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THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Lesson for July 15

Golden Text—Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.—Cor. 13:4, 7, R.V.

THE LESSON AS A WHOLE

By J. C. Macaulay, D.D.
 Approach to the Lesson

As GO the homes, so goes the nation. Referring in the revelations of fraudulent practices in the RFC (Reconstruction Finance Corporation), Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas recently recalled the fact, demonstrated by history, that "the vast majority of great civilization have been destroyed not as a result of external aggression, but as a consequence of domestic corruption." While the word "domestic" here is used in the political sense, the statement would be even more true if the word were given its more intimate connotation. Where the homes of a nation are sanctuaries of honor and rectitude, national affairs will be characterized by righteousness and justice; and such a nation is a bulwark against tyranny and oppression. But when our homes begin to crumble because of unfaithfulness and lack of discipline, we may expect the national conscience to disintegrate, and with that goes our national strength, until we are ripe for destruction. The safeguarding of the home, therefore, is more than a pretty sentiment of old-fashioned idealists. It is a prime necessity for our national security. As go the homes, so goes the nation.

With a divorce rate variously estimated from one in five to one in three, the call to save our homes is not a bit too soon! But where shall we begin? Peter says in another connection, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17); and the application of these words to our present theme is not far-fetched. One is alarmed at the widespread lack of Biblical ideals of home life among Christians. Unless we begin to build our homes on the sure foundation of godly fear and obedience, how can we stay the processes of disintegration in the nation at large? Let Bible standards prevail in our Christian homes, being taught and required by the Christian church. Then our Lord's declaration, "Ye are the salt of the earth," will be demonstrated more abundantly. We want to see the American home, not a marvel of labor-saving gadgets and a wonder of luxury, but a bulwark of righteousness and a haven of peace. Then we shall still be able to sing:

"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
 Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home;
 A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
 Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
 Home, home, sweet, sweet home!
 There's no place like home, oh, there's no place like home!"

Verse by Verse
 Matt. 19:3—"Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" This was a question hotly disputed between the followers of Hillel, who allowed considerable freedom in the matter of divorce, and the disciples of Shammai, who took a more rigid stand. The Pharisees tried to make Jesus a party to their disputes, but our Lord avoided partyism by taking higher ground than any of them. To these Pharisees the lawfulness of a thing was the full requirement, but see 1 Corinthians 12:10, 23.

Verse 4—"Have ye not read . . . at the beginning?" Jesus began by challenging their boasted knowledge of the Scriptures. Then He took them back to the origin of the marriage bond, in order to show them the divine intention and standard. Once we have that, nothing less will satisfy us.

Verse 5—"For this cause shall a man leave . . . cleave . . . one flesh." The relation of husband and wife preceded that of parent and child, and must always have precedence. But the command to cleave is as insistent as the command to leave. In the divine reck-

oning, husband and wife are a truly "one flesh" as were Adam and Eve, where Eve was actually taken out of the man (Gen. 2:21-23). Notice, it was God, not Adam, who spoke these words, quoted from Genesis 2:24.

Verse 6—"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." To argue that in some cases it was not God that joined them together is mere trifling. It is the institution of marriage that is in view here, not the special leading of God in individual lives, which every Christian should earnestly seek. In God's sight, the marriage bond is permanent.

Verse 7—"Why did Moses then command . . . to give a writing of divorcement?" An unfair allusion to Deuteronomy 24:1, 2, suggesting that Moses had instituted divorce, whereas he only tolerated it. What Moses commanded was a formal act of divorce in place of an impetuous, unrecorded dismissal of a wife on any pretext. Notice, too, that it was on the ground of "uncleanness" that Moses permitted divorce, not on any whim of incompatibility.

Verse 8.—Moses . . . suffered but from the beginning." The Law took account of the hardness of heart which made the ideal too much to enforce, but Christ, who gives a new heart to those who accept Him, expects God's original and highest intentions to be our accepted standards.

Verse 9—" . . . except it be for fornication . . . adultery . . . adultery." This statement is perfectly clear. Christ recognizes only one ground of divorce, and remarriage in any other case is not only an act of adultery, but a perpetual state of adultery. To marry a divorced woman (or man), apart from the exceptional case indicated by our Lord, is to enter into adulterous relations with somebody else's wife (or husband).

1 Cor. 13:4-7.—These verses present the character of love (the preferable reading to "charity" which is today rather restricted in meaning).

Verse 4—"Love's patience: 'love suffereth long.' Love's goodness: 'and is kind.' Love's magnanimity: 'love envieth not.' Love's modesty: 'love vaunteth not itself.' Love's humility: 'it is not puffed up.'"

