mind." "Except one but this time born not a Gentile, but Kingdom of God."

It is not likely that Nicodemus was so stupid as to take Jesus' words their literal sense when he replied: "Oan a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" He is implying that a Jew is by natural birthright fit for the Kingdom, that a spiritual rebirth is no more

possible than a physical rebirth. Precisely at that point is where Christianity breaks with all other re lectons, and with political scheme: and economic utopies which have for their purpose the betterment of humentty. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom God." "Ye must be born again." other words the Kingdom of God de pends upon a spiritual rebirth man, and it enlists its citizens among men and men who have thus been re born, in terms of belief which has do with the nature of God and purpose for His children upon earth This purpose is summed up in John iticel intriguing he will lead up to, by 3:16, and is pointed to in the "Lifting up of the Son- of Man" (on the cross) that whosover believeth in him should the bestowment of a new nature. have eternal life,"—that is, the only life that can see the Kingdom of God

or enter in.

"Spirit" (the Spirt of God). Baptism was used by John the Baptist and by Jesus also as a symobile rite to mari dom of God. With Jesus and his disciples, however, it was a rite to mark those who HAD entered the Kingdom John's baptism was a mark of repentance of sin. Jesus' baptism was a mark both of repentance and of the New Birth. It was baptism Jews also used baptism by water Cannot we believe that there is

born snew, he cannot see the a Jew. The idea that not only Gentiles but Jews also must be been smain must have staggered Nicodemus the Sanhedrin. Joint had required the same preparation for entrance to the Kingdom, but the Pharasees had not Historied to John, and were offended precisely on the ground of his bentism. For John had said to the deputation (as reported by Matthew) "Think not to say within yourselves. We have Abraham to our Pather, for say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Even now the axe is laid

into the tree! and every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn . . Now Jesus presses on Nicodemus the very same truth. zed and be born anew to become enter the good life as the Jews sew i so must the Jew be born again if he and to belong to the Kingdom of God. He must submit along with the Gentile to the double baptism of water and the Spirit - of water to mark the pardon and cleansing of his sinful human nature, and of the Spirit for new and holy life, in which he is uni

"How can these things be?" How of-Jesus defines the New Birth in ten people express a similar doubt toterms of "Water" (baptism) and the day! Like Nicodemus our generation talks quite freely about miracles, and believes in them — the miracle of science, medicine, and of psychiatry. People even have a vague feeling those who wished to enter the King- that these miracles point to a Power which we call Divine. But if it is suggested that this same Power is able to work changes no less miraculous in the Human soul, then they become sceptical. That a surgeon can graft the cornea from the eye of person who has died to the blind eye of a person who is living, so that the both by "water" and 'the Spirit.' The blind can see, this we can believe when they made a Gentile convert, surgery of the soul that can restore

Nicodemus sceptically remarks:

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become blinded? Cannot we believe that if a broken human body can be miraculously mended and made new. the same healing and renewing process can apply to the human soul so as to fit it for Utopia otherwise impossible? "If I told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly

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BANK OF COMMERCE HEAD OFFICE CONGRATULATES KEN MOMILIAN

Ken McMillan, whose horse entries at the Royal Winter Fair were outstanding, was pleased to receive letter of commendation from the head office of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. The letter, signed by Stanley M. Wedd, vice-president and

general manager, says: "The official results from the Royal Winter Fair are just coming before us and we should like to send you our hearty congratulations on the excellent showing made by your harness horses. Mr. Inglis, who was the manager of our branch at the Pair, tells us that your exhibit was certainly a great credit to Canada."

MRS. SYD MACKENZIE AGAIN PRESIDENT ST. GEORGE'S W.A.

Mrs. Sydney MacKensie was re-olected president of St. George's W.A. when that organization held its amnuml meeting last Wednesday at the home of Mrs. D. L. Herbert. Pollow--ing the business meeting, Mrs. D. W Baxter and Mrs. L. W. Dann assisted the hostess with serving refreshments. Officers for 1947 are: Hon. Pres.—Mrs. W. G. O. Thomp-

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The Editor's Column

1907 AUTO MARKER RECALLS THE PAST

To the list of interesting articles displayed in the Herald office window from time to time, we add this week an automobile licence marker loaned to us by Mr. D. R. McLaughlin of the Check Line. The marker, of heavy black rubber, has its number 8431 stamped in white five inch letters, an inch higher than the figures on a 1947 black and silver licence plate which Mr. McLaughlin also brought to show the contrast. Annual plates were not introduced into Canada until about 1911.

The "Official Automobile Guide of Canada," also loaned for our perusal is interesting to present motorists. Describing the Toronto to Guelph highway, it says the road from Brampton is good, mostly gravel. It followed the present highway through Norval, then jogged a block up Water Street, right at the Hotel Mc-Ginnis (misprint for McGibbon) and met the present highway again at the top of Main Street. In those days, Limehouse was on the main road, for the motorist is advised to turn left at 41.3 (miles from Toronto) into Limehouse and four miles beyond that north-west, passing through Acton.

Speeding was a problem, even in 1912, (the speed limit was fifteen miles per hour, but you could throw it wide open to twenty on the highway). One township council near Toronto took drastic measures to curb those daring souls who were inclined to go faster. "There is a level stretch . . . marked here and there by 'bumps' such as are made by toboggan slides, and wilfully placed by the township authorities to prevent motorists driving at high speed."

In Quebec, motorists were confined to a speed of six miles in town limits and fifteen in open country, and this was also the case in the Maritimes. The horse had preference in all provinces. In Ontario, for instance, an automobile could not approach or pass an horse-drawn vehicle at a greater speed than seven miles an hour, must stop if signalled to do so by the driver of the buggy, and must even render assistance if called upon to do so by that driver.

International travelling was much more complicated in 1912 than in the present day. Each of the States had its own laws governing visiting motorists, ranging from "visitors exempt" in Illinois and Indiana to \$10 and upwards for travelling in New York State.

SO MUCH FOR SO FEW

Speaking at Mayor Gibbons' inaugural banquet on Monday evening, Halton's provincial member of Parliament, Stan Hall, gave his audience much food for thought when he asked "Can we justify our existence as one of the United Nations when so much can be enfoyed by so few." He spoke, of course, of Canada with the thousands of miles of territory inhabited by a relative handful of people a land which can absorb many new citizens and give them a better life while at the same time strengthening our country.

It is a problem which we should all consider, this adoption of a .. wider immigration policy which ground open wider the gates to new settlers of the right Mone of us are so far removed from immigrants that we can sit back and say "no foreigners the melting pot of European races into a mship which has made our country great planned increase of our population by fuse more solidly this Canada of ours.

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