

Sunday School Lesson

Lesson For January 1, 1939

PETER CALLED TO SERVE

Golden Text — "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."

The Lesson as a Whole

In studying the life and ministry of Simon Peter we shall see how God can make an outstanding witness to his truth from most unlikely material. Who would have thought of the rugged, impetuous, profane fisherman Simon ever becoming the eloquent, spiritual preacher, whose burning words would be used to the conversion of thousands of souls? But God works with what he brings, not simply with what he finds. Simon the fisherman, regenerated, becomes Peter the apostle, to whose sermons and letters the whole world owes a debt that it can never pay. While his ministry was primarily toward the Jews, yet the "branches run over the wall" (Gen. 49:22), and he was the one specially chosen of God to open the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 15:7). A man of strong prejudices, his narrow views were superseded by remarkable breadth of vision when taught by the Holy Spirit. Like his brother apostle, Paul, he delighted in "the true grace of God" (1 Pet. 5:12), which knows no national or racial boundaries. Hence his messages are the delight of believers from among the nations, whom he once despised, as well as among those of Jewry, who have found in the Lord Jesus the promised Messiah.

The Historical Setting
We do not know how old Simon was when he was first brought to Jesus. From that day on, which was in the beginning of our Lord's public ministry, he was identified prominently with the testimony of Christ, until his martyrdom, probably by crucifixion in Rome, about A.D. 67, or shortly afterward.

Verse by Verse:

John 1:40—"Andrew, Simon Peter's brother." We do not know much about Andrew's qualifications for platform ministry, but he was a quiet personal worker who will always be remembered as the one who introduced his more brilliant brother Simon to Christ.

Verse 1—"The Messias... the Christ." Both words mean "the Anointed," the one being from the Hebrew, the other from the Greek. It was Andrew's high privilege to know Christ first and then to lead his brother into that knowledge.

Verse 2—"Thou shalt be called Cephas... A stone." Cephas and Peter are synonymous, the first Aramaic, the second Greek. Both mean the same thing. Peter himself calls all believers, living stones built on Christ himself (1 Pet. 2:4, 5). Jesus doubtless referred to the rocklike character which would replace his natural vacillation.

Luke 5:1—"By the lake of Gennesaret." That is, the sea of Galilee, on the northwestern shore of which this incident took place.

Verse 2—"Two ships standing by." The Lord looked for a vantage place where he might take his stand as he instructed the throng that pressed to the water's edge.

Verse 3—"One of the ships, which was Simon's." While Simon was a disciple of Jesus, he had not yet been called to full-time service, as we say today. He was carrying on as usual in the fishing business. Jesus entered his ship, and when it was thrust out from the land it became his pulpit.

Verse 4—"Launch out... let down." Jesus knew that Simon did not as yet really know him, thought he was ready to be taught by him. He took charge of affairs and told the experienced fishermen to do what was unusual—launch out and let down the nets in broad daylight.

Verse 5—"Nevertheless at

thy word." Surprised, Simon at first seemed about to protest, but thought he evidently considered it unlikely that he would get a catch, he obeyed and let down the net.

Verse 6—"Their net brake." As the finny treasure of the deep rushed into the net it proved too weak to stand the strain.

Verse 7—"Beckoned unto their partners." Another ship owned by the same firm was near, to whom they signaled for help, but so great were the numbers of fish taken that both ships were filled and began to sink.

Verse 8—"I am a sinful man." In a moment Simon's eyes were opened. He realized that only a supernatural person could have thus commanded the fish of the sea to enter his net after the fruitless efforts of the night before. With this came a crushing sense of his own unworthiness, which brought him down in repentance at the feet of Jesus.

Verse 9—"He was astonished and all that were with him." But evidently his companions were not all affected as he was. It is one thing to be amazed at the power of Christ, but quite another to be abased before him.

Verse 10—"Thou shalt catch men." This was Simon's call to the apostolate. He was to become an efficient angler for the souls of men. The language of the Lord would appeal to him because of his calling. His energies were now to be turned into new channels for blessing to mankind.

Verse 11—"They forsook all, and followed him." There were four men definitely called and separated to Christ's service that day: Andrew and Peter, and also James and John. Henceforth they were to go about with Jesus and prepared for a wide and blessed ministry of soul-winning.

one raid. Our old frame building shook with the concussion and as the airplanes continued right on for us we thought for sure we were for it. My knees were shaking like leaves. But they passed over without dropping more bombs.

"I wish you would make it known to the Chinese of Toronto," Mr. Brace stated, "that Canton was sold out by its local government. Most of the Toronto Chinese are Cantonese and will be very interested in that. All precautions were taken for complete defence before the onslaught of the Japanese. Thousands of troops were sent there and Canton was prepared for a long siege that in all probability would have resulted in successful defence.

