

Business Directory

DENTAL

NEIL C. SMITH, L.D.S., D.D.S.
Graduate of
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Office over Canadian Bank of
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E. S. BARKER, L.D.S., D.D.S.

Honor Graduate of Royal College
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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Lesson for Oct. 29
Golden Text.—Whatever things
are true, whatsoever things are
honest, whatsoever things are just,
whatsoever things are pure, what-
soever things are lovely, whatso-
ever things are of good report; if
there be any virtue, and if there
be any praise, think on these
things.—Phil. 4:8

THE LESSON AS A WHOLE

Approach to the Lesson
Someone has declared that in
our busy work-a-day world medi-
tation has become a lost art. Un-
happily, this is true generally,
even among Christians. Life has
become so strenuous that many
feel that they have no time for the
thoughtful reading of the Word of
God, and even when a portion of
Scripture is read daily, it is soon
forgotten because of occupation
with so many less important
things. Thus we are all in danger
of becoming like the man describ-
ed in James 1:23, 24, who looks
into a mirror, but straightway
forgets what manner of man he is.
In other words, we are content to
be "hearers only" of the Word, not
doers (Jas. 1:22). If we would
grow in grace and the knowledge
of Christ, we must feed upon the
Word of God. This implies far
more than a cursory reading or
hearing certain passages of
Scripture. We need to heed the
admonition: "Read, mark, and
inwardly digest." We fulfil this as
we take time to meditate upon the
Word itself. Meditation is mental
and spiritual mastication. It is in
this way that we learn the mind of
God and appreciate the precious-
ness of the revelation He has
given. David wrote: "O how love I
thy law! it is my meditation all the
day" (Psa. 119:97), and again, "My
meditation of him shall be sweet"
(Psa. 104:34a). We have two strik-
ing illustrations of the importance
of eating the Word in the cases of
Ezekiel (Ezek. 3:1-3) and of John
(Rev. 10:9-11). Thus having appro-
priated God's truth for themselves,
they were strengthened for service
and prepared to give it out to
others. It is only as we make the
Word of God our own by medi-
tation and obedience that we grow
from spiritual babyhood to Christ-
ian maturity. As babies, we need
the "milk of the word" that we
"may grow thereby" (1 Pet. 2:2).
As we become well instructed we
will enjoy feasting on the "strong
meat" of the Word (1 Cor. 3:2;
Heb. 5:12-14).

The Historical Setting

Berea was the third Macedonian
city visited by Paul and his com-
pany after their arrival in Europe.
Upon being released from prison
in Philippi, Paul and Silas travel-
ed the high road to Thessalonica,
where a new church was estab-
lished, but when persecution broke
out they went on to Berea. There
they found a very open-minded
group of Jews, who received them
cordially, and searched the Scrip-
tures diligently for confirmation of
Paul's teaching, with the result
that many were converted.
Paul's Letter to the Philippians
was written some years later from
Rome, during his first imprison-
ment. First Timothy was written
after his release, and Second
Timothy, the last of Paul's writ-
ings which the Spirit of God has
preserved for our edification, was
written during his second impris-
onment in Rome shortly before
his martyrdom.
Verse by Verse
Acts 17:10—"The brethren.....
sent away Paul and Silas by night."
Because of the vindictive spirit of
certain unbelieving Jews, the
Christians at Thessalonica hurried
Paul and Silas secretly out of their
city by night, in order that they
might go on to Berea, where, it
was hoped, they would be
unmolested.

Verse 11—"These were more
noble than those in Thessalonica."
Their nobility was manifested by
their lack of prejudice and bigotry
and by their fairmindedness, which
led them to listen courteously to
the Gospel message and to search
their Old Testament Scriptures to
see whether Paul's preaching was
in accordance with what was there
written.

Verse 12—"Therefore many of
them believed." As a result, many
of the Jews in that city received
the message in faith, as also a
number of Greek women and men,
who were possibly proselytes, or
at least inquirers, seeking after the
knowledge of the true God. The
term, "honourable women" would
suggest that these were ladies of
culture and refinement, connected
with important Berean families.

