

# Sunday School Lesson

Lesson for June 15  
PROGRESS IN WORLD MISSIONS

Golden Text—For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.—Gal. 3:26

### The Lesson as a Whole

As the work of evangelizing the Gentiles developed, under the nurturing hand of God, and more and more of these once-despised idolaters were brought to the knowledge of Christ and into the fellowship of the church, the latent antagonism between those of Jewish extraction and their brethren from the nations threatened to become stronger, and to hinder the work in a marked degree. From the first, Paul insisted in the "no difference" doctrine which he develops in Romans 3:9,22; 10:12) and in Galatians 3:28, 29) and also in Ephesians 2:11-16). This was the message of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19) which he proclaimed everywhere to Jew and Gentile alike. His great sermon preached in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia is a wonderful epitome of the message he carried nation after nation, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (vs. 16-41). It is not surprising that it should have been so carefully considered, setting forth God's way whereby guilty sinners may not only find forgiveness, but justification from all things. The opposition of the unsaved Jews to this truth was of such a violent character that Paul, and Barnabas had left the synagogue and turned, for the time, wholly to the heathen, using their action on direct Scripture, from Isaiah 49:6. But although any of the Gentiles received the message in faith and confessed Christ with gladness, the opposition increased that the apostles moved to Iconium. It is fitting to link this historical record a doctrinal statement from the Epistle to the Galatians, as that letter was occasioned by an effort in later days to corrupt this testimony by mixing Judaism with Christianity.

### The Historical Setting

Returning to the continent of Asia after the Cyprus campaign, Paul and Barnabas moved on from Perga in Pamphylia to the Pisidian Antioch, where they first found an open door to the Jewish synagogue, until the Jews who refused to believe the Gospel stirred up an incipient riot, as a result of which they separated the converts and continued preaching to the Gentiles. The time, A. D. 45.

### Verse by Verse

Verse 44—"The next sabbath day," at the previous Sabbath Paul preached to the Jews, and as word about of the strange new message, representatives of both the Jews and Gentiles thronged the synagogue on the second Sabbath.

Verse 45—"They were filled with envy." Instead of rejoicing that their Gentile neighbors were eager to hear the glad tidings concerning their Messiah and the grace of the God of Israel, the Jews were moved to jealous hatred and took occasion to rail upon the preachers and the message they proclaimed.

Verse 46—"... Judge yourselves worthy of everlasting life." Little did these Jews realize that they thus proclaimed their own unworthiness, for whenever men treat the grace of God with contumely, they really deserve against their own salvation. Because of this attitude on the part of the Jews, Paul declared, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." It was unthinkable that a dog-in-the-manger attitude on the part of these men of the synagogue should hinder the going forth of the Good News to others who needed it so badly.

Verse 47—"I have set thee to be light of the Gentiles." This was the promise of God the Father to his Son in view of his rejection by Israel. The time had now come to fulfil upon the call of the nations. At that time they might know him who was pointed of Jehovah to "be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." No national or religious prejudices must be permitted to dam up the stream of the grace of God now flowing for the blessing of all nations.

Verse 48—"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." At this, as many as were determined to life eternal. All are ordained to eternal life who take the place of entrance before God. Hearing the message, they believe and are saved.

Verse 49—"The word of the Lord was published throughout all the region." Several small countries came together in this region, but all were included in the broad term "Galatia." Throughout all the countryside the message was carried and many were brought to know Christ as Saviour.

Verse 50—"The Jews stirred up devout and honourable women." These men are generally strongly partial. These good women were per-

suaded by the Jews that the doctrine of the apostles was a dangerous heresy; so they earnestly opposed it. In many mission lands today the strongest opposition comes from the women, who, not understanding the new message, fear it may be destructive of family peace. So strong were their opponents that the apostles were expelled from the city of Antioch and its coasts.

Verse 51—"They shook off the dust of their feet against them," as taught by the Lord himself when he was on earth (Matt. 10:14), and moved on to the city of Iconium.

Verse 52—"The disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost." Persecution cannot destroy the joy of the Lord, or quench the power of the indwelling Comforter.

Gal. 3:26—"Children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The Authorized Version gives "sons." This is correct. It means that all believers now are recognized by God as his sons, and heirs, jointly with Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:17). We are children by new birth, but sons by adoption.

Verse 27—"Have put on Christ." Those who are united to Christ (of which baptism is the outward sign) are now clothed in him. We are identified with him before God. By the baptism of the Holy Spirit we

are made members of the body of Christ and of that new creation of which he, the risen Lord, is the Head.

Verse 28—"All one in Christ Jesus." All national and racial distinctions disappear in this new creation. No longer are we viewed as Jews or Gentiles, slaves or free, male or female, but all are one in him who has redeemed us to God in his own blood.

Verse 29—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." All who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham (Gal. 3:9). He is the father of both a natural and a spiritual seed. It is the spiritual seed who are really heirs of the promise.

### WRITE TO THE BOYS

The Canadian troops in Britain are not idle. They are kept fit all the time by the most intense training. Few spare moments come to the troops over there except when on welcome leave. Their movements are restricted, too, and there are not so many welcome days now when the mails come in. They want the news of home, those home details that are not in the newspaper. Nothing is too small to tell them in letters and the more mail they get the less is the monotony of drilling and waiting felt.

### WOULD BLAST GERMANY



If Major-General John F. O'Ryan of New York gets his way, the whole U.S. army, navy, and air force, will be sent to England "to blast Germany from British bases." He wouldn't declare war on Germany. He'd go in kicking, eye-gouging and hitting below the belt. "That's the way those racketeers in Berlin fight," he said. "That's swell if that's the way they want it. They can dish it; let's see if they can take it."

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### DOWN THROUGH THE AGES

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