

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

JESUS LAYS DOWN HIS LIFE

by Rev. R. C. Todd

LEBSON . . . John 18:37, 38:19; 10:16, 25-30

Before Pilate, a political charge is laid against Jesus by the Jewish priests — the charge of sedition. "We found him troubling the nation, forbidding to pay tribute to Caesar, saying that he is Christ, the king." It was all false, but it made the best charge that could be laid against a man before the Roman power to secure his death.

Such devoted loyalty to the Empire on the part of the leaders of Rome's most rebellious province, must have aroused cynical suspicion in Pilate's mind at once, and he might have commented caustically: "My, my, this is so sudden!" A brief examination of the prisoner was sufficient to confirm his suspicion that Jesus was innocent of the political charge against

him, and the priests' only motives were jealousy, pride and hatred. When Jesus replies to Pilate's question regarding his kingship to the effect that His Kingdom is a kingdom of truth, not needing to be defended by swords, Pilate who is the archetype of pagan materialists swayed by the main chance, contemptuously dismisses the whole matter with the cynical question: "What is truth?" In other words: Truth is only an Utopia. Why speak to me about ideal worlds? What concern have I with provinces that can yield no profit and offer no armed resistance?" Pilate is simply not aware of anything beyond the realm of sense and material values. And he is typical of the majority of our own age who scoff at a world of spiritual values which ought to direct and control our actions. As a matter of fact Pilate soon found that he had a great deal to do with truth, and because he had dismissed it contemptuously, had gotten himself into a situation from which he could not extricate himself without bowing to the will of Jewish priests whom he ordinarily viewed with contempt. The judgment that

history has passed on Pilate, is the judgment that awaits all who in any age ignore and flout the kingdom of truth. His brief examination convinces Pilate that Jesus ought to be released. A strong judge who had regard for the truth would have set him free. Pilate was neither judicious nor strong. He was a petty politician whose decisions were governed by the main chance and who was in the midst of a very difficult political situation. Palestine was as difficult a situation in Pilate's day under the Roman Empire, as in Britain's day under the British Empire. The political situation was tense, and might at any moment explode into open revolt. One can see at a glance that there is no love lost between the priest and the governor; and further, that the governor is weak; he will not rule with a firm hand. He tries several appeasing expedients which do not work. Observing that Pilate really desires to release Jesus, the priests make their final move. It is a direct attempt to intimidate the judge. "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar's." This will not be the first time Pilate's administration has been complained of as inimical to the best interests of the Roman Empire. Pilate knows, and the priests know, of many things in the governor's record that will not bear investigation by Caesar's royal commission. So Pilate, weak and cowardly politician, swayed by the world of sense and material values, gives in. He who should have been strong enough to take the responsibility entrusted to him for judgment, weakly bows to the judgment of the crowd, gives Jesus over for crucifixion and tries to transfer responsibility for his decision by washing his hands. The evil in the heart of the Jews taking advantage of the evil in Pilate's life, thus accomplishes the condemnation and judicial murder of the one man who alone of all who have ever lived, is without sin. Sin and Death here make their desperate attempt to destroy Life and Righteousness; the Darkness seeks to obliterate the Light which has shone into the world in Christ, as the Son of God goes to His Cross.

Was the Cross necessary? Yes. First because only the Sacrifice of the Son could glorify the Father. (See last week's lesson). Second, because only thus could the Christ crucify Sin and

Death for us in His own body, and become the Way of reconciliation with God, and in His Resurrection prove that they have no dominion over Him or over those who are to Him as the branches are to the Vine. Because only thus could He demonstrate that Life is stronger than Death, Sin than Righteousness, Light than Darkness, Third, because only thus could be revealed to men the holiness of God, and the unholiness of man and Christ become the Way by which men may become holy. In Christian experience it has indeed proved to be the Cross that shows men the nature of their sins, and gives them power to overcome them. Because we know that the same sins that sent Jesus to His death, pride and worldliness, and jealousy and hate — so often find lodgment in our own lives, and because we know that He said, "Father, forgive them . . . we are able to say with Paul, 'The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me.'"

The care of Jesus for His Mother is of a piece with all the conduct of Jesus. There is an entire absence of self-consciousness, of ostentatious suggestion that He is now making atonement for the sins of the world and cannot be bothered with human relations. The incident is an indication of the bond that must exist between human beings when there is a close bond of devotion to the Christ who makes atonement.

Our ears ought to be open to the Word of God in all the events surrounding the Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus, to hear Him uttering to all of us His Divine Love in the most forcible tones. These are the events in history in which His deepest purposes and tenderest love are given utterance. How He is striving to win His way to us, to convince us of the reality of sin and salvation! To be mere spectators here is to convict ourselves of being superficial or strangely callous. Scarcely any criminal is executed but we all have our opinion on the justice or injustice of his condemnation. We are expected to form our judgment in THIS case, and to take action upon it. Were the Jews wrong? Then if we act as they did, we also are condemned. Was Pilate right, if after he knew Jesus to be innocent, he scoffed at spiritual values as valid in making his decision, and allowed himself to be ruled by material considerations