"The city was sold out by a general who had full command at the time. He ordered his troops to retreat. The general was shot by officers of his own army.

"Right now the United States is selling Japan about 50 per cent of ammunition used in the war. China is getting about 17 per cent. Japan is conducting effective blockades. But the country is not beaten yet and in my opinion never will be."



W. Davey, 8 Stanton Ave.

TORONTO-Flash

One of the best ventures ever sponsored in Stouffville by the merchants is the way Toronto folk visited the Christmas market at Stouffville made reference to the day, and so we congratulate Jack Hodgins and all his staff of workers.

While at the St. Lawrence market the other day we were purchasing one of the fine home cured hams from a kind faced lady wearing one of the Dutch bonnets. We did not know her name but she said to us, are you the gentleman who writes the Flashes in the Stouffville Tribune. You see folks a person is recognized, and we learned then that our esteemed lady came from the 8th of Markham.

We hear lots of interesting things over the radio, but what is more interesting is the fact that in Uxbridge township there is a man named Elwood Wag

who goes about the township cleaning wells, although he weighs 227 pounds. While we are on weights, why not elect Jack Rae to the council. He is the second biggest man in the township and would grace a municipal seat as it ought to be. While his chances of a heavy vote are minimized by so many in the field from Goodwood, Mr. Rae should run up a large vote for he is a man of sound judgment. Of course there are other first class candidates too, so all in all a real fight is on.

The Correspondent of Flashes was highly honoured, we are told by the ladies of the Institute who proposed a toast to him at their regular meeting held at the Harper home last Thursday. That was a kindly act, and one which stirs our warmth of heart. We sincerely thank the ladies and wish for them a bigger and better year than ever in 1939. At this meeting on Thursday the lady of the house also treated the guests in an unusual way for which every member is highly appreciative.

Alex. Brown was in Stouffville for the Christmas market and spent the day with his brother. These old Goodwood stalwarts met many from the home village at the big poultry market.

Happy birthday to you—Miss Jean Slack, Goodwood, and to Herbert Stewart, Foxwarren, Man., also T. Porter and E. J. Davey, dates Dec. 31, and Jan. 4 for the three men.

Some good natured person sent to our home a brand new furnace shovel prepaid. We accepted it as a Christmas gift, and as the Toronto cop would say, "I think I have my eye on him," meaning the giver in this case.

The Phillips family of Roseville have moved over to Vivian to reside.

One of the widely known men of Uxbridge Township is Wesley Matthews of whom we extend congratulations in his 96th birthday. Living south of Uxbridge his life partner for years peddled vegetables in the town.

Well, folks, it certainly takes old Christmas season to bring about a raft of cards and letters from old friends. As we look about ourselves here at home we are surrounded by hundreds of cards coming as they have from folks of whom we have not heard in many years. They came from coast to coast and down in the U.S.A. For the most part these well wishers are all readers of The Tribune. To one and all we wish a happy new year, and may I say thank you for your co-operation in any way.

Send The Tribune to absent friends.

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Carman Brace Returns Home

"All you have ever heard about Japanese brutality in the present war with China is true and then some. The merest taste of victory for the Japanese means they absolutely run amok and the horrors are indescribable." This is the word brought back from China by Carman S. Brace, technical engineer, who returned to Toronto last week.

Mrs. Brace, who spent several years with her husband in China, fled from Nanking with her two children, Georgina, 4, and Garnet, 2, a few days before the city was pillaged and fired by Japanese. On her return to Toronto another son was born, Ronald, now aged eight months. It was to rejoin his family that Mr. Brace left his position as technical engineering adviser on the staff of General Chiang Kai-shek to return to Toronto.

More than half of his lifetime has been spent in China, Mr. Brace is a son of Dr. A.J. Brace, sec'y of national council of the Y.M.C.A. in Toronto.

Carman Brace's mother is the former Blanche O'Brien of Stouffville, and he attended school here when the family resided in the house now owned and occupied by Mrs. Irwin Gray.

On joining the forces of Chiang Kai-shek, he organized and operated a complete mobile service unit for the mechanized forces of the Chinese army. After instructing Chinese, he was transferred by Madame Kai-shek to the transportation department of the air force, which she directs.

It was during his stay at Changsha, between Hankow and Canton, that bombs came so close that his knees quaked as he tried to take pictures of the scene.

"We were on a second floor of a small building when the airplanes went over," he said, "and when they got to the thickly populated part of the city they dropped their bombs. About 400 were killed in that



When it comes to dunking doughnuts, Wilma Beard, daughter of a barge captain and known to her father's friends as "Tugboat Minnie," wants the world to know she's every bit as proficient in the art as the girls from whom she deliberately stole the spotlight. The charming advertiser's model was sponsored in a "coming out" party by 14 prominent New York men-about-town, who introduced her to society as a protest against the much-publicized Brenda Frazier.