Verse 13—"Jews of Thessalonica
.....came.....and stirred up the
people." When news of the work

of God at Berea reached Thessa-
lonica, Paul's former opponents
were enraged and a group of them
came on to Berea in order to incite
their coreligionists against the
teachers of the new doctrine.
Verse 14—"The brethren sent
away Paul." Because he was the
chief object of the Jew's hatred,
the brethren sent Paul by a cir-
cuitous route to Athens, endeavor-
ing thus to throw his persecutors
off the trail. Timothy, who we now
learn was also with Paul, and Silas
remained behind to help confirm
the young converts.

Verse 15—"They that conduct-
ed Paul brought him unto Athens."
He remained there for a time, wait-
ing for Timothy and Silas to rejoin
him as quickly as circumstances
permitted.

Phil. 4:8—"Whatever things
are pure.....think on these things."
The more our hearts are occupied
with things that are holy and
beautiful, the richer we shall be-
come spiritually. If we allow our
minds to dwell upon things that
are evil, we become defiled and our
spiritual growth is hindered.

Verse 9—"The God of peace
shall be with you." As we practice
that which is good and pleasing to
God, we will have an abiding sense
of His presence with us as the God
of peace, keeping the heart at rest
even in the midst of the most
adverse circumstances.

1 Tim. 4:12—"Let no man
despise thy youth." This should
not be construed as an encourage-
ment to youthful vanity or arro-
gance. Nothing so commends young
Christians as exemplary behavior,
the manifestation of kindly con-
sideration of others, purity and
modesty in life and conversation,
based upon appreciation of and
obedience to the Word of God.

Verse 13—"Give attendance to
reading." The word used in the
original text refers rather to read-
ing to others than simply for one's
own edification. This public read-
ing of the Scriptures was most
important when very few people
had access to portions of the Word
of God, even if able to read for
themselves. The teacher might link
with this Nehemiah 8:3. Even in
our own day, when copies of the
Bible can be so readily obtained,
and literacy is so prevalent, it is
still important for preachers and
teachers to keep this exhortation
in mind.

Verse 14—"Neglect not the gift
that is in thee." When Timothy
went forth as a fellow laborer with
Paul, he was commended by the
elders at Lystra to the work of the
Lord. As they and the apostle laid
their hands upon him and prayed,
a special gift was given through
the Holy Spirit to fit the young
worker for his life of service.

Verse 15—"Meditate upon these
things." By prayerful meditation
the holy Scriptures are assimilated
spiritually. It is all-important that
the servant of God give himself
fully and completely to the study
of the Word if he would have a
profitable ministry.

Verse 16—"Take heed unto thy-
self, and unto the doctrine." No
man is fit to minister to others who
is careless as to his own behavior.
The teacher should be character-
ized by true piety as well as by a
working knowledge of the great
truths as revealed in the Word of
God.

2 Tim. 2:15—"A workman that
needeth not to be ashamed." Just
as an artisan working on any
particular project needs to con-
sult carefully the plans and speci-
fications, so do the servants of
Christ need to study the Scrip-
tures diligently, that they may
discern clearly God's plan and
purpose. "Rightly dividing the
word" implies a recognition of the
great outline of its doctrinal pro-
phetic, and dispensational instruc-
tion.

2 Tim. 4:13—"Bring.....the books
the.....parchments." Although a

prisoner in a Roman dungeon, Paul
valued his books and literary
materials. Just what these books
and parchments contained we are
not told, but we may be sure that
they were either copies of Scrip-
ture portions or other edifying
literature. One is never too old to
learn more of the truth of God and
revealed in His Word, so long as
mental clearness is retained.

The Heart of the Lesson

We wrong our souls when we
neglect the careful study of the

Word of God, for it is only by
meditation upon it that we grow
in grace and in the knowledge of
our Lord and Saviour Jesus
Christ. We should also avail our-
selves of helpful literature design-
ed to open up the Scriptures; but
in regard to this we need to use
careful discrimination, for there
are so many books pouring forth
from so-called religious publishing
houses today which are utterly
misleading, and thoroughly mis-
chievous.



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