H. DE VRIES WINS SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED AT O.A.C.

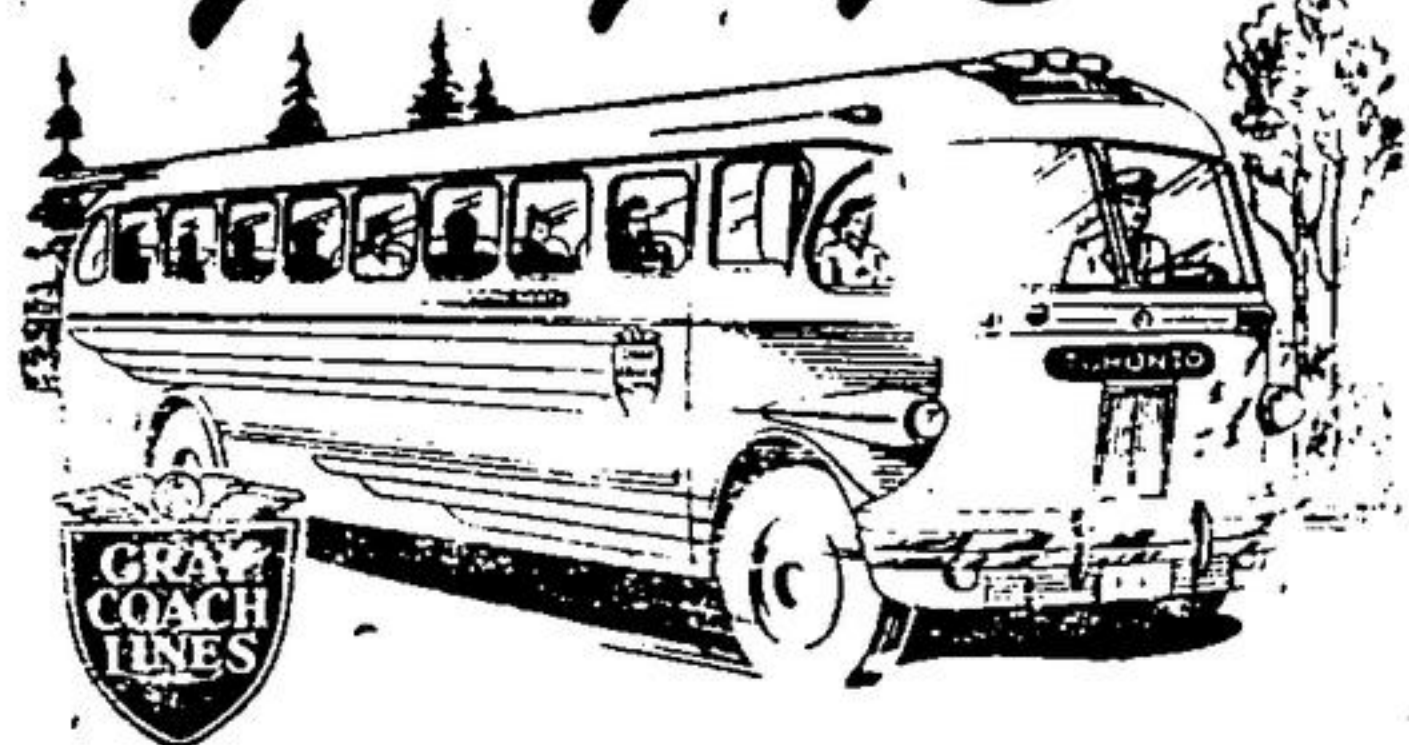
The achievement day for Halton's two Boys' Grain clubs was held in conjunction with the Halton Good Fair and Bacon Show on Saturday, March 15th. The top awards of a two weeks' short course, donated by the Halton Crop Improvement Association, was won by Hank DeVries of Georgetown, with a score of 885, out of a possible 1000 points. In second place with a score of 880 was Geo. Wilson, of Georgetown. Other awards were as follows: 3rd, Douglas Alexander, Georgetown; 4th, Fraser McNabb, Georgetown; 5th, Geo. Burkholder, Freeman; 6th, Harold Hurren, Campbellville; 7th, Stuart Alexander, Georgetown; 8th, Gordon Hurren, Campbellville; 9th, Harold Tyrrell, Freeman; 10th, Douglas Anderson, Rockwood; 11th, Howson, Raddell, Georgetown; 12th, James Snow, Milton; and 13th, Craig Alexander, Georgetown.

Six Taxis In Georgetown, As Arrow Taxi Commences Operation

With the introduction of Clarence Kennedy's Arrow Taxi recently, Georgetown now has four companies operating a total of six cabs. Mr. Kennedy has given up his position in the bakery division of Smith and Stone, Ltd., and is offering 24-hour service with his office located at his home at the corner of Guelph and Water Sts. He has a 1946 Plymouth. Arrow Taxi is the second such business to be set up this year. Stewart Simpson having inaugurated a similar service a few months ago, operating under his own name. Oldest taxi business in town is Whitmee's Taxi, taken over by Ray Whitmee a few years ago from his father who had been in the business for almost a quarter of a century. Until recently he had two cabs, but last week disposed of his Chrysler and traded in his other car on a brand-new Plymouth. Georgetown Taxi, operated by Jim Ross and Tom Clapham was established by Russell Thompson who operated under his own name until he sold out a year ago. They have three cabs operating.

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12.09 p.m.	b11.29 p.m.	y4.55 p.m.	x11.10 p.m.
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Something OR Nothing

Remember the story of the monkey who tried to withdraw a fistful of nuts through the narrow neck of a jar?

Because he wasn't content with getting one luscious nut at a time, he ended up by getting nothing instead of something.

That story is worth remembering today. Greedy grabbing of goods still in short supply can have the same result — nothing instead of something. Inflated prices, like the inflated paw of the monkey, can as surely prevent each of us from getting his fair share of available goods.

Canadians have had the wisdom to be content with a moderate "something," knowing that as production increases that "something" will grow larger and larger.

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