Verse 5—"Love's decorum: 'doth not behave itself unseemly.' Love's unselfishness: 'seeketh not her own.' Love's meekness: 'is not provoked.' (A.S.V.) Love's guilelessness: 'thinketh no evil.'"

Verse 6—"Love's sincerity: 'Rejoiceth . . . in the truth.'"

Verse 7—"Love's fortitude: 'beareth all things.' Love's faith: 'believeth all things.' Love's optimism: 'hopeth all things.' Love's submission: 'endureth all things.' The Heart of the Lesson

The home is the primary social institution, and basically affects the entire social structure. The streams which flow through all the wider relationships of life have their rise in the home. The preservation of the home, therefore, is a fundamental necessity for the security of society.

The strength of the home rests on the sacredness of the marriage bond. Our Lord goes back to the beginning to show God's intention in that regard. There one man and one woman are bound in a union so sacred and complete that a severance of it would be unthinkable. That is God's order for marriage.

In this sphere, as in all others, sin has made a breach in God's order. Neither polygamy nor separation has any place in the divine reckoning, and the fact that some of God's saints have practiced both does not put the stamp of divine approval on them. Even the Mosaic regulation of the practice of divorce is not an annulment of the original intention, but an attempt to curb the evil, and to secure some measure of justice for the parties involved. God's pattern, given in Eden, still holds. The Christian teaching is the primitive teaching (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). Any departure from that is simply not Christian.

The Law did not provide the spiritual equipment (Rom. 8:3) to enable sinners to rise to the heights of God's original purpose in the marriage bond, so it could do no other than regulate a condition which is found existing. That is why Moses allowed divorce and commanded that it be carried out in orderly fashion, and for just cause. The Gospel, on the other hand, contemplates the operation of abundant grace in the hearts of God's people, and therefore anticipates a gracious settlement of difficulties in the spirit of Christ.

Love, after the order of 1 Corinthians 13, will always find a way, for such "love never faileth." This is the love of God, which is "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:5). Only let this love rule, and supposed cause for divorce will melt away like snow in the summer sun. Not the love which is glamorized in the movie world, but this love of God in the hearts of His children, will build our homes and make them impregnable bulwarks for the nation's safety.

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Voice of Prophecy Bible Questions And Answers

Question—What does "amen" mean?

Answer—It means "be it so" or "so it is." It is an affirmation of a preceding statement, which the speaker solemnly makes his own. It is also used as a proper name for Jesus as affirming God's promise. (See Revelation 3:14.)

Q.—Is Italy mentioned in the Bible?

A.—Yes, three times: and Italian once. (See Acts 18:2, 27:1; Hebrews 13:24; Acts 10:1.)

Q.—Please explain Psalm 51:7. What is hyssop?

A.—We quote the text: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." This is a part of David's prayer for forgiveness. Hyssop is a plant that grew in walls and crevices of rocks and was used to sprinkle water and blood in the ceremonial purification of the temple.

Q.—I have understood that heaven is a spiritual condition. Am I right?

A.—Heaven includes a spiritual condition, but it is more than that. Jesus said in John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Heaven is also a place.

Q.—Is death the end of everything, as lots of people say?

A.—That's an old question. Job asked it more than three thousand years ago. And he answered it, too, by inspiration: "If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands." Job 14:14, 15. Jesus said: "Marvel not at this: for the hour

Married in Uxbridge Sixty Years Ago

Dr. and Mrs. E. A. Hardy, Duplex Ave., celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary on Friday with a reception at the home of their daughter, Dr. Florence McConney, Glencairn Ave.

Born in 1867 in New Hampshire, Dr. Hardy came to Canada three years later, settling first in Guelph, and later in Uxbridge. His wife was born in England, and came to Canada at the age of 10. She met her husband at Uxbridge High school, and was a member of the first graduating class of Moulton College. The couple was married in St. Paul's Anglican church. They went to Toronto 13 years later.

Dr. Hardy graduated in 1888 from the University of Toronto, taught in Lindsay collegiate for 15 years, was principal of Moulton College 1906-1909, and taught in Jarvis Collegiate for 26 years. He received his pedagogy degree in 1912, and in 1935 was awarded the O.B.E. for his education work. Since 1936, he has been a board of education trustee.

During his career, he has held many offices, including that of member of the University of Toronto senate, and of McMaster University. His wife, who taught in Uxbridge before her marriage, has been active in women's organizations. The couple have two daughters, Dr. Florence McConney, member of the staff of Women's College hospital, and Mrs. C. W. Murphy, English lecturer at McMaster University. They have four grandchildren